The University of North Carolina

Campus Law Enforcement

2022

Police Officer of the Year

AWARD WINNERS

APPENDIX C

UNC System Police Officer of the Year Guidelines

Purpose:

To provide recognition of a UNC Campus Police Officer(s) having demonstrated exceptional valor or service to constituents of the University of North Carolina by exhibiting the highest traditions of law enforcement.

Eligibility:

A. Act(s) of Exceptional Valor

   Definition: An act of exceptional valor shall mean that a police officer has, by a conspicuous act or acts, clearly distinguished him/herself by bravery, heroism, or outstanding courage and has placed the safety and welfare of others above all other considerations.

B. Outstanding, Exceptional Service

   Definition: Completion of a task or assignment that went beyond the normal call of duty, which served to enhance public safety, encourage community involvement, and/or demonstrated an effective outcome in crime prevention, community-oriented policing, or other projects.

Criteria of Eligibility:

A nominee must be a sworn law enforcement officer employed at one of the UNC Campus Police Departments, including the NC Arboretum, who has performed an act of valor or exceptional service during the calendar year. A posthumous award may be made in the name of a law enforcement officer to the surviving spouse, child, or parent of the officer.

An officer shall not be eligible for recognition if the officer received a written reprimand (planed in personnel file) or suspension at any time between January 1 through December 31 of the year being considered for award.

Documentation:

A letter of nomination from the Chief or Interim Chief of the institution's Police Department the nominee serves with. The letter must include an overview of the incident(s) or act(s).

Selection Process:

A. Selection Committee:

   The selection committee is composed of six (6) UNC Campus Police Chiefs and the VP of Safety and Enterprise Risk Management. Selection of the committee membership is on a voluntary basis.

B. The award recipient(s) will be chosen by the selection committee after a full review of all nominations.

Logistics:

A. The date and location of the awards ceremony shall be at the annual UNC Campus Police Chiefs Conference.

B. The name(s) of the Officer of the Year award recipient(s) will be presented to the VP of Safety and Enterprise Risk Management for including in the annual conference program.

C. Nominations should be emailed to the VP of Safety and Enterprise Risk Management.

D. The deadline for receipt of nominations will be at a date four (4) weeks prior to the annual conference.

2022 UNC Police Officer of the Year Award Winners

EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE:

POLICE OFFICER OF THE YEAR - 2020

Detective Whitney Montgomery	UNC Asheville

POLICE OFFICER OF THE YEAR - 2021

Officer Mike Reynolds	UNC Charlotte

ACTS OF VALOR:

Officer Shelton Harris	North Carolina Central University
Sergeant Greg Hughes	North Carolina Central University
Officer Matthew Prewitt	NC Arboretum
Officer William Brown	East Carolina University
Officer Mike Fecteau	East Carolina University
Officer Tylor Greene	Appalachian State University
Captain Johnny Brown	Appalachian State University

Detective Whitney Montgomery

UNC Asheville

Award Category: Exceptional Service Police Officer of the Year - 2020

Whitney Montgomery started at UNC Asheville in August of 2016 as a police officer right out of BLET. Due to her interest in investigations and her hard work, she was promoted to Detective and the Clery Act Compliance Coordinator for the university in 2018. Det. Montgomery has a natural ability to talk with students and gain their trust which has proven effective in her interviews for cases. She was able to close several cases involving burglaries, larcenies, vandalism, and sexual assault investigations. Det. Montgomery not only worked her assigned cases but would review other officer's cases and assist them in their investigations with the heart of a mentor in order to guide officers to be able to work cases more proficiently. Det. Montgomery reworked the existing Annual Security and Fire Safety Report (ASFR) to make tracking statistics and policy statements more efficient. She also was able to get CSA training documented at a level of 78% overall with some university departments reporting at 98- 100%. She updates the crime log daily and trains officers on case report requirements for Clery documentation. Det. Montgomery has served as a Background Investigator for 4 years and over the last year has decreased the turnaround time it takes to complete a background investigation to get new officers started in Field Training. She assists with equipment management, evidence submission and inventory, patrol and dispatch coverage during shift shortages, and student Safety Planning as needed for Title IX consults involving victims of sexual assault, stalking, and dating or domestic violence cases. She has also partnered with other local first responder agencies to facilitate updated training for our department to include the Department of Juvenile Justice and the local domestic violence center from the Family Justice Center. Det. Montgomery plans and participates in crime prevention programming regularly. While doing all of this, Det. Montgomery has been attending classes part time at AB Tech to work on her dream of earning her college degree. She plans on completing her associates degree and then working on her bachelor’s degree while continuing to serve the university. Det. Montgomery always steps up when and where needed without being told and sets the example for other officers to follow. She has been an asset to me during my term as Interim Chief.

Officer Mike Reynolds

UNC Charlotte

Award Category: Exceptional Service Police Officer of the Year - 2021

Joining the UNC Charlotte Police Department in July 2019, Officer Reynolds was already a highly experienced veteran police officer who had previously served over 30 years in law enforcement. That experience was recently on full display when he responded to a call for service in the early morning hours of July 24th at the Light Rail Station. At that time, two subjects were attempting to cut the locks from bicycles from a bike rack located near the platform. When officers approached, one of the individuals pulled a machete from his bag and swung it wildly at them. The officers deployed pepper spray; however, it had no effect. The subject then attempted to flee heading towards a residence hall. Officer Reynolds, who had just arrived on scene, maneuvered his patrol car into the individual's path. As he attempted to change directions, Officer Reynolds repositioned his vehicle, again blocking the offender until officers could deploy pepper spray once more. At this time, the individual swung the machete at Officer Reynolds' window striking the vehicle. Seeking an end to the volatile situation, Officer Reynolds then used his driver's side door to carefully neutralize and disarm the subject enabling fellow officers to rush in and apprehend him. The outcome of this incident could have been very different if it had not been for the bravery, good judgement and professionalism displayed by all the involved officers including Thomas Cloer, Terry Wells, Jason Johnson, and Sergeant Mark Litjes and Angela Ortiz. It was, however, Officer Reynolds' calm composure and quick thinking that brought a peaceful resolution to this deadly situation with no injuries to the offender or any of the officers involved. We are extremely fortunate to have such dedicated and experienced officers protecting our campus community.

Officer Shelton Harris

NC Central University

Award Category: Valor

On September 18, 2021, during North Carolina Central University's first home game several gunshots were heard coming from the Latham Parking Deck on campus. Officer Shelton Harris arrived on the scene and began performing CPR on an individual. Other officers arrived to assist. Officer Shelton Harris continued to administer CPR until Durham County EMS and Durham County Fire Department arrived and took over medical care. The two individuals succumbed to their wounds. The actions of Officer Shelton Harris reflected great credit upon himself and the NCCU police department. Officer Harris truly demonstrated a high degree of competence, professional, and dedication to the North Carolina Central University Police Department's mission. His exhibition of the highest tradition of law enforcement, to protect and to serve, that night demonstrated exceptional valor and service to constituents, not only of North Carolina Central University, but the University of North Carolina System.

Sergeant Greg Hughes

NC Central University

Award Category: Valor

On September 18, 2021, during North Carolina Central University's first home football game, several gunshots were heard coming from the Latham Parking Deck on campus. Without hesitation and regards for his own safety, Sergeant Greg Hughes immediately responded to the parking deck to observe a black sedan driving away from the area. He immediately notified Communications. Sergeant Greg Hughes then located two subjects lying close to each other in empty parking spaces. He conducted a quick assessment of their condition and discovered that they both were suffering from gunshot wounds. He again immediately notified Communications and requested EMS. At this time, Sergeant Greg Hughes' first aid and CPR training kicked in as he conducted a quick assessment of the two individuals. He observed one individual moving and appeared to be breathing, and one of the individuals not moving or breathing at all. Sergeant Hughes immediately focused his attention to the individual who was not breathing. He checked for a carotid pulse but could not find one. He noticed blood on the individual's t-shirt and lifted it up to find a gunshot wound to the chest and abdominal area. He immediately began chest compressions. The actions of Sergeant Greg Hughes reflect great credit upon himself and the NCCU police department. He truly demonstrated a high degree of competence, professionalism, and dedication to the North Carolina Central University Police Department's mission. His exhibition of the highest tradition of law enforcement that night demonstrated exceptional valor and service to constituents, not only of North Carolina Central University, but the University of North Carolina system.

Officer Matthew Prewitt

North Carolina Arboretum

Award Category: Valor

On July 2, 2021, Officer Matthew Prewitt was stationed in the gatehouse at the front entrance of the Arboretum, offering a break to the gate attendant during a very busy day. A family pulled up to the gatehouse as they were exiting the campus and stopped abruptly as a woman frantically exited the car and excitedly banged on the gatehouse door. In panic, she exclaimed that she needed 911 called because her two-year-old in the car was unresponsive. Officer Prewitt quickly told the gatehouse attendant to call 911 as he ran out to the car to assess the child's condition. Officer Prewitt found the child pale and unresponsive to stimulus. He made the decision to remove the child from his safety car seat to attempt life saving measures. As he removed the toddler, the child started to breathe again. He took the child inside the gatehouse to continue monitoring their vitals. Suddenly, it became apparent that the child was experiencing a seizure. Officer Prewitt's Emergency Medical Services (EMS) training and certification allowed him to monitor the threatening condition while keeping the child's airway open. Often seizure patients bump their heads or fall while seizing, so Officer Prewitt made sure the child was secure as he continued to console the mother and waited on other EMS units to arrive on scene. The child was transported to the hospital and was awake and alert as they left the gatehouse. After reading the account of this incident and talking with other officers on scene that day, it is certain that Officer Prewitt's calm assessment and appropriate responses saved the child's life. Officer Prewitt's training level and quick action assisted this child in regaining consciousness and an ability to breathe. The medical officers speculated that the child's airway was blocked during an initial seizure in the car seat. When Officer Prewitt removed them from the seat, it opened the airway and the child began to breathe on their own again. The parents were not aware of any history of seizures. To say the least, the two-year-old's parents were relieved and fortunate to meet Officer Prewitt while on our campus. As Officer Prewitt's commanding officer, I cannot express how proud I was, and still am, after reviewing the details of this incident. In the medical world, a most frightening part of the EMS job is to have a baby's life in your hands. Pediatric cases are rare and tend to be complicated. Matthew's quick thinking and bravery in execution will long be remembered by his peers and the family of the child he saved and serve as a model of why EMS training among all Arboretum officers is so necessary.

Officer William Brown

East Carolina University

Award Category: Valor

On March 9, 2021, around 2345 hours, officers were dispatched to a suicidal male hanging over the parking deck at the Student Center. When they arrived, Officer William Brown had engaged the subject in conversation. The subject was leaning over the edge beyond the safety cables and rocking back and forth. Officer Brown's demeanor and presence, coupled with verbal CIT skills were enough to encourage the subject to swing his legs back over the ledge and land safely on the deck. Officer Brown stayed by the subject's side the entire time, from the parking deck to the hospital, and consoled him. After speaking with the counselor who the subject had called, the counselor stated that we absolutely saved a life tonight. The subject had already written a suicide note and the counselor said that it was a miracle they responded as fast as they did. Officer Brown went above and beyond during this critical incident and directly altered an otherwise fatal situation. His actions are commended and serves as a great example of how to respond to an unpredictable and dangerous situation.

Officer Mike Fecteau

East Carolina University

Award Category: Valor

On March 17, 2021, around 2130 hours, Officer Mike Fecteau was patrolling the upper level of the parking deck when he observed a male and a female near the edge of the wall. When assessing the situation, Officer Fecteau found out that the male was suicidal and had attempted to jump off the parking deck downtown just two days before. Officer Fecteau called his supervisor, Sgt Travis Davis, on the radio and advised him to respond. When Davis arrived with three additional units, Officer Fecteau was engaging the subject in conversation. Officer Fecteau did an outstanding job keeping the subject distracted by talking to him for a several minutes. The subject kept looking over the edge of the wall, and Officer Fecteau would bring his attention back to him. After several minutes, Officer Fecteau talked the subject into stepping away from the wall, and then Officer Fecteau went in to shake his hand. When he did, Officer Fecteau didn't let go and responders were able to get him away from the wall and to safety. Officer Fecteau showed incredible CIT skills and empathy for the suicidal male. His intervention was crucial to a safe outcome for all parties involved. He is commended for his demeanor and calmness in a stressful and dangerous situation.

Officer Tylor Greene

Appalachian State University

Award Category: Valor

On April 24, 2021, App State officers responded to the 4th floor of a parking garage in reference to an individual who was standing on the ledge and threatening to commit suicide by jumping from the garage. As officers arrived, the subject was standing on a pillar on the edge of the top of the parking garage. The subject appeared to be distraught and was crying. The subject appeared to be very close to making the decision to jump. Officer Tylor Greene began attempting to have a conversation with the subject. After a few minutes of talking, it became apparent that the individual was intent on jumping. Officer Greene asked the subject to move away from the ledge so that they could continue talking. When the subject refused, Officer Greene once again asked the subject for their name. The subject replied, and Officer Greene introduced himself while holding out his hand, as if to shake hands, as he moved closer to the subject. As the subject held out their hand to shake hands, Officer Greene immediately grabbed the subject's hand and pulled them down off the top of the pillar. The subject was taken into custody and transported to the hospital for a mental health evaluation. Officer Greene's actions were calm, composed, and heroic. Officer Greene immediately attempted to build rapport with the subject while developing a plan to intervene in the subject's ability to jump from the parking deck. The subject merely thought they were going to shake hands, but Officer Greene was prepared and took advantage of the opportunity to pull the subject from the ledge, saving their life.

Captain Johnny Brown

Appalachian State University

Award Category: Valor

On April 28, 2021, Watauga County Sheriff's Office deputies responded to a residence to perform a welfare check on a husband and wife who had not reported for work that morning. Upon arriving and entering the home, the deputies discovered their bodies in a first-floor bathroom. The gruesome scene indicated that they had been murdered. As deputies began searching and clearing the home, one of the deputies was ambushed and killed, with a firearm, while descending the stairwell leading to the basement of the home. A second deputy was mortally wounded and remained, unresponsive, on the first floor inside the home. The individual remained barricaded somewhere inside the home. The number and type of weaponry available to the individual was unknown. Captain Brown was among the first responding officers following the shooting of the deputies. After gathering information pertaining to what had transpired, it was determined that an attempt would be made to rescue the deputy who lay wounded on the main floor. Captain Brown organized a group of officers at the scene and volunteered to lead the entry into the home. During the rescue, Captain Brown was the first to enter. He and others located the wounded deputy, who was still alive but had suffered a gunshot wound to the head and took up positions on the main floor of the residence while two members of the entry team attempted to drag the deputy to safety. As they did so, the individual emerged from the stairwell leading to the basement and opened fire on the group, striking the officer standing next to Captain Brown in the head. Fortunately, the officer's ballistic helmet absorbed the round. Captain Brown engaged the individual, and a gun battle ensued in the living room of the home. Unbeknownst to Captain Brown, two of the rounds from his department issued rifle struck the individual in the right side of the chest. As the individual retreated to the basement of the home, the wounded deputy and the police officer who had been struck in the helmet were evacuated. The wounded deputy was airlifted to a Tennessee hospital. He succumbed to his injuries later that evening. Although the barricaded individual's wounds were not immediately fatal, he was bleeding internally and remained barricaded inside the basement of the home for several hours prior to taking his own life. Captain Brown volunteered to enter the home twice more that day. He entered to assist in deploying a robot into the home, and he entered a third time to deploy gas into the basement, where the individual was barricaded. Captain Brown's willingness to put his own life in jeopardy in service to others was nothing short of heroic. He exhibited extraordinary valor, and leadership. Most of us can only imagine what we would, or wouldn't, do when faced with similar circumstances. Captain Brown's actions showed that he is willing to put the lives of others ahead of his own.

It is always a special moment for Campus Policing when we can celebrate the great work and incredible acts of bravery by the men and women of our UNC police departments. Their families' unconditional support, day in and day out, is genuinely appreciated and must always be acknowledged. Each of our recipients possess a selflessness and commitment to public service that is rare and difficult to quantify. Through your exceptional service and valorous actions you have inspired your campus communities, and we are privileged to take this time to honor your work and bravery. The UNC System Office extends its sincerest gratitude to you and your families.