

CITY OF CORAL GABLES

- MEMORANDUM -

TO: MAJOR THERESA MOLINA
AWARDS SELECTION COMMITTEE

DATE: DECEMBER 2, 2014

FROM: SGT. JOSE DEL VALLE
DEPARTMENT FLEET MANAGER

SUBJECT:
AWARD / HONOR
NOMINATION

I am nominating Sgt. Vicky Merino (ID #7419) for Officer of the Month for November 2014, for her outstanding work in police cases 14-8811 and 14-8842. In addition to these two cases, Sgt. Merino has been multi-tasking several other assignments such as Field Training Supervisor, Squad Sergeant, and occasional Shift Commander and Task Force Sergeant duties.

In reference to case 14-8811, while Sgt. Merino was on routine patrol in the area of the 1900 blk of Casilla Street, she had an SUV under observation due to burglaries and thefts which had been occurring in various parts of the City. She had run a query on the tag and it came back as a rental vehicle which is a common MO for offenders to use in the commission of crimes. The occupants had not detected Sgt. Merino yet and parked in the swale area. At this time she observed two subjects exit and rapidly walk towards a lawn maintenance crew as the SUV drove away. Unsure if a crime was about to occur she began her approach. Upon seeing her, the subjects began to walk north on Casilla St. She stopped the subjects for investigation and asked for back up. Investigation revealed that the subjects were attempting to cell counterfeit cell phones. The subjects were arrested for loitering and prowling and possession of counterfeit goods.

In reference to case 14-8842, while Sgt Merino was on routine patrol, monitoring the Operation Merrick Task Force and was the Acting Shift Commander for the day, a burglary-in-progress was dispatched at 501 Loretto Ave. The subjects had just fled the area in a silver or grey vehicle, unknown make, but possibly a Mercedes Benz, towards Riviera Dr. As she approached east bound on Bird Road to Riviera Dr., she observed grey vehicle with very dark tints which aroused her suspicion. The vehicle had made a left onto west bound Bird Road from northbound Riviera Dr. As soon as she made a U-turn to west bound Bird Road to obtain a vehicle tag, the vehicle immediately began to increase in speed an apparent effort to elude Sgt. Merino. The vehicle subsequently ran the red light at Granada Blvd and Bird Road causing a severe crash with injuries to another driver. Three subjects exited the gray vehicle and immediately fled the vehicle on foot. Sgt. Merino without hesitation tended to the victim, requested fire rescue, set up a perimeter, and provided subject descriptions. Sgt. Merino's actions allowed for the apprehension of three burglary subjects which committed a minimum of three burglaries in our City.

Sgt. Merino's actions in these two cases illustrate the passion she has for her profession and the dedication she has to the citizens of the City of Coral Gables. Her efforts, however, do not stop there. Sgt. Merino is a beacon for the Bravo Shift. She is consistently aware of crime trends occurring not only our City, but also in neighboring jurisdictions. Sgt. Merino goes out of her way to gain intelligence from CIS and other law enforcement contacts in order to provide the best supervision to the Bravo Shift and service to our residents.


I hope the committee takes into account not only the work in the aforementioned cases, but also the totality of her contributions to the Department as they consider her for this prestigious honor.

REVIEWED BY:

DATE


P. Miyares, Lieutenant
Uniform Patrol Division

12/8/14


R. Pedroso, Major
Uniform Patrol Division, Commander

12/8/14


T. Molina, Major
ASC Chairperson

12/8/14

JD/jd
Attachments (2)

C:
Sgt. V. Merino

CITY OF CORAL GABLES

- MEMORANDUM -

TO: MAJOR TERRI MOLINA
AWARDS COMMITTEE CHAIR

DATE: October 22, 2014

FROM: LT. PAUL MIYARZ
BRAVO SHIFT COMMANDER

SUBJECT:
AWARD NOMINATION:
SGT. VICKY MERINO

I respectfully request to nominate Sergeant Vicky Merino for the award of *Distinguished Officer of the Month*.

14-8811

On November 13th 2014, Sgt. Merino was on routine patrol when she observed vehicle drop off two subjects in the area of the 1900 blk of Casilla St. The vehicle then left and she observed the two subjects walk up to a landscaping crew. Sgt. Merino approached both subjects and asked them what they were doing in area; one subject said "my dad is picking me up". The subject vehicle then drove back up to the scene. All subjects were Mirandized and consent was given to search the vehicle. Found on subjects and inside the vehicle was over 20 counterfeit Samsung phones. Information from the landscaping crew was the subjects tried to sell them the phone. All three subject s were arrested for Loitering and prowling and Possession/Sale of Counterfeit goods.

14-8842

On November 14th 2014, two residential burglaries had occurred within a short time frame. A description of the vehicle was given out over the radio. Sgt. Merino was in the area of the 900 block of Bird Rd. going eastbound when she observed the subject vehicle going westbound on Bird Rd. Sgt. Merino made a U-turn in an attempt to stop the subject vehicle. At that time the subject saw the marked police vehicle and accelerated and crash into two vehicles at the intersection of Bird Rd and Granada Blvd. Sgt. Merino drove up to the scene right after the crash and observed the three subjects flee. Sgt. Merino advised of the crash and gave very detailed description of the subjects and direction of travel. Sgt. Merino also set up a perimeter around the area.

Multiple units arrived in the area and within a few minutes all subjects were in custody.

Sgt. Vicky Merino did an outstanding job in both of the listed cases. Thanks to her keen observation skills she was able to solve two separate crimes in two days. In the first case, if she had not been patrolling the area and notice the suspicious behavior, the crime would have never been noticed or maybe even reported. As far as the second case, the subjects had been

committing multiple burglaries in Coral Gables as well as other jurisdictions. Sgt. Merino being at the right place and time and being able to observe the subjects vehicle going in the opposite direction was crucial in the apprehension of these subjects. In a chaotic scene after the crash she was able to verbalize on the radio what was occurring, requesting assistance, direction of travel and description of the subjects.

Sgt. Merino is an outstanding law enforcement officer and supervisor. Her work ethic is unmatched and is always trying to come up with strategies on how to work more efficiently and how to catch the bad guys. It is a pleasure to work with her on a daily basis and is very deserving of this award.

Reviewed by:



Major Raul Pedrosa, Commander
Uniform Patrol Division



Major Terri Molina, Commander
Criminal Investigation Division