



# 2010 VACP/VPCF AWARDS

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August 10, 2010  
Reston, Virginia





**T**he Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police and Virginia Police Chiefs Foundation each year recognize individuals in three award categories: Lifesaving, Outstanding Contribution to Law Enforcement and Valor. This year, we will also recognize an Outstanding Legislator from the Virginia General Assembly.

It is with great pride that we recognize the exceptional efforts of these fine officers and individuals who are a credit to their agencies and true public servants to the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,

Chief M. Douglas Scott  
2009-2010 VACP President

# **Annual VACP/VPCF Awards Banquet**

**August 10, 2010 • Reston, VA**

## **WELCOME**

Chief M. Douglas Scott, VACP President

## **INVOCATION**

## **DINNER**

## **PLATINUM SPONSOR RECOGNITION:**

CISCO SYSTEMS, INC.

VERIZON WIRELESS

## **VACP/VPCF AWARDS PROGRAM:**

Chief Bruce P. Marquis, VACP Awards Committee Chairman

Chief M. Douglas Scott, VACP President

### **Outstanding Legislator Award**

### **Awards for Lifesaving, presented to Agency Chiefs**

### **Awards for Valor**

### **Award for Outstanding Contribution to Law Enforcement**

## **VACP PRESIDENT'S AWARD**

Chief M. Douglas Scott, VACP President

## **INSTALLATION OF 2010-2011 VACP EXECUTIVE BOARD**

Chief Charlie T. Deane, Chairman, VACP Nominating Committee

## **PAST PRESIDENT PRESENTATION**



**T**he Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police on special occasions honors a Virginia lawmaker who has been an outstanding supporter of the Virginia law enforcement community.

This award is presented in recognition of a legislator's dedicated leadership to improving the state criminal justice system, and commitment to addressing the needs and concerns of Virginia law enforcement.

The 2010 Award for Outstanding Legislator is presented with great pride and gratitude to the Honorable Janet D. Howell, Senate of Virginia.

# 2010 OUTSTANDING LEGISLATOR AWARD

## HONORABLE JANET D. HOWELL

### *Senate of Virginia*

"Senator Howell is a champion for Virginia law enforcement," said VACP President Doug Scott, Arlington County Police Chief. "She is very dedicated to protecting funding streams for Virginia law enforcement agencies, and to promoting legislation that reduces crimes and protects victims. Senator Howell's work in support of Virginia's law enforcement agencies never wavers or changes course, and we have come to depend on her leadership in the General Assembly."

In the 2010 General Assembly session, Senator Howell led the effort in the State Senate to restore the 599 funding stream for Virginia police departments. Her stirring speech in support of funding for state and local law enforcement on the floor of the Virginia Senate during the 2010 General Assembly session confirmed her steadfast commitment to putting public safety at the forefront of government services.

Senator Howell currently is Chair of the Virginia State Crime Commission, where she presides over a number of critical public safety studies and projects. She is the first woman to serve on the prestigious Virginia Senate Finance Committee, and chairs the Public Safety Subcommittee of the Finance Committee. Senator Howell is also the first woman and second non-lawyer to serve on the Committee for Courts of Justice. As a state legislator, she has focused on education, transportation, human services and public safety. A recognized expert on family violence prevention and crimes against women and children, Senator Howell champions legislation to protect women and children, including Megan's Law, creation of a sex offender registry, and anti-stalking legislation. She chaired the Commission on Family Violence Prevention which totally revamped and updated Virginia's approach to domestic violence.

Senator Howell is a wife, mother, grandmother and community leader for more than thirty years, and a native of Northern Virginia. She has represented the residents of the 32nd Senate District for 19 years.





**T**he Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police and the Virginia Police Chiefs Foundation are proud to honor eight officers with the 2010 Award for Lifesaving.

The VACP/VPCF Lifesaving Award is presented in recognition of a law enforcement officer's actions that put that officer in harm's way in an attempt to save the life of another. This year's honorees risked their own lives to save others from armed assailants, burning buildings, deadly falls, vehicle crashes, personal harm and other dangerous situations. In several cases, the honorees are credited with saving the lives of a fellow law enforcement officer.

The Lifesaving Awards will be presented at the officers' agencies by their chief on behalf of the VACP.

# 2010 LIFESAVING AWARDS

Chesapeake Police Department

**Field Training Officer Eric Hayes**

Chesterfield County Police Department

**Officer First Class Jordan J. Lambert**

**Senior Officer Eric Becker**

**Senior Officer Richard L. Upton**

Henrico County Division of Police

**Sergeant George Russell**

Roanoke Police Department

**Officer Nicholas D. Comas**

Virginia Beach Police Department

**Officer Alison N. Spiroff**

Virginia State Police

**Trooper S. Matthew Cochran**



**T**onight, the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police and the Virginia Police Chiefs Foundation honor nine Virginia law enforcement officers with our highest award.

The VACP/VPCF Award for Valor recognizes a law enforcement officer who, in the line of duty, performs an act of extraordinary heroism while engaged with an adversary at imminent personal risk.

These awards recognize the bravery, professionalism and commitment to public service of these fine officers.



# 2010 VALOR AWARDS

Danville Police Department  
**Corporal Samuel C. Bray**

Leesburg Police Department  
**Detective Matt Hackney**

&

Loudoun County Sheriff's Office  
**Sergeant Chris Coderre**

Newport News Police Department  
**Officer Richard Mojica**  
**Officer Gregory I. Seaborne**  
**Officer Joseph Torres**

Portsmouth Police Department  
**Officer Scott Blystone**  
**Officer Frank Natal**  
**SWAT Medic Jeff Yates**



On January 5, 2010, Corporal Samuel C. Bray of the Danville Police Department was on routine uniformed patrol when he was dispatched to a call of shots fired. He received additional information from the dispatcher that some of the persons involved had fled the scene in a vehicle and that several more were fleeing on foot.

Corporal Bray immediately began a search for the suspects. As he drove down Paul Street, Bray observed the suspect run across the street directly in front of his patrol car with a gun in his hand. Corporal Bray radioed what he had seen, drew his weapon and gave chase on foot, yelling repeatedly to the suspect to drop the gun.



*Corporal Samuel C. Bray*

As the suspect ran behind a house, he appeared to stumble and fall. Corporal Bray confronted the suspect on the ground and ordered him again to drop the gun. When the suspect raised his gun to shoot, Corporal Bray fired five shots, striking the suspect four times. Corporal Bray then took cover and directed the actions of responding officers to protect them from danger until the suspect and his weapon could be secured. The suspect died from his wounds.

The subsequent investigation revealed that two groups of men had engaged in a gun battle on Chatelaine Avenue, during which one was killed. Corporal Bray was responding to the report of shots fired at that location when he confronted the suspect running from the scene. Corporal Bray's actions demonstrated exceptional valor in the face of certain danger. His immediate response to a shots fired call, his determination to find the suspects, his willingness to leave the safety of his patrol car to confront an armed man alone, his decision to chase the armed man, his ability to give clear commands to drop the gun during the chase and engagement, his decision to use deadly force when faced with death, and his clear instructions to responding officers to protect them from harm were all actions indicative of a courageous, alert, calm, well-trained and disciplined police officer.

Leesburg Police Department

**DETECTIVE MATT HACKNEY**

Loudoun County Sheriff's Office

**SERGEANT CHRIS CODERRE**



On July 10, 2009, police responded to an attempted robbery at a jewelry store. The owner left the shop in a state of panic and the suspect chased the shop owner. At least one shot was fired before the suspect fled on foot.

Soon after, the suspect was seen by a citizen, who noticed him breathing heavily and sweating profusely behind a house. The citizen asked the suspect what he was doing there and told the suspect to stop, but he continued to walk away. The citizen then took cover behind a vehicle as the suspect displayed a weapon and fired one round before continuing to flee on foot. Police units set up a perimeter in the area in an attempt to contain the subject.

The suspect then forced entry into a residence occupied by a babysitter and a 2-year old child. He stole a cell phone, jewelry, and the keys to the babysitter's vehicle before locking the sitter in a bathroom. The residents returned home, at which time the suspect threatened them at gunpoint and told them to get on the floor. He took \$800 from the victim's wallet before fleeing in their vehicle, which was found abandoned a short time later.

Soon after, the suspect entered the home of another couple through their open garage, and barricaded himself inside the residence. The victims were locked in the bathroom, but were able to call 911 from a cell phone to report the hostage situation. Leesburg Police Detective Matthew Hackney and Loudoun County Sheriff's Office K9 Sergeant Chris Coderre heard the radio call that two hostages were being held and proceeded to the residence to confirm. The two officers and canine entered the garage and confronted the gunman as he was attempting to exit the residence and leave in the victims' car. The officers ordered the gunman to surrender; however, he reentered the residence and fired a round at the officers narrowly missing them. The officers and canine held their position until backup officers and tactical personnel arrived.

Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) members were on-duty, and immediately began negotiating by cell phone. The couple were tied up by the suspect and terrorized throughout the event. The negotiations with the suspect lasted for approximately nine (9) hours. The first victim was released at approximately 9:00 pm. At 9:50 pm, the second victim was released and the suspect surrendered to police.



*Detective Matt Hackney*



*Sergeant Chris Coderre*

Newport News Police Department

**OFFICER RICHARD MOJICA**  
**OFFICER GREGORY I. SEABORNE**  
**OFFICER JOSEPH TORRES**



On Wednesday, March 3, 2010, Officers Joseph Torres, Richard Mojica and Gregory Seaborne, members of the Newport News Police Department's High Impact Patrol Unit, were patrolling together in an unmarked police unit. On that day, all officers were in plain clothes and wearing their issued ballistic "raid vests" clearly marked with the word POLICE on the front and back.

While patrolling, they noticed a suspicious Chevrolet Impala occupied by two black males. The vehicle was running and the lights were off. As the officers got out of the car and began their approach, they encountered two subjects who quickly exited the vehicle. As the driver exited the vehicle, he pointed a firearm and opened fire on Officer Torres, striking him in the chest (where the bullet was stopped by his ballistic vest) and hip. Officer Torres fell to the ground and attempted to draw his firearm and take cover with no success. Officers Mojica and Seaborne took cover near their police unit.



*Officer Joseph Torres*

After disabling Officer Torres, the gunman walked closer towards him and pointed the firearm directly at Officer Torres. At that time, Officers Seaborne and Officer Mojica returned fire and startled the gunman, causing him to flinch as he pulled the trigger. The bullet missed Officer Torres, who was still lying on the ground.

Officers Seaborne and Officer Mojica proceeded to engage the gunman and a shoot-out ensued. During this time, the passenger of the suspect vehicle fled on foot in an unknown direction. After several shots were fired, the gunman got back into his car and sped off. Officer Mojica ran towards Officer Torres and rendered aid as Officer Seaborne got into the police unit and pursued the gunman for several miles until his vehicle ran off the road and crashed into several trees. Officer Seaborne, who was close behind the gunman's vehicle, likewise ran off the road and crashed into the trees directly in front of the suspect's vehicle.



When Officer Seaborne (and others) approached the gunman's car, the driver was deceased. He had a gunshot wound to the head. A 9mm handgun and a wallet were lying on the floor between the driver's feet. A substantial quantity of crack cocaine, a small amount of marijuana and \$362 cash was found in the driver's pockets.

The deceased driver had an extensive criminal history and, at the time of the incident, had outstanding warrants on file in Norfolk for Robbery and Violation of the Drug Control Act (VDCA). His criminal history included Possession with Intent, Evade and Elude Police, and Possession of Firearm by Felon. The gunman was a member of the "Bounty Hunter Bloods" gang. He had been implicated in several robberies in the Norfolk area and was said to be plotting a home invasion the night the officers encountered him.

The passenger was later identified as a former prison mate of the deceased gunman. The VDCA and robbery charges against the deceased gunman in Norfolk stemmed from a "home invasion" robbery in that city. Norfolk detectives advised that the passenger was a suspected accomplice, but has not been charged at this time.

Officers Mojica, Seaborne and Torres performed their duties in a courageous manner during a very traumatic encounter. These officers put their lives on the line to keep their community safe by stopping a violent subject with a violent history. Two of the three officers are back to work and still performing their duties with no distress. The third officer is expected to return to full duty status in the near future and continue his service with the Newport News Police Department.



*Officer Richard Mojica*



*Officer Gregory I. Seaborne*

*Portsmouth Police Department*

**OFFICER SCOTT BLYSTONE**

**OFFICER FRANK NATAL**

**SWAT MEDIC JEFF YATES**



On February 27, 2009, the Portsmouth Police Department received a request to assist with the mental evaluation of an individual who had shown violent tendencies towards members of the community and his family. As the officers arrived at the location with the mental health worker, the individual was in possession of a sharp object and charged at the mental health worker. The individual was warned to stop by officers at the scene and did so.

During the minutes that followed, the individual was despondent and appeared to be extremely agitated. The individual placed the sharp object on a table and picked up a large knife near him and began to walk toward the door of his house. Officers attempted to block his path but were pushed back by the knife-wielding individual who eventually made it into the dwelling. At this time, the Portsmouth SWAT team and negotiators were called to the scene.

As officers and negotiators arrived, it was determined that there was no means of communication with the individual because there was no phone service at the home. Members of the SWAT team determined that the best course of action would be to deploy a negotiation phone into the dwelling in an attempt to communicate with the subject.

Officer Frank Natal and Officer Scott Blystone were members of the team that would be deploying the negotiation phone. The deployment team was positioned behind a wooden shed and was utilizing a ballistic shield for cover. The team had to move across 45 feet of open ground while being provided ballistic protection by Officer Blystone and the ballistic shield. The subject in the house fired on the of-



*Officer Scott Blystone*



*Officer Frank Natal*

ficers. One of the .33 caliber pellets struck the ballistic shield and one struck Officer Blystone's left thigh just below the shield.

Officer Blystone realized that more gunfire was possible from the suspect and understood that his primary duty was the protection of the team members. Although wounded, Officer Blystone remained standing and continued to provide ballistic protection for the team by keeping himself between the gunfire and his team members. Officer Blystone calmly informed his team that he had been shot and needed assistance getting behind cover. Realizing the need to get Officer Blystone behind cover and to begin medical treatment, Officer Frank Natal left his point of cover and reached out to guide Officer Blystone behind the shed. As he did, the suspect fired a second round, striking Officer Natal's left arm. One of the pellets completely severed Officer Natal's brachial artery and severely damaged the brachial nerve. Tactical officers on scene would later state that it appeared as if Officer Natal's arm "exploded" upon impact. (Surgeons at Sentara Norfolk General Hospital indicated that the injury to Officer Natal brachial artery was sufficient to cause death within a few minutes.) Members of the team began to return fire into the house while Officer Natal, although seriously wounded, assisted Officer Blystone, who never relinquished ballistic protection of the team, to cover. One of the police snipers deployed on a rooftop across the street fired three rounds from his .308 sniper rifle. Two of the rounds struck the suspect, killing him.

While still under fire, a SWAT paramedic assigned to the entry team, Jeff Yates, immediately began combat care of Officer Natal and Officer Blystone. Yates was able to stop the bleeding from Officer Natal's brachial artery, which has been credited with saving his life. SWAT Medic Yates was also able to treat Officer Blystone and reduce the amount of blood loss prior to arrival at the hospital. Both Officers were transported to Sentara Norfolk General Hospital for treatment. Officer Blystone underwent several weeks of physical therapy and was able to return to full duty on the SWAT team. Officer Natal underwent surgery, a lengthy hospital stay, extensive physical therapy, and was able to return to full duty on the SWAT team 11 months later.



*SWAT Medic Jeff Yates*

Officer Blystone and Officer Natal clearly placed themselves in imminent danger while engaged with an armed adversary who had the ability, means, and intent to injure or kill these and other members of the Portsmouth Police Department's SWAT team. Officer Blystone's persistence of maintaining ballistic protection for his team after being wounded, along with Officer Natal's selfless actions under fire to render aid to Officer Blystone were acts of extraordinary heroism.

The Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police is pleased to recognize Officer Scott Blystone and Officer Frank Natal, and SWAT Medic Jeff Yates, with the Award for Valor.



**T**he Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police and the Virginia Police Chiefs Foundation each year selects a recipient for the Award for Outstanding Contribution to Law Enforcement. This award is presented in recognition of an individual's conspicuous act or achievement in the performance of some duty that results in an exceptional and responsible contribution to law enforcement. The act or achievement must clearly distinguish the individual from others in the same or like circumstances.

This award may be presented to a civilian employee or volunteer whose efforts benefited law enforcement statewide, regionally, or locally; or, to a law enforcement officer whose efforts extended beyond his agency or locality and had a regional or statewide impact.

The 2010 Award for Outstanding Contribution to Law Enforcement is presented with great pride to Colonel W. Gerald Massengill, retired Superintendent, Virginia State Police



# 2010 OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AWARD

## COLONEL W. GERALD MASSENGILL, RETIRED *Virginia State Police*

Retired Colonel Gerald Massengill has dedicated more than half a lifetime to serving the Commonwealth of Virginia as a public safety professional. He is recognized among his law-enforcement peers for his steadfast commitment to being effective and fair. When asked by a newspaper reporter in 2005 about what motivates him, Colonel Massengill stated, "Being in the position to think outside the box and take calculated risks to better promote a cause." For this 68-year-old Dinwiddie County resident, there is but only one cause: serving and protecting the great Commonwealth of Virginia.



Colonel Massengill served for 37 years in the Department of State Police, rising to the level of Superintendent in 2000. Colonel Massengill served until October 2003 as the leader of the statewide police force, which at that time included more than 2,500 employees and an annual budget of \$212 million. During his extensive tenure with State Police, Colonel Massengill was known for his calm, kind, and compassionate demeanor. Even upon joining the Department, his fellow 45th Basic Session Trooper Trainees recognized his leadership traits by electing him class president. His State Police career took him to riots, floods, coal workers' strikes, labor disputes, demonstrations, horrific crash and crime scenes, and hostage situations. His most memorable experiences came as Superintendent: the terrorist attack on the Pentagon on September 11, 2001, and the D.C.-Virginia sniper shootings. He credits such incidents and the lessons learned from each one as helping mold his leadership style and personal philosophy, which is "To do things the right way, but to always do the 'right' things."

When Colonel Massengill retired from State Police in 2003, he accepted a request from the Virginia Public Safety Foundation to serve as its executive director. Then in May 2005, former Governor Mark R. Warner asked Colonel Massengill to serve as the interim director of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries

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## **MASSENGILL, *cont.***

(DGIF). He accepted and found himself at the helm of a state agency embroiled in controversy. However, his competent and firm leadership helped the agency regain its footing and credibility within the public eye. In the fall of 2006, Director Massengill officially retired from state government... again.

In 2007, Governor Timothy M. Kaine sought out Colonel Massengill to lead an eight-member panel charged with investigating various aspects of the Virginia Tech school massacre. The panel, under his steady direction and guidance, succeeded in providing comprehensive recommendations that have since been enacted into law and prompted substantial changes in state and school policy.

During his tenure in law enforcement, and his service on the Virginia State Crime Commission, Colonel Massengill always has considered what was best for Virginians and Virginia law enforcement. He has worked closely with federal, state, local, campus and special law enforcement agencies to promote professionalism and cooperation in the public safety community. In recognition of his exemplary and dedicated service, Colonel W. Gerald Massengill is the 2010 recipient of the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police Award for Outstanding Contribution to Law Enforcement.

## **NOTES**

### **Award Recipients & Executive Board:**

- ◆ Please remain at the end of the banquet for additional group photographs. Gather near the stage at the front of the room.
- ◆ Protective sleeves for your awards are available at the front of the room after the banquet.

### **Photography:**

- ◆ Photographs of the award presentations will be available on the VACP photo website — <http://photos.vachiefs.org> — following the conference. Prints may be purchased from the photo gallery directly, or you may download high-resolution images to make your own prints.



*Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police*  
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*sponsored by:*



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