

CITY OF CORAL GABLES

- MEMORANDUM -

TO: MAJOR TERRI SILVERIO-MOLINA
ASC CHAIRPERSON

DATE: October 2, 2014

FROM: SGT. DEAN WELLINGHOFF
CID

SUBJECT:
OFFICER OF THE MONTH
NOMINATION FOR SEPT.

Sgt. D. Wellinghoff

I would like to recommend that Detective Brad Baena be awarded Officer of the Month for September 2014 for the reasons outlined below:

- On August 26, 2014 a burglary was committed by unknown offenders at 1209 Venetia Avenue (14006529). Officer Kevin Kelley, who is an extremely proactive officer, had observed and noted two suspicious individuals who had pulled away from the area of the burglarized home in an older Honda Odyssey van. Officer Kelley noted the tag and provided that information to myself as well as SIT officers. A background investigation into the van was initiated and subsequently, Officer Kelly was able to identify Luis Blanco-Osorio as the driver of the van he had observed. As a result of this intelligence, and operating on the suspicion that Blanco-Osorio may be involved in other criminal activity, SIT officers and Detective Baena developed a strategy to target this subject in an attempt to catch him in the commission of criminal activity. Once it was established where the van and the subject were located, Detective Baena began working on developing enough evidence to support the issuance of a court order for a tracking device to be installed on the van. Due to the location of the van being in unincorporated Miami Dade County, ground and air surveillance was established on the van. Detective Baena liaised with MDPD Kendall GIU Detectives and Supervisors and notified them of the situation and requested their assistance. Detective Baena was successful in obtaining a court order for the installation of a tracker on the van and assisted in the surveillance detail. While under surveillance, Blanco-Osorio and another subject, Andy Hernandez-Barthelemy, were observed driving in the van and burglarizing lawn trailers in the Falls area. Subsequently, Detective Baena was instrumental in assisting MDPD with the preparation of a search warrant of the subject's residence and, as a result, several pieces of stolen lawn equipment were recovered from the subject's home. It was also discovered that Blanco-Osorio had property on his person that was taken in an armed home invasion robbery. Both Blanco-Osorio and Hernandez-Barthelemy were arrested and due to his excellent interrogation skills, Baena was able to get Blanco-Osorio to admit his involvement in the burglaries of the lawn trailers and thefts of lawn equipment. To date, it is unknown how many criminal cases around Miami Dade County will be cleared as a result of this case. However, the number is climbing and the investigation is continuing.
- On 09/12/2014 a burglary was committed in the DevonAire neighborhood in unincorporated Miami Dade County. In that burglary, a safe containing approximately \$15,000 in cash and several thousands of dollars in jewelry was taken. Detective Klurman (MDPD Kendall GIU) contacted Detective Baena and advised him of the burglary and informed Baena that a Toyota Corolla was used in the burglary. Detective Baena advised Klurman that he was aware of a burglar who was recently arrested by Pinecrest PD in a newer model Toyota Corolla which was

rented from a company near the Miami International Airport. A Toyota Corolla had also been involved in a Coral Gables burglary just days prior. Detective Baena believed that the MDPD case could possibly be related to the CGPD case and began attempts to contact the rental company for information. The rental company was not timely in its response to Baena's request. Therefore, Baena sought authorization from me to respond to the rental agency in an effort to get timely information on the possible suspect vehicle. I authorized Baena to respond for the purposes of assisting MDPD and he was able to obtain real time information on the suspect vehicle and relay that information to MDPD units. As a result, three subjects were taken into custody after they were observed loading a safe into the trunk of the Toyota Corolla. A search of the subject's home revealed several pillow cases full of jewelry, a stolen handgun, the cash that was stolen from the safe, and several other items which most likely came from burglaries committed throughout Miami Dade County. To date, seven burglaries in Miami Dade County have been cleared on these subjects. Detective Baena worked with MDPD on the scene and later responded to MDPD Kendall District Station in order to photograph the property that was recovered in order that CGPD Detectives could meet with victims to see if the recovered jewelry could be identified.

- On 09/22/2014 Detective Baena, along with other officers, responded to a Burglary in Progress at 405 Vittorio Avenue. Detective Baena and Sgt. Merino met with the victims at 405 Vittorio Avenue and requested that they be shown surveillance footage of the incident. After viewing the surveillance footage, Detective Baena immediately recognized the female offender as Melissa Jackson based on a BOLO he had received from Miami PD back on July 23, 2014. Subsequently, it was learned that Officer Cabrera had conducted a Field Contact on a female in the area shortly before this burglary was reported. Contact was made with Officer Cabrera and he confirmed that the female he spoke to was Melissa Jackson. Detective Baena was able to locate Ms. Jackson and set up surveillance on her. While under surveillance, Ms. Jackson was observed approaching homes in the area and knocking on doors. Jackson was eventually arrested and charged with Burglary. Due to the close proximity to Lejeune Road and the possibility that there could be additional victims in the city of Miami, Detective Baena took the initiative to contact Miami PD Commander Alberto and brief him on the case. Commander Alberto advised Detective Baena the Jackson matched the description of an occupied burglary that had occurred in their jurisdiction. Detective Baena organized a show-up with Miami PD and their victim and a positive identification was made of Jackson as the perpetrator. Miami PD was, therefore, able to charge Jackson with Burglary to and Occupied Residence. Detective Baena interrogated Jackson at the Coral Gables Police Department and, after a lengthy interrogation, was able to obtain a full confession from her. Detective Baena was also able to obtain a full confession from her as to her involvement in the burglary that was committed in the city of Miami.
- On June 15, 2013, Detective Baena was assigned a Residential Burglary in which over \$250,000 in property was taken. Detective Baena immediately began working the case and obtained video surveillance of the incident. Having no investigative leads other than the video, he requested that a press release be issued. A press release was issued and local media outlets covered the case. As a result, a tip was received that identified Felix Rivera as the offender. Detective Baena conducted a detailed investigation into Mr. Rivera and found that he had been involved in similar incidents as far away as Naples, Florida. Rivera was subsequently arrested for this burglary and, due to Detective Baena's case management skills and thorough investigation, Rivera was tried and convicted of this burglary in September of this year. As a result, Rivera faces four years in prison. This was due, in large part, to Detective Baena's tenacity in seeing this case through.

- On August 26, 2014 Detective Baena was assigned a case reference a shoplifting that occurred at the CVS store located at 1160 South Dixie Hwy. Detective Baena was persistent in having the manager of the store provide video surveillance of the incident. After several attempts, he finally was provided with the footage and he immediately disseminated a BOLO to officers in CGPD as well as to his counterparts at Miami PD. Detective Baena was able to identify the offender as Joanne Sams, a serial shoplifter with several arrests. He was able to coordinate with Miami PD PST Officers and was able to take Sams into custody on September 26, 2014. Without his determination in obtaining video surveillance and then disseminating a BOLO to those he believed could assist in this investigation, this case would not have had the same outcome.
- In mid-September, Detective Baena was contacted by an informant who provided information regarding a burglary that occurred on 08/10/2014 at 4001 Monserrate Street, which was a house under construction. In that burglary, several thousands of dollars of recently purchased fixtures (i.e. lights, toilets, etc.) were stolen. The informant provided the identity of the offender and advised that the stolen items had been sold to a pawn shop in Miami Dade County. Detective Baena searched pawn shop databases and located the stolen items. He then forwarded the information to Detective Cachinero and assisted Detective Cachinero in the subsequent investigation. On September 30, 2014, the offender was located and taken into custody without incident by Detectives Baena and Cachinero. Detective Baena utilized his excellent interrogation skills and succeeded in obtaining a full confession from the offender as to his involvement in this burglary.
- On September 22, 2014, a report was generated regarding a theft from a law office located at 3211 Ponce De Leon in which an offender entered the office and stole almost \$4,000 in cash. Upon the assignment of the case, Detective Baena immediately requested video from the victim and began a thorough investigation. He requested that a press release be issued in an attempt to identify the offender and he provided the necessary information and video to PIO Denham. A press release was issued and within hours, the offender was identified as Steve Austin (06/03/1974). As part of his investigation, Detective Baena was able to identify another office in the same building that was victimized by this offender. Austin is possibly involved in several other burglaries and thefts and the investigation is continuing. In fact, at the time of this writing, Austin was just placed into custody by Detective Baena after he was able to obtain intelligence as to a possible location where Austin was located. He will be charged in at least three separate cases.
- Also, during the month of September, Detective Baena assisted on the Burglary Task Force and assisted in several surveillances and investigations. He also conducted interrogations for those arrested during the Task Force and was instrumental in making the Task Force a success. During that time, Detective Baena also continued working on Operation Broken Fence, an Organized Retail Theft Crime investigation which Detective Baena initiated in June of this year. As a part of this investigation in the month of September, Detective Baena coordinated with GIU Detectives from MDPD Hammocks District, Special Agents from US Department of Homeland Security, CGPD SIT Officers and CGPD Detectives and was able to conduct controlled sales of "stolen" merchandise which will allow for successful prosecution of a RICO case. It should be noted that this case was initiated by Detective Baena after he was able to develop an informant who was involved in retail theft crimes. Detective Baena put together a team of local and federal law enforcement and it appears that a criminal enterprise involved in high value retail theft crime will be closed down as a result.

As evidenced above, Detective Baena was instrumental in clearing several cases during the month of September and he is deserving of the Officer of the Month award. It should be noted, also, that Detective Baena has this same work ethic month after month after month. He is a very competent investigator who goes above and beyond with virtually every case he is assigned. He could easily be nominated for an employee excellence award every month based on his hard work and dedication to duty. Due to his networking and his diligence in establishing a great rapport with detectives from other agencies, he is able to close several cases in a timely and efficient manner and is to be commended for his hard work and commitment to serving this City with the highest level of integrity and professionalism.

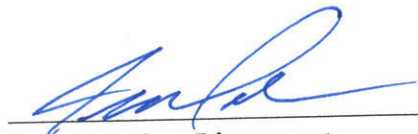
I would also like to recognize the entire Strategic Initiatives Team which played a vital role in many of these cases and would like to nominate each member of the Strategic Initiatives Team for the employee excellence award due to their proactive policing efforts. They can consistently be counted on to conduct surveillance of suspects and to assist in the apprehension of wanted offenders and are always willing

In addition, Officer Kevin Kelley should be recognized as well for his keen observation skills and proactive police work which led to the identification of the Honda Odyssey van being used in many burglaries in Miami Dade County. Officer Kelley is another one of those officers who consistently produces a great work product. He is a proactive officer who serves the citizens of this City well. Based on his efforts in the case involving the Honda Odyssey van and the effort he put in, I believe he, too, is deserving of the employee excellence award.

Officer of the month
nomination | Sept 2014
Det Baena / memo dated
Oct 2, 2014 from Sgt
Wellinghoff-

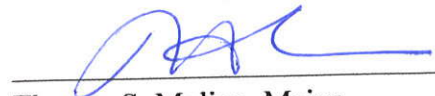
Reviewed by

Date



Jesse Medina, Lieutenant
Criminal Investigations Section

10-6-14



Theresa S. Molina, Major
Awards Selection Committee Chairperson

10/6/14