



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

ALFREDO "FREDDY" RAMIREZ III



I am humbled to reassume my duties as Director, leading the best law enforcement agency in the country, and I am grateful for the confidence that Mayor Daniella Levine Cava has shown in me to additionally oversee the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department, as Chief of Safety and Emergency Response. Moving forward, we will continue to build on the partnership with our great fire department, working shoulder to shoulder with our brothers and sisters. We will be working together a lot more as one public safety unit, for the benefit of our community, to ensure that every person who lives or visits Miami-Dade County feels safe.

My priorities within the Department remain the same, to work closely with our Psychological Services Bureau to enhance officer safety and wellness, to collaborate with our community partners to continue to build more trust, and to focus on reducing gun violence. There are many ongoing initiatives that focus on those important issues, some of them contained in the Mayor's Peace and Prosperity Plan. Through the plan's Fit2Lead program, we have made tremendous strides in connecting with our youth.

Our Operation Community Shield, launched over a year ago, has led to the confiscation of hundreds of illegal firearms, and we will continue this highly successful initiative as part of our strategy to create safer communities.

Additionally, we have many monthly and annual events that bring us closer with the community, including our Coffee with A Cop and National Night Out events. Through these casual gatherings, we get feedback from residents. I was encouraged to see such a great turnout recently at several of our past National Night Out events.

Our prayers go out to the victims of the Robb Elementary School mass shooting in Uvalde, Texas, and the victims of the mass shooting at a Fourth of July parade in Highland

Park, Illinois. We must remain vigilant to protect the public from potential threats to our schools and other public spaces. In the wake of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooting four years ago, we created the Priority Response Team, a select group of officers specifically trained to provide a rapid, coordinated, and overwhelming response to mass casualty attacks and critical incidents, to include active shooter situations and acts of terrorism.

These tragedies are reminders that there is always a threat, and as first responders, the community relies on us to keep them safe. I have the upmost confidence in the capabilities and bravery of our officers and firefighters, as guardians of our community. Police, firefighters, emergency call takers, dispatchers, and our professional staff are the foundation of public safety, and I am proud of the work that you do on a daily basis. Our dispatchers and call takers are the voice that guides our first responders, they get the necessary information from the community in their time of need, and are a calming voice. I truly appreciate them and will continue to make sure they have everything they need to do their job at the highest level.

Such achievement takes support, most importantly the support that you receive from your family and friends, and from your mentors. Always remember the people who have encouraged you and continue to push you to be the best version of yourself.

Sincerely,

Alfredo "Freddy" Ramirez III
Director



After Two Years of Muted Graduation Ceremonies, MDPD Returns To Proper Induction For BLE Class #133

By Brian Ballou



BLE graduation ceremonies were toned down because of the COVID-19 pandemic, but returned to their normal pomp on Thursday, May 26, 2022, with the graduation of 35 new officers. (Photo by Gaston De Cardenas)

After two years without a proper graduation ceremony due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD) presented Basic Law Enforcement (BLE) Class #133 in an open air setting on Thursday, May 26, 2022, a steady breeze fluttering the stars and stripes and the class flag.

It was the ideal setting for the times, under a large shade canopy at the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Headquarters in Doral, a return to how things were prior to the rigid restrictions that limited graduations to small, private affairs.

The 35 new officers were presented with their families present, and surrounded by the Department's Command

Staff, and the drill instructors and training instructors who shaped them during their time in the academy. The crowd of approximately 300 sat side-by-side and cheered as the new officers crossed the stage.

The last graduation ceremony that included family and friends occurred on Thursday, February 6, 2020, with BLE Class #125.

Prior to the hour-long ceremony, the class gathered together to listen to a personal message from Major Carlos Gonzalez, the commander of the Miami-Dade Public Safety Training Institute. As the class huddled around him, he encouraged them to remain brave, dedicated to duty, and to never forget the sacrifices of their families in supporting them.

After that pep talk, Officer Donovan Miller exclaimed, "I'm ready to get this going!" His classmate, Officer Jonathan Carmona, responded, "I've been waiting for this day too man!"

The class started training on Monday, June 28, 2021, but twice, training was

halted and they were put into COVID-19 protocol, after several recruits tested positive. The flare-ups occurred months apart, and both times, they were sent home for two weeks. Retesting took an additional two weeks, so each delay was a month, with the total delay time being two months.

"The COVID-19 shutdowns were a real challenge, but we made it through and now we are ready to serve the community," said Officer Kim Nguyen, whose first assignment is at the South District. "It feels great, our class is truly blessed."

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MIAMI-DADE
COUNTY
2022



41st Annual Miami-Dade Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Ceremony

By Brian Ballou

The Miami-Dade Police Department honors the brave men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice. On Thursday, May 5, 2022, the names of 14 of our brothers and sisters, from 6 different law enforcement agencies, were etched into the Law Enforcement Memorial Wall of Honor at Tropical Park.



Corrections & Rehabilitation Department

*Correctional Officer Juan Llanes
Correctional Officer Alexy Aguilar
Correctional Officer David Jean-Baptiste
Correctional Officer Calyne St. Val
Correctional Officer Terrell Jordan
Correctional Officer Sylvia Allen*

Federal Bureau of Investigation

*Special Agent Laura Ann Schwartzenberger
Special Agent Daniel Alfin*

Florida Highway Patrol

Trooper Lazaro R. Febles

Miami Beach Police Department

Sergeant Edward Perez

Miccosukee Police Department

Sergeant Horacio Dominguez

U.S. Customs & Border Protection

*Senior Officer David Bryant Saavedra
Officer Yokemia L. Conyers
Officer Erik James Skelton*

Miami-Dade Police Department Conducting Unique Training for Female Officers, Aimed at Building Confidence to Handle Physical Demands of the Job

By Brian Ballou



From the second floor gangway of a shoothouse at the Miami-Dade Public Safety Training Institute in Doral, several training instructors had a clear view of everything that was happening on the ground floor directly below. Although it was a training exercise, a trio of female police officers entered the shoothouse with a heightened sense of awareness. A stocky man wearing a camouflage jacket suddenly stepped out from an adjacent room, and the officers yelled at him to put his hands up. The man complied, and told the officers that a suspect had broken into his home and was hiding in a rear room. The officers proceeded to search for the “intruder.” Suddenly a gunman emerged from a dark hallway, his “simunition” gun pointed at the officers, and then; bam, bam!

Minutes after the exercise was over, the instructors gathered with the officers to give them feedback on their performance. The building search was one of several exercises that a class of 20 female officers went through during a “F.I.V.E. Training” (Female Involvement in Violent Encounters) course, held May 16-20, 2022.

Miami-Dade Police Department Officer Jessica Coello, of our Miami-Dade Public Safety Training Institute, who created the course, said she did so to help female officers build more confidence by honing their skills in the areas of defensive tactics, firearms, traffic stops, and building searches. The participants also spent many hours on the shooting range.

There has been a total of six courses held, with the first one starting in November 2020. The classes have averaged about 24 participants, mostly officers from

Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties, but also from other law enforcement agencies throughout Florida, and from other states such as Ohio and North Carolina. The course is not only offered to the region and nationally, but female police officers from the National Police of Colombia will attend the training in February 2023, and the Pakistan Police has also reached out to the Department to inquire about the course.

Officer Coello is a firearms instructor for the police academy. She has been with the Department for 16 years, and has worked in investigations, on the Crime Suppression Team, and was a Detective in the Auto Theft Unit, and Residential Burglary Unit.

The goal of this course is to enhance the skills in fundamentals of defensive

tactics, firearms, traffic stops, building searches, and tourniquet application. The students are challenged mentally, physically, and professionally in handling high risk and stressful situations that an officer may face in the performance of her duties.

“It’s hard to be a female officer in a male-dominated field,” Officer Coello said. “What can tend to happen, is that women may not want to do additional training because they feel that in doing so, they would expose weakness. So, this course, is all about building confidence, in a class full of women.”

The last day of the course goes over everything learned in the previous days, with exercises designed to be physically taxing and stressful to simulate the psychological and physiological effects of a potentially lethal confrontation.

Training involves the use of live fire, non-lethal training simunitions, and close quarter combat to enhance the officer’s skills needed to control violent subjects. These exercises produce a physical and stressful element to simulate psychological and physiological effects of a potentially lethal confrontation. Students are expected to build awareness and have the confidence to confront everyday challenges faced throughout their careers.

“This course is designed to give them the tools they need to engage in those situations, and the confidence to know that they are ready to do so at any given time,” said Officer Coello. “I recently got a call from a female officer who went through one of the courses, and she told me that she used a technique that she learned during the course to subdue a male suspect, and place handcuffs on him. I’ve been getting that type of feedback more and more lately.”

Miami-Dade Police Department Helped Remove Over a Ton of Trash from the Julia Tuttle Causeway Area on Earth Day

By Brian Ballou



Members of the Department's Police Explorer Program participated in the cleanup. (Photo by Brian Ballou)

It is one of the most scenic vantage points of Biscayne Bay in all of Miami, but the strip of green space that runs along the Julia Tuttle Causeway is also a place where litter abounds, some of it arriving by way of storm drains, some floating in from as far away as the Caribbean, and some of it tossed by people who visit the thin strip of beach that is a popular fishing spot and picnic area.

On Earth Day, Friday, April 22, 2022, approximately 200 members of the MDPD and about a dozen youth enrolled in the Department's Explorer and Youth Outreach Unit Programs, picked up over a ton, 2,000 pounds of trash from a half-mile stretch of beach, mangroves, and grassy areas. They used trash picking extensions, buckets, large burlap bags, and all-terrain vehicles. The participants were divided into three teams and the cleanup took approximately four hours.

The event was a collaboration with Local 10 News, with its Reporter Louis Aguirre, who serves as the channel's Environmental Advocate, and with VolunteerCleanup.org, a Miami-based, non-profit environmental conservation organization. Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniella Levine Cava, and County Commissioners Danielle Cohen Higgins (District 8), and Eileen Higgins (District 5), and the County's first Chief Bay Officer, Irela Bague, also participated.

Officers with the Department's Illegal Dumping Unit also participated in the Earth Day cleanup. Lieutenant

Ernesto Rodriguez, who leads that unit, believes it is important that the public is educated on the devastating effects that trash has on marine life, and on the quality of our drinking water.

"I have seen an increase in dumping and trash due to construction and the influx of people to the area recently," Lieutenant Rodriguez said. "We have seen cars dumped in waterways, and the chemicals that come out can affect the water table, which is crucial for our farming community. Everyone should do their part to keep this beautiful area trash-free because we are impacted by it, and future generations will be impacted."



Captain Evens Gabriel Jr., of the Intracoastal District, helped pick up debris. (Photo by Brian Ballou)



Job Can Take Emotional Toll, But MDPD Emergency Call Takers Focus on Helping Others Get Through Crisis

By Brian Ballou

An average of 2.4 million calls come in annually to the Miami-Dade Police Department's 911 Communications Center. The voice on the phone could be an exhausted whisper from a person fading out of consciousness after a horrific car crash, or it could be frantic screams from a mother cradling her lifeless child. Multiple calls may flood in after calamity. And occasionally, there are blatant misuses of the system, such as a parent calling to complain that their unruly child won't go to school.

At any given time, a Police Complaint Officer (PCO) may pick up a call from someone whose life is in imminent danger, and it is the responsibility of the PCO to do everything she or he can to help the caller, and at the same time, gather critical information from the caller that will give a dispatcher enough details to send out the proper response to a confirmed address, whether it be police, fire, Emergency Medical Service or a combination of those first responders.

During National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week, the second week in April every year, society is reminded of the vital role that PCOs and Dispatchers perform for the public in times of crisis. There are some PCOs and Dispatchers in the Department whose careers have spanned two tragic events, the ValuJet Crash in 1996, and the Surfside Building Collapse in 2021. No one is born for the job, and eventually, even for the most impervious worker will need to step away, if just briefly, to readjust and recharge.

At any time of the day, the PCOs and Dispatchers have at their disposal, a counselor from our Department's Psychological Services Bureau. The Bureau is proactive, and reaches out to PCOs and Dispatchers, especially after tense calls.

There is no closure in many cases, and after a call, a PCO may never know how the situation ended. For call takers, who may walk a person through CPR or other lifesaving measures, that could weigh on them emotionally. Some calls can be draining because of the sheer duration, some have lasted for hours. A PCO spent over an hour with a caller in the wake of the Surfside Building Collapse.

"This job is not for everybody, there are people who are more susceptible to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder than others, and we tell the trainees that," said Ms. Debbie Speck, a Police Dispatcher who has been with the Department for 18 years. "But I wouldn't say, don't take this job because it will happen to you."

Next to the center's spacious open floor are two small rooms purposely decorated in muted colors and tranquil wall art, and both contain a comfy couch long enough



Police Dispatcher Mary Hall participated in the "Red Carpet" theme day during National Telecommunicators Week from April 11-15, 2022. (Photo by Angelica Kellner).

to lay on. The rooms are perfect reading cubbyholes, or places to knit, or meditate, or finish a crossword puzzle. The rooms are getaways, quiet zones where PCOs and Dispatchers can remove themselves from the drumbeat of emergency calls. There are approximately 115 PCOs and 60 Dispatchers who split three shifts; 10 sworn supervisors; and 15 civilian supervisors. There are 90 workstations on the floor for the PCOs and Dispatchers, and approximately a dozen supervisor's pods.

Gaiety in the workplace helps too, and there was a daily dose of that during National Public Safety Telecommunicators Week, in the form of dress-up days. The themes ranged from "Witches, Wizards, and Dragons" to "Rock Star" to "Luau Party."

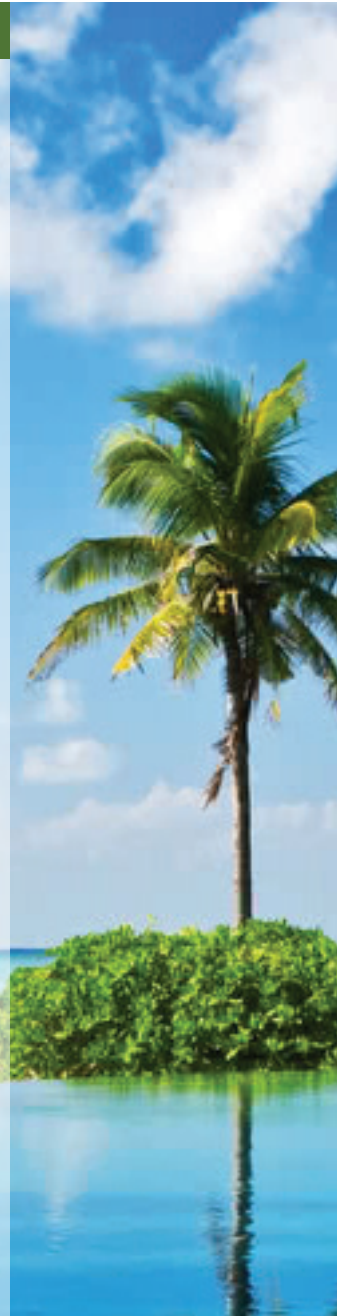
Police Dispatcher Sonia Morales, who has been with the Department for 26 years, is one of those Dispatchers. Her ability to know cross streets and other markers to determine precise locations, is legendary inside the Call Center, so much so that her coworkers have a nickname for her - Google Maps. "It feels good to be appreciated, we are that calm in the storm, you don't really see us, but we are an integral part of the whole system," she said.



MDPD recently said farewell to 54 employees (37 sworn officers and 17 professional staff) who retired after periods of service ranging from 36 to 10 years. Director Alfredo “Freddy” Ramirez III, the Department’s Command Staff, and the entire MDPD family wish our colleagues many, many years of happy retirement.

Sworn

Captain Dawn M. Agins.....	30
Captain Nelson Aloy	32
Captain Elise V. Dillard	29
Captain Jorge L. Herrera	31
Lieutenant Florencio Boucourt	30
Lieutenant Jorge L. Interian	28
Lieutenant Eduardo E. Leon	30
Lieutenant Rawn R. McPhee	40
Lieutenant Denise M. Rera	30
Sergeant Alfredo I. Alvarez	25
Sergeant Joseph A. Bermudez	30
Sergeant John E. Methvin	30
Sergeant Mathew R. Meyer	25
Sergeant Rhonda L. McCoy	25
Sergeant Arturo A. Perez	30
Sergeant Humberto Perez	33
Sergeant Godofredo Suros	29
Officer Robin E. Ables	32
Officer Omar G. Bustamante	27
Officer Jorge Carnero	39
Officer Charles E. Croom	25
Officer Itala C. Elias	35
Officer Christopher J. Fabian	30
Officer Dexter E. Fletcher.....	35
Officer Ulysses Guerrero	30
Officer Maurice M. Henry	17
Officer Roger Herrera	22

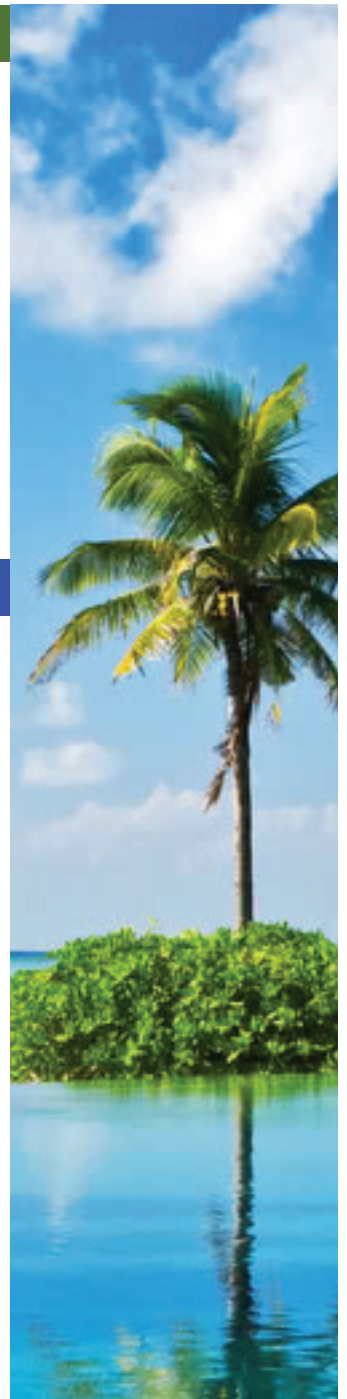


Sworn

Officer Christopher R. Hodges	26
Officer Dwaine A. Jones	35
Officer Benigno R. Millares	21
Officer Carlos E. Perez	25
Officer Orlando Prieto	25
Officer William L. Rogers	28
Officer Marjorie C. Tamayo	25
Officer Lazaro Valdes	30
Officer Kenneth L. Veloz	30
Officer Gilbert C. Yap	25

Professional Staff

Information Officer Julie K. Abbuhl	30
School Crossing Guard Program Administrator Irelene King Allen	39
Police Dispatcher Wanita K. Balutis	34
Public Service Aide Deborah J. Carnevale	13
School Crossing Guard Raul Casanova	37
Police Crime Analyst Specialist 1 Maria V. Espinosa	29
School Crossing Guard Fernando Fornos	8
School Crossing Guard Ruth Henry	11
Stenographic Reporter Lori A. Levy	35
Driver Messenger Robert E. Long	11
MDPD Investigative Specialist Lisa McAndrew	35
Administrative Secretary Iris Mejia	32
Police Property Evidence Specialist 1 Gilberto B. Milian	35
School Crossing Guard George Morell	13
Secretary Linda L. Pelaez	35
School Crossing Guard Raquel Reborido	8
Police Records Specialist 1 Rory A. Scales	21



HUMAN LIFE IS NOT FOR SALE

*Anyone can experience trafficking
in any community. If you have
information on human trafficking:*

Call 911 immediately.

*Call the National Human Trafficking
Hotline at 1-888-37-37-888*

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Thank You Blood Donors!

The Miami-Dade Police Department and OneBlood held successful blood drives at the Miami-Dade Public Safety Training Institute on Wednesday, April 6, 2022 and the Miami-Dade Police Department Headquarters on Wednesday, May 11, 2022 and Thursday, June 9, 2022. Special thanks are extended to the donors listed below for helping save lives!

Major Jose A. Fernandez
Sergeant Samuel Castanedo
Sergeant Alain Cruz
Sergeant Dustin E. James
Sergeant Robin N. Pinkard
Sergeant Michael R. Scott
Sergeant Ricardo Toledo
Officer Javier E. Aluart
Officer Ramon J. Iglesias
Officer Marc J. Martinez
Officer Armando J. Recio
Officer Harold Riobe, Jr.
Officer Christopher A. Rodriguez
Officer Miguel A. Ruiz
Maintenance Repairer Humberto Achon
MDPD Intelligence Analyst Barbara A. Bonachea
Police Records Technician 1 Catherine E. Buckland

Administrative Secretary Doris G. Gabe
Public Service Aide Franz Point Du Jour
Personnel Technician Oneida Ortega
Police Records Specialist 1 Jacqueline M. Puentes
Police Records Specialist 1 Rodrigo A. Sepulveda
Criminalist 2 Erin M. Wilson
Ms. Andrea Burgos
Mr. Sylvio Da Cunha
Ms. Kyla Estiverne
Ms. Myrian Herlle
Ms. Nayessa Roz Maciasqui
Ms. Ana Lopez-Merlos
Mr. William Monahan
Ms. Lorena Ontaneda
Ms. Nelis Serrano
Mr. Francisco Suarez
Ms. Mirna Urbina



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Daniella L. Cava
Mayor



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