



Date of occurrence: 2017

Employee Name: John Gentile

Classification: Police Officer

Unit/Division: Patrol

Award/Commendation type and recommendations: Surfside Police Department
Officer of the Year 2017

Narrative:

This letter is to recognize Officer John Gentile as the Surfside Police Department 2016 Officer of the Year. Officer John Gentile joined the Surfside Police Department in 2005 and has consistently shined. During the year 2017, Officer Gentile has continued to exemplify the highest standards of a professional police officer.

On April 25, 2017, Officer Gentile stopped a vehicle for a traffic infraction. Further investigation resulted in the arrest of the two occupants who were in possession of a total of eight firearms, over 200 rounds of ammunition, and marijuana. The driver, at the time of the stop, had an AK-47, loaded, on his lap. The driver had an extensive past out of three different states. Both occupants were arrested for various weapons charges and a narcotics charge. The firearms and ammunition were impounded and taken off the streets. Officer Gentile was awarded was recognized as Officer of the Month for April for his outstanding self-initiated police work resulting in multiple arrests and the seizure of numerous firearms and a significant amount of narcotics.

On July 09, 2017, Officer Gentile was commended for observing suspicious activity which involved three males in a vehicle, parked at the side of the road, and a male on a motorcycle, parked a short distance away in the 9100 block of Collins Avenue. Officer Gentile observed the motorcycle travel south on Collins Avenue, the wrong way, and turn on 91st Street to Harding Avenue, avoiding Officer Gentile who was parked further up the block. As the vehicle pulled away with the other three males inside, Officer Gentile conducted a traffic stop. The occupants gave conflicting stories about their activity near the motorcycle. The owner of the motorcycle lived in 9100 block of Collins Avenue and confirmed his motorcycle had been stolen. All three males were arrested for Loitering and Prowling. A BOLO was issued county wide for the motorcycle and it was recovered a few hours later by the Miami Dade Police Department. Officer Gentile received the Officer of the Month award for July for being proactive and alert while patrolling, leading to the arrest of these subjects before any further crimes could be committed.

On August 08, 2017, Officer Gentile, and his fellow squad members, investigated a suspicious incident call from a resident who observed several juveniles in his neighbor's yard. While responding to the call, the officers observed several juveniles riding bicycles away from the area. The juveniles were detained and the three bicycles the juveniles had in their possession had in fact been stolen and were returned to the homeowner. Officer Gentile and his fellow officers were able to work together at different locations to effectively investigate the incident, arrest the juveniles, and return all stolen property without allowing any further thefts.

On September 18, 2017, Officer Gentile assisted a resident who had lost her house and car keys in front of her home, close to a large pile of debris from Hurricane Irma. The resident was looking through the debris in front of her home, in the dark, and was having difficulties locating her keys. Officer Gentile drove by and offered his assistance to the woman who was frantically looking in the debris for her keys. Officer Gentile was successful in locating the keys. In a letter to the Chief of Police, the resident expressed her surprise and appreciation for the officer's random act of kindness. The resident never expected hands on assistance by a police officer and wanted to commend Officer Gentile for taking his time to assist with a non-police issue that made a lasting impression on the resident.

Officer Gentile is a Field Training Officer and considered a top instructor among his peers. His knowledge, experience and work ethic combine to be a great advantage for those he trains. Officer Gentile takes the job of instructing new hires very seriously from both the perspective of the trainee who will possibly be using the learned skills to save his life or that of another one day to the importance of developing only the best candidates to serve the Town of Surfside.

Additionally, Officer Gentile is the department's Off-Duty coordinator. In that role, Officer Gentile works closely with a large number of entities from contractors to residents requesting off-duty officers for security, traffic control and road closures. Officer Gentile schedules and manages an average of over 1000 Off-Duty shifts totaling in excess of 9800 hours yearly.

Officer Gentile's work ethic and exemplary dedication and commitment to his profession is not only noteworthy but commendable and worthy of recognition. His tireless commitment to improve and connect with the community is an extraordinary example of the essence and substantive framework that embodies the department's mission statement. Congratulations to Officer John Gentile as the recipient of Officer of the Year...well deserved!