

**THE 2008 LIBERTY MEDALS**

# POST SALUTES

## Winners united at gala for unsung heroes

By RITA DELFINER

Nine of Gotham's guardian angels were honored yesterday as recipients of the seventh annual New York Post Liberty Medals.

The winners, epitomizing the legion of New York's humble heroes who champion us with their goodness and grit, were recognized at a reception emceed by TV host Regis Philbin at the Midtown headquarters of News Corp., which owns The Post.

"It's an honor to be with these people," said Philbin.

Hassan Askari, a Muslim college student who jumped in to help four Jewish subway riders under attack, said he would accept the Courage Liberty Medal on behalf of "the many other people out there" who don't hesitate to stand up for oth-

ers. "New York's a great place and there are always people ready to help you out," said Askari, who was born in Texas, grew up in Bangladesh and now lives in Brooklyn.

Brooklyn great-grandmother Ruth Silber, an 83-year-old volunteer who runs the library at PS 273 in East New York, was "shocked and thrilled" to win the Leadership Medal.

Silber, who volunteers through the nonprofit Learning Leaders, urged New Yorkers to volunteer "rather than sitting home thinking of your aches and pains. Volunteering keeps you functioning, it keeps your mind alert."

Police Commissioner Rav...

Emergency Service Unit Detective Michael Cook with the Finest Medal.

The Post launched the Liberty Medals program seven years ago, in the aftermath of 9/11, to salute the selfless New Yorkers who go the extra mile to benefit others with resourcefulness, empathy and valor.

A panel of prominent New Yorkers — including George Steinbrenner, Grisedes owner John Catsimatidis, and city Comptroller Bill Thompson — selected the winners in each of the eight categories.

Because of a tie, two Lifetime Achievement medals were awarded.

Majora Carter, who took one of those medals for her crusade to make the South Bronx greener, said it was an honor to win it "at the age of 41, but it really puts the pressure on to achieve something for the rest of my life!"

Billionaire financier Jerome Kohlberg, 83, won the other Lifetime Achievement Medal, for helping push the new GI bill and setting up his own \$8 million Fund for Veterans' Education.

"The most important gift for the young people of our country is an education," said Kohlberg, who was unable to attend the reception.

rita.delfiner@nypost.com

**LEADERSHIP**

**RUTH SILBER**

The Brooklyn great-grandmother, 83, volunteers to run the library at PS 273, an elementary school in East New York that does not have a full-time licensed librarian. "I enjoy doing it. It's so important when they love to read," says the retired bookkeeper, who has been a volunteer at the school for 13 years.

# 'ANGELS' OF NY



**THEY'RE TOPS:** Seven of the winners yesterday prove their "medal." From left (front row): Jane Katz, Educator; Majora Carter, Lifetime Achievement; Ruth Silber, Leadership; and (top row) Craig Roeder, Bravest; Hassan Askari, Courage; Frankie Gaetani, Young Heart; and Michael Cook, Finest.