



Officer of the Month
for
April 2016
Officer Aaron Allen



In March of 2016 Officers Frank Taranto and Aaron Allen responded to a vehicle burglary call and quickly learned there were multiple victims. They conducted numerous interviews, processed the crime scenes and documented their findings. Fortunately, while they were on-scene and working the case, a victim came forward and informed them someone was attempting to use a credit card stolen from her vehicle. They quickly responded to the store but the suspect was already gone; however, the officers were able to secure video footage, obtain a photograph of the suspect, and identify the suspect from photographs currently in the department's Records Management System. An arrest warrant was secured and the suspect subsequently arrested. An additional suspect was then identified and arrested as well. The thorough and diligent efforts of Officers Taranto and Allen resulted in the arrest of multiple vehicle burglary suspects and the recovery of several pieces of stolen property. Their efforts speak to their professionalism and dedication to duty; therefore, they are both being recognized as the Officer of the Month for April 2016.



2016 Civilian of the Second Quarter Courtney Beesley



On 08 June 2016, Dispatchers Jennifer Holland and Courtney Beesley were dispatching officers, coordinating activity and maintaining information on two police radio channels, Primary and Traffic. As is often the case, radio traffic was extremely heavy and multiple high priority calls for service were coming in. On this evening in particular, Deputies from HCSO attempting to serve a lunacy writ requested assistance from Biloxi PD when the subject pulled a knife and threatened himself and others. Simultaneously, officers were dispatched to a domestic disturbance and burglary in progress call in separate parts of town, and both radio channels were placed under "Limited Emergency Communication Traffic Only" for the sake of officers on scene. Assisting officers responding to these calls were on different channels, causing confusion for the dispatchers and officers already on-scene. Dispatcher Holland quickly identified the problem, re-directed the officers to appropriate radio channels and restored order to multiple chaotic scenes; thereby, ensuring officer safety and an accurate accounting of on-going activity. Her calm demeanor, quick thinking, and professionalism were readily evident as these events unfolded, and her actions bring great credit upon her and the Biloxi Police Department's Communications Center. Therefore, she is being recognized as the Civilian of the Second Quarter for 2016.



CERTIFICATE
of
COMMENDATION
Officer Todre Clopton



On 03 June 2016, a robbery occurred in East Biloxi where the suspects brandished weapons, stole money from the victim and drove away from the area. Responding officers quickly developed and disseminated descriptions of the suspects and their vehicle. Officer Clopton, who was working on the opposite side of town, quickly began monitoring possible routes the suspects might use to leave the city and located a vehicle matching the suspect description. He attempted to conduct a traffic stop to investigate further but the driver immediately accelerated and led officers on a high speed chase into Gulfport, where he wrecked and attempted to run from the scene; however, Officer Clopton was able to apprehend him within moments of the crash. Officer Clopton's diligence to duty and quick actions resulted in the arrest of three armed robbery suspects and recovery of the victim's property. His actions bring great credit upon himself and the Biloxi Police Department; therefore, he is being recognized with this Certificate of Commendation.



CERTIFICATE
of
COMMENDATION



Officer Spurgeon Crosby

On 03 June 2016, a robbery occurred in East Biloxi where the suspects brandished weapons, stole money from the victim and drove away from the area. Responding officers quickly developed and disseminated descriptions of the suspects and their vehicle. Officer Crosby, who was working on the opposite side of town, began monitoring possible routes the suspects might use to leave the city when Officer Clopton advised he located a vehicle matching the suspect description. A high speed pursuit quickly ensued and Officer Crosby responded to assist. After the suspect vehicle crashed in Gulfport, Officer Crosby moved in to apprehend one the fleeing suspects, knowing they were armed. Three suspects were subsequently arrested and the victim's property was recovered. Officer Crosby's actions bring great credit upon himself and the Biloxi Police Department; therefore, he is being is recognized with this Certificate of Commendation.



CERTIFICATE
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COMMENDATION



Sergeant Keith Garner

On 03 June 2016, a robbery occurred in East Biloxi where the suspects brandished weapons, stole money from the victim and drove away from the area. Responding officers quickly developed and disseminated descriptions of the suspects and their vehicle, and Sgt. Garner immediately began coordinating available resources and directing personnel to locations where the suspects may flee. Officers soon located the suspect vehicle and a pursuit ensued. Sgt. Garner continued to monitor and supervise the event, direct resources and moved to a location where he could assist if needed. The suspect vehicle crashed in Gulfport and Sgt. Garner was on-scene to assist in the apprehension of all three armed suspects, ensure the safety of his personnel and preserve the crime scene for additional evidence collection.

Sgt. Garner also distinguished himself during this quarter by making numerous misdemeanor and felony drug arrests, and providing shift personnel under his command with in-service training on various law enforcement topics. Sergeant Garner is an accomplished and reliable supervisor who regularly demonstrates the attributes of a solid leader; therefore, he is being recognized with this Certificate of Commendation.



CERTIFICATE
of
COMMENDATION
to
Charlie Hebert



On 23 April 2016, Inv. Richard Hilliard, along with his wife and two children were boating near Deer Island. The family was headed for land after spending the day on the water when the engine stopped working and the boat began taking on water. Within minutes, the boat began sinking and eventually capsized, forcing the family to enter the water. Richard and his son were able to remain buoyant on the boat's hull, but his wife and five year old daughter got caught up in the water's current and pulled away from the capsized vessel. Richard re-entered the water, grabbed his daughter and attempted to swim back to the hull, but the currents thwarted his efforts. Fortunately, Biloxi Fireman Charlie Hebert was boating nearby and responded to their location to rescue the family. Firefighter Hebert quickly retrieved each of the four family members from the water, ensuring their safety and returned them to land. His quick actions are credited with saving the life of Investigator Hilliard and his entire family, for which they, and we, are eternally thankful. The Biloxi Police Department proudly recognizes the heroic and life saving efforts of Firefighter Hebert, and presents him with the Biloxi Police Department Chief's Award.



2016 Civilian of the Second Quarter Jennifer Holland



On 08 June 2016, Dispatchers Jennifer Holland and Courtney Beesley were dispatching officers, coordinating activity and maintaining information on two police radio channels, Primary and Traffic. As is often the case, radio traffic was extremely heavy and multiple high priority calls for service were coming in. On this evening in particular, Deputies from HCSO attempting to serve a lunacy writ requested assistance from Biloxi PD when the subject pulled a knife and threatened himself and others. Simultaneously, officers were dispatched to a domestic disturbance and burglary in progress call in separate parts of town, and both radio channels were placed under "Limited Emergency Communication Traffic Only" for the sake of officers on scene. Assisting officers responding to these calls were on different channels, causing confusion for the dispatchers and officers already on-scene. Dispatcher Holland quickly identified the problem, re-directed the officers to appropriate radio channels and restored order to multiple chaotic scenes; thereby, ensuring officer safety and an accurate accounting of on-going activity. Her calm demeanor, quick thinking, and professionalism were readily evident as these events unfolded, and her actions bring great credit upon her and the Biloxi Police Department's Communications Center. Therefore, she is being recognized as the Civilian of the Second Quarter for 2016.



Officer of the Month

for

June 2016

Officer Steven Kinsey



On 01 June 2016, Officer Steven Kinsey was patrolling his assigned areas in east Biloxi when he noted an unusual amount of foot traffic coming from a particular house. He monitored the situation for a while and began interviewing people exiting the residence, which furthered his suspicions that criminal activity was afoot. He eventually approached the residence, made contact with the residents and noted the presence of a controlled substance in plain view. He immediately called for back-up assistance and maintained control of all the occupants until help arrived. His subsequent investigative activity resulted in the recovery of 21 grams of cocaine, a pistol and proceeds from drug sales. As a direct result of his efforts, three suspects were arrested, all of whom were convicted felons, and one, which had just been released from prison the day before. Then, on 03 June 2016, a robbery occurred in east Biloxi at which time the suspects brandished weapons, stole money from the victim and fled the area. Responding officers quickly developed and disseminated descriptions of the suspects and their vehicle. Officer Kinsey, who was working on the opposite side of town, began monitoring possible routes the suspects might use to leave the city when Officer Clopton advised he located a vehicle matching the suspect description. A high-speed pursuit quickly ensued and Officer Kinsey responded to assist. After the suspect vehicle crashed in Gulfport, Officer Kinsey moved in to apprehend the fleeing suspects, knowing they were armed. Three suspects were subsequently arrested and the victim's property was recovered.

Officer Kinsey is a recent graduate of the Field Officer Training Program and has less than one year of experience in the field, making his actions all the more impressive. His efforts are a direct reflection of his desire to improve our community and commitment to service before self. Therefore, he is being recognized as the Officer of the Month for June 2016.



2016 Officer of the Second Quarter Officer Steven Kinsey



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Officer of the Month

for

May 2016

Officer Kit Manning



On May 25, Officer Kit Manning was conducting routine patrol duties in west Biloxi when he observed a person moving equipment between two vehicles; however, the license tag on one vehicle was obscured with a towel. He approached the scene and began asking questions about his observations and was given conflicting information about the man's actions. After calling in the vehicle's tag and attempting to gather identification from the vehicle's owner, the man ran from the scene and refused to stop. Officer Manning immediately gave chase, established a perimeter and called for assistance from surrounding units. The suspect was caught shortly thereafter. It didn't take long to learn the vehicle was stolen and the suspect was in the process of stealing the equipment he was moving between vehicles. Further investigative activity disclosed the suspect was a Fugitive From Justice from another agency and wanted on multiple charges.

On May 30, Officer Manning responded to Summer Chase Apartments for a reported building fire. He immediately noted flames coming from under the building's roof on his arrival and entered the building to begin evacuation procedures. Officer Manning's quick and decisive actions ensured the safety of all residents and allowed the Fire Department to extinguish the blaze without incident. His actions in both of these incidents are truly noteworthy and bring great credit upon him and the Biloxi Police Department; therefore, he's being recognized as the Officer of the Month for May 2016.



CERTIFICATE
of
COMMENDATION



Investigator Michael Melasecca

In early April 2016, the Biloxi Police Department devised an initiative to address the homelessness issue as Director Miller had received numerous complaints in and around the downtown area from local businesses and visitors. A select group of officers trained in Police Bicycle tactics was put in place for the detail; however, the department's bicycles had fallen into disrepair and needed maintenance. Investigator Melasecca, one of the select Bicycle Officers, immediately took it upon himself to make the necessary bicycle repairs and within one week had the fleet of nine bicycles functional and safe for deployment.

On 26 April, 2016, Investigator Melasecca and Officer Aaron Allen were chosen to represent the new Bicycle Team at a City Council meeting as the Director announced the initiative to the Council and media. The team has made a significant impact on previous concerns identified by our local businesses and the City's administration; however, this could not have been accomplished without Investigator Melasecca's direct intervention and action to prepare the fleet for service. His actions bring great credit upon himself and the Biloxi Police Department; therefore, he's being recognized with this Certificate of Commendation.



Supervisor of the 2016 Second Quarter Sergeant Eugene Palmer



On 09 June 2016, the United States Marshal Service requested Biloxi Police Department's assistance in locating the vehicle of an armed and dangerous suspect believed to be in Biloxi and wanted for an Aggravated Assault involving a firearm. Sergeant Palmer took the information and immediately directed patrol units in a coordinated search effort, resulting in his team locating the vehicle and allowing the Marshall Service to set up a surveillance post. The suspect was located shortly thereafter and Sergeant Palmer took the initiative to coordinate the suspect's arrest, which occurred without incident. Sergeant Palmer's actions during this event were instrumental in the location, identification and flawless arrest of a dangerous suspect, and drew praise from the lead US Marshall Service Agent on-scene. He brings great credit upon himself and the Biloxi Police Department and is therefore being recognized as our Supervisor of the 2016 Second Quarter.



Citation To Accompany The Distinguished Service Medal



On 13 April 2016, officers with the Ocean Springs Police Department made contact with a distraught female threatening to jump off the Biloxi/Ocean Springs Bridge and requested assistance from Biloxi PD. When Biloxi officers arrived on-scene the female was standing on the outside ledge of the bridge, about 70 feet above the water, threatening to commit suicide. After a short discussion with police, she let go of the railing in preparation to jump, but an Ocean Springs officer reached through the protective metal railing and grabbed her ankles. This action prevented her from falling, but left her dangling upside down. Without regard for his own safety, Investigator Nick Sonnier bent over the top rail and attempted to grab her arms; however, they were out of reach and the Ocean Springs officer was losing his grip. Inv. Sonnier realized the impending danger and used his belt as a rope, giving the female something to hold, which she did. He then pulled her high enough to grab a hand and pull her to safety. Inv. Sonnier's quick thinking and decisive actions saved the woman's life and allowed her to get the help she needed. Therefore, it is with great pride, the Biloxi Police Department awards Investigator Nick Sonnier the Distinguished Service Medal for heroism in the face of life threatening situation.



Officer of the Month
for
April 2016
Officer Frank Taranto



In March of 2016 Officers Frank Taranto and Aaron Allen responded to a vehicle burglary call and quickly learned there were multiple victims. They conducted numerous interviews, processed the crime scenes and documented their findings. Fortunately, while they were on-scene and working the case, a victim came forward and informed them someone was attempting to use a credit card stolen from her vehicle. They quickly responded to the store but the suspect was already gone; however, the officers were able to secure video footage, obtain a photograph of the suspect, and identify the suspect from photographs currently in the department's Records Management System. An arrest warrant was secured and the suspect subsequently arrested. An additional suspect was then identified and arrested as well. The thorough and diligent efforts of Officers Taranto and Allen resulted in the arrest of multiple vehicle burglary suspects and the recovery of several pieces of stolen property. Their efforts speak to their professionalism and dedication to duty; therefore, they are each being recognized as Officer of the Month for April 2016.