

CITY OF CORAL GABLES

- MEMORANDUM -

TO: ASSISTANT CHIEF M. MILLER
AWARDS SELECTION COMMITTEE

DATE: September 17, 2016

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

SUBJECT:
NOMINATION: OFFICER OF
THE MONTH & THE GOLD
MEDAL OF VALOR

CA

I respectfully request to nominate both Sgt. Erasmo Lopez and Officer Luis Lopez for the distinguish awards of "*Officer of the Month & The Gold Medal of Valor*" based on their actions on the following two cases: 16-006865 and 16-006868.

On Monday September 12, 2016 at approximately 15:56hrs, the homeowner of 1226 Capri St. arrived at his residence and noticed an unknown beige Nissan Maxima parked in his driveway. The homeowner proceeded to check the exterior of his residence with a rake in hand, when he noticed the rear northwest door and window smashed. The homeowner then walked to the front of his residence and proceeded to call 911. As the homeowner was reporting the incident to the Coral Gables Police Department's dispatch center, the subject exited through the front door and confronted the homeowner. The subject was holding a pistol in his right hand and a machete in his left hand. At this point, the subject demanded the homeowner to move his vehicle from the driveway and struck him with the butt of the machete in the head, knocking the homeowner to the ground. The subject then took the cell phone away from the homeowner, as the homeowner laid on the ground. Upon experiencing the aggressiveness of the subject, and being in fear for his life, the homeowner/victim immediately got into his vehicle and reversed out of the driveway.

The Coral Gables Police dispatcher was able to gather enough information to dispatch units to a 2-26, a residential burglary in progress, where a cell phone was taken away from the victim and consequently the victim was not able to provide additional information at the time. Shortly after the call was received, Officer Luis C. Lopez and Sgt. Erasmo Lopez arrived simultaneously. (Note: both officers were not dispatched to this call; however, they went beyond the call of duty and responded) Upon Sgt. Lopez's arrival, he observed a Nissan Maxima parked on the far end of the driveway with a male subject rushing into the driver's side. As both officers approached the Nissan Maxima, the subject exited the vehicle rapidly. The subject proceeded to run westbound through the yard as Sgt. Lopez and Ofc. Lopez gave pursuit. The subject jumped over a rock wall and continued to run southbound through the neighbor's yard. The subject then crossed Venetia Avenue into the curtilage of the corner house running through the hedges into

the following curtilage; then the subject changed direction, heading eastbound going over a fence into 1310 Capri Street.

After observing the subject's direction of travel, Sgt. Lopez immediately started giving perimeter points along the 13, 14, and 1500 blocks of Capri Street. As Sgt. Lopez and Officer Lopez continued chasing after the subject, Ofc. Lopez heard the subject struggling with the homeowner at 1310 Capri St. and could hear the homeowner gurgling and attempting to scream for help. As Officer Lopez jumped over the fence, he observed the subject holding the homeowner in a choke hold, and attempting to force him back into the house. Officer Lopez gave loud verbal commands to the subject to get on the ground and to let go of the victim. The subject then pushed the homeowner to the side and ran into the house through the rear glass patio door in an attempt to barricade himself.

Once inside the house at 1310 Capri St, the subject grabbed the victim's wife's purse and started running through the house towards the front door. However, the front door suddenly opened as the wife returned home and was about to walk into the house. Startled by the wife's presence, the subject threw the purse down and ran into the adjacent bedroom and locked himself inside. Due to the escalation of events, Officer Lopez who was in fresh pursuit of the subject, forced the bedroom door open. Officer Lopez discovered the subject had opened a bedroom window and was ready to jump out of it. Officer Lopez gave loud verbal commands to get down on the ground and to show his hands. The subject dove out the open window as Officer Lopez caught his legs. The subject then attempted to kick Officer Lopez, at which point, Officer Lopez once again gave loud verbal commands to stop resisting and to put his hands behind his back. The subject disregarded Officer Lopez's commands and continued to attempt to escape through the window.


At this point, Officer Peter Hernandez ran into the bedroom and assisted in holding the subject's legs. Officer Lopez then pulled out his taser and tased the subject multiple times in the torso as the subject failed to comply. Continuing with their professional police response, Officer Lopez advised Officer Hernandez to get the exact location from the victim and broadcast the location via the police radio. Sgt. Lopez, who had taken a tactical position at the southeast exterior corner of 1310 Capri St., observed the subject half way through the bedroom window. Sgt. Lopez immediately pulled the subject out of the window and re-directed the subject to the ground, where the subject was handcuffed without any further incident.

On this volatile September 12th afternoon, two of our residents were exposed to violence within the sanctity of their homes. Thankfully, the outstanding bravery of both officers resulted in the protection of life and property, the prevention of further criminal acts against the populous, and the successful apprehension of the armed subject. Both officers performed their duties in the presence of extreme personal danger and their actions were nothing short of being heroic. In closing, it is with the utmost respect and gratitude that I nominate and recommend both Sgt.

Erasmo Lopez and Officer Luis Lopez for the distinguished awards of "*Officer of the Month & The Gold Medal of Valor.*"

Reviewed by:

Date



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9-19-2016

Major Raul Pedroso
UPD Commander



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9/20/16

Assistant Chief M. Miller
ASC Chairperson

Cc.
Chief Hudak
A/Major Lawrence
Lt. Barnet
Sgt. Aleman
Sgt. E. Lopez
Ofc. L. Lopez

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