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## AN INSPIRING STORY – RESCUE OF VALOR

After witnessing a terrible accident, the executive Ricardo Guerreiro became a Volunteer Firefighter and founded an NGO to support the Brazilian Emergency Services.

While vacationing in his native Brazil in 2009, RVFD member Ricardo Guerreiro, 45, a quality manager for General Dynamics in Washington DC, had an intense experience that changed his life. He witnessed a terrible motorcycle accident at the Costa do Sauipe resort near the shores of Bahia state in Brazil. “I noticed that all my skills and knowledge were totally useless to help that man”. That scene never left his mind, so the first thing he did once he returned to the USA was join the Rockville Volunteer Fire Department.

After a year of training, Ricardo split his career between businessman and volunteer firefighter. In the USA, 70% of the active firefighters are volunteers. His Wednesday nights and a Saturday every month were filled with fighting fires and [responding to] rescues. Some calls were easy, while other could take the whole night.

“I remember being awakened up at 4:00am and we had a minute to board the truck and rush to the scene without knowing what to expect”. However not everything was Ok to him. In the United States, the emergency services are exemplary, unfortunately in Brazil the reality is different and the population suffers.

At the end of 2012, Ricardo decided it was time to move back to Brazil. His desire was to live close to his relatives and promote the work of volunteer firefighters in his country. At the beginning of that same year Ricardo received a job offer from Bematech, a business automation company from Sao Paulo.

Back in his home country and with a new job, Ricardo founded the NGO “Bombeiros e Socorristas Voluntários do Brazil” (“Brazilian Volunteer Firefighters and Rescuers”), which already has 100 volunteers. The business administrator returned to his double life, working as a software development senior manager at Bematech and taking care of the day-to-day activities of his NGO. He recently established a partnership with the city of Caieiras to provide a standby crew at a big event in November.

“The activity as a volunteer completes me”