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Congratulations to Officer Alejandro Pino-Perez, recipient of the City of Coral Gables "Officer of the Month Award," for August 2023.

On Sunday, August 6, 2023, at approximately 0950 hours, Coral Gables Marine Patrol (CGPD) received a request for assistance from the US Coast Guard and other marine patrol units in pursuit of a stolen vessel in Biscayne Bay heading toward Coral Gables. A suspect encountered a docked tow boat at Brickell Key. The boat had the keys in it and the suspect believed God told him to take the boat. The suspect started the boat and fled south toward Biscayne Bay. Marine Patrol officers from the City of Miami Police Department began following the vessel and tried to stop it. The suspect drove full speed trying to evade them. Responding to the call for assistance, the Coral Gables Marine Patrol Officers headed out of the Coral Gables Waterway and observed a MDPD helicopter orbiting in the bay near Stiltsville. As the officers arrived in the area, they saw the suspect continue to try to evade other police boats from multiple jurisdictions. The offender purposefully turned toward police boats several times. Realizing that the suspect needed to be stopped for everyone's safety, the Marine Patrol Officers quickly came up with a plan. Officer Alex Toledo drove his boat on one side of the stolen boat while a Miami Dade boat drove next to the suspect on the other side. Once the suspect was unable to turn either way, he just kept going forward at high speed. Officer Alejandro Pino-Perez saw that the emergency stop switch lanyard was hanging from the dashboard of the stolen boat. All three boats were driving at a high rate of speed and bouncing up and down with the waves. Despite all the motion, Officer Pino Perez was able to reach across to the stolen boat with a boat hook and was able to pull the lanyard which stopped the engines. This immediately caused the boat to come to a stop and allowed other officers to board the stolen boat and take the suspect into custody. Due to the actions of Officer Pino-Perez, the stolen vessel was quickly returned to the owner without damage and more importantly nobody, including the suspect, was injured.