

CITY OF CORAL GABLES

- MEMORANDUM -

**TO:** ASSISTANT CHIEF MICHAEL MILLER      **DATE:** JANUARY 10, 2017  
ASC CHAIRPERSON

**FROM:** SERGEANT BRAD BAENA **BB**      **SUBJECT:**  
UNIFORM PATROL DIVISION      AWARDS/HONOR  
NOMINATION

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I am honored and privileged to nominate the following personnel: *Officer Theresa Luaces for January 2017 Officer of Month* and *Sergeant Jesus Garcia & Detective Alfred Fernandez for Detective of the First Quarter 2017.*

By way of background, during the end of November 2016 thru the beginning of January 2017, a crime pattern/trend evolved, where storefront glass windows of businesses were targeted and vandalized in the northern sector of the City; specifically, along the 2300-Blk of Ponce De Leon Blvd. The unknown subject(s) were throwing projectiles (typically rocks) into these windows causing them to shatter, resulting in an aggregate loss in excess of \$9,000.00. For further details pertaining to these crimes, please refer to the below CGPD Cases:

**Case:** 16-8778  
**Date/Time:** 11/18/2016 2030hrs  
**Incident Location:** Luminaire, 2331 Ponce De Leon Blvd  
**Damage:** Storefront window (estimated cost \$1,000.00)

**Case:** 16-9134  
**Date/Time:** 12/03/2016 0300hrs  
**Incident Location:** Luminaire, 2331 Ponce De Leon Blvd  
**Damage:** Storefront window (estimated cost \$2,000.00)

**Case:** 16-9182  
**Date/Time:** Btwn 12/03 2100hrs - 12/05 0900hrs  
**Incident Location:** Luminaire, 2331 Ponce De Leon Blvd  
**Damage:** Storefront window (estimated cost \$1,000.00)

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**Case:** 16-9349  
**Date/Time:** 12/10/16 2114hrs  
**Incident Location:** Luminaire, 2331 Ponce De Leon Blvd  
**Damage:** Storefront window (estimated cost \$1,500.00)

**Case:** 17-0048  
**Date/Time:** 01/03/17 2112hrs  
**Incident Location:** Luminaire, 2331 Ponce De Leon Blvd  
**Damage:** Storefront window (estimated cost \$2,000.00)

**Case:** 17-0070 (linked to Case 16-9182)  
**Date/Time:** Btwn 12/03 2100hrs – 12/05 0900hrs  
**Incident Location:** Smoothie King, 2315 Ponce De Leon Blvd  
**Damage:** Storefront window (estimated cost \$1,200.00)

On January 6, 2017 Sergeant Jesus Garcia sent an email to “Bolo Distribution,” detailing the latest criminal mischief reference CGPD Case 17-0048. This email contained a synopsis of the events related to the crime, a potential suspect description, and most importantly video surveillance photographs of the potential suspect. These video stills were recovered from Pardos Restaurant located at 2312 Ponce De Leon Blvd (across the street from the incident location).

On January 8, 2017, Officer Theresa Luaces (Charlie Shift) was assigned to Zone 2 for her tour of duty. At approximately 8:07pm, while patrolling her assigned zone, she observed a juvenile male walking southbound along the westside of the 1900-Blk of Galiano Street. This juvenile immediately caught her attention, because he closely resembled the description of the suspect in the photographs emailed by Sergeant Jesus Garcia. Officer Luaces then conducted a consensual encounter/field contact. Backup Officer Ignacio Rivera and I arrived on scene. During the encounter, Officer Luaces remained professional and respectful, used good officer safety skills, and established a positive environment for detectives prior to their questioning. The photographs provided by Sgt. J. Garcia, were compared on scene revealing a remarkable resemblance. Sgt. J. Garcia was immediately contacted and notified of this encounter. Officer Luaces’ calm and respectful demeanor during this encounter comforted the juvenile, which created a sense of trust throughout the entire investigative process. Due to this established bond of trust, Officer Luaces successfully convinced the juvenile to be transported voluntarily to the station for questioning.

While at the Coral Gables Police Department, post Miranda Rights, Sgt. J. Garcia and Detective Alfred Fernandez conducted a thorough and detailed interview and interrogation of the juvenile. Sgt. J. Garcia and Detective Fernandez successfully got the juvenile to provide a comprehensive admission with respect to his lone participation in all six (6) of the cases listed above (i.e. 16-8778, 16-9134, 16-9182, 16-9349, 17-0048, and 17-0070). It was apparent during their questioning, these detectives were not only prepared but most importantly displayed a strong desire to seek justice fairly and professionally. These are two crucial aspects to take into account during the investigative process, especially when dealing with juvenile offenders.

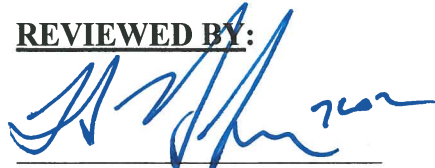
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Moreover, Officer Luaces is customarily assigned to work Zone 6, primarily due to her creation of "Operation Merrick Park." This operation was creatively conceptualized and implemented by Officer Luaces in order to deter and identify potential subjects involved in criminal activity at the Village of Merrick Park. The primary objective of the operation has been to target vehicles improperly and/or suspiciously parked along the perimeter of the mall; in hopes of identifying subject vehicles, offenders & associates, and provide an additional layer of police presence to prevent future crimes. It is without question, this operation has been a huge success, which she should be commended for.

It is undeniable that Officer Theresa Luaces' hard work, enthusiasm, keen observation skills, and dedication to the Coral Gables Police Department and the community alike make her most deserving of Officer of the Month for January 2017. It has been a great privilege and honor to supervise Officer Luaces. She not only brings great attributes to the Uniform Patrol Division but the department as a whole. These various examples only touch the surface of her strong work ethic and commitment to the department and citizens of the City of Coral Gables. In addition, it is without question Sgt. Garcia and Detective Fernandez's outstanding investigative skills, successful interview, and strong desire to seek the truth, make them both most deserving of the Detective of the First Quarter 2017. These collaborative efforts between Officer Luaces, Sgt. Garcia, and Det. Fernandez exemplify the importance of how working together as a team can successfully achieve our most important goal in law enforcement, Justice.

Thank you for your consideration.


**REVIEWED BY:**



Henry Barnett, Lieutenant  
Uniform Patrol Division

 6856

Raul Pedrosa, Major  
Uniform Patrol Division

 10325

Michael Miller, Assistant Chief  
Awards Selection Chairman

**DATE**

1-11-17

1/11/17

1/12/17

*I completely concur w/ this nomination at this time  
CIO/ARO*

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