

2020 CIVILIAN OF THE YEAR

Parking Enforcement Officer Willie Perez

Chief Yero was honored to present the 2020 Civilian of the Year Award to Parking Enforcement Officer Willy Perez.

Parking Enforcement Officer William (Willy) Perez began his commendable 25-year career with the Surfside Police Department in 1996 and his longevity with this organization is the epitome of stability and service. Though his primary role is enforcement of parking violations, he assists with traffic control, receives correspondence and packages, delivers and picks up equipment in need of repair or certification, transports vehicles and handles numerous logistical matters for the operational effectiveness of the Police Department.

In October 2020, Parking Enforcement Officer Perez was awarded the Civilian of the Month for his dedication to assisting others and his commitment to community service. Without his actions in this situation, a young woman could have remained unidentified and been delayed proper care. (See the story in the December 2020 Gazette at bit.ly/Dec20Gazette).

PEO Perez also received a commendation in December for his work on the 12th Annual Holiday Toy Drive. The Surfside Police Department traditionally hosts an annual Holiday Toy Giveaway Party. The toys collected were distributed over two days to 26 grateful families in need. PEO Perez contacted each family and coordinated delivery dates and times. The day of delivery, he provided valuable instructions to the anxiously awaiting families. His assistance was instrumental in the success of the event.

PEO Willy Perez is a critical link between the Police Department and the community. This relationship is paramount to the day-to-day effectiveness of operations. We commend him for his dedication to service and commitment to the Police Department and the community. Congratulations!



(L-R) Willie Perez, Police Chief Julio Yero and Bobby Gabriel

2020 OFFICER OF THE YEAR

Officer Bobby Gabriel

Chief Yero was honored to present the 2020 Officer of the Year Award to Police Officer Bobby Gabriel.

Bobby Gabriel began with the Surfside Police Department (SPD) at age 16, as a Police Explorer. He joined the SPD family in 2011 as a Communications Operator and was sworn-in as Police Officer in 2013. Officer Gabriel demonstrates

the highest standards of conduct and professionalism and is dedicated to serving and protecting Surfside residents and its visitors. He is an ultimate colleague and a true team player.

In 2017, Gabriel began an assignment in the South Florida Financial Crimes Strike Force, a multi-agency, local, state, and federal investigative unit primarily tasked with investigating money launderers, smugglers and narcotics traffickers. Through hours of surveillance, investigations and processing of evidence, he helped law enforcement seize approximately \$3.5 million. He also investigated unlawful gold smuggling and seized gold and illegal funds obtained from criminal activity. The Town of Surfside was awarded a portion of the seizures. His experience and knowledge from Strike Force is a benefit to the agency and the Town he serves.

While working on patrol in Surfside, Gabriel received a be-on-the-lookout for a stolen vehicle that was traveling south on Collins Avenue. He spotted a vehicle matching the description and confirmed the vehicle to be stolen. Two subjects were taken into custody. The driver was on inmate release and awaiting trial for aggravated battery on a police officer with a deadly weapon and fleeing and eluding police. A female passenger was in possession of drug paraphernalia. Both were arrested without incident. Officer Gabriel was nominated for the September Officer of the Month. Less than a month later, Officer Bobby Gabriel was named the October Officer of the Month for his keen observation skills which led to an arrest and recovery of another stolen vehicle (see the complete story in the December 2020 Gazette, bit.ly/Dec20Gazette).

Officer Bobby Gabriel has a strong work ethic, is highly respected by his peers and is devoted to the community he proudly serves. Congratulations!