STATE OF NEW YORK

GEORGE E. PATAKI
GOVERNOR

June 7, 2001

Dear C.O. Cassidy:

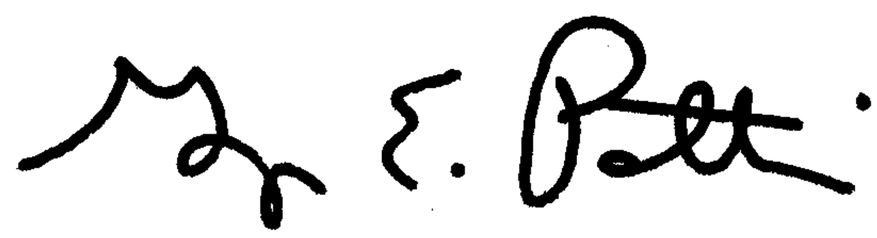
It is a pleasure to join with families, friends and coworkers today as you are presented with the Department of Correctional Services' Medal of Merit for your bravery and heroism, which have made you a source of pride for the Department.

You demonstrated these very qualities on January 16, 2000 while off-duty, when you came upon a serious personal injury accident on the Belt Parkway in Brooklyn. You quickly called 911 to report the accident and then took command of the chaotic scene prior to the arrival of the New York City Police. At the risk of personal injury, you immediately assisted other motorists in removing four passengers from a burning vehicle, and upon arrival of the police, provided them with a quick assessment of the situation. You further assisted by directing the arriving medical and rescue personnel to the appropriate location, and clearing the highway of onlookers. Your actions were above and beyond normal expectations, and you are credited with saving the lives of several of the accident victims.

Four years ago, I was proud to be the first Governor in the history of New York State to present the prestigious Medal of Honor and Medal of Merit to the deserving men and women of the Department of Correctional Services. You carry on the admired traditions of professionalism, valor and excellence which have long been the standard of the 32,000 men and women who work in 70 correctional facilities throughout the Empire State. This distinguished honor places you among the 111 Correctional employees to earn a medal since the inception of the program in 1984.

I commend you for representing the highest standards upheld by Correctional professionals throughout the entire country, and I offer gratitude and congratulations for a job well done.

Very truly yours,



C.O. Thomas R. Cassidy
Arthur Kill Correctional Facility
Staten Island, NY 10309

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