



Legislation Text

File #: 23-5257, Version: 1

Congratulations to Officer James Coleman, recipient of the City of Coral Gables “Officer of the Month Award,” for the month of December 2022.

On December 7, 2022, at approximately 1:43 PM, Officer James Coleman (ID# 8420) was dispatched as the primary unit to investigate a residential burglar alarm in his assigned zone (Ref. Case No. 22-007782). The alarm was called into CGPD Communications by a private residential alarm monitoring service.

Officer Coleman arrived on the scene within approximately 2 minutes of being dispatched to the alarm call. Officer Coleman noticed that the front door of the residence was secure, so he moved around to the West side of the residence where he encountered a closed gate leading into the rearward. Officer Coleman looked through a small opening in the gate and saw a suspicious male (Suspect 1) wearing a pink hoodie sweatshirt, gloves, and a full-face mask. The suspect appeared to be acting as a lookout, crouching down in the Northwest corner of the residence with his back to Officer Coleman. Being very careful to not be detected by the suspect, Officer Coleman advised dispatch and all on-duty units about his observations by talking quietly on his portable radio.

He also requested all available patrol units to immediately respond to his location. Before backup patrol units could arrive on scene, the suspect turned around and became aware of Officer Coleman's presence. Officer Coleman opened the gate and began shouting loud verbal commands at Suspect 1 to show his hands. Suspect I responded by turning away from Officer Coleman, jumping over a fence and fleeing in a northwest direction.

Officer Coleman advised responding units that Suspect I had fled from him and instinctively began calling out perimeter points for the responding units. Officer Coleman also provided an updated BOLO description of Suspect 1. Shortly thereafter, Officer Justin Gonzalez advised that he saw a suspicious male, matching the BOLO, walking along the 1100-Block of Sorolla Avenue. Officer Gonzalez stopped and detained Suspect I without incident and Miranda was read. Suspect I subsequently waived his right to remain silent and admitted to committing a burglary and fleeing from Officer Coleman. Suspect I also advised detectives that he wasn't acting alone, and there was another suspect hiding inside of the residence.

Officer Coleman's experience and training told him there may be additional suspects so he continued monitoring the residence until backup units could arrive and establish a close perimeter. Officer Alexander Engmann was one of the first backup units to arrive at the scene and begin checking the exterior of the residence for any sign of forced entry/burglary. Officer Engmann was walking toward the East side of the residence when he noticed a second male suspect (Suspect 2) climbing over a fence in the rear yard. Officer Engmann gave loud verbal commands to stop fleeing and was able to stop and detain Suspect 2 without further incident. Suspect 2 was subsequently read Miranda and waived his right to remain silent. Suspect 2 admitted to committing a burglary along with Suspect 1.

During a canvass of the surrounding area, Suspect I's vehicle was located. It was parked on the grassy swale, directly across the street from the residence which they had just burglarized.

While officers conducted an inventory of the vehicle prior to towing it, various property items were discovered inside the vehicle. Further investigation revealed the property belonged to two additional burglary victims who live in the City of Miami and Miami-Dade County jurisdictions.

Suspect 1 and Suspect 2 were arrested and charged with committing a residential burglary, and additionally charged for 2 more burglaries in the City of Miami, and Miami-Dade County, by each respective law enforcement agency.

I believe that the quickly established perimeter which led to the successful apprehension of both burglary suspects, is directly attributed to Officer James Coleman's diligent patrolling of his assigned zone, and fast response. Officer Coleman's strong work ethic, loyalty, commitment, and dedication should be commended. Officer Coleman takes great pride in deterring crime, protecting, and serving the residents in his assigned zone. Officer Coleman always goes out of his way to make his presence known and felt by the residents who live there.

For all the aforementioned reasons, I am very excited and honored to nominate Officer James Coleman for the prestigious Coral Gables Police Department Officer of The Month Award.