

OFFICER OF THE MONTH - SEPTEMBER 2021

Detective Arrests Frauds Stealing from Champlain Victims

The Champlain Towers South building collapse on June 24, 2021 impacted many families throughout Surfside, surrounding communities and Miami-Dade County, in unimaginable ways. It was only two weeks after the tragic incident that the first identity fraud report was received. Subjects accessed the victim's account, transferring \$2,000. Family members of five other deceased victims reported fraud in their accounts. The subjects changed the victims' addresses and stole their identities to buy gift cards and high-end purchases. Surfside Detective Andres Mendoza was assigned to the investigation and discovered the Aventura Police Department had received a seventh fraud report.

Detective Mendoza successfully identified the first subject through store cameras and a witness. A surveillance operation was conducted for several days, yielding enough results to proceed with arrest warrants. The State Attorney's Office granted the warrants, and after days of planning and coordination, local and federal partners arrested four subjects. Each were



dealt high bond and three vehicles were seized. At the residence detectives found personal mail with names of the victims, credit card making machines, blank credit cards and checks, narcotics and a firearm.

Detective Andres Mendoza conducted an exceptional investigation leading to the arrest of criminals who further victimized devastated Surfside families. Detective Mendoza is commended for his tenacity in conducting a comprehensive investigation that honored the victims. Congratulations to Detective Andres Mendoza as the recipient of the September Officer of the Month award. Well deserved!

Surfside Police Join in Childhood Cancer Awareness Month

September was National Childhood Cancer Awareness Month and the Forces showed up in Gold. The 4th Annual Childhood Cancer Police Car Initiative Gold Ribbon Parade was hosted by the Mystic Force Foundation in conjunction with the North Miami Police Department. The parade showcased police vehicles from all Miami-Dade departments



wrapped and decorated with gold ribbons in support of the littlest heroes battling childhood Cancer. Surfside Officer Micah Smith (pictured in the far left photo) participated in this momentous event and a Surfside police vehicle supporting childhood cancer awareness was proudly displayed.

JORGE VILLAR HONORED WITH 10-YEAR PIN



In honor of 10 years of distinguished service, Chief Julio Yero presented Communications Operator Jorge Villar (third from left) with a 10-year recognition pin he will proudly wear on his uniform.



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