



2015 VACP/VPCF AWARDS

**September 1, 2015
Williamsburg, Virginia**





The 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.

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 Gary W. Roche
2014-2015 VACP President

Annual VACP/VPCF Awards Banquet

September 1, 2015 • Williamsburg, VA

WELCOME

Chief Gary W. Roche, VACP President

INVOCATION

Chief Douglas A. Goodman, Jr., VACP Board Member

DINNER

VACP PRESIDENT'S AWARD

THE HONORABLE BRIAN J. MORAN

Virginia Secretary of Public Safety & Homeland Security

VACP/VPCF AWARDS PROGRAM

Chief David C. Sloggie, VACP Awards Committee Chairman

Awards for Lifesaving

Awards for Valor

INSTALLATION OF 2015-2016 VACP EXECUTIVE BOARD

Chief Richard C. Clark, Jr., Chair, VACP Nominating Committee

PAST PRESIDENT PRESENTATION

Chief David C. Sloggie, 2015-16 VACP President



The President of the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police each year selects an individual for the President's award in recognition of meritorious efforts on behalf of the law enforcement profession and Virginia's criminal justice system.

The 2015 VACP President's Award recipient is The Honorable Brian J. Moran, Virginia Secretary of Public Safety & Homeland Security.

Secretary Moran has made a great effort to reach out to the VACP and work with the police chiefs on legislative and policy initiatives. In 2015, he played a strategic role in redirecting numerous legislative initiatives on body cameras, license plate readers, drones and data collection to study initiatives to ensure a thorough examination of all relevant issues. Secretary Moran headed up the task force on special conservators of the peace and was instrumental in his support of legislation authorizing our established private police departments. His leadership and vision are integral to strengthening the working relationship between the Governor's office and our law enforcement leaders. The VACP thanks Secretary Brian Moran for his tremendous commitment to working with and supporting Virginia law enforcement.

2015 PRESIDENT'S AWARD

THE HONORABLE BRIAN J. MORAN

Virginia Secretary of Public Safety & Homeland Security

Secretary Brian J. Moran has a passion for public service, particularly in the area of public safety and social justice issues. His unique combination of experience as a practicing attorney, former state legislator and leader, and an association executive give him a multi-faceted perspective of how organizations function. Leadership skills are an important part of making any enterprise succeed and Secretary Moran has a demonstrated record of motivating and focusing people in both business and government environments.

The Secretary draws on his experiences as a local County prosecutor and his thirteen years serving in the Virginia legislature. He began his career as a judicial law clerk in Arlington, Virginia learning the intricacies of the court system. In 1989 he started his career

as County prosecutor where he prosecuted a variety of crimes including murder and rape. He was elected seven times to represent the 46th legislative district.

While in the legislature, Secretary Moran served on the Courts of Justice Committee, the State Crime Commission, the Militia, Police, and Public Safety Committee, the Board of the Alcohol Safety Action Program, and the Secure Virginia Panel. As a legislator he focused on numerous public safety issues. He championed and sponsored legislation in the areas of: child abuse, domestic violence, drunk driving, drug interdiction and elder abuse. He forged bipartisan coalitions and support to pass numerous pieces of legislation. Most notably: creating the felony drunk driving law; and Alicia's Law, which provides law enforcement the necessary tools to stop internet sexual predators from preying on our children.





The Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police and the Virginia Police Chiefs Foundation are proud to honor eighteen officers with the 2015 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 in an effort to save others from burning buildings and vehicles, vehicle crashes, drownings, suicide attempts and other dangerous situations.

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

2015 LIFESAVING AWARDS

Hanover County Sheriff's Office

Deputy Barry Bland
Deputy Kenny Winston
Deputy Matt League
Sergeant Frank Dressler
Sergeant Tim Simpson
Fire EMS Officer Jacob Ryan Jordan

Herndon Police Department

Senior Police Officer Mark Butler

Leesburg Police Department

Sergeant Mark Davis
Officer Alex Hilton

Marion Police Department

Patrolman Daniel A. Hamm

Prince William County Police Department

Officer Robert Minnick
Officer Michael Szalach

Richmond Police Department

Sgt. Christopher Jernigan

Officer Joseph Dillon
Officer Jonathan Wade

Virginia State Police

Trooper Sanders T. "Lee" Schoolar, IV

Sergeant-Pilot Shawn T. Rivard
Sr. Trooper-Pilot Jeffrey W. Bush



Tonight, the Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police and the Virginia Police Chiefs Foundation honor eleven 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.

2015 VALOR AWARDS

Chesapeake Police Department

Officer Michael Hilton

Colonial Heights Police Department

Master Officer Gregory A. Thinnies

Norfolk Police Department

Officer Brian Jones (Posthumous)

Officer Curtis Allison

Officer Toofan Shahsiah

Pulaski Police Department

Officer Adam M. Abdelaziz

Richmond Police Department

Sergeant Tish Edmonds

Sergeant Jayson Walter

Officer Michael Ellison

Officer Timothy Fields

Roanoke County Police Department

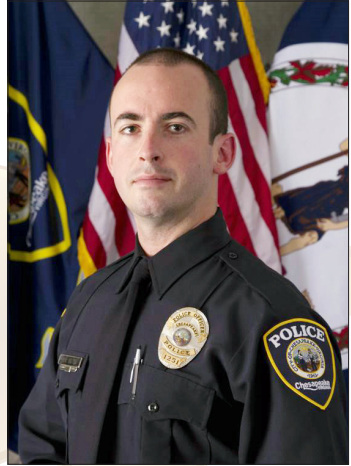
Officer Paul D. McMillan

Chesapeake Police Department
OFFICER MICHAEL HILTON



On the evening of January 14, 2015, officers were called to assist the complainant with a person who was reported to be suicidal. Initially, it was indicated that the suicidal subject was in the street threatening to commit suicide by unknown means. Shortly after the call was dispatched, officers were informed that the suicidal male was in possession of a gun. Little additional information about the gun or the location of the subject was available prior to officers arriving.

Due to the potentially dangerous situation, Officer Hilton stopped his vehicle on the side of the road before arriving on scene and retrieved his rifle from the trunk of his police vehicle. He verified the weapon was loaded and made it ready. This would later prove to be the one officer safety decision that would save his life as well as the lives of other officers and residents in the area.



Officer Michael Hilton

When turning onto the scene, Officer Hilton immediately started taking gunfire from the suicidal subject. The subject was in the middle of the street about 75 yards away, firing a rifle in Officer Hilton's direction. At the same time, another officer was arriving on scene. Both Captain Draper and Officer Hilton were within the line of fire and were hearing rounds striking objects nearby.

Using patrol techniques and sound officer safety skills, Officer Hilton positioned his vehicle to provide maximum cover from the gunfire. He exited the vehicle and ordered the subject to drop the weapon. When the shooter failed to comply, Officer Hilton took aim at the subject and returned fire and incapacitated him. Unfortunately, the subject died a short time later while being attended to by medical personnel.

Had it not been for his demonstrated habit of preparing his weapon in advance of arriving and mentally preparing for potentially violent situations, many nearby residents — as well as other responding officers — could have been in a potentially fatal situation. Officer Hilton selflessly, calmly, and deliberately utilized his training and experience to stop a serious threat to the safety of the public.

For his courageous act during a dangerous situation and his commitment to the preservation of life while in harm's way, Officer Hilton is presented with the VACP/ VPCF Award for Valor.



On August 24, 2014, Master Officer Gregory A. Thinnes was operating stationary radar in Colonial Heights when a vehicle passed by going 60 mph in a 35 mph zone. MPO Thinnes activated his lights and siren and attempted to catch up to the speeding vehicle, which was weaving in and out of traffic. MPO Thinnes observed the vehicle continue at a high rate of speed and run a red light. The suspect vehicle continued traveling at a high rate of speed, ignoring the police lights and siren. The suspect vehicle continued into the driveway of a residence, stopping behind the house in the woods, out of sight of the general public.



Master Officer Gregory A. Thinnes

MPO Thinnes followed and positioned himself in a traffic stop position and called in the South Carolina tag. He observed one unknown person in the driver's seat as he challenged the driver to show their hands. MPO Thinnes made this command six or seven times, requesting their hands to be placed outside the vehicle, but to no avail. At this time, MPO Thinnes notified Communications and responding units that he had the subject at gunpoint and that the occupant was not responding to his commands.

As MPO Thinnes waited for backup, the driver's side door swung open quickly and a female exited the vehicle, pointing a handgun in the direction of MPO Thinnes. Fearing for his safety, MPO Thinnes discharged his firearm six times, striking the subject twice and incapacitating her. MPO Thinnes then cleared the area and proceeded to provide aid to the female who had just attempted to shoot him.

Further investigation revealed that the female suspect was wanted out-of-state and had committed a felonious assault in the State of New Jersey. She was on her way back to South Carolina. The suspect has since been charged with the Attempted Capital Murder of a Police Officer as well as other serious charges. An internal affairs investigation determined that MPO Thinnes' actions were in accordance with proper procedure and departmental policy, and that he reacted and performed as professionally trained in a life-threatening situation. Tonight we are honored to present Master Police Officer Gregory A. Thinnes with the VACP/VPCF Award for Valor.

Norfolk Police Department

**OFFICER BRIAN JONES (POSTHUMOUS)
OFFICER CURTIS ALLISON
OFFICER TOOFAN SHAHSIAH**



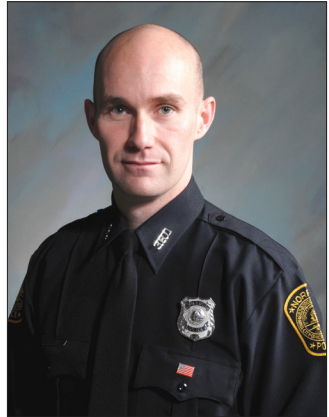
On Friday, May 30th, 2014, at 10:40 PM, the Norfolk Emergency Operations Center began receiving multiple 911 calls regarding an individual firing a weapon at citizens, vehicles, and residences while driving a red Jeep Cherokee. Officers from the 2nd and 3rd Patrol Divisions responded to the areas in the 8300 and 8400 block of Chesapeake Boulevard, and minutes later to the Walmart located in the 7500 block of Tidewater Drive. Information was received that the suspect may be armed with an assault rifle.

Officer Curtis Allison, who was off duty and resides near the Walmart, heard multiple gunshots near his home. He grabbed his tactical vest, his police radio, his duty weapon, and rifle, and began to search the neighborhood. He spotted the suspected red Jeep Cherokee in the front yard of a residence. The suspect, later identified as James Brown, was observed pacing in the yard at that location.

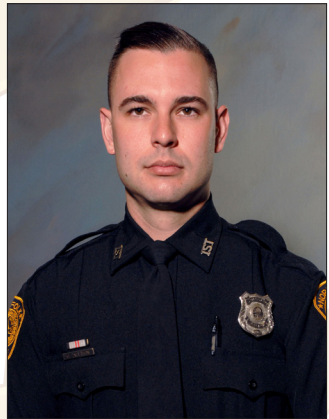
Officer Brian Jones, who also was nearby and heard the gunshots, responded to the area and spoke with Officer Allison who directed him to the location where the suspect was last observed. Officer Jones drove his police vehicle toward the suspect residence and Officer Allison followed behind on foot. Officer Jones stopped his vehicle and verbally challenged Brown. Brown ignored him, entered his residence and then almost immediately exited, opening fire on Officer Jones with a high-powered assault rifle. Officer Brian Jones was struck and mortally wounded.

Officer Allison also was struck by the gunfire as he ran for cover. Although he had been hit, Officer Allison was able to find cover and return fire using his duty weapon. Brown returned to his vehicle and fled the scene. Officer Allison then went to Officer Jones and immediately rendered aid. He also radioed in the description of Brown's vehicle and direction of travel. Officer Jones and Officer Allison were then transported to Sentara Norfolk Hospital where Officer Jones succumbed to his injuries. Officer Allison was treated for a gunshot wound to his right hip.

Officer Toofan Shahsiah was responding to the 7400 block of Wellington Rd to assist Officer Jones with the report of shots fired. Officer Shahsiah monitored the



Officer Brian Jones



Officer Curtis Allison

suspect vehicle description and direction of travel provided by Officer Allison. He then observed the suspect vehicle traveling at high speed westbound on Biltmore Street, and gave chase. The suspect began firing his weapon from his moving vehicle, narrowly missing Officer Shahsiah. Brown sped through the intersection of Galveston Boulevard and E. Little Creek Road, and struck a vehicle that was traveling eastbound on E. Little Creek Road. The ensuing crash caused Brown's vehicle to spin and roll over several times.

Brown exited his vehicle and took a position of cover behind it. Officer Shahsiah was able to observe what appeared to be a handgun being carried by Brown as the suspect moved. Officer Shahsiah continued to challenge Brown who appeared to surrender. Although he still didn't have back up, Officer Shahsiah attempted to take Brown into custody, at which point the suspect abruptly attacked Officer Shahsiah and attempted to disarm him. Officer Shahsiah was able to push Brown slightly away and draw his service weapon. Fearing for his life and having knowledge that this suspect was involved in the shooting of a fellow officer, Officer Shahsiah discharged his firearm in an effort to protect himself and bystanders. The suspect was hit several times and fell to the ground mortally wounded. Officer Shahsiah sustained minor injuries from the struggle with Brown.

Officer Shahsiah's incident ended at 10:50 PM. While this entire event unfolded, the Norfolk Police EOC received a call about a motor vehicle accident with injuries in the 8400 block of Chesapeake Boulevard at 10:48 PM. Responding units discovered a vehicle that had struck a telephone pole in the median. Upon examination, the officers discovered a gunshot victim inside, 17-year-old Mark Rodriguez, who was returning home after a high school graduation function. It was determined that Mark was shot and killed by Brown's senseless act of random violence.

Officer Brian Jones was assigned as a community resource officer with the 3rd Patrol Division. He was well known and beloved by members of the community and was respected and held in high esteem by his peers. After hearing gunshots in the area, Officer Jones did not hesitate to respond to where there was every indication that the reported armed suspect was present. Officer Jones immediately challenged the suspect, who almost immediately fired on the officers before they could take cover. After being mortally wounded, he was still able to report his situation, and provide a description of the suspect vehicle leaving the scene.

These officers responded to reports of shots being fired and knowingly risked their lives in order to protect the citizens they were sworn to protect. Each performed their duties with extreme heroism — with little regard for themselves — against a heavily armed individual who was randomly discharging his weapons with no regard to the safety of others. The bravery exhibited by these officers undoubtedly saved other citizens, and police officers, from being killed or wounded by the suspect. The Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police and the Virginia Police Chiefs Foundation present Awards for Valor to Officer Curtiss Allison, Officer Toofan Shahsiah and to the widow of Officer Brian Jones.



Officer Toofan Shahsiah



On Tuesday, May 5, 2015 Officer Adam M. Abdelaziz was conducting a safety check on the Pulaski Storage lot when he discovered a pickup truck sitting in a row between the storage buildings. Initially believing that the truck was unoccupied due to the tinted back glass, he approached it and observed a man — later identified as Robert A. Frost— sitting in the front seat, apparently asleep, with a handgun in his hand resting on his lap. Officer Abdelaziz backed up a few steps, requested assistance by his radio, and then walked back up to the open window of the truck. The male occupant suddenly awoke and instantly raised the firearm and began shooting.



Officer Adam M. Abdelaziz

Officer Abdelaziz retreated to the rear of the vehicle where he discharged three shots in an attempt to stop the attack. Mr. Frost then opened the truck door and fell onto the ground. Police personnel immediately initiated emergency medical first aid while an ambulance was requested. Mr. Frost was transported to the Lewis-Gale hospital in Pulaski where he later died. Officer Abdelaziz was not injured.

The family of the deceased was notified of the incident by Pulaski Police Captain A. C. Meredith. They indicated to Captain Meredith that they were not surprised that something like this happened as he had been struggling with PTSD and emotional depression for years after returning from military service in Operation Desert Storm. He had also said that when he “went”, he would make the police kill him.

The investigation revealed that Mr. Frost discharged three rounds from his weapon, which struck the building outside of his vehicle before firing a single gunshot to his chest. It appears that none of the three bullets discharged from Officer Abdelaziz’s service pistol struck Mr. Frost as two lodged in the rear of the truck cab and one passed through both the back and front vehicle glass. Officer Abdelaziz’s actions after the initial exchange of gunfire were recorded by his body camera. The video recording reveals that Officer Abdelaziz demonstrated total professionalism and tactically sound judgement during this encounter and his actions are a model for everyone wearing a badge to emulate. Tonight, we honor Pulaski Adam M. Abdelaziz with the VACP/VPCF Award for Valor.

Richmond Police Department

**SERGEANT TISH EDMONDS
SERGEANT JAYSON WALTER
OFFICER MICHAEL ELLISON
OFFICER TIMOTHY FIELDS**



During the early morning hours of May 12, 2014, Richmond Police units were dispatched to the scene of a large fight. Sergeants Jayson Walter and Tish Edmonds and Officers Tim Fields and Michael Ellison arrived and observed a large number of people in the street getting ready to fight. Officers then began dispersing the crowd. As they were doing this, a gun battle erupted just south of their location. Despite the police presence, multiple guns began firing.

Sergeants Walter and Edmonds and Officers Fields and Ellison heard the gunfire and started looking for the shooters. They quickly located the area with at least two individuals firing weapons. With shots still being fired toward a crowd of people, the officers — without regard for their safety — began to move in on the shooters, observing one male shooting his weapon multiple times, in an effort to engage them and stop the gunfire. As the officers closed in on the suspects, the suspects continued to fire while being ordered to drop their guns. All officers showed great discipline and cool heads as they did not have clear fields of fire due to the number of innocent people running from the gunfire.

With the officers getting close, the suspects jumped into a vehicle and attempted to flee. The officers quickly surrounded the car preventing the suspects' escape. Three individuals were taken into custody and two firearms were seized. One of the males was



Sergeant Tish Edmonds



Sergeant Jayson Walter

continued next page

charged with multiple offenses including discharging a firearm in public, and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. Additional charges may be filed against the other two males pending lab results.

The quick response by these officers saved lives and prevented at least one group of shooters from escaping. For their actions, Sergeant Jayson Walter, Sergeant Tish Edmonds, Officer Tim Fields, and Officer Michael Ellison are presented with the VACP/VPCF Awards for Valor.



Officer Michael Ellison



Officer Timothy Fields

Roanoke County Police Department

OFFICER PAUL D. MCMILLAN



On the evening of July 14, 2014, the Roanoke County Police Department was alerted to a report of an active shooter at a large retirement community facility in the county. A single male suspect was reported to be armed with a rifle and a pistol and a shot had already been fired by the suspect inside one of the buildings.

Officer Paul D. McMillan and other officers began arriving within two minutes of being dispatched. The retirement community consists of several buildings on a large campus and there was some initial confusion over the location of the suspect. Officer McMillan was flagged down by a nurse outside the Health and Rehabilitation Center and was told that the shooter was inside that building on the second floor. He immediately made a single-officer entry, proceeding inside and up the stairs as other officers began to converge on the building at Officer McMillan's direction.



Officer Paul D. McMillan

Upon reaching the second floor, Officer McMillan was told by another nurse that the suspect had just gotten on the elevator headed to the first floor. Officer McMillan headed back downstairs as he updated the other officers by radio.

Coming out of the stairwell, Officer McMillan located the 59-year-old male suspect in the lobby area near the exit where he had stopped upon seeing several officers approaching outside the building. Officer McMillan at this point was still the only officer inside the building. He observed the suspect holding a handgun and what appeared to be a small rifle. Officer McMillan ordered the suspect to drop his weapons, which he did, and to get on the ground.

Officer McMillan's view of the weapons on the floor was obscured by furniture and he could not see them. The suspect initially appeared to be complying with Officer McMillan's command to get on the ground. However, as he bent down, the suspect suddenly grabbed the handgun, a 9mm pistol, and brought it up towards Officer McMillan, firing a shot in his direction. Officer McMillan immediately returned fire with his patrol rifle, firing twice and striking the subject both times.

The suspect fell and was immediately taken into custody. He is currently awaiting trial on multiple felony charges including attempted capital murder of a law enforcement officer.

Officer McMillan's fast response and courageous actions brought a quick end to what could have been a much more tragic situation. For his act of extreme heroism, Officer Paul D. McMillan is presented with the VACP/VPCF Award for Valor.

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 boxes 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
AWARDS COMMITTEE

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Williamsburg Police Department

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