

CITY OF CORAL GABLES

- MEMORANDUM -

TO: ASSISTANT CHIEF M. MILLER
AWARDS SELECTION COMMITTEE

DATE: October 24, 2016

FROM: LT. CORDELL ATHERLEY I.D. 7000
UNIFORM PATROL DIVISION

SUBJECT: *Silver*
NOMINATION: THE GOLD
MEDAL OF VALOR

I respectfully request to nominate the below listed officers for the distinguished award of "*The Gold Medal of Valor*" based on their actions on the following attempted suicide case: 16-7820.

Officer Kristopher Clute	Officer Alexander Jorva
Sgt. Alejandro Escobar	Officer Nayel Medina
Sgt. Jesus Garcia	Officer Daniel Sotolongo

On Friday October 14, 2016 prior to 1235hours, a 54 year old male sat in his apartment at 505 Palermo Ave and proceeded to slit both his wrist and stab himself several times in the torso with a large 12 inch knife in an attempt to end his life. Leaving behind a pool of blood in his apartment, and being in a crisis state of mind, the male proceeded to walk eastbound on Palermo Ave towards Lejeune Rd.

At approximately 12:35hrs, CGPD communications center received several "9-11" calls reference a male 50 years of age, who was covered in blood and carrying a large knife as he walked in between traffic southbound in the northbound lanes of the 2700 Block of Lejeune Rd. Reports came in that the male had a knife which he was attempting to hit passing cars with.

As the first arriving units, (Officers Clute, Sotolongo and Nayel Medina), positioned their marked police vehicles in the northbound lanes of the 2700 Block of Lejeune Rd., the male holding the bloody knife in his right hand approached Officer Clute who was attempting to exit his police vehicle. At this point, all three officers took a tactical position, pointing their duty handguns at the male and giving him loud verbal commands to "Drop the knife!" The male continued to ignore the officer's commands and continued to close the distance from approximately 20 feet away to less than 10 feet which created an extremely dangerous environment for the officers. However, in the face of great personal danger, Officer Sotolongo communicated with Officer Clute to transition from his duty handgun to a Taser, a less lethal weapon, in an attempt to safely stop the male from harming himself, other innocent bystanders or the officers themselves.

At this time, Sgt. Escobar, Sgt. Jesus Garcia and Officer Jorva arrived on the scene and took a tactical position, aiming their duty handguns at the male with the bloody knife, who was now foaming at the mouth. Officer Clute gave numerous loud verbal commands to the subject to drop the knife he was carrying, but the subject continued to approach Officers Clute, Medina and Sotolongo. All three officers exemplified extreme bravery in the face of great personal danger by remaining calm and in control of the situation.

At this point, Officer Clute deployed his Taser at the male. Unfortunately, only one probe made contact with the male's body and consequently, the Taser had no impacting effect. The male continued to approach the officers while still holding the bloody knife. Instantly, Sergeant Escobar observed the deployment of the Taser as not having an impact on the male and after giving loud verbal commands to the subject to drop the knife, Sgt. Escobar also transitioned to his Taser. Sgt. Escobar then deployed his Taser as the subject got closer. Both probes made contact with the male's chest, causing the male to fall to the ground while still clutching the knife in his hand. Sgt. Escobar had to engage his Taser two more times, due to the fact that the male was still clutching the knife in his hand, refusing to let it go after being ordered to do so. Still refusing to let go of the knife and now facing Officer Jorva, the male was still moving around on the ground. In an attempt to stop the male, Officer Jorva then deployed his Taser into the right side of the male's torso. The male then dropped the knife causing it to fall on the ground. The male was subsequently restrained and immediately administered first aid to by the CGPD officers on scene, followed by CGFD – Paramedics.

As Police Departments and individual officers across the nation are being scrutinized for the management of individuals experiencing crisis situations, the above listed members of the Coral Gables Police Department performed their duties in an exemplary manner. In the face of great personal danger, these officers' approach to the situation was one which was centered on a Critical Decision-Making Model which gave the officers an organized process for thinking through this challenging situation. They made decisions that were effective and safe for the public, the delusional male and themselves. As Major Pedroso's e-mail drafted on 10/20/16 stated: *"...the incredible restraint and judgement displayed by those of you involved in the skilled apprehension of the clearly distraught man with the knife, a man who displayed no regard for even his own safety, walking down the center of a busy street. You should all be very proud of your actions that day, as this could have ended very differently. Your professionalism, compassion, and teamwork are deserving of recognition."*

Therefore, for the heroic acts performed in the line of duty, the outstanding bravery displayed in the protection of life while in the presence of great personal danger, and for going above and beyond the call of duty; as the on-duty Shift Commander during this incident, I gratefully nominate the listed officers for the award: *"The Gold Medal of Valor."*

Reviewed by:



6856
11/01/16

Major Raul Pedroso
UPD Commander

Date

11/01/16

Assistant Chief M. Miller
ASC Chairperson

Cc.
Chief Hudak
Major R. Pedroso
A/Major Lawrence
A/Major Barta
Lt. Werner

CA/ca