



Legislation Text

File #: 19-8729, Version: 1

Congratulations to Officer Oscar Valdivia, recipient of the City of Coral Gables “Officer of the Month Award,” for the month of April 2019.

On April 24, 2019, units were dispatched to an emergency vehicle accident which turned into a hit and run. A vehicle had crashed into a residence and subsequently fled the scene. Prior to fleeing the scene, three subjects jumped out of the vehicle were seen running into the victim's backyard. The vehicle fled with an unknown number of subjects still inside. The vehicle was abandoned shortly thereafter on Donatello St just east of the residence. An extensive search of area for the subjects was conducted with negative results. During the search, we discovered one of the subjects had lost a shoe.

At the time of the incident, it was not known the vehicle was stolen out of the City of Miami. Investigation later revealed the victim's employee was driving the vehicle when it was stolen from Shenandoah Middle School. The victim was unable to report it stolen due to the fact she was out of town. The vehicle was taken with the keys inside.

At 0453 hours, Sergeant Valdivia observed two subjects walking eastbound at the 4600 block of Ponce De Leon Blvd under the Metro-rail. He also noticed one of the subjects was not wearing any shoes and walking with only socks. A consensual encounter was conducted and after reading both subjects their Miranda warnings, they were unable to dispel his alarm. Sergeant Valdivia was persistent in linking these two juvenile subjects to the earlier hit and run and now stolen vehicle and proceeded to canvass the area for evidence. While conducting his search, he discovered a fanny pack about 100 feet away with one of the subject's Florida Driver License and a key which matched the vehicle involved in the hit and run.

He instructed Officer Chris Hernandez to respond to Downtown Towing to confirm whether or not the key would unlock the car. Officer C. Hernandez contacted Sergeant Valdivia and advised the keys in fact unlocked and started the vehicle. This evidence now reaffirmed what Sergeant Valdivia believed. Detectives were called to the station to interview the subjects. They were both charged with Loitering and Prowling. Future charges of Grand Theft Auto are pending.

Sergeant Valdivia continues to lead his officers from the front, always setting high standards. His keen observation and persistence proved effective during this investigation. His experience and knowledge resulted in the apprehension of two known juvenile offenders. The arrest of these two juvenile offenders prevented other Coral Gables residents from being targeted and becoming victims that night. Sergeant Valdivia is deserving of the "Officer of the Month" award.