

Nominee: Sergeant Heather Strick
Officer William Hertler
Officer Frederick Dirga
Officer Christopher Lundberg

Award: Meritorious Service Citation

Summary

On February 28, 2011, **Sergeant Heather Strick, Officer William Hertler, Officer Frederick Dirga, and Officer Christopher Lundberg** responded to a white naked male physically attacking another male in the parking lot of an apartment complex. Upon their arrival, the Officers encountered the naked male and observed his attempt to attack other bystanders. Ignoring all verbal commands, he charged Officers Hertler and Dirga, punching them in the face and head. Officer Dirga deployed his Taser with no success. Baton strikes were also unsuccessful. They were finally able to tackle the male to the ground, as Sergeant Strick and Officer Lundberg arrived. The male continued to punch, kick, and spit blood on the Officers. After a lengthy struggle and injuries to the Officer, they were finally able to bring him under control. The Officers then noticed the male had stopped breathing, was turning blue, and had no pulse. They immediately began to provide medical attention to the male. After several minutes, the male started to breathe on his own and began to struggle again. The Officers were able to hold him down until medical personnel arrived. The male's life was saved and he was later arrested. As a result of their actions, training, judgment, and restraint, these Officers successfully ended a potentially deadly situation and saved a life.

As such, **Sergeant Heather Strick, Officer William Hertler, Officer Frederick Dirga, and Officer Christopher Lundberg** are hereby presented with the *Meritorious Service Citation*

Nominee: Officer William Hertler

Award: Meritorious Service Citation

Summary

On May 20, 2011, Officers were dispatched to a robbery of a female victim at Citizen's Bank on Washington Street. A black male (later identified as Monte Watson), attempted to steal the victim's vehicle while she was entering the driver's side of the car. The victim jumped on top of him, as her 4-year-old daughter was in the vehicle. After a struggle and unable to steal the vehicle, Watson stole the victim's purse and ran on foot.

Officer William Hertler began canvassing the surrounding areas and housing complexes and decided to extend said canvass. He then observed a black male in possession of a bag (both fitting the descriptions provided by the victim), riding a bike in an area that was extremely far from the original incident. Officer Hertler caught up to Watson and stalled him with small talk while waiting for the back-up officers to arrive. As Officer Christopher Iovene pulled up to assist Officer Hertler, Watson fled. Officer Hertler first secured the bag from the bike and began his pursuit of Watson with Officer Iovene and then Officer Christina Patterson. When they finally caught him, a struggle ensued; however, Watson was eventually arrested, charged on numerous felonies, and brought to justice.

As a result of Officer Hertler's professional tactics, a male perpetrator was accosted without further incident.

As such, **Officer William Hertler** is hereby presented with the *Meritorious Service Citation*.

AND...

Officers Christopher Iovene and **Christina Foss-Rugan** are hereby presented with an **EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE LETTER.**

Nominee: Lieutenant Richard Davis

Detective Kurt Scrivo

Detective William Maio

Detective Marc Del Mauro

Detective Nicholas Puorro

Award: Meritorious Service Citation (Street Crime Unit)

Summary

The Middletown Police Department's **Street Crime Unit**, in conjunction with the Bristol Police Department, have combined their efforts to improve the quality of life in Middletown's North End area.

From June 2012 through September 2012, members of the Street Crime Unit conducted a large scale, multi-agency undercover investigation in which they addressed the concerns and complaints from citizens residing in the North End area. Numerous street-level drug dealers had been identified during previous surveillance, and were to be the targets of this investigation. As a result of this large scale operation, sixteen (16) narcotic traffickers were targeted and the Street Crime Unit attained twenty-four (24) Narcotic Arrest Warrants.

On September 26, 2013 while executing these arrest warrants, several other parties were also identified as having outstanding arrest warrants and/or in possession of narcotics. With the exception of one person who has fled the city, all of the intended targets have been arrested and held on a total of \$1,715,000.00 in bonds.

As such, **Lieutenant Richard Davis, Detective Kurt Scrivo, then Detective William Maio, Detective Marc Del Mauro, and Detective Nicholas Puorro** are hereby presented with the *Meritorious Unit Citation*.

Nominee: Sergeant William Porter
Sergeant Vincent Mazzotta
Officer Paul Liseo
Officer Robert Sevigny
Officer Gino Pulvirenti

Award: Meritorious Service Citation (Marine Unit)

Summary

On October 16, 2011 during the Head of the CT Regatta on the Connecticut River, the Middletown Police Marine Unit vessels were positioned in several sectors of the race course. As a result of rough waters and a strong wind current, several crew boats capsized. The boats were occupied by both High School and College athletes in the area of Wilcox Island. Approximately eighteen (18) crew members were tossed into the cold waters with a very strong river current. These crew members were in grave danger of being swept away and drowning. **The Middletown Police Marine Unit** was first at the scene. Risking their own safety and utilizing their boats in a prolonged rescue operation, the Marine Unit members were able to successfully remove the (18) crew members from the rough waters. All of the crew members were accounted for and transported back to the docks at the Canoe Club at Harbor Park for medical evaluation. However, due to the swift actions of the Middletown Police Marine Unit, no serious injuries were reported and no serious medical care was needed.

Due to the dangerous water conditions, the race course was shortened for safety concerns and several other races were cancelled. These dangerous waters were the same that the Marine Unit had just braved while rescuing the 18 crew members.

As such, **Sergeant William Porter, Officer Paul Liseo, then Officer Vincent Mazzotta, Officer Robert Sevigny, and Officer Gino Pulvirenti** are hereby presented with the *Meritorious Unit Citation*.

Nominee: Detective Kurt Scrivo

Award: Emergency Life Saving Citation

Summary

On July 31, 2011, while off duty, **Detective Kurt Scrivo** was enjoying dinner with his family and several family friends. During the dinner, the 16-month-old son of a family friend fell off a table where he had been climbing and landed hard on the floor. This caused a large piece of carrot which the child had been chewing to become lodged in his throat. The child began to choke and ultimately stopped breathing. The mother of the child, who was not trained in life saving techniques, grabbed the child and began to panic, screaming for help as she was unsure of how to help her child. Detective Scrivo rushed to the aid of the child, taking control of him and began the "Heimlich Maneuver" designed for children until the carrot was dislodged from the child's throat and allowed the child to resume breathing normally. If not for the actions of Detective Scrivo, the child could have easily choked to death on the carrot lodged in his throat.

As a result of his quick actions and willingness to get involved while off duty, Detective Scrivo saved a human life.

As such, **Detective Kurt Scrivo** is hereby presented with the *Emergency Life Saving Citation*.

Officer Frank Scirpo
Officer Kraeger

Nominee: ~~Detective Kurt Scirvo~~

Award: **Emergency Life Saving Citation**

Summary

On April 25, 2011, **Officer Frank Scirpo, along with Officer Robert Kraeger,** were dispatched to 65 Church Street, regarding a suicide by a male by wrapping a rope around his neck. Upon arriving at the scene, the male's mother was hysterically screaming that her son was dead and had a rope around his neck.

Officers Scirpo and Kraeger went to the apartment with the male's mother, and found the male lying on his back on the couch with a black cellular phone charging cord tightly wrapped around his neck. They found the male's face bluish purple and non-responsive. The male's neck now free of the cord, they lowered him to the floor and positioned themselves to start chest compression. As they were just about to begin CPR, the male gasped deeply and regained consciousness.

Middletown Fire and Hunters Ambulance arrived at the scene. The male stated he did not want to live and that the Officers should not have stopped him. He was transported to Middlesex Hospital for a mental and physical evaluation.

For their actions in the face of injury and possible death of another, **Officers Frank Scirpo and Robert Kraeger** are hereby presented with the *Emergency Life Saving Citation*.

Nominee: Officer Christopher Lundberg

Award: Exceptional Service Citation

Summary

On December 31, 2012, **Officer Christopher Lundberg** initiated a motor vehicle stop on Route 9 Southbound in the area north of Exit 11. Both male occupants were identified as dangerous street gang members of "The Blood", known for their past involvement with weapons. Officer James Remotti and Street Crime Unit members Lieutenant Richard Davis, Detectives Nicholas Puorro, Marc Del Mauro, and Frederick Dirga arrived at the scene as backup. Both occupants were removed from the vehicle.

While conducting a search in the vehicle, both perpetrators fled the scene on foot. Officers pursued the two on a dangerous foot pursuit, dodging traffic, tumbling down a steep snowy ledge covered with thorns, trees, and rocks; ending behind a residential cul-de-sac, when one of the perpetrators was caught by police. The Police would continue their pursuit of the other suspect until he turned himself in peacefully several days later.

Due to his perseverance and professionalism tactics, **Officer Christopher Lundberg** is hereby presented with the *Exceptional Service Citation*.

AND...

Lieutenant Richard Davis, Detectives Marc Del Mauro, Frederick Dirga, Nicholas Puorro, and Officer James Remotti are hereby presented with an **EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE LETTER.**

Nominee: Officer Matthew Milardo
Officer Frank DiFonzo

Award: Exceptional Service Citation

Summary

On February 17, 2013, while walking their beats in the North End, Officers **Matthew Milardo and Frank DiFonzo** were investigating a suspicious motor vehicle. Upon arrival, they located the vehicle parked running on the side of the road and observed the male operator of the vehicle appeared to be sleeping. Upon making contact with the operator, Officer Milardo noticed he appeared to be disoriented and confused. As he spoke with the Officers, the male operator, began to reach down towards the inside door panel compartment with his left hand. Sensing impending danger, the Officers immediately removed the operator from the vehicle. The operator was found in possession of a folding knife in one pocket and a box cutter in another. The Officers also located a loaded .22 Caliber Hand Gun inside the inner door panel compartment where the operator had been reaching before being pulled from the vehicle. A Records Check revealed that the operator was a dangerous convicted felon with 21 previous arrests.

Due to their keen observation and professional tactics, **Officers Matthew Milardo and Frank DiFonzo** are hereby presented with the *Exceptional Service Citation*.

Nominee: K-9 Handler Lt. Richard Davis
Narcotics K-9 Rika

Award: Honorable Service Award

Summary

Narcotics Detector dog, “Rika”, was certified in Narcotics Detection by the Connecticut State Police Canine Unit and Connecticut State Police Forensic Lab since 2004. Rika was trained to alert to the odor of controlled illegal substances. She was eventually assigned to the Street Crime Unit under then K-9 Handler Christopher Lavoie from 2004 through 2007; and then under **K-9 Handler Richard Davis** from 2007 through 2012.

While assigned to the Street Crime Unit, Rika was often required to search out narcotics in deplorable conditions inside houses, vehicles, and inclement weather. She would often alert to human body areas when detectives were unable to detect drugs with a pat down. Rika was also instrumental in acquiring several Search & Seizure Warrants through commercial shipping services, resulting in controlled narcotic deliveries with numerous arrests and seizures of hundreds of pounds of marijuana.

Rika conducted numerous searches, not only in the City of Middletown, but for other agencies, including neighboring cities, the CT State Police, the DEA and ATF. Rika has also attended numerous demonstrations at schools and daycares.

As a result of their services, **former K-9 Handler Lieutenant Richard Davis and Narcotics K-9 Rika** are hereby presented with the *Honorable Service Award*.

**Nominee: K-9 Handler Officer Douglas Clark
K-9 Niko**

Award: Honorable Service Award

Summary

In their seven (7) years of service with the Middletown Police Department, **K-9 Handler Officer Douglas Clark and K-9 Niko** have located and apprehended approximately 110 criminal suspects while working in the City of Middletown or providing mutual aid to surrounding cities and towns. Among their most notable accomplishments are as follows:

In December 2007, they were involved in a motor vehicle pursuit in which the operator fled from his vehicle. As K-9 Niko gave chase, the suspect turned and fired two rounds from his handgun at Officer Clark and K-9 Niko.

In September 2008, they responded to an attempted car break-in. The suspect had fled toward Harbor Drive. K-9 Niko tracked the suspect through rough terrain and located him concealed underneath a commercial semitrailer unit. After being arrested, it was learned that he had an outstanding arrest warrant and had been profiled on "America's Most Wanted" for his involvement in the murder of his brother and an arson in Newark, NJ.

In May 2010, they assisted patrol officers with an out of control, emotionally disturbed person. During the course of attempting to apprehend the individual, K-9 Niko was injured by the individual and briefly lost consciousness. K-9 Niko fully recovered from his injuries and continued to apprehend dangerous criminals until January 2013, when he officially retired.

As a result of their services, **former K-9 Handler Officer Douglas Clark and K-9 Niko** are hereby presented with the *Honorable Service Award*.

Nominee: Officer Robert Kraeger
Officer August DeFrance

Award: Honorable Mention Letter

Summary

On September 29, 2012, **Officer Robert Kraeger** responded to a location in an attempt to make contact with a suspect in a recent burglary of guns in Portland. Through the suspect's family, Officer Kraeger was able to convince the suspect to turn himself. Upon his arrest, his vehicle was subsequently searched which led to the seizure of crack cocaine.

During the booking process, **Officer Kraeger and Officer August DeFrance** would go above and beyond their normal duties and build a rapport with the suspect, gathering valuable information regarding other stolen firearms and narcotic sales, as well as a confession to the original Portland burglary.

Based on the information that they obtained, Officers Kraeger and DeFrance were able to prepare a Search & Seizure Warrant, which resulted in the arrest of four (4) individuals involved in narcotics trafficking, as well as the seizure of crack cocaine, powder cocaine, marijuana, drug paraphernalia, weapons, and a large sum of US currency.

As a result of their services, **Officers Robert Kraeger and August DeFrance** are hereby presented with an *Honorable Mention Letter*.

The CHIEF'S AWARD is awarded by the Chief to any member of the department who has exemplified the qualities within the department's mission statement (excellence, professionalism, & integrity) and is deemed deserving of recognition. The CHIEF'S AWARD is the only department award that is recognized by the Chief of Police *without* the involvement of the department's Awards Committee.

This year I have chosen Officer Bill Warner as the recipient of the CHIEF's AWARD for his exemplary service to the department, and the community. Officer Warner has served as the department's Community Liaison Officer for over two years, and during his time in the assignment he has consistently "exemplified the qualities in our mission statement" as he represents the department in his many duties which include working with various City Departments, Community and Service Organizations, Church and Youth groups, and other agencies. Officer Warner is committed to serving the community with the utmost professionalism, and he takes pride in his work while performing his many duties with excellence. It is for these reasons that I have chosen Officer Warner as the recipient of the CHIEF'S AWARD.