



Date of occurrence: September 11, 2020

Employee Name: Officer Joseph Matthews

Unit/Division: Police Department

Award/Commendation type and recommendations: Letter of Commendation and recommendation for Officer of the Month for September, 2020.

Narrative:

On September 11, 2020, Officer Joseph Matthews was enroute to work driving his marked Police Department vehicle when he observed a multi-vehicle traffic crash in the 15700 block of Northwest 2nd Avenue. Officer Matthews took immediate action in strategically positioning his police vehicle and assessing the scene for injured motorists and pedestrians. Officer Matthews observed a visible shaken female holding an infant child near a minivan that had been involved in the traffic crash. Officer Matthews transmitted a priority call for immediate emergency assistance then radioed a priority call for immediate emergency assistance on the main Miami- Dade Police radio channel due to the severity of the crash and the likelihood of multiple injuries. The distressed female then ran towards Officer Matthews passenger window with the infant in her outstretched arms saying "help my baby, help my baby". Officer Matthews hurriedly donned his PPE gloves, took possession of the infant, and conducted a medical assessment of the infant's heartbeat, respirations, and condition. His assessment led to the conclusion that the infant had no visible signs of trauma, was non-responsive, no respirations, and no heartbeat. Officer Matthews immediately began Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) on the infant. As Officer Matthews performed compressions, he was able to instruct the infant's mother to perform rescue breathing to the infant. Officer Matthews knew he had to continue the CPR compressions and breathing cycles non-stop until Fire Rescue personnel arrived. He intelligently commissioned the assistance a citizen on scene to depress the transit button on his police radio so he could provide pertinent medical updates to the police dispatcher via his radio that were then relayed to Miami-Dade Fire Rescue personnel enroute to the scene. Upon arrival of the Miami-Dade Police Officer, the infant's mother was relieved from the rescue breathing role. Officer Matthews continued performing compressions until Miami-Dade Fire rescue personnel arrived and took over the efforts to save the infant's life. Several adults and children were transported to the hospital by Fire Rescue and the infant was airlifted via Miami-Dade Fire Rescue helicopter to Jackson Memorial Hospital Ryder Trauma Center. Officer Matthews provided all his pertinent information to the Miami-Dade Police Department Traffic Crash Investigators on scene.

The efforts and actions by all first responders were remarkable and heroic. Officer Joseph Matthews deserves special recognition for his prompt reaction to a critical incident he happened upon his way to work outside of his jurisdiction; safely and effectively coordinating the on-scene response of the traffic crash; and identifying mitigated injuries to other pedestrians and motorists. The infant arrived at Jackson Memorial Hospital but despite the valiant efforts of the first responders and hospital staff, the 20-day old infant expired while at the hospital. Two children also traveling in the same vehicle as the infant, a one year old and a two-year-old, were transported to the Ryder Trauma Center in stable condition.

The Surfside Police Department is extremely proud of Officer Joseph Mathews' heroic actions and efforts during this horrific tragedy. Officer Matthews is commended for his quick response, decision making skills, professionalism, and dedication to the South Florida Community he so proudly serves. Congratulations to Officer Joseph Matthews as the recipient of the September Officer of the Month award...well deserved!