

2023 St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office Department Awards

Throughout the year, the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office honors those whose bravery and dedication to protecting others distinguish them as heroes. In 2023, Sheriff Greg Champagne presented one Award for Valor, three Distinguished Service Awards, six Letters of Commendation, and three Citizen Awards.

Recipients were honored for a variety of courageous acts, such as medical life saving acts, providing child safety seats to those in need, assisting other emergency first responders, and risking their own lives for the safety of others.

- * Award for Valor
- * Distinguished Service Awards
- * Letters of Commendation
- * Citizen Awards

Distinguished Service Award Deputy Derrick Cuffie

In the early morning hours of April 23, 2023, Deputy Derrick Cuffie was patrolling the area of Bayou Gauche Road when he saw a vehicle with body damage driving very slowly. Deputy Cuffie made contact with the driver and noticed his right foot was nearly severed and bleeding profusely. Deputy Cuffie applied a tourniquet, which eventually stopped the bleeding. The driver was transported to the hospital a short time later.

EMS Director Huey Marcel confirmed that Deputy Cuffie's actions were indeed lifesaving and deserve to be commended.

For his actions on April 23, 2023, Deputy Cuffie was awarded the Distinguished Service Award.

Letter of Commendation Sergeant Don Murray and Deputy Emory Putman

On April 22, 2023, Sergeant Don Murray and Deputy Emory Putman were dispatched to a medical call at the residence of a Sheriff's Office employee. Upon arrival, Sergeant Murray and Deputy Putman located the employee with a significant cut above his right knee. Direct pressure was applied to the wound and a tourniquet was applied due to the severe bleeding. He was ultimately transported to the hospital for treatment. Due to the severity of the laceration, his injury required surgery.

Sergeant Murray and Deputy Putman's actions that day are commendable and deserve to be recognized.

Letter of Commendation

Lieutenant Walter Banks, Sergeant Holly Laurent, and Detective Chris Waguespack

On the evening of April 23, 2023, Sergeant Adam Coley contacted the Juvenile Investigations Division regarding a mother who was awarded custody of her children as a result of a protective order. The young mother did not have the funds to purchase the two car seats necessary to transport her children back to North Louisiana. Sergeant Holly Laurent, along with Detective Chris Waguespack and Lieutenant Walter Banks were able to provide donated car seats and install them for her.

Lieutenant Banks, Sergeant H. Laurent, and Detective Waguespack's actions that evening are commendable and deserve to be recognized.

Letter of Commendation

Corporal Andre Lee

Sheriff Champagne received a letter of recognition from Huey Marcel, Director of St. Charles Parish EMS advising:

On Wednesday, March 29, 2023, fire, EMS, and SCSO were dispatched to Pine Lane in St. Rose for an apartment complex on fire. Corporal Andre Lee was off-duty and on his way to meet a firefighter for lunch, when he heard the call come out. Corporal Lee went to the scene for hours, helping pass out water and assisting firefighters with rehab as they would exit the fire, carrying air bottles back and forth to be filled, and he offered any assistance needed. Corporal Lee went over and beyond the call of duty by helping in any way possible, especially while being off duty. The actions displayed by Corporal Lee represent what a public servant should be and were noticed by many members from various agencies and departments.

Corporal A. Lee's actions that day are commendable and deserve to be recognized.

Award for Valor

Deputy Michael Kinler

Citizen's Award

Maximo Diaz-Leiva, Willie James, and Jonah Raiford

On October 17, 2023, off-duty Deputy Michael Kinler was traveling to an in-service training class in St. John Parish when he responded to a call for service for a woman in crisis. Deputy Kinler observed a frantic man on Airline Highway standing next to the women's vehicle. The vehicle then sped away, made a U-turn, and quickly accelerated before crashing into a pond south of the spillway off Airline Highway. Seeing that the vehicle was drifting and sinking, Deputy Kinler

immediately entered the water and swam to it, sacrificing his own personal safety to recover a one-year-old child that was secured in a child safety seat. Deputy Kinler swam back to the shore with the child while Maximo Diaz-Leiva, Willie James, and Jonah Raiford recovered the woman in crisis from the vehicle.

Once everyone was safe, Deputy Kinler briefed responding officers on what had transpired and asked if he could be dismissed because he did not want to leave the in-service training class short on role players. Deputy Kinler's dedication and loyalty to this agency and service to the community are outstanding and second to none. His actions are commendable. He risked his own personal safety to ensure the safety of a child. For these reasons, Deputy Michael Kinler is awarded the ***Award for Valor***.

Maximo Diaz-Leiva, Willie James, and Jonah Raiford put their own personal safety in jeopardy to save the life of another. The actions of these men are very commendable, especially at a time when most people would have stood by on the shoreline and recorded the incident on their phones. For these reasons, Maximo Diaz-Leiva, Willie James, and Jonah Raiford are awarded the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office ***Citizen's Award***.

Distinguished Service Award Deputy Christopher Lee and Deputy Mohamed Mahmoud

On October 1, 2023, Officers working an off-duty detail at the Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport were dispatched to an unresponsive man at a ticket counter. Deputies Christopher Lee and Mohamed Mahmoud responded to the scene and found three nurses performing CPR on the man. Despite the efforts made to resuscitate him, he continued to show no signs of recovery and had minimal vital signs. Fearing the man may have overdosed, Deputy Lee administered two doses of Narcan and then continued chest compressions, relieving the nurses. Meanwhile, Deputy Mahmoud retrieved a CPR mask and AED and began medical triage. Their effort continued for several minutes until emergency Medical Personnel arrived on scene to provide extensive life-saving measures. The man was transported to a local area hospital for further care and was expected to recover.

Captain Dennis Thornton with the Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office said that Deputies Lee and Mahmoud are believed to be instrumental in saving the man's life. For these reasons, Deputy Christopher Lee and Deputy Mohamed Mahmoud are awarded the ***Distinguished Service Award***.