

Citations for 2002 Medals of Honor and Medals of Merit

To Plant Utility Engineer Mark C. Battaglia of Wende Correctional Facility, the Medal of Merit:

On February 2, 2001, you were driving in the village of LeRoy. As you passed a local supermarket, you noticed that village Police Sgt. Timothy Hayes appeared to be in trouble.

Sgt. Hayes had stopped an individual for a routine traffic violation when the motorist turned violent. The driver got out of the car and began assaulting Sgt. Hayes, grabbing his pepper spray, and spraying it on the Sergeant and grinding the can into his eye.

The struggle continued until you stopped your vehicle and quickly came to the aid of Sgt. Hayes. Two other Good Samaritans who observed the incident joined you in pulling the driver off Sgt. Hayes. The three of you restrained him until back-up police arrived on the scene.

You are to be commended for your quick thinking and courageous actions in coming to the aid of Sgt. Hayes without regard for your own safety. You helped prevent more serious injury to Sgt. Hayes.

Date of Birth: 09/27/60

Employment date: 10/14/99

Salary: \$41,893

To Correction Officer Clinton L. Stevens of the Washington Correctional Facility, the Medal of Merit:

On January 20, 2001, you were ice fishing on Lake George. You observed a man on a snowmobile fall through the ice.

You immediately proceeded to help the man, later identified as Matthew Sassone, free himself from the icy waters. As Mr. Sassone attempted to climb out of the water, the breaking ice continued to force him back into the frigid waters.

Using your fishing sled, you were able to lay on the ice and toss a rope that was tied on the end of your sled to Mr. Sassone. Mr. Sassone then wrapped the rope around his arm while you continued to lay on the ice holding on to the sled – despite the possibility that the weakening ice could have collapsed below you. By doing so, you were able to keep Mr. Sassone from slipping below the frigid waters of Lake George.

You kept Mr. Sassone afloat in the icy waters for approximately 40 minutes until the Lake George Ice and Water Rescue Team arrived and were able to remove Mr. Sassone from the water. Your quick thinking and courageous actions in coming to the aid of Mr. Sassone without regard for your own safety are to be commended. You quite probably saved Mr. Sassone's life.

Date of Birth: 01/12/51

Employment date: 10/17/94

Salary: \$43,034

To Correction Sergeant Jeffrey D. Haines of Cocksackie Correctional Facility, the Medal of Honor:

On September 5, 2001, while inmates were being escorted into the yard. Inmate Robert Jackson attacked inmate Christian Martinez with a sharpened shank approximately 11 inches in length.

Inmate Martinez was stabbed numerous times in the head and upper body. After the attacking inmate refused several orders from staff to stop, you physically intervened in an attempt to separate and protect inmate Martinez from further harm. However, inmate Jackson continued to stab inmate Martinez.

In the process of intervening, you were stabbed in the right wrist before additional security staff could help you bring the situation under control. Inmate Martinez has since recovered from his injuries while inmate Jackson is confined to a special housing unit pending criminal indictment.

Your fearless actions put your own life in jeopardy to prevent further injury or even death to inmate Martinez. Your courageous and unselfish act epitomizes the dedication and professionalism of the Department's uniformed staff.

Date of birth: 09/25/62

Employment date: 07/14/86

Salary: \$55,093

To Correction Officer Paul D. MacNeil of the Wende Correctional Facility, the Medal of Honor:

On March 23, 2001, your fellow Wende C.O. Tina DeJesus was assaulted by an inmate on the third floor of B Block. The inmate struck C.O. DeJesus with his fists, knocking her unconscious, and retrieved her baton.

Alerted by the sounds of a struggle, you quickly responded to the scene from your post on the second floor. As the first person to respond, your arrival diverted the inmate's attention away from C.O. DeJesus. The inmate began to brutally strike you in the head and arms with the baton.

You were unable to draw your baton due to the intensity of the attack. Despite serious injuries, you were able to activate your personal alarm. Additional staff quickly responded and forced the inmate to retreat to the gallery. The inmate ran into a storage area where he was disarmed, overpowered and placed in restraints.

Your quick thinking and courageous actions without regard for your own safety are truly commendable. You quite probably saved the life of C.O. DeJesus.

Date of Birth: 09/21/60

Employment date: 03/26/84

Salary: \$47,172