



Letter of Award Medal of Merit



To: Officer Elijah Hayward
From: Craig N. Meidl, Chief of Police
Date: February 14, 2019
Re: Medal of Merit Award

Lt. Rich Meyer recently nominated you for the Medal of Merit Award. The Medal of Merit is awarded to members of the Spokane Police Department who distinguish themselves by meritorious achievement or meritorious service. The meritorious actions must clearly surpass that which is normally required or expected. This service or achievement need not be unique but must be exceptional and superior. When the Special Awards Committee reviewed this nomination, it was clear that you are most deserving of this recognition. In his nomination, Lt. Meyer wrote:

"On 5/4/18, I responded with Officer Hayward on a domestic violence call. This call on the surface was no different than the numerous others that Spokane Police Department go to on a daily basis. But it is what occurred during the interview phase of this call that truly warrants accolades for Officer Hayward. Through his training and experience, he quickly realized that this was not the average domestic violence call for service.

Through his compassion and empathy he was able to glean information most would not have picked up on. The victim told us that she began a romantic relationship with gang member. A short time after she began the relationship, he began to physically assault her. In June 2017, the suspect was arrested for assaulting her. In July 2017, the suspect took her to his parents' house in Victorville, CA. On the drive to California, he told her that she was going to have to start "working" for him. The victim believed him to mean that he wanted her to prostitute for him.

When they were in California, the suspect made her stay in a small room and would assault her if she left the room. He then told her that she needed to start working as a prostitute. He informed her on how the commercial sex industry worked and all aspects of the prostitution industry. He had her place sex advertisements on Backpage.com. She began working as a prostitute in California and he would collect all of the proceeds from her sex acts. He routinely assaulted her during this time. This is a common trend among criminal street gangs and has garnered a lot of attention with federal agencies due to the high potential of teen victims in the Human Trafficking industry. Through a federal investigation we learned that the suspect had posted ads in different cities across the United States.

By the end of his shift, Ofc. Hayward had authored 2 separate search warrants for the victim's Facebook account and her bank account in hopes to find images of the suspect withdrawing money from her bank account. Excerpts from her Facebook messenger showed the intense and severe hold that a "pimp" has on a young woman.

Ofc. Hayward has also been selected as a trainer for WSIN in a class that he developed. The class will be part of the 2019 curriculum at the national WSIN conference "Human trafficking- A patrol officers response".

Officer Hayward's dedication to his profession has made a difference in the community in which he patrols and he is an asset to the Spokane Police Department as a whole. Officer Hayward is truly deserving of the Medal of Merit for his hard work and dedication and actions with this investigation."

Officer Hayward, you have certainly distinguished yourself in the area of meritorious achievement and I am proud to recognize you with the Medal of Merit Award. You will be awarded the Medal of Merit during the annual Employee Awards Ceremony in March 2019 and a copy of this letter will be placed in your personnel file.

Craig Meidl
Chief of Police