



**City of Coral Gables**  
**CITY COMMISSION MEETING**  
**May 31, 2022**

**ITEM TITLE:**

Congratulations to Detective Justin Gonzalez, recipient of the City of Coral Gables “Detective of the First Award,” for the First Quarter 2022.

**BRIEF HISTORY:**

I am honored to nominate Detective Justin Gonzalez for the prestigious Detective of the 1st Quarter Award 2022. In his short tenure as an investigator, Detective Gonzalez's intensity, determination, and outstanding investigative skills and follow-up, have led to the successful identification of subjects and/or closure of the following CGPD cases: 21-6831, 21-7397, 22-00076, 22-0183, 22-0499, 22-0547, 22-0775, 22-0952, 22-0831, 22-0841, 22-0981, 22-1030, 22-1079, 22-1097, 22-1598, 22-1211, etc. I am consistently impressed and appreciative of Detective Gonzalez's hard work and dedication.

Below, please find a synopsis for each of the cases mentioned above.

CGPD Case 21-006831:  
Retail Theft at Publix (2551 Lejeune Rd)

- Offenders stole approximately \$176.68 worth of beer.
- Detective Justin Gonzalez was assigned the case. Video surveillance footage was requested, received, and reviewed.
- Detective Gonzalez obtained suspect information and completed a photographic line-up with the witness who made a positive identification of the offender.
- Detective Gonzalez reviewed the offender's prior arrest record and contacted the last arresting officer (MPD) who provided an additional positive identification of the offender.
- Through investigative means, Detective Gonzalez was able to make a potential identification of the co-offender. A secondary photographic line-up was completed with the original witness who also made a positive identification.
- A PC to Arrest BOLO was issued, and the business was instructed to direct file the case with the State Attorney's Office due the offenders living outside the City of Coral Gables, and it was a misdemeanor level crime.
- The case was exceptionally cleared.

CGPD Case 21-007397:  
Retail Theft at Sunglass Hut (350 San Lorenzo Ave)

- Offender stole a pair of Cartier sunglasses worth \$1,145.00.
- Detective Justin Gonzalez was assigned the case. Video surveillance footage was

requested, received, and reviewed.

- It was learned the offender's accomplice made a purchase using her name. Detective Gonzalez was able to make an identification of the accomplice.
- Through investigative means, Detective Gonzalez was able to obtain an investigative lead as to the identity of the offender. Detective Gonzalez made a positive identification of the offender by eliciting assistance from the last officer (MDPD) who arrested the offender.
- A PC to Arrest BOLO was issued.
- The offender was on probation for an unrelated case; therefore, Detective Gonzalez contacted the Probationary Officer, who assisted with facilitating a scheduled appointment to have the offender come into their office.
- On 3/2/22, the offender responded to the Probation Office and was successfully taken into custody without incident.
- Detective Gonzalez interviewed the offender post Miranda Rights. The offender admitted to stealing the sunglasses because he was late on rent and needed money. The offender cooperated and agreed to return the property to the store. Therefore, Detective Gonzalez was able to have the offender's friend bring the stolen sunglasses to the station, which were finally returned to the store.
- The case was cleared by arrest.

CGPD Case 22-000076:

Retail Theft at Barnes & Noble (152 Miracle Mile)

- Offender stole three books totaling \$300.00.
- Detective Justin Gonzalez was assigned the case. Video surveillance footage was requested, received, and reviewed.
- A Need to Identify BOLO was disseminated.
- A MDPD officer reviewed the BOLO and was able to positively identify the offender from a prior arrest.
- A PC to Arrest BOLO was issued, and the business was instructed to direct file the case with the State Attorney's Office due the offender being homeless, and it was a misdemeanor level crime.
- The case was exceptionally cleared.

CGPD Case 22-000183:

Theft from Structure with Legal Access (1708 Ferdinand Street)

- Offender (housekeeper) stole numerous items from the homeowner totaling approximately \$46,000.
- Detective Justin Gonzalez was assigned the case. Video surveillance footage was requested, received, and reviewed.
- Video surveillance confirmed the offender removing property from the residence without the victim's consent.
- On 1/14/22, Detective Gonzalez located the offender at another residence and placed her under arrest.
- The offender was interviewed post Miranda Rights. The offender admitted to stealing various items from within the residence and told Detective Gonzalez some of the stolen property was inside her vehicle parked at the arrest location. The offender signed a consent to search vehicle form. Detective Gonzalez was able to successfully recover a silverware set valued at approximately \$10,000.00.

This silverware set was reunited with the victim per procedure.

- This case was cleared by arrest.

CGPD Case 22-000499:

Theft by Pickpocket at the Passport Office (4520 Ponce De Leon Blvd)

- Offender stole approximately \$300.00 in cash from a victim's baby bag.
- Detective Justin Gonzalez was assigned the case. Video surveillance footage was requested, received, and reviewed.
- Detective Gonzalez was able to identify the offender because she was a customer at the Passport Office that same day.
- The victim did not want to prosecute the offender if she made her whole again.
- Detective Gonzalez was able to get in contact with the offender who admitted to stealing the money. The offender agreed to repay the victim; therefore, a meet was established, and the offender paid the victim the stolen money.
- The victim signed a non-prosecution form; therefore, the case was exceptionally cleared.

CGPD Case 22-000547:

Theft from Structure at Coyo Taco (126 Giralda Ave)

- Offender made entry into the restricted employee office and stole several credits, where he subsequently compromised these credit cards at Target Department Store. The offender purchased numerous items including gift cards (total loss over \$800.00).
- Detective Justin Gonzalez was assigned the case. Coyo Taco and Target video surveillance footage was requested, received, and reviewed.
- A Need to Identify BOLO was disseminated.
- Through his networking with other agencies, Detective Gonzalez secured a positive identification from a MPD police officer who had arrested him wearing the same clothing.
- The offender was not in custody at the time; therefore, Detective Gonzalez disseminated a PC to Arrest BOLO. The same MPD police officer who assisted with the identification, located the offender, and detained him for Detective Gonzalez. The offender was once again wearing the same exact clothing as in the BOLO.
- Detective Gonzalez interviewed the offender post Miranda Rights. The offender confessed to stealing the credit cards without permission and using them to purchase gift cards at Target.
- The case was cleared by arrest.

CGPD Case 22-000775:

Theft by Shoplifting at Shell Gas Station (1492 S Dixie Hwy)

- Offender stole several perishable items from the gas station and fled the scene in an awaiting subject vehicle.
- Detective Justin Gonzalez was assigned the case.
- Detective Gonzalez conducted records check on the subject vehicle and determined it was a rental vehicle. He made contact with the rental agency to request the renter information. The rental agency was cooperative and provided a third-party rental service company. This company was able produce the renter information.

- During the course of Detective Gonzalez's investigation, he was able to determine the renter subleased the vehicle to a third party. This individual was cooperative and provided the offender's identity.
- Due to the misdemeanor level offense, both parties resolved the matter. The loss was paid in full and both parties amicably settled. Therefore, the business representative signed a non-prosecution form.
- The case was exceptionally cleared.

CGPD Case 22-000952:

Theft from Structure at 7-Eleven (350 Bird Rd)

- Offender stole the victim's cellphone (worth \$500.00) which was left on the countertop during checkout.
- Detective Justin Gonzalez was assigned the case. Video surveillance footage was requested, received, and reviewed.
- The review of the video confirmed the offender placed his hot dog on top of the phone to conceal it and stole it after he paid his bill.
- It was learned the offender frequented the establishment and was suspected of responding to the scene the same day the video was reviewed (day after incident).
- As predicted, the offender showed up during lunch time; therefore, police units were dispatched. The offender was placed under arrest and transported to the station.
- It was noted the offender positively matched the video footage and was wearing the same outfit as in the day prior.
- Detective Gonzalez interviewed the offender post Miranda Rights. The offender confessed to stealing the phone and intended on selling it for profit.
- The case was cleared by arrest.

CGPD Linked Cases 22-0831, 22-0841, 22-0981, 22-1030, 22-1079, & 22-1211

Retail Thefts at Sephora & Nordstrom (Village of Merrick Park)

- Three offenders were linked to numerous retail thefts at Sephora and Nordstrom, where the offenders introduced pepper spray as a weapon to evade capture by loss prevention officers/employees.
- These cases were investigated by Detective Justin Gonzalez, where he worked closely with the stores' loss prevention personnel and local law enforcement agencies to gain intelligence, identify the offenders responsible, and develop an action plan to combat these offenders from continuing their criminal activities.
- Two of three offenders were subsequently arrested during an in-progress retail theft at Sephora. Detective Gonzalez was the lead investigator who conducted an extensive interview and interrogation with each offender.
- Post Miranda Rights, the two offenders confessed to their involvement in these cases and identified and implicated the third offender, which produced PC to Arrest.
- These cases were all cleared by arrest. The third offender is unable to be located; therefore, Detective Gonzalez will be filing for an arrest warrant.

CGPD Case 22-001097:

Theft of Automobile (600 Puerta Ave)

- Offenders scaled the residence's front gate and stole the victim's high end Rolls Royce Dawn with

the key fob inside.

- Detective Justin Gonzalez was assigned the case. Video surveillance footage was requested, received, and reviewed. The video footage was poor quality.
- It was learned the stolen vehicle's FL tag was queried by a Ft. Lauderdale PD officer the night it was stolen. This information provided data to suggest the offenders were from the Broward County area. Therefore, our partners with the BSO Burglary Apprehension Team (BAT) were contacted and advised of the stolen vehicle.
- During the course of Detective Gonzalez's investigation, it was discovered that these offenders were linked to numerous vehicle burglaries throughout Miami-Dade and Broward Counties. A partnership was established which resulted in the offenders being tracked by Davie PD and BSO BAT. Investigative leads developed by Detective Gonzalez were provided to their agencies, which lead to the apprehension of a known target potentially involved in the reported vehicle theft.
- The BSO BAT and their counterparts were able to take two subjects into custody. One subject was suspected of being the offender linked to our case. Therefore, Detective Gonzalez responded to Dania Beach, FL where he conducted his interview and interrogation. The offender was interviewed Post Miranda rights and confessed to his involvement in the vehicle theft. The offender stated the vehicle was sold to an unknown buyer and could not be recovered as a result.
- Detective Gonzalez successfully arrested the offender for the stolen vehicle.
- The case was cleared by arrest.

CGPD Case 22-001223:

Theft from Motor Vehicle/Attempted Vehicle Theft (2151 Lejeune Rd - Parking Garage)

- Offenders made entry in the victim's high-end Jeep Track hawk (worth over \$100,000.00) via a smashed rear side window. Once inside the vehicle, the offenders reprogrammed the vehicle's computer in an attempt to steal the SUV. The offenders were unsuccessful stealing the vehicle for unknown reasons but were able to make off with the victim's wallet (containing credit cards, etc.) and his loaded firearm.
- The offenders then drove to Nordstrom at Aventura Mall, where the victim's credit cards were utilized to make several large purchases.
- Detective Gonzalez was able to piece together the video footage from the incident location and identified the make and model of the subject vehicle.
- Detective Gonzalez was then able to secure video footage from Nordstrom which depicted three offenders (2 males and 1 female) compromising the victim's credit cards. All offenders were attempting to conceal their identity with face coverings.
- Detective Gonzalez was able to utilize various investigative online platforms which provided him with a potential identification of one of the offenders. Detective Gonzalez contacted the MDPD RID officer who arrested this offender just days prior in order to assist with a formal identification. The MDPD officer was able to confirm the offender's identity. Additionally, confirmation of the subject vehicle was made and connected to this offender and the female offender on video at Nordstrom.
- To confirm the subject vehicle used by the offenders once they arrived at Nordstrom, additional video footage from the mall's entry and exit points and parking garage were requested and provided.
- Detective Gonzalez was able to generate leads with the use of facial recognition technology and open-source media, which when corroborated, led to the identification of all the offenders coming to and leaving Nordstrom.
- Detective Gonzalez then partnered with local and federal law enforcement agencies to investigate these offenders aggressively and actively. With the assistance from these agencies, Detective Gonzalez was able to locate the subject vehicle which had been purchased by a third party on Facebook Market

Place. The new vehicle owner was cooperative, while Detective Gonzalez and these other agencies inspected the vehicle for its authenticity. The inspection revealed the vehicle had several unauthorized vin numbers indicative it was a stolen/salvaged vehicle. As a result, the vehicle was seized by the MDPD/Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) Task Force for further investigation.

- Note, the stolen firearm was involved in an "accidental" shooting in Miami Dade, where MDPD detectives made an arrest and recovered the firearm. The subject arrested is currently being investigated to determine his affiliation to this auto theft crew.
- Due to the on-going sensitive nature of this investigation, further information cannot be provided and/or disseminated at this time.

CGPD Case 22-001598:

Theft of Automobile (00-BLK of Santillane Ave)

- Offenders stole the victim's Jeep Gladiator while it was parked at an on-street parking space. The victim confronted the offenders during the commission of the crime, who was able to provide the subject vehicle description (blue Maserati) and its FL tag characters.
- The victim was able to take photographs of the subject vehicle as it fled the scene.
- Detective Justin Gonzalez was assigned the case and immediately conducted records checks of the subject vehicle, known associates to the vehicle's registered owner, ALPR data, etc. ALPR data placed the subject vehicle in the area during the time of the vehicle theft (which corroborated the victim's statements).
- Detective Gonzalez conducted systematic spot checks at the subject vehicle's registered address. He was able to positively identify a suspect involved in the purported vehicle theft.
- On 3/24/22, Detective Gonzalez, along with the Property Crimes Unit, conducted a spot check at the subject vehicle's registered address and a known dumping location close by where stolen vehicles are left to "cool" off. While at this location, Detective Gonzalez recognized a white Dodge Scat Pack that was originally parked next to the subject vehicle at the subject vehicle's registered address. Upon further inspection of the Scat Pack, Detective Gonzalez confirmed it contained a fraudulent windshield vin plate, tag not assigned, and an unassigned decal.
- The MDPD Mid-West Auto Theft Unit (ATU) was immediately contacted and requested to respond to the scene for jurisdictional support. While MDPD ATU was enroute, the subject vehicle (blue Maserati) pulled up to the Scat Pack and dropped off a male associate. The associate left the scene in an unrelated vehicle. Subsequently, the subject vehicle left the scene. Once the MDPD ATU arrived on scene, they initiated surveillance as we backed them up. The subject vehicle then returned moments later. The suspect was observed exiting the subject vehicle and positioning himself on the hood of the Scat Pack. The subject vehicle left the scene with the registered owner (suspect's girlfriend) behind the wheel.
- The suspect was observed entering the Scat Pack; therefore, MDPD and CGPD detectives apprehended the subject and placed him under arrest. Around this time, the subject vehicle returned, and the girlfriend was detained by MDPD. It was confirmed the Scat Pack was recently stolen and revinned.
- The subject and his girlfriend were questioned post Miranda Rights by MDPD. Both subjects gave conflicting statements.
- Consent to search the cellphone on the subject revealed compromising photographs of him stealing our victim's Jeep Gladiator.
- As a result, Detective Gonzalez was able to arrest the subject and charge him accordingly. The MDPD ATU arrested the subjects for grand theft auto charge related to the stolen Scat Pack.
- Currently, Detective Gonzalez is conducting a further investigation into the offender and his known associates related to additional stolen vehicles in Coral Gables and throughout Miami-Dade. He is

working closely with the MDPD ATU.

- The case was cleared by arrest.

As evidenced above, it is irrefutable that Detective Justin Gonzalez's hard work, utilization of technology, enthusiasm, and dedication to the Coral Gables Police Department and the community alike, makes him most deserving of the Detective of the 1st Quarter Award 2022. It is a privilege and honor to supervise Detective Gonzalez, and I am confident he will continue to develop and mature into a highly competent and seasoned investigator. It's police officers/detectives like Justin Gonzalez, who make our agency the finest in the country, and leave an everlasting positive impression on the people we serve and protect.

**ATTACHMENT(S):**  
**Nomination memo**