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Livonia man saves life of Southfield driver

By AMY ALLEN Special to The Oakland Press

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Jonathan O'Neill, 24, of Livonia reacted fast, saving a 70-year-old man being dragged by his own truck down Telegraph Road and Civic Center Drive in Southfield and being run over by the truck, making O'Neill a hero to some.

O'Neill was walking with two co-workers when he noticed the truck heading south on a northbound road at about 10 to 15 mph during the week of Sept. 18. He was on the clock and about 3 miles from Michigan Auto Law on Evergreen Road, where he works as a fileclerk.

There was "a man in a red truck running next to his car with the driver-side door open maybe 60 feet or so in front of us," O'Neill said. "Then I see him fall, and all you can see is his feet dangling and he was being dragged."

Running to the truck, O'Neill saw the man had his hand caught in the steering wheel. "I jumped over him into the driver seat and hit the brake," he said. "There was no time to think. I just had to react. In my opinion, had he let go or got unstuck, he would have been run over by his own car," O'Neill said. The man called O'Neill a few days later to thank him. "It was just a brief conversation," O'Neill said, "He was obviously very thankful that I was there and said that I was his hero. He told me the story of what had happened from his point of view."

The man was trying to back up while towing another car when one of the truck's wheels became stuck. Then the truck began moving when the man put the car in neutral rather than park.

"He was able to run up on the car, but he couldn't jump in," O'Neill said.



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