



2025 Letter of Awards Medal of Valor



To: Lieutenant Brent Austin
From: Kevin Hall, Chief of Police
Date: May 23, 2025
Re: Medal of Valor

Sergeant Kyle Heuett nominated you for the Medal of Valor. The Medal of Valor is the highest recognition of achievement presented by the Spokane Police Department. The Medal of Valor is awarded to employees for extraordinary acts of bravery or heroism, while displaying extreme courage by placing oneself in immediate peril. When the Special Awards Committee reviewed this nomination, it was clear that you are most deserving of this award. Excerpts from Sergeant Heuett's nomination included:

"On February 12th, 2024 at 0016 hours, officers were dispatched to a shooting at a residence call. The female victim had been shot by a male suspect and the suspect was still on scene inside the residence. While enroute to the call, dispatch advised that another male was calling into 911 to report he was inside the same residence and that the suspect was armed with a handgun - currently in his hand- and had shot his mother. The caller stated that he was in an upstairs bedroom and was watching a live feed from inside the residence. He was unable to safely exit the residence without the suspect seeing him and was in fear that he was also at risk of serious physical injury or death. Based on the information and continual assessment of the situation, officers quickly determined that they would treat this incident as a hostage rescue to safely rescue the female and her son.

The victim upstairs continued to give updates to the responding officers. Lt. Austin, Sgt. McVay, Corporal Busch and Officer Fabian, SWAT team members who were working on patrol, arrived on scene. They moved around to the back of the house to make entry through the back door. It would be reasonable to believe that they would immediately be shot-at by the suspect when they made entry or had to breach a door. It would also be reasonable to believe that attempting to make verbal contact with the suspect from outside the residence would likely put the female victim and her son at greater risk of death or serious bodily harm.

The officers made contact with the victim's son through an open upstairs window. He advised that the suspect had just gone back into the bedroom with the female victim and he was able to safely exit the residence out the back door. Believing that the female victim's life was still in immediate danger, the officers made entry. The officers quickly cleared up to the living room and held at the threshold doorway leading into the living room. Officer Fabian advised that the male was on the couch and had something in his hand. The male got off of the couch and began going back towards the bedroom where the female victim was located. The rescue team moved into the living room, placing themselves at risk of serious injury or death, to rescue the female victim. Immediately upon the rescue team making entry into the living room, the suspect shot several times at the officers. Officers returned fire, neutralized the suspect, and quickly moved towards the bedroom with the female victim. The female victim had multiple gunshot wounds and was quickly and safely removed from the residence to receive immediate advanced medical care.

Officers involved in a hostage rescue are placed at a higher risk than other incidents, due to the fact that the hostage's safety is the number one priority. Based on their quick, decisive, brave and courageous actions, both victims were safely rescued. They put the hostages' safety above their own and risked a lot to save a lot."

Lieutenant Austin, I am proud to present you with the Medal of Valor award. You have my personal thanks for your brave and courageous actions, and the gratitude of our community and your fellow officers for your dedication to our profession. A copy of this document will be placed in your personnel file.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of the name "Kevin Hall".

Kevin Hall, Chief of Police