



The New York City Department Of Correction

MEDAL DAY 2008

AWARDS FOR VALOR



October 2, 2008

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MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

October 2, 2008

Dear Friends:

It is a pleasure to welcome everyone to the Department of Correction Medal Day.

The medals awarded today are high honors, and these brave men and women are most certainly deserving recipients. Our City's jails are now safer than ever, in large part thanks to the hard work, steadfast dedication, and unmatched valor of those honored here today. These qualities are why we call the men and women of the Department of Correction New York's Boldest; they will stop at nothing to ensure the safety of our City's toughest precincts, as well as all of the streets and neighborhoods of our great City.

On behalf of the City of New York, I congratulate all of tonight's honorees for their dedicated service, and I commend everyone gathered to celebrate their outstanding accomplishments. Please accept my best wishes for an enjoyable event and continued success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael R. Bloomberg". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor

*The New York City Department Of Correction***MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSIONER**

Welcome, Mayor Bloomberg, staff, families and friends, to the Department of Correction Medal Day.

We refer to our officers as “New York’s Boldest” and indeed they are. The men and women of our Department patrol the toughest precincts in the city. But they are also New York’s Noblest. Each day, members of service and other employees of our Department look out for the safety and welfare of New York’s children who find themselves in trouble with the law. With vigilance and compassion they perform their duties and insure that our city is safe and the persons in our custody safely kept.

The stories you will hear today and the people we will honor will tell you many other things about our officers and our other staff as well. They are also among our city’s most courageous, most generous, most honest, most efficient, and most dedicated public servants.

We often speak of the “invisibility” of our work force, and the difficulty that the general public has in knowing about, much less recognizing, their work, because it is out of the view of most. But the awards we give today are for valor and honor and effectiveness both behind the bars and doors of our jails AND all across the streets and neighborhoods of New York City. And when you hear of their efforts, you will know that our officers and staff are not just good at their work, they frequently and willingly go above and beyond the normal call of their jobs and they lend a hand in the community no matter the challenge.

We are extremely proud of the men and women of the Department of Correction and the difficult job that they do, anonymously but very well, every day. And we are happy today for their contributions and to honor and congratulate them.

Martin F. Horn

**MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OF DEPARTMENT**

It is no coincidence that the dictionary defines valor as “boldness or determination in facing great danger,” when our Correction Officers - “New York’s boldest” - act with valor nearly every day of their working lives and frequently in their private hours as well.

The Department is rightly proud of our record of reducing inmate violence - whether directed against other inmates or staff - to record low levels through the collective efforts of all. Safe jails are secure jails. However, the public must be aware that our jails hold nearly 14,000 inmates in custody daily and that violence is a constant threat.

That reality makes the professionalism, courage and nobility of our staff all the more impressive.

Furthermore, the many awards presented this year for valor while off-duty serve as a message to New Yorkers that their Correction Officers are not only the finest anywhere...but that they are also outstanding private citizens and law enforcement officers who are willing to risk their safety to help those in need. I am extremely proud of and congratulate every officer and employee honored today.

Carolyn Thomas

DESCRIPTION OF AWARDS

Medal of Honor

Awarded to members of the Department who intelligently distinguish themselves by the performance of an act of extraordinary courage, bravery or heroism whether in the line of duty or off-duty.

Exceptional Merit

Awarded for an act of bravery, intelligently performed involving personal risk, whether in the line of duty or off-duty.

Meritorious Duty

Awarded for an extraordinary performance in the line of duty, an exceptional contribution to the Department or an exceptional contribution to the public that brings credit to the Department.

Unit Citation

Awarded to a unit, division or command for outstanding performance and/or accomplishment, sustained over a period of time.

Commissioner's Award

The Commissioner's Award is presented to individuals and units who have contributed significantly to enhancing the Department's professionalism and image by demonstrating continuous excellence of performance and a commitment to furthering the accomplishments being achieved by the agency.

ADW - William Heidenreich Outstanding Achievement Award

Conferred by the Assistant Deputy Warden/ Deputy Warden's Association to an Assistant Deputy Warden whose professionalism, integrity and commitment to duty, supervisors, peers and subordinates has been consistent throughout the member's career.

ADW - Dominick Schiano Award

Conferred by the Assistant Deputy Warden/ Deputy Warden's Association to a Deputy Warden whose professionalism, integrity and commitment to duty, supervisors, peers and subordinates has been consistent throughout the member's career.

CCA- Alfred Mandanici Community Service Award

Awarded for professionalism, personal achievement and commitment to outstanding community service.

COBA- Arturo Meyers Member of the Year Award

Awarded by the Correction Officers' Benevolent Association to a Correction Officer for outstanding acts of gallantry at the time of imminent hazard to life.

Employee of the Year Award

An award established to acknowledge and honor uniformed and civilian employees who every day perform their duties in an exemplary manner.

MEDAL OF HONOR**CAPTAIN RENEE CHONG**

Correction Captain Renee Chong joined the Department in 1988 and faithfully served the people of New York City until the morning of October 30, 2007.

On that day she awoke to find her Rosedale, Queens residence filled with smoke and flames. Captain Chong fought her way through thick smoke to a window where she was able to call to a passerby to summon help. Then, instead of fleeing the fire which had fully involved the two story home, she turned and began a search for her two sons. With extensive Department of Correction training in fire safety, fire fighting and emergency procedures, Captain Chong well knew the risks of returning to the center of the fire.

Still, she chose to risk her life and in fact sacrificed it in behalf of her children. When the fire was under control, fire fighters found Captain Chong with her sons clutched to her in an attempt to shield them from the smoke and flames.

Renee Chong had distinguished herself among her colleagues for the precise execution of her duties, and for her commitment to her work. However, she had also gained their love and admiration for the joy she took from her children and her life, from the challenge to succeed and from her success in doing so. Her final act as a parent was one more unselfish act of bravery and heroism while off duty, and in doing so she exhibited the highest standards of personal courage and reflected credit upon both herself and the Department.

**CORRECTION OFFICER KENNY DUNCAN**

In the early morning hours of April 22, 2008, Correction Officer Kenny Duncan was doing what he liked best, sitting in his garage with a friend tinkering with his beloved motorcycle.

When two strangers—one with a firearm—approached and attempted to steal the motorcycle, Officer Duncan identified himself as a peace officer and defended his friend, himself and the members of his family sleeping in the house above by discharging his weapon after being fired upon. In the exchange of gun fire, Officer Duncan was shot and fatally wounded, and as of this date the investigation and search for his assailants continues.

Kenny Duncan was known by his colleagues at the Manhattan Detention Complex and those with whom he had worked as a skilled and dedicated Correction Officer, and as an individual who truly understood the notion of “family” in the Department. For example, he was universally known as the friend who was the first to offer help to colleagues having car trouble or other difficulties. And through his love and loyalty to coworkers and friends he earned long-lasting friendships and a reputation as a “go-to” person.

Officer Duncan earned the respect of his colleagues by the daily performance of his duties, and he earned a lasting place in all our memories by his heroic actions protecting his family and friend that night. For these actions he is awarded the Medal of Honor.

MEDAL OF HONOR**CORRECTION OFFICER SHELDON JOHNSON**

In the early hours of July 13, 2008, Correction Officer Sheldon Johnson stood at the gas tanks of a Bronx service station, filling his vehicle with gas. As Officer Johnson finished paying his bill and returned to his car, a stranger approached and, at first, asked only for directions. While providing the information, Officer Johnson reentered his car, only to have the stranger enter the passenger side, pull a revolver from his waistband and demand that Officer Johnson give him his money and get out of the car. The assailant then moved to the driver's side, ordering Officer Johnson to get into the passenger seat. When the stranger reached for his weapon, Officer Johnson removed his service weapon and fired on the assailant, then moved across the street to have a passerby call for police. The assailant died at the scene.

Officer Johnson responded to the threat to himself and the public's safety professionally and with spontaneous thinking, but also with regard to human life since his first efforts were to avoid violence, responding with physical force only when necessary to protect himself and others.

**CORRECTION OFFICER PAUL HARPER**

When, on October 8, 2005, Peekskill Police officers responded to a report of a vehicle submerged in the Hudson River, they hurried to the scene. Once there, they found two individuals had already braved the currents, deep water and heavy rains in an attempt to save two trapped passengers. One of them was Correction Officer Paul Harper, an 11-year veteran of the Department.

Despite the assistance of seven additional officers, rescuing two elderly passengers—a couple aged 80 and 81—proved to be difficult. The vehicle had driven off a dock and was sinking deeper into the water and drifting away from the dock, the weather included heavy rains and winds, one passenger was quite heavy and the second was trapped in his seat restraint.

Eventually, one occupant was dragged safely from the car to the dock. Braving the wind and water, Officer Harper and others made repeated attempts to remove the other occupant. Only when the car was secured and stopped drifting could they rescue the second occupant. Both were taken to a nearby hospital and despite their age and the ordeal, they were treated only for minor injuries and discharged. Their lives had been saved.

Correction Officer Harper showed extraordinary courage by repeatedly entering the water in attempts to save the couple, and remaining there with no regard for his own safety until the rescues were complete despite extreme weather conditions. In doing so, he demonstrated the ideals of the Department of Correction and brought honor to himself and his fellow Officers.

MEDAL OF HONOR**CORRECTION OFFICER RALPH SMITH**

Officer Ralph Smith was on his way home, driving north on the West Side Highway on November 21, 2006, when he witnessed a horrific car crash in the opposite lane.

A southbound car driven by an allegedly drunk driver weaving and traveling at high speeds near 92nd Street, had careened into a Ford Explorer, forcing the Explorer into the median and through the air, finally crashing into a light pole and turning on its side.

Officer Smith, the Department's photographer, slammed to a stop, pulled his car out of traffic and ran across the median and toward the scene, but not to take pictures. Working with other good Samaritans, he attempted to pull the driver from the Explorer. After prolonged efforts to smash windows and finally open the SUV's rear hatch, Officer Smith crawled forward, cut through the driver's seat restraint and, with the help of others, began to pull the man out...all the while smelling the distinctive and frightening odor of gasoline dripping from the SUV's gas tank. Officer Smith and other rescuers were mere feet from the vehicle, dragging the driver away from the car when, seconds later, it erupted into a ball of flame.

EXCEPTIONAL MERIT**CORRECTION OFFICER ERIC BROWN**

Correction Officer Eric Brown responded quickly on May 1, 2006 when his sister told him that she had seen a suspicious person in their back yard. Officer Brown moved to the rear of the house to investigate and noticed that the rear window security gate and window of his neighbor's home were open. Then he observed a person who he knew not to be a resident climbing out of the window.

Confronted by the burglar, Officer Brown unholstered his firearm and identified himself as a peace officer, ordering the perpetrator to hit the ground and not move. Officer Brown then applied service handcuffs and placed the suspect under arrest, escorting him to the front of the residence and calling 911.

For his decisive and professional actions, Officer Brown, who joined the Department in 1989, is awarded the medal for Exceptional Merit.

**CORRECTION OFFICER GILBERT HENRICKSEN**

On January 30, 2007, Correction Officer Gilbert Henriksen observed a robbery in which a perpetrator violently threw a victim to the ground and grabbed her purse before running off. Officer Henriksen gave chase, ultimately chasing down the suspect, identifying himself as a Correction officer and detaining the suspect until police arrived to make the arrest. And he also recovered the stolen purse.

Officer Henriksen responded quickly and professionally, putting himself at risk to assist a stranger and apprehend a perpetrator. In so doing, he sets a fine example for his fellow Officers and for all of us.

**CORRECTION OFFICER FERLISHA MURRAY**

Moments after CO Smith initiated the daring rescue of an injured driver on November 21, 2006, Officer Ferlisha Murray, who joined the Department in 1989 and like Officer Smith is assigned to headquarters was also driving home. Officer Murray also pulled off the road and, surveying an accident scene that included two cars, one deceased victim and the rescue effort led by Officer Smith, she instructed other drivers to return to and move their cars to make room for emergency vehicles. She then maintained a position directing traffic in the northbound lanes for the next hour.

EXCEPTIONAL MERIT**CORRECTION OFFICER JOSE ROMERO**

Officer Jose Romero, an eight-year veteran of the Department, was off-duty when he observed several men approach three others from behind, with one of the perpetrators assaulting one of the three men. The victim was struck on the side of the head with a glass bottle and, when he fell bleeding to the ground, two of the assailants continued to kick and beat him.

Officer Romero approached the group and pulled two assailants away from the victim, holding one of them on the ground. When the others moved threateningly toward him, Officer Romero unholstered his weapon and identified himself as a Correction Officer. Ordering the second assailant to the ground and holding the others at bay, Officer Romero called for police assistance. Police arrested the two assailants although the others fled. The victim was treated for lacerations to his face and back. Officer Romero's courageous actions prevented further injuries to the victim and others in the group.

**MECHANIC JOSE SANTANA JR.**

On September 3, 2008, Jose Santana, a mechanic assigned as a tow truck driver in the Transportation Division, was towing a Department van up a steep hill when the van became displaced and fell from the tow truck.

Recognizing that pedestrians and on-coming traffic were in jeopardy, Mr. Santana leaped from the truck and ran to the van as it began to roll backwards down the hill. While attempting to enter the van as it gained momentum, the door struck him, knocking him to the ground. The van came to rest only after striking several parked cars. Mr. Santana suffered rib fractures and multiple cuts while risking his own personal safety to protect others from injury.

**CAPTAIN EDDIE VASQUEZ**

On June 7, 2006, Captain Eddie Vasquez, while off duty, observed three suspects apparently holding up the clerk of a video store on Castle Hill Avenue in the Bronx. After calling 911, Officer Vasquez, now an 18-year Correction veteran, followed the subjects undetected until responding NYPD units joined the pursuit.

Captain Vasquez was instrumental not only in observing and reporting the commission of an armed crime, but also in helping to apprehend and identify the three suspects involved.

His quick thinking and selfless actions bring honor to the Department and have earned for him the Department's Exceptional Merit.

MERITORIOUS DUTY**DIRECTOR OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT CRISTINA CARLO**

The Department's annual "Take Care DOC" Health Fair is a joint effort of the Department and the city Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, at which staff are made aware of the keys to living a longer and healthier life. At this year's event, for example, screening for glaucoma, diabetes, cholesterol and blood pressure were available, 182 flu vaccinations were administered and consumer information on a multitude of important everyday health issues was distributed to staff in attendance.

As the Department's coordinator of "Take Care DOC", Director of Project Management Christina Carlo has led the effort since the event was created three years ago, performed in an extraordinary manner and contributed to the health and well-being of her colleagues.

**CORRECTION OFFICERS HUGH CARRINGTON AND DAVID VARGAS**

Several Correction Officers assigned to the Bronx courts and detention complex responded on March 13, 2006, when a baby was spotted on the fifth floor fire escape of the building directly across from the Walton Avenue sallyport entrance.

Among them were Correction Officers David Vargas and Hugh Carrington, who joined the Department within one month of one another in 1989.

Officers Vargas and Carrington were dispatched by their supervisors and immediately scaled the building's lower wall, climbed the fire escape to the fifth floor, grabbed the baby, and wrapped the child in a jacket to protect him from the cold March weather. They entered the apartment after their colleagues went to the door of the apartment and got the attention of the child's family, and turned the extremely fortunate child over when NYPD arrived on the scene.

**CORRECTION OFFICERS DEVON CHRISTIE, LEONID STRELNIKOV AND WALTER SOTO**

On July 22, 2008, Officers Leonid Strelnikov and Walter Soto, assigned to the Transportation Division, and Officer Devon Christie, assigned to the Brooklyn Detention Complex, prevented a possible escape. The

three officers were escorting 28 defendants to the Brooklyn criminal court at the sallyport of the Brooklyn House when they alertly observed two inmates as they attempted to conceal themselves by crawling under the bus and suspending themselves from the vehicle's undercarriage. The three immediately apprehended the inmates.

MERITORIOUS DUTY**CAPTAIN RAFAEL COLLAZO**

Correction Captain Rafael Collazo, assigned to the North Infirmity Command, was off-duty and at home in Yonkers on September 14, 2008 when he noticed two men unknown to him examining his car and motorcycle in the driveway.

When Captain Collazo stepped outside the house to confront the males, one of them pointed a gun and demanded the Captain's money. The two perpetrators fled when Captain Collazo attempted to disarm the one with the weapon, at which point Captain Collazo telephoned police, informed them of the incident, and took to his car, locating one of the suspects at a nearby service station. Captain Collazo approached him, overpowered and disarmed him and held him until police arrived. The second suspect was apprehended three blocks away a short time later.

Captain Collazo is an 18-year veteran of the Department of Correction.

**CORRECTION OFFICER ROBERT COLLAZO**

Correction Officer Roberto Collazo, Sr., is presented the Meritorious Duty Award for his professional demeanor and quick, effective action at the Elmhurst Hospital prison ward on September 18, 2005, when he responded to an alert and resuscitated an inmate who had attempted suicide and had no pulse, by administering CPR until a medical team arrived. Officer Collazo, a 19-year veteran of the Department, had received training in suicide prevention and CPR and had previously received three Employee of the Month Awards.

**CORRECTION OFFICER GLEN EBON**

While Correction Officer Glenn Ebron was arriving at church in Nyack, New York on Sunday, July 24, 2005, police from nearby Clarkstown were pursuing an individual who had stolen a van and crashed it into three police vehicles before fleeing on foot.

Observing police activity outside his church, Officer Ebron inquired and received police information about the incident and posted himself outside the church in order to ensure the safety of other members of the congregation as they arrived and parked in the area. Meanwhile, he kept watch for the suspect, who was believed to be moving into the area of the church.

Minutes later, after hearing cracking branches in the bushes near the church, Officer Ebron watched as a man matching the suspect's description emerged. After he made eye contact with the individual, Officer Ebron called out to a neighbor to go up the block to get the police. The suspect surrendered himself to Officer Ebron, who promptly turned him over to the arriving police.

The perpetrator's charges included attempted aggravated assault of a police officer, first degree reckless endangerment, third degree grand larceny, third degree criminal possession of stolen property, and three counts of criminal mischief, in addition to several misdemeanors.

MERITORIOUS DUTY**FRANK FLORES, M.D.**

For more than 10 years, Frank Flores, M.D., has served effectively and energetically as the Director of the Urgi-Care Center of the West Facility on Rikers Island, where emergency medical services are provided for both staff and inmates in Rikers facilities.

During his tenure, Dr. Flores has demonstrated a continuing commitment to providing prompt and high level medical care to all those who visit the facility. Working with Department staff and Prison Health Services, the Urgi-Care Center under Dr. Flores has contained costs while also improving the quality of care.

The Department of Correction is committed to the care, as well as the custody and control of those in its jails, and to taking care of its staff. Dr. Flores has helped achieve the Department goals in both respects, and is presented with the Meritorious Duty Award.

**CORRECTION OFFICER ANTONIO FERNANDEZ**

On May 10, 2008, Correction Officer Antonio Fernandez was working a steady post at the Manhattan Detention Complex. He observed that one prisoner was acting suspiciously and affecting what seemed to be a less than genuine limp. Officer Fernandez, a 20-year veteran of the Department, first continued to observe the inmate and then conducted a search of the prisoner, during which he found a loaded .25 caliber Beretta handgun concealed in the prisoner's left shoe. He of course took possession of the weapon, preventing a possible attack on himself or other prisoners and staff in the area.

**CAPTAIN MICHAEL GARRAWAY AND
CORRECTION OFFICER WAYNE PRINCE**

On July 21, 2008, an inmate managed to slip undetected out of the Anna M. Kross Center. Minutes later, the inmate was spotted walking along Hazen Street on Rikers Island by Captain Michael Garraway, who was driving past the nearby trailers but had not been aware of an escape attempt.

Captain Garraway, an 18-year veteran, immediately stopped, questioned the inmate and challenged his responses, in which he provided false information in an apparent effort to escape custody.

Captain Garraway was joined by Correction Officer Wayne Prince, who is assigned to George Motchan Detention Center and was driving past. Captain Garraway and Officer Prince, a four-year Officer, together escorted the inmate to a nearby office, secured him with handcuffs, confirmed his identity and returned him to custody.

As a result of Captain Garraway's alertness and the quick response and sure handling of both the Captain and Officer Prince, an escape was prevented and a defendant safely maintained in custody.

MERITORIOUS DUTY**CHIEF SURGEON RICHARD LEINHARDT, M.D.**

Richard Leinhardt, M.D., joined the Department of Correction as its Chief Surgeon assigned to the Health Management Division in 2000.

In the years since, he has consistently shown his dedication and commitment to the Department and its staff, both uniform and civilian.

With the large number of new recruits and officers in the past year, Dr. Leinhardt's duties have expanded to include the review of all medical charts to ensure that the candidates are all medically qualified. In an effort to expedite hiring processes and meet hiring goals, he works closely with the Applicant Investigation Unit and the NYPD's Medical Division.

But Dr. Leinhardt's efforts are not limited to the institutional and administrative. They also include the personal and even bedside attentions of a general practitioner. He is responsive to the medical needs of a vast department, making himself available whenever called upon, often conducting hospital visits to staff who are ill or injured in the line of duty and occasionally interceding with hospital administrations to advocate for optimal care for his Department patients. And during flu seasons, Dr. Leinhardt has taken the initiative to secure supplies of vaccine for the entire Department and even personally administered the shots in multiple Department locations.

Dr. Leinhardt is truly dedicated to the Department and truly deserving of recognition with the Meritorious Duty Award.

**SENIOR STATIONARY ENGINEER ROBERT MITERKO**

Robert Miterko, Senior Stationary Engineer in Environmental Health and Safety, was charged with designing and overseeing the construction of a massive ventilation/air conditioning system at the George R. Vierno Center. His engineers significantly exceeded expectations in their expertise, leadership and diligence, enabling the Department to meet its goals and its obligation to provide suitable housing conditions for certain classifications of inmates in its custody. The work of Mr. Miterko, who joined the Department in 1982, is illustrative of the commitment and skills of our civilian staff and deserves both gratitude and recognition through a Meritorious Duty Award.

MERITORIOUS DUTY**SUPERVISING INVESTIGATOR THOMAS O'CONNOR**

Correction Officer Thomas O'Connor, currently the senior supervising investigator in the Department's Investigation Division, joined the Department in October, 1959—49 years ago this month—being appointed as a permanent Correction Officer in 1961. Never has the word "permanent" had more meaning. In fact, in the time since Investigator O'Connor joined the Department, his son completed his own 23-year career in law enforcement and retired.

After serving for the next 15 years in assignments at the Bronx House of Detention, Hart Island, the Police Academy and the facility now known as Eric M. Taylor Center, he was assigned to the Inspector General's Office, where he served until 1986, when the Investigation Division was created.

He has continued to serve in the Investigation Division from that day to this, along the way receiving awards too numerous to mention, including three Investigation Division Certificates of Appreciation, at least two COBA awards, the Department's Excellent Duty Medal and the Investigator of the Year award.

He has served with distinction, more than once detecting open or unresolved cases in the files of inmates and through acute observation avoiding an erroneous inmate discharge. Even more important, he has become a Department-wide symbol of both tenacity- he has taken not one sick day in the past 18 years - and the integrity that is so critical in the Department's work.

It would make sense to honor Mr. O'Connor in 2009, when he observes the anniversary of 50 years of service to the Department of Correction and the people of New York City. However, we choose not to wait, and present him with **both** Meritorious Duty Award and **The Commissioner's Award**.

**CAPTAIN MAXIMO SENISES AND CORRECTION OFFICER FRANK POST**

When, on May 12, 2008, Correction Officer Michael Muzio was stricken with an acute heart attack while on duty at the West Facility, his colleagues sprung into action.

Observing Officer Muzio in distress, Correction Officer Frank Post escorted him to the facility's Urgi-Care Clinic for attention by the medical staff. Meanwhile, EMS was summoned. Officer Post acted as escort and accompanied Officer Muzio, riding in the rear of the ambulance, while Captain Maximo Senises rode with the driver in the cab.

Enroute to Elmhurst General Hospital, EMS staff reported that Officer Muzio had no pulse, and that the driver was needed to assist in intensifying his treatment, so the driver pulled to the shoulder of the Brooklyn-Queens Expressway and went to the rear to assist the paramedic. However, rather than waste precious travel time while Officer Muzio was attended to, Captain Senises ordered Officer Post to drive the ambulance and they resumed the trip to the hospital with both EMS Officers desperately working to save Officer Muzio's life.

Although he subsequently succumbed to additional cardiac attacks and passed away, hospital staff reported that the quick action of the Captain and the Officer saved precious time in getting Officer Muzio to the nearest cardiac trauma unit as quickly and safely as possible. For their professional response to crisis in their efforts to save the life of a colleague, they are awarded the Meritorious Duty Award.

MERITORIOUS DUTY**ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER FOR MINISTERIAL AND VOLUNTEER SERVICES
IMAM UMAR ABDUL-JALIL**

The contributions of Imam Umar Abdul-Jalil, assistant commissioner for ministerial and volunteer services, can be summarized quite simply: he cares deeply for his colleagues in the Department and for their spiritual needs, and he will go any place at any time in the belief that he can assist them. His compassion and loyalty to us have been demonstrated time and again since he joined the Department in 1993, as he responded to Department events and important moments, both joyous and tragic, in the lives of its Members of Service.

**PETER WACHTEL, M.D.**

When Correction Officer Michael Muzio was brought to the West Facility Urgi-Care Clinic complaining of severe chest pains on May 12, 2008, Dr. Peter Wachtel, the physician on duty, responded decisively.

While instructing staff to clear a large number of waiting inmates from the area holding pens and to notify Special Operations Division that the Rikers Island bridge should be cleared to expedite the arrival of EMS, he rendered vital immediate medical care to Officer Muzio until paramedics arrived and continued working to stabilize Officer Muzio for transfer to the hospital.

Given Muzio's serious condition, he also recommended that Captain Maximo Senises accompany the ambulance and stay in telephone contact with the doctor, since he himself could not leave the large number of inmates awaiting urgent care in the clinic.

Dr. Wachtel stayed in telephone contact with Captain Senises as Officer Post took over driving the ambulance so that the driver could assist the paramedic in treating Officer Muzio, helping the officers to remain calm until they arrived at Elmhurst Hospital. He also maintained contact with hospital staff through Officer Muzio's triage at Elmhurst. Although Officer Muzio later passed away, Dr. Wachtel's quick actions and commitment to the well-being of the Officer were acknowledged as an important factor in getting Officer Muzio safely to the hospital for treatment.

MERITORIOUS DUTY**CAPTAIN MICHAEL WALTON**

Michael Walton, who unexpectedly passed away just last month, was a Captain's Captain.

He first joined the Department in 1990 and served at the James A. Thomas Center and the George R. Vierno Center, where he assisted in opening that facility. Officer Walton was recognized early for his dedication to duty and his outstanding performance, receiving a letter of commendation in 1991 and being named officer of the month in November, 1992.

At his request, he was assigned to the Training Academy in 1996 as an instructor, and there he found his niche. Teaching came easily to him, and he did it well...probably because he enjoyed helping others to achieve their potential and succeed. In 2000, he was recognized for ten years of perfect attendance, and the following year the Academy named him Employee of the Month for February.

After promotion to Captain, he was assigned to Eric M. Taylor Center, but he returned to the Academy as soon as he could, in March, 2004, to resume his role as an instructor and the job of Recruit Battalion Commander, a demanding job that attracted few applicants.

In that post, mentoring and counseling recruits became Captain Walton's passion, and he was the perfect role model for the job. His commitment showed. In July, 2006 he was again honored as Employee of the Month and in 2007, the Correction Officers Benevolent Association honored him as their Captain of the Year. When he passed away, he was in his 18th year of perfect attendance.

The recruit class that graduates next week will be the last class to have benefited from Captain Walton's passion for his profession and love of his job and the people he worked with. With respect but also with profound sadness, we honor Captain Michael Walton posthumously with the Meritorious Duty Award.

EMPLOYEES OF THE YEAR



CAPTAIN STEPHEN CUMBERBATCH

Captain Stephen Cumberbatch is a Department of Correction veteran who for 26 years has consistently demonstrated skill, dedication and commitment to his duties, wherever he has served.

For example, in his entire career, Captain Cumberbatch has called in sick just four times, which led to his receiving a 1992 certificate for ten years of perfect attendance and three designations as Employee of the Month during his tenure as a Captain.

Captain Cumberbatch currently serves as Administration Captain in the Queens Detention Complex, where he is responsible for security, environmental health and administrative functions and where he is known for his encyclopedic knowledge of court operations.

Both superiors and colleagues single out Captain Cumberbatch for his positive attitude, the ease with which he confronts different situations and his positive influence on all other staff.



HEAD NURSE LINDA RHANEY

Linda Rhaney, Head Nurse in the Health Management Division, is a 26-year veteran of the Department of Correction. She is honored as Employee of the Year in recognition of her career-long diligence and outstanding performance. In addition to her regularly assigned functions, Ms. Rhaney is also charged with ensuring that all candidates for Correction Officer are medically cleared for Fire and Safety performance prior to hiring. In the past year, during which the Department has recruited heavily, she has reviewed some 1,500 candidates, making a significant contribution to the efficient hiring of new officers.

UNIT CITATION**CARE**

One of the dominant themes of life in the Department of Correction is that of “family”—the recognition that our work is difficult, that we work together, that we depend upon one another and that generation after generation join us in our careers. CARE—Correction Assistance Response for Employees—is a program that both reflects this theme and recognizes the reality that effective and motivated employees may sometimes require assistance with problems in their lives. The dedicated CARE staff help employees deal with depression, domestic violence, alcoholism, the effects of serious threats by inmates and traumatic incidents and other personal problems.

**ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH UNIT**

The Environmental Health Unit is responsible for assuring that both inmates in the custody of the Department of Correction and Department staff live and work in conditions that are safe and sanitary, meeting the standards of state and federal statutes. The unit has seen to it that in its six most recent inspections by the state Department of Labor Public Employee Safety and Health Bureau, not a single fine has been levied for unsafe worker conditions. (This compares to \$1.6 million in fines outstanding in the mid 1990s.) However, the Environmental Health Unit is also honored with a Unit Citation for its extraordinary performance in a recent system-wide effort to maintain the cleanliness of inmate shower areas, which has resulted in the highest level of shower cleanliness since the Department began tracking such data.



UNIT CITATION

GEORGE M. DETENTION CENTER

With a daily inmate count of more than 1,900, the George Motchan Detention Center, named for the last Correction Officer to be killed in the line of duty, is the city's second largest jail. Yet GMDC is recording impressive progress in improving and maintaining inmate and staff safety. In the past year, GMDC has significantly reduced overall violence, and achieved a 20% reduction in inmate/inmate incidents and reduced slashings and stabbings from 13 to just two.



GEORGE R. VIERNO CENTER

The George R. Vierno Center houses several units designed to provide special services and high levels of security for specific segments of the inmate population. These units include the punitive segregation mental health unit which houses some of the Department's most difficult to manage inmates and the Intensive Treatment Unit.



UNIT CITATION

INTELLIGENCE UNIT

The Intelligence Unit was established in the mid-90s to combat the activities of inmates with street gang affiliations, and it continues today to develop information both to prevent and assist in the prosecution of incidents of inmate violence and other unlawful behavior, particularly by those with gang affiliations. The Intelligence Unit is awarded a Unit Citation this year for its role in developing information that assisted in tracking down and apprehending an inmate who escaped custody while being processed at the Brooklyn Courthouse. The inmate was returned to custody without incident a short time later.



INVESTIGATION DIVISION

The Investigation Division is at the forefront of the Department's continued commitment to integrity and accountability and thus has a broad range of responsibilities in monitoring the activities of personnel and investigating incidents ranging from uses of force to criminal allegations and off-duty incidents. More often than not, the Division has resolved allegations in favor of Department Staff. However, the Division also plays an important role in promoting public safety, as in its role in efforts to apprehend erroneously discharged inmates, and maintaining close cooperation with a wide variety of law enforcement agencies, including prosecutors, inspectors general and drug enforcement authorities. The Division is selected for a Unit Citation for its performance in all these functions.



UNIT CITATION**OTIS BANTUM CORRECTIONAL CENTER/CENTRAL PUNITIVE SEGREGATION UNIT**

The diverse facilities of the Otis Bantum Correctional Center include a housing area for high classification inmates and the Central Punitive Segregation Unit, which holds inmates found guilty of having committed infractions of jail rules and “sentenced” to time away from the general population. Despite the fact that the Punitive Segregation Unit includes some of the system’s most dangerous inmates, whose behavior is documented in their infraction histories, the jail staff has maintained a very low rate of violent incidents—in fact, just three slashings or stabbings in the past three years. This excellent record warrants recognition of the entire OBCC staff in a Unit Citation.

**DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION PIPE AND DRUM BAND**

In a city full of pipe and drum corps, the Department of Correction Pipe and Drum Band is widely and rightly known as one of the best—a group with a sure-fire talent for enthusing a crowd, getting through tough times and maintaining high morale. A collection of talented current and retired officers, the band travels to perform its rousing music at Department events both tragic and celebratory, from the St. Patrick’s Day Parade along Fifth Avenue to Department funerals and today’s happy observance of the courage and good work of our staff.



UNIT CITATION

SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION

The Support Services Division takes on just about every tough assignment that doesn't fall under the job description of other units, including maintenance and administration of the City's "Potters Field" cemetery and major maintenance projects. This year, the Support Services Division is selected for a Unit Citation in recognition of its efficient management of the project to install ventilation units necessary to provide appropriate court-ordered housing conditions for certain categories of inmates at GRVC.



SPECIAL OPERATIONS DIVISION

The Special Operations Division comprises several specialized units central to the routine operations of the jails as well as essential to incident response in all Department facilities. Included among its responsibilities is one of the Department's publicly most visible functions—the arrival and departure of 1,500 visitors to Rikers Island on an average day. The Division is honored for its overall performance as well as the recent accomplishments of its units, as detailed in other Unit Citations.



UNIT CITATION

CENTRAL VISITS CONTROL BUILDING

The Staff in the Central Visits Control Building have done extraordinary work in redesigning the main visitor entry portal to Rikers Island jails, making the area more secure and improving protections against the importation of contraband, while at the same time smoothing visitor traffic flow, increasing the amount of information available to visitors and making it easier and faster for more than 350,000 visitors to meet with their loved ones in Rikers Island jails every year.



RADIO SHOP

Maintaining the safety and security of jails and the people in them is a never-ending challenge that requires both vigilance and the use of the latest technologies. The Special Operations Division and its Radio Shop are honored with a Unit Citation this year for their effectiveness in prompt installation of next-generation surveillance cameras and equipment throughout the jails in keeping with court orders.



UNIT CITATION

SPECIAL SEARCH TEAM

Less contraband in the jails—whether weapons or commodities to fight over—means less violence in the jails. The Special Search Team was organized to provide the Department with a unit of officers specially trained in discovering and confiscating weapons and other contraband in the city's jails. Officers cannot volunteer for the Special Search Team. Instead, they are selected after being identified as among the best at countering the



inmates' never-ending attempts to possess contraband. The unit continues to make important contributions and has played a critical role in the Department's successes in recent years in reducing the levels of violence in the jails and maintaining them at record low levels, ensuring the safety of both inmates and staff.

ADW - WILLIAM HEIDENREICH OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**ASSISTANT DEPUTY WARDEN STANLEY CHIN**

Assistant Deputy Warden Stanley Chin is this year's recipient of the ADW/DW Association's William Heidenreich Outstanding Achievement Award to the ADW "whose professionalism, integrity and commitment to duty, supervisors, peers and subordinates has been consistent throughout his career."

ADW Chin is a 22-year veteran of the Department who entered the Correction Academy with bachelors degrees in both business and economics and who graduated as the Academy's valedictorian.

He began his career with three years in the Robert N. Davoren Center before being promoted to Captain. His 10 years at the Captain's rank were divided between the James A. Thomas Center and the Manhattan Detention Center. While at JATC, ADW Chin received the Department's Exceptional Merit Award for his heroic action in restraining a violent inmate who had viciously stabbed another Officer. He was named Assistant Deputy Warden in 2000 and served six years at George Motchen Detention Center before accepting his current assignment in the Special Operations Division, where he has served since 2007 as Executive Officer.

ADW Chin is a past president of the Asian Jade Society and has served on the executive board of the Supreme Council of Asians in Law Enforcement

ADW Chin's leadership abilities were also acknowledged in 2004, when COBA named him its ADW of the Year. The Asian Jade Society named him their Man of the Year in 2005.

ADW - DOMINICK SCHIANO AWARD**DEPUTY WARDEN IN COMMAND EDMUND DUFFY**

Edmund Duffy, who this year was named Deputy Warden in Command (DWIC) of the Department's Hospital Prison Wards, is a worthy recipient of the award intended to honor a deputy warden "whose professionalism, integrity and commitment to duty, supervisors, peers and subordinates have been consistent throughout his career."

DWIC Duffy joined the Department in 1982 and served at the Correctional Institute for Women before being promoted to Captain in just three years and assigned to the Anna M. Kross Center, where he worked in the mental health housing units for five years.

DWIC Duffy was promoted to Assistant Deputy Warden and assigned to the George M. Detention Center in 1998. The Correction Academy then enlisted him as an adjunct faculty member to teach newly promoted ADWs. While working as the Assistant Deputy Warden for Security, Duffy received the Excellent Duty award for gathering information leading to significant contraband recoveries. He also served as facility delegate for the ADWs/DW's Association. In 2003, he became executive officer of the Transportation Division and later that year he was promoted to Deputy Warden.

In 2006, he was assigned as Deputy Warden for Security at GMDC and in 2007 in the newly created Operations Deputy post at GMDC, where marked reductions in inmate/inmate and inmate/staff violence were achieved.

Last year, COBA recognized DWIC Duffy as its "Team Leader of the Year."

CORRECTION CAPTAINS' ASSOCIATION - ALFRED MANDANICI COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD



CAPTAIN KHALILAH FLEMISTER

Captain Khalilah Flemister joined the Department of Correction in 2001. However, she began her work as a volunteer years earlier, at the age of 14, offering her services at nursing homes and hospitals and watching her parents work in community organizations and help the homeless.

The list of Captain Flemister's charitable and voluntary activities reads like a directory of America's non-profit world. And through those early involvements, she has perfected the science of combining her "day job" with the volunteer activities that infuse her spirit.

She was promoted to the rank of Captain in 2000 and has worked at Rose M. Singer Center and as an investigator in the Trials and Litigation Division...but she has also been a leader of the NYC Correction Guardians and Operation Give Back, which provides a Christmas Party for children at the Women in Need of homeless shelter.

She is an emergency medical technician, but has also raised more than \$2 million for the Muscular Dystrophy Association and headed its Send-a-Child-to-Summer-Camp program.

She is a Cub Scout pack leader also but has been a Team Captain for the Race for the Cure since 1998, and an active member of Blacks in Government and the NAACP.

Captain Flemister's example is rubbing off—her son is a Boy Scout and a peer mediator and tutor at his high school. But she has also been a shining example and inspiration to her colleagues. She makes all of us proud and richly deserves to be honored with the Correction Captains Association Award for Community Service.

**COBA - ARTURO MEYERS MEMBER OF THE YEAR AWARD AND
DEPARTMENTAL EXCEPTIONAL MERIT MEDAL****CORRECTION OFFICERS FREDERIC FUSCO
AND WILLIAM C. RYBA**

Correction Officers Frederic Fusco and William Ryba were making deliveries in the Bronx on November 30, 2007, when they were approached by a civilian who told them that two men—both with knives—were fighting nearby.

Officers Fusco and Ryba quickly drove to the nearby location and observed the two male suspects circling and shouting at one another, with one already wounded and bleeding from the hand. Officer Ryba, an 18-year veteran, and Officer Fusco, who joined the Department in 2005, identified themselves and ordered the two combatants to drop the weapons and stop fighting. The suspects complied, and the two officers called for police and EMS assistance and detained the suspects until officers from the 45th Precinct arrived and took them into custody.

Officers Fusco and Ryba demonstrated courage, quick thinking and professional response to a dangerous situation and are chosen to receive both COBA's Member of the Year Award and the Department's Medal of Exceptional Merit.



The New York City Department Of Correction