



40th Annual Awards Reception

Houston Police Officers Union
October 22, 2021





Hispanic Officer Of The Year Committee

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Special Thanks To

Mistress of Ceremony- Mayra Moreno, News Anchor-ABC 13 /KTRK -TV

National Anthem- Yvonne Molina

HPD Photographer-Julian Scott

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Houston Police Officers Union



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NLPOA - GREATER HOUSTON CHAPTER

SPECIAL RECOGNITION:

CYNTHIA RIVERA

ALAMO TAMALES



Program

Welcome

Mayra Moreno

News Anchor-ABC 13/KTRK-TV
Mistress of Ceremony

Posting of Colors/ Pledge

Houston Police Department

Honor Guard

National Anthem

Yvonne Molina

Invocation

Vincent Johnson

HPD-Chaplain

Introduction of Head Table

Mayra Moreno

Special Recognition Presentation

Ernest Garcia

Assistant Chief
President, HOY Committee

Presentation of Proclamations

Dave Martin

City of Houston Council Member-Mayor Pro-Tem

Introduction of Guest Speaker

Mayra Moreno

Guest Speaker

Pedro Lopez Jr.

Chief of Police
Houston Independent School District

HOY Presentations & Sponsors

Patricia Cantu

Assistant Chief
Vice President, HOY Committee

Closing Remarks

Ernest Garcia

Assistant Chief
President, HOY Committee

Benediction

Vincent Johnson

HPD-Chaplain



Mistress of Ceremonies

Mayra Moreno

News Anchor-ABC 13/KTRK-TV



Mayra Moreno joined KTRK-TV Eyewitness News in October 2015.

A journalist with years of experience, Mayra has reported all over the state of Texas. She comes back to her hometown of Houston from KENS 5 in San Antonio, where she worked as the weekend anchor and reporter for four years.

Mayra's television career started at the Rio Grande Valley's news leader, KRGV-TV Channel 5 News in Weslaco, TX. Mayra covered an array of stories; from border-crime issues, to hurricane coverage and other problems affecting the community. A few years later, Mayra found her way back to Houston as a fill-in anchor and reporter for KIAH-TV's CW 39 News.

Throughout her career, Mayra has covered many notable stories. During her time at the CW, she was one of the many journalists to report live from Fort Hood after the deadly 2009 shooting. In San Antonio, Mayra was nominated for a Lone Star Emmy on an investigation into the city's DWI no refusal program, where blood samples began piling up and caused a backlog at the courts. Mayra also covered some major weather-related events: from the deadly Memorial Day floods of 2013 and 2015 in the San Antonio area, to the tornado that tore through Acuna, MX later that year.

Mayra is happy to return home to Houston. She's a proud alum of the University of Houston, where she graduated Magna Cum Laude with a double major in Journalism and Spanish.

Mayra loves being involved in the Hispanic community. When she's not talking to kids at local schools about the importance of staying in school, Mayra loves to spend her free time with family and friends, working out and cooking.

Mayra loves to hear from viewers, whether it's to say hello or pitch a story idea, be sure to drop her a line at Mayra.Moreno@abc.com. She is also very active on social media look for her on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



Guest Speaker



Pedro Lopez Jr.
Chief of Police

Houston Independent School District



Pedro Lopez Jr. has a combined law enforcement career of 33 years. He began his career as a Correctional Officer with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice in 1987. He later transferred to the Harris County Sheriff's Department where he honorably served as a Deputy Jailer. In 1991 he embarked on his current 29-year career with the Houston Police Department. He served as an officer for 17 years then promoted to the rank of Sergeant in 2008, to Lieutenant in 2014, Captain in 2017 and lastly Assistant Chief in June 2017. Over the last 29 years with the Houston Police Department, he has supervised numerous units within patrol and investigative divisions, an elite squad of supervisors in the Internal Affairs Proactive Unit and retired as the Assistant Chief over Patrol Region 1. He is currently the Chief of Police for the Houston Independent School District Police Department. In addition to his law enforcement service, he has honorably served in the United States Army for 27 years prior to his retirement in 2011. Chief Lopez retired as a Chief Warrant Officer Three and specialized in logistical operations. He had command and control responsibility for logistical operations for over 5,000 soldiers stationed throughout the United States and overseas units.

Chief Lopez is a graduate of the 272nd Session of the FBI National Academy and the 80th Session of the Senior Management Institute for Police. He holds a Master of Science Degree in Criminology from the University of Houston, Clear Lake. He holds a Master Peace Officers license in the State of Texas. Chief Lopez is a graduate of the Army's Primary Leadership Development Course, Basic Non-Commissioned Officers Course, Advanced Non-Commissioned Officers Course, the Warrant Officers Basic Course, and the Advanced Warrant Officers Course. He also instructed DOD personnel scheduled for deployment to the theater of operations in the Military Decision-Making Process (MDMP). Chief Lopez was recently appointed to serve as the South-Central Vice President for the National Latino Police Officers Association.

For the past 36 years, Chief Lopez has been happily married to his wife Frances. They have a grown son and enjoy their empty nest.



2020 Support Officer of the Year

Robert Sandoval & Shannon Barker



Academy Class #245 had a 59% fail rate on the first take of the TCOLE test and a high 30% fail rate on the retake. Shannon Barker went outside of her responsibilities at the Academy and got the cadets study materials and she contacted TCOLE about the high fail rate.

While Shannon was scrambling for the BPOC and study materials, Robert Sandoval began interviewing instructors at the Academy to determine what may have happened and to obtain additional study materials for the Cadets. Robert also contacted TCOLE for advice. As a result of contacting TCOLE, Shannon and Robert were able to get the third test delayed which gave the Cadets time to study the BPOC.

As a result of Shannon and Robert's commitment to training and making sure every Cadet had a fair shot at graduating the Houston Police Academy, 14 Cadets were able to pass the TCOLE test on the third attempt. And, because of their hard work and commitment to the Department, the Training Academy and the Cadets, the 4 cadets who were unable to pass the test on the third attempt were able to start the newest Cadet Class without a break in pay/service.

Thank you to Shannon Barker and Robert Sandoval for a job well done.



2021 Support Officer of the Year



Maria Rodriguez



SPO Rodriguez is assigned to the Victim Services Division and serves as a liaison for the Vice Division, Human Trafficking Unit. SPO Rodriguez serves as one of the nation's only Human Trafficking and Victim Advocates. This role is a hybrid role, one where she fulfills the duties of a uniformed police officer and a Victim Advocate, which is predominately a City of Houston civilian role.

During her development as a uniformed officer, SPO Rodriguez has served in various roles throughout the Department. In each assignment, she has exhibited experience, effectiveness, and excellence. It should be noted that SPO Rodriguez is a team player and is always willing to volunteer and help manage last minute divisional needs. Supervisors can count on her productivity and quality of work, which is second to none.

Throughout her career, SPO Rodriguez has earned the respect and admiration of her peers, through hard work and her determination to uplift the Houston community by advocating for a better quality of life for victims of domestic violence and human trafficking. As a Spanish-speaking member of Houston's Domestic Abuse Response Team (D.A.R.T.), SPO Rodriguez is able to bridge the gap with Spanish-speaking crime victims by offering key resources and support after being victimized. During each D.A.R.T. shift, SPO Rodriguez exhibits strength and boldness, often-leading teams of male officers while exhibiting trauma-informed investigative techniques on scene. Once she arrives at a domestic violence crime scene, SPO Rodriguez amplifies the voices of the victims, many who were VOICELESS until meeting her. SPO Rodriguez is a trauma informed officer who works diligently to facilitate restorative justice through relational policing. She is what every officer should aspire to be. SPO Rodriguez is not only an asset to the Houston Police Department and the Houston residents we serve, she is an ambassador for the future of policing.



2020 Uniform Officer of the Year

Abelina Lopez



On August 4, 2019, Officer Lopez responded to a welfare check in which the consumer had threatened suicide. Exercising patience, caution, and restraint, she built a rapport with the consumer. This resulted in the consumer turning off the gas and permitting the officers to enter her residence. The consumer was taken into protective custody without incident and an Emergency Detention Order was filed.

On September 24, 2019, while working an extra job Officer Lopez was notified about a homeless person down and not breathing. She immediately assisted another citizen perform Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR.) and the person started to breathe again. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation was continued until Houston Fire Department personnel properly relieved her. Officer Lopez conducted a follow-up investigation at the hospital and determined that the individual would survive.

On September 26, 2019, she responded to a call for service related to Family Violence-Assault. The complainant received severe injuries and the suspect was not present. The complainant wanted to return to her mother's house in Arizona, but did not have any money for the bus tickets. Officer Lopez transported the complainant and her children to the bus station and subsequently paid for their bus tickets. Additionally, she provided the complainant with a significant amount of money for any incidentals that she might incur.

Officer Lopez conducted a follow-up investigation, which involved re-interviewing the complainant and presenting the case to the Harris County District Attorney's Office for the filing of criminal charges. The suspect was charged with Continuous Family Violence and is currently at large.

These are just a few of Officer Lopez' accomplishments in her very short tenure with the Houston Police Department.



2021 Uniform Officer of the Year

Joe Sanchez



Throughout the year, Senior Police Officer Joe Sanchez performs his duties as a Field Training Instructor in an exceptional manner. Officer Sanchez routinely requests to train and evaluate probationary police officers as they embark on their new careers. Not only does Officer Sanchez ensure that each of his trainees is prepared for the next phase of training, he also spends a significant amount of time mentoring the new officers and acclimating them to the police culture in a positive and constructive manner. Officer Sanchez maintains a high level of productivity and professionalism as a Field Training Instructor. On many occasions, I have received positive feedback from the probationary officers that Officer Sanchez has trained. They are very appreciative of the quality of training that Officer Sanchez

has provided to them and feel a sense of confidence in their newly obtained abilities to perform in the role of a police officer.

2021 Hispanic Officer of the Year Scholarship Recipients



Karen Reneé Banks
Northeast Patrol



Sgt. Michael Hinojosa
Northeast Patrol



2020 Non-Uniform Officer the Month



Daniel Saenz



Officer Saenz is the handler for one of the most productive and prolific confidential informants to ever work for the Houston Police Department Narcotics Division. In August of 2014, Officer Saenz's informant introduced him to an upper level narcotics distributor in the area of Hillcroft and Southwest Freeway. Several controlled buys ensued and Officer Saenz was eventually introduced as an undercover officer purchasing kilos of meth.

This particular investigation eventually targeted the drug activities of two significant individuals in Mexico who were responsible for smuggling large kilogram quantities of cocaine into the United States, specifically Houston, for distribution to Massachusetts, North Carolina, Illinois and Ohio. This investigation was named Dark Skye for identification purposes. Investigators with the Houston Police Department in conjunction with the Drug Enforcement Administration began targeting a suspect who occupied a leadership role within this organization. During the first phase of this investigation, agents employed the use of 19 Title III intercepts, 11 pen registers and 10 GPS pings resulting in 39 arrests, the seizure of 97 kilograms of cocaine, 8.6 kilograms of heroin, 16.4 kilograms of meth and \$2,919,939.00 in cash, 4 vehicles and 10 guns.

On July 1, 2020, under phase II of this operation, investigators appeared before the Federal Grand Jury in the Eastern District of Texas, which returned a true bill of indictment for an additional 16 members of this Drug Trafficking Organization leading to the successful conclusion of Dark Skye.

Officer Saenz and his confidential informant are solely responsible for the initiation of this complex, in-depth six year investigation that resulted in significant seizures and arrests. Officer Saenz represents the highest ideals of quality investigations which represent the Houston Police Department Narcotics Division.



2021 Non-Uniform Officer of the Year



Mario Valles



Officer Valles is a twenty-six year veteran of the Houston Police Department and has been assigned to the Narcotics Division for fifteen years. Officer Valles currently is assigned to a HIDT A Targeted Narcotics Enforcement Squad (Heroin), which targets upper level drug couriers in the greater Houston area.

Officer Valles has always possessed a unique ability to recruit and retain confidential informants who are able to produce on a high level, not only in terms of seizures but also in relation to their contacts with Mexican drug cartels. Officer Valles currently oversees approximately eight confidential informants. This unique ability has led to the disruption and dismantling of several Drug Trafficking Organizations in the Houston area and surrounding counties.

Officer Valles has already seized the following in eight months of calendar year 2021:

10 kilos of Heroin

30 kilos of powder cocaine

108 kilos of methamphetamine

The aforementioned seizures have led to the felony arrests of seven suspects for drug trafficking. Officer Valles is a leader in the Narcotics Division. He works with the Drug Enforcement Administration on a regular basis. Officer Valles also trains and mentors new officers who transfer into the HIDT A squads, specifically the Heroin Squad. Officer Valles uses his Spanish to develop relationships with informants that is unprecedented in this division.



Honorable Mentions for 2021 Hispanic Officer of the Year

The Hispanic Officer of the Year Committee, Inc. congratulates each of the following Houston Police Officers for their outstanding contributions to the law enforcement profession. Our community, the Houston Police Department and all of law enforcement are better served because you have gone beyond the call of duty. It is fitting that you be recognized for your consistent outstanding performance. We are extremely proud of you and are confident that you will continue to enjoy great success in your careers.

V. De La Garza	Vice Division
K. Chinchilla-Rodas	Central Division
V. Garza	Eastside Division
A. Chapa	Downtown Division
P. Marquez	Training Division
G. Gutierrez	Emergency Communications Division
H. Chairez	Southwest Division
A. Barajas	Southwest Division
J. Duncan	Westside Patrol
R. Smith	Westside Patrol
J. Adovasio	Northeast Patrol
J. Robles	Patrol Division
H. Cardenas	Clear Lake Patrol
K. Villareal	Northeast Patrol
D. Escobar	Special Victims
L. Gonzales	Special Victims



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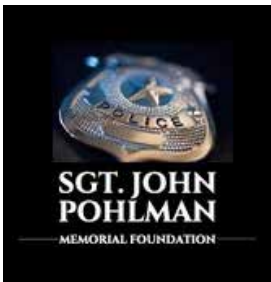
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GREATER HOUSTON CHAPTER



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Changas**
FRESH. MEX. FUN.

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LIEUTENANT ELMA TREVINO (RETIRED)**

**SR. OFFICER MIKE (RETIRED) &
SR. OFFICER ROSALINDA YBANEZ (RETIRED)**



Special Recognition

CYNTHIA RIVERA



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

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