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Pit stop for patriotism: Honorable moment a first responder rescues an American flag from the path of Hurricane Irma on the anniversary of 9/11

By Kayla Brantley
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Joseph Schiavo (far right) is pictured with his team of firefighters, medics and police officers who now hang the flag in their Lenco BearCat® armored SWAT vehicle

As thousands of Floridians are still recovering from the wreckage of Hurricane Irma, one first responder made a pit stop for patriotism on the anniversary of the 9/11 attacks.

Joseph Schiavo, 42, is a Coral Springs firefighter and medic who was with his SWAT medical team leading rescue efforts on Monday when they came across an American flag on the ground.

'We saw the red, white, and blue all curled up laying on the ground, and just thought, "we can't leave it there",' Schiavo said.

That's when he got out of the **BearCat** armored vehicle, fully dressed in military attire, to rescue the flag from the rain and heavy winds.

The patriot is seen picking the flag up, shaking it off and holding it high above his head, a moment he described as filled with pride.

Schiavo added that 'it was an honorable thing to do' and 'it would be a disgrace to let it lay on the ground'.

The team of medics, firefighters and police officers will fly the flag in their SWAT vehicle as they continue their rescue efforts throughout Southern Florida.

Hurricane's Irma's death toll has risen to 65 and thousands are still without power after the category 5 storm ripped through Florida over the weekend.



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Joseph Schiavo is a Coral Springs firefighter and medic who was with his SWAT medical team leading rescue efforts when they they stumbled upon the damp flag.