



Roxana Kennedy
Chief of Police

CHULA VISTA POLICE DEPARTMENT

315 Fourth Avenue, MS P-200
Chula Vista, California 91910-3801

POLICE MEDIA ADVISORY

Date: 09/12/2024
To: San Diego Media
From: Chula Vista Police Department
Contact: Sergeant Anthony Molina, Public Information Officer
Phone: (619) 385-6775
Email: pio@chulavistapd.org
Subject: **MEDIA INVITE – EVENING WITH HEROES – SEPT. 14TH 4 P.M. to 8 P.M.**

*****Please note, the event is sold out; attendance has already reached full capacity.*****

SEE MEDIA PARKING INFORMATION AT BOTTOM.

Message: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Partners: Chief Roxana Kennedy would like to invite you to share in the experience of the 11th annual “Evening with Heroes,” taking place on Saturday evening (September 14, 2024) from 4 P.M. to 8 P.M. Media personnel will be provided interviews and have access to interactive stations staffed by officers, crime lab personnel, and other Department representatives.

You’ll have the opportunity to interact with members of SWAT, the Mobile Field Force Team, K9 Team, Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS) Drone Team, and Crime Lab. Learn more about our internationally acclaimed Drone as First Responder program and experience 3-D crime scenes created by the Crime Lab’s new scanner. Come out and see how we partner with our community and the Chula Vista Police Foundation to make Chula Vista safer.

This annual fundraising event, hosted by the Chula Vista Police Foundation, honors the men and women of the Chula Vista Police Department, including those who performed above and beyond this past year in service to their community. Their stories are compelling and even life-changing for some members of the community. Stories like the ones below that would otherwise go unnoticed:

AGENT NATALIE GARNSEY, OFFICER DANIEL HERNANDEZ (LIFE SAVING AWARD) + SERGEANT CHRIS FISHER, SERGEANT EVAN LINNEY (DEPARTMENT EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE)

Just after 11:00 p.m. on Friday, October 13th, 2023, the Chula Vista Police Department received several 9-1-1 calls regarding a vehicle fire on Interstate 5 in Chula Vista. While freeway calls in San Diego County are typically transferred to the California Highway Patrol (CHP), this one

caught the attention of a Chula Vista Police sergeant who was listening to the calls for help in real time through Live911.

The sergeant heard the callers' voices and believed someone's life might be at risk. Knowing that officers in Chula Vista would likely be closer than responding CHP officers, the sergeant asked the dispatcher to send Chula Vista Police officers "CODE 3." Although the location of the incident was somewhat unclear and many details were lacking, a Chula Vista Police drone was overhead quickly, and the Drone as First Responder (DFR) pilot provided the responding officers with a more accurate location.

Chula Vista Police officers arrived on scene to find a man screaming for his life while trapped inside a burning car on the side of the freeway. The officers worked quickly – battling the flames and their own fears – to reach the man trapped in the car; breaking out a rear window and pulling him to safety just seconds before the car was fully engulfed. It took bravery, teamwork, and tremendous courage. This man is alive in part because of the men and women of the Chula Vista Police Department and innovative technology which played a vital role in his rescue.

When the man awoke from a coma four weeks later, he learned what the officers did to save him. He expressed gratitude and acknowledged how differently things might have ended if not for the actions they took. He said, "I feel like I got a second chance. I'm so appreciative that they were able to get there in time and do what they did. If they didn't, I wouldn't be here today."

A video titled "Man Rescued from Burning Car" can be found on the Chula Vista Police Department YouTube page, which shows footage of the intense rescue: <https://youtu.be/3LT0nCt4WNo>.

JAMES MOORE AND NICOLAS CASTRO (CITIZEN EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE AWARD)

In the early morning hours of October 6th, 2023, a single vehicle collided with a tree in the 1500 block of East H Street, catching on fire in the process. It was just after 2:30 a.m., but the sound of the crash caught the attention of James Moore and Nicolas Castro, two separate residents in the area. As the 9-1-1 calls began coming in, James and Nicolas each walked out of their homes and saw the car on fire. James noticed the driver was trapped in the car and hurried to his aid. The driver was unresponsive as the fire started growing in the rear compartment. James and Nicolas worked together to free the man before the flames reached him. They started breaking the windows and ended up removing the windshield, where they were able to pull the man out to safety just before the car became fully engulfed.

Officers arrived to find the rescued man and a car fully overtaken by flames. Public safety truly is a community effort... had James and Nicolas waited for first responders to arrive, the driver in this incident might not have survived. The Chula Vista Police Department will be recognizing James Moore and Nicolas Castro for their selflessness and quick thinking to save a man's life.

The men and woman of the Chula Vista Police Department put their lives on the line, day in and day out, to provide the highest level of service to the community. The Chula Vista Police Foundation helps obtain funding for specialized equipment and innovative technology not funded in the city budget. Equipment such as life-saving tourniquets and body-worn cameras; Programs such as Drone as First Responder, the Chula Vista Police Department K9 Program, and many more have been supported and enhanced by the Chula Vista Police Foundation.

The Chula Vista Police Department is grateful for the support of the Chula Vista Police Foundation and all the amazing and generous donors who continue to make Chula Vista an even safer place to live and work by supporting the Department and its officers.

DATE: Saturday, September 14, 2024

TIME: 4:00 P.M. - 8:00 P.M.

LOCATION: Chula Vista Elite Athlete Training Center, 2800 Olympic Pkwy, Chula Vista, CA.

MEDIA PARKING ON-SITE AT EASTON ARCHER CENTER (SEE MAP BELOW):

Easton Archery Center – check in with uniformed staff at the first checkpoint and show media credentials. Drive to the front of the Easton Archery Center and contact the PIO at (619) 385-6775.



Email pio@chulavistapd.org or call/text PIO Sgt. Molina at (619) 385-6775 for coordination purposes if you will be attending.

Prepared By: Public Info Specialist Cait Clark
Copies Sent To: San Diego Media

Approved By: Assistant Chief Dan Peak
Date/Time: 09-12-2024 / 1145