

**Attorney General Pam Bondi's Law Enforcement Officer of the Year
Nominees' Biographies**

**Investigator Richard Baldwin
Nominated by the Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Office of
Agricultural Law Enforcement**

Investigator Baldwin has proven his dedication to excellence during his almost ten-year career with the Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement. His comprehensive, high quality, law enforcement work has successfully resolved numerous, complicated investigations which have resulted in convictions, recovery of funds and property, and restitution to victims. Due to his patience, persistence, and attention to detail, Investigator Baldwin often finds the small missing piece of evidence necessary to successfully close cases.

Investigator Baldwin was able to unravel a complex fraud case involving a charitable organization based in Ocala that derived the majority of its funds through a grant administered by the Florida Department of Health. Based on a tip from a former employee, coupled with many hours of research and analysis, and cooperation from the Department of Health, Investigator Baldwin uncovered evidence that proved the executive director was defrauding the state. The defendant was submitting fraudulent documentation and thereby receiving unwarranted grant reimbursements from the state. His work led to 37 felony counts against the executive director, to which he pled guilty, resulting in 10 years probation and an order for restitution of more than \$15,000 to the Department of Health.

In another unique case, Investigator Baldwin's assistance was requested by the Levy County Sheriff's Office in solving an incident of cattle theft. His work resulted in uncovering a refined modern day cattle rustling operation run by a career criminal. This individual duped the local chapter of Future Farmers of America and several students out of 115 top graded steers valued at more than \$181,000. His investigation revealed this person had committed similar crimes in several other states. Because of his relentless efforts, the subject was arrested, all the stolen livestock located, and all of the victimized students were paid the full purchase price for their animals.

Investigator Baldwin is continuing his quest for excellence by pursuing a master's degree in criminal justice administration. He is a CJSTC certified instructor for the Office of Agricultural Law Enforcement, training other officers in the investigation of commercial vehicle crimes, interdiction protocol, and state laws pertaining to agricultural law enforcement. He is a field training officer, a member of the Florida Agricultural Crimes Intelligence Unit, and Florida Child Abduction Response Team.

Special Agent Jason Cook
Nominated by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement

During his six years with FDLE, Special Agent Cook's investigative efforts have brought much recognition to the department and its efforts to combat the prescription drug abuse problem in Florida. He consistently exhibits commitment to his department's fundamental values of Service, Integrity, Respect and Quality, providing superior services to Florida's citizens and criminal justice community. Special Agent Cook is a member of the Orlando Regional Operations Center Organized Crime Squad and the Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation's Prescription Drug Unit. As the case agent for the Central Florida Drug Enforcement Strike Force, he investigates pharmaceutical crimes throughout the nine-county Orlando Region.

Special Agent Cook initiated an investigation into a network of registered pain management clinics in the Orlando area owned by Lewis and Darrin Shapiro. Through multiple undercover operations, countless surveillance hours, witness interviews, and research and analysis of records, Special Agent Cook was able to obtain search warrants for the Orlando clinics. In addition, search warrants were obtained and executed on four bank accounts, resulting in the seizure of approximately \$250,000. Continuing his investigation, Special Agent Cook was able to obtain a court ordered search warrant for the residence of Lewis and Jarrett Shapiro, where approximately \$985,000 in currency, believed to be proceeds from the clinic operations, was seized. The proceeds were seized just prior to being transferred to Darin Shapiro in Hawaii.

Working closely with the Office of Statewide Prosecution, a 206 page affidavit was prepared which resulted in capiases being issued for racketeering, conspiracy to commit racketeering and money laundering against five suspects, which includes two medical doctors. The Shapiros were taken into custody on the island of Kauai, Hawaii, Dr. Rotman was arrested in Orlando and Dr. Jummani surrendered at the Orange County Jail. The three worst offending pill mill clinics in Central Florida were permanently closed.

Special Agent Cook has approached his work on the department's Prescription Drug Initiative with vigor, providing agents across the state with a blueprint of how to successfully bring down a pill mill and its organization.

**Officer Bryan Fugate
Nominated by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission**

Officer Bryan Fugate was raised in Desoto County by a law enforcement family. His mother was a police officer with the Arcadia Police Department and his father is a former deputy sheriff and former Sheriff of the Desoto County Sheriff's Office.

Officer Fugate achieved his dream of becoming a conservation law enforcement officer in May 2009. Since that time, he has worked tirelessly at his job, serving in the Florida Keys.

Innovative and resourceful, Officer Fugate introduced the use of "trail cams" into his marine resource investigations, enabling the FWC to observe suspect vessels entering and departing locations of criminal activity. He also utilized "game cams" for the purpose of identifying illegal fish traps by securing the cameras in the mangroves and photographing individual boaters as they approached and removed the fish from the traps.

Through the use of the "trail cams," he was able to obtain the necessary proof to obtain a warrant for placement of an electronic tracking device on a commercial vessel owned

by an individual suspected of placing untagged lobster traps in the water, which subsequently led to an arrest. Officer Fugate was the first FWC officer in Monroe County to obtain such a warrant. His work inspired the Monroe County Sheriff's Office to begin using these devices in their investigations.

He also worked to obtain personal breath test instruments through Mothers Against Drunk Driving. These instruments will be used to detect and verify the consumption of alcohol by individuals under the age of 21 who are operating vessels upon the waters of the state.

Officer Fugate works with the federal and municipal law enforcement partners in his community, establishing strong relationships with these agencies in order to provide more comprehensive enforcement efforts in the Keys.

Officer Fugate is a leader among his peers, and functions as a field training officer instructing new officers in the many aspects of the job by taking a genuine interest in helping them adjust to the rigors of their new career. In addition, he teaches classes in law enforcement techniques at the Florida Keys Community College. He also volunteers with the Boys Scouts to teach them outdoors skills.

Sergeant Mary Godino
Nominated by the Florida Highway Patrol

A 17-year veteran of the Florida Highway Patrol, Sgt. Godino exemplifies the force's selfless commitment to duty and service to the citizens of Florida. Her courageous effort to rescue an unresponsive driver that was involved in an automobile crash is a small example of her commitment to service.

While traveling to work on November 9, 2011, Sgt. Godino came upon a chaotic scene involving a school bus, cloud of dust, and people in a state of panic. Upon closer inspection, Sgt. Godino discovered an overturned fertilizer truck whose driver was

trapped inside the badly damaged cab of the truck. The truck driver had sustained a head injury.

Sgt. Godino and a nurse who had stopped at the scene crawled into the truck cab to render aid to the injured driver, despite the presence of diesel fuel leaking into the cab. Sgt. Godino suppressed the bleeding and supported the driver's head to keep his airway open until emergency personnel arrived and was able to cut through the damaged truck's cab to extract the driver, which took approximately one hour. Without thought for her own safety, her life-saving actions may well have prevented tragic consequences for the injured driver.

**Detective Sebastian Monros
Nominated by the Florida Retail Federation**

Detective Monros began his law enforcement career with the Miami-Dade Police Department in April 2008. Detective Monros has been assigned to the department's Economic Crimes Unit Special Investigations Section as a fraud investigator for nearly two years.

He investigates cases such as credit card and check fraud, counterfeiting, embezzlement, identity theft, organized crime, lottery scams, financial account takeovers, and extortion. Such crimes are a multi-billion dollar a year industry, resulting in very complex investigations, often leading to organized crime rings, career criminals and gang activity.

In June 2011, Detective Monros observed a trend in the cases assigned to him. He uncovered evidence that individuals were using stolen personal information and counterfeit credit cards to establish false memberships in wholesale clubs. "Paid shoppers" would purchase alcohol and tobacco products with multiple different counterfeit cards, then sell the items to three separate liquor stores in the Miami-Dade area.

Working with other agencies and retail personnel, Detective Monros was able to identify more than 30 criminals participating in the crime scheme. As a result of his investigation, eight suspects were arrested, with additional arrests pending, and the involved liquor stores are facing civil and criminal penalties.

In another investigation, Detective Monros was able to identify and arrest an individual who had transacted more than 101 fraudulent purchases at a home improvement chain's multiple area locations. The transactions involved 28 separate victim accounts where all the checks were returned as counterfeit documents resulting in more than \$360,000 in losses to the retailer.

Those who have been victims of financial crimes know how difficult it is to deal with the aftermath. Having a dedicated public servant such as Detective Monros on a case is a distinct advantage to businesses and citizens of the state.

Detective Dwight Murphy
Nominated by the Florida Department of Financial Services, Division of Insurance Fraud

Detective Dwight Murphy has served with the Division of Insurance Fraud since May 2008, and has more than 30 years of law enforcement experience.

In one case, he was the lead detective assigned to an FBI Fraud Task Force investigating a Ponzi scheme involving the purchase of high interest motor vehicle installment finance contracts (car notes). To fund its purchase of car notes, Lydia Cladek, owner of Lydia Cladek, Inc., solicited private investment of capital from private investors and in exchange for the loans.

LCI represented the notes as genuine and valid-- that they had never been previously assigned and would not be assigned in the future, however Detective Murphy's investigation proved the promises were all false. The suspect was using money from new investors to pay interest to old investors and to fund her personal lavish lifestyle.

By the time the FBI served a search warrant on LCI, the existing performing car notes owned by LCI had dwindled to just under four million dollars, while the outstanding loans to investor exceeded \$90 million. The suspect was also encouraging investors to roll over their returns into additional investments rather than take a payout, despite the fact that she knew there were not adequate funds to meet the obligations of existing promissory notes.

On September 20, 2012, Lydia Cladek was sentenced to 240 months on counts 1-13, and 125 months on count 14. The Judge also ordered her to pay more than \$34 million dollars in restitution.

Detective Murphy conducted a lengthy investigation into a case involving a Jacksonville radiology technician who was stealing syringes of the narcotic Fentanyl during patients' procedures and replacing them with syringes of saline contaminated with the Hepatitis C virus. One patient who contracted the Hepatitis C virus as a result of this criminal act, died four years later never knowing how he contracted the Hepatitis C virus.

This year long investigation by Detective Murphy led to the arrest and conviction of radiologist technician Steven Beumel, on charges of tampering with a consumer product resulting in death, tampering with a consumer product resulting in serious bodily injury and stealing a synthetic narcotic by deception.

The suspect was sentenced to 240 months for tampering with a consumer product that resulted in a serious injury; 360 months for tampering with a consumer product that resulted in death; and 48 months for theft of Fentanyl.

In June 2011, Detective Murphy began an investigation into several clinics that provided massage therapy services exclusively to auto accident claimants using PIP auto insurance benefits. Through his work, it was discovered that the clinics were involved in staged accident schemes to defraud insurance companies. Currently, 26 warrants have been issued and 17 arrests have been made, with more expected. Thus far, fraudulent

claims from the scheme exceed \$6 million and that amount is expected to grow as the investigation continues.

Detective Oscar Plasencia
Nominated by the Florida Sheriffs Association

A police officer for more than 32 years, Miami-Dade Police Department Detective Plasencia feels as if he inherited the law enforcement gene, since his father and grandfather were police officers in his native Cuba. Detective Plasencia is assigned to the Career Criminal Squad. He is charged with investigating, locating and arresting career criminals with outstanding warrants, and convicted felons considered the “worst of the worst” by virtue of their lengthy criminal histories. He and his fellow squad officers routinely work in high-risk situations in an effort to make their community a safer place for citizens and visitors.

On January 20, 2011, Detective Plasencia experienced a life-changing event while attempting to serve an arrest warrant. He and several other members of the Career Criminal Squad were searching for a violent career criminal who was wanted on charges of first degree murder and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

They had been to several locations searching for the suspect without success; however the last stop was the suspect’s mother’s home. The suspect’s mother let the squad into her residence. As soon as they entered, the suspect, who was armed with a semi-automatic pistol, began to fire at them without any warning. Detective Roger Castillo was shot and killed instantly. Detective Amanda Haworth was critically wounded and died a short time later at a local hospital. Detective Beecher was also injured during the incident.

While his partners were going down in a barrage of bullets, Detective Plasencia’s years of training and instincts took over as he realized the suspect was now firing at him. Fully realizing that his own life was in jeopardy, Detective Plasencia returned fire and

took down the subject, saving himself and other officers. From the first shot to the last, the entire shooting incident took less than 17 seconds.

He still deeply regrets the loss of his fellow officers and is determined to continue enforcing the law. Detective Plasencia's actions on that fateful day reflect the best qualities in our state's law enforcement ranks.

Sergeant Karl Lounge
Nominated by the Fraternal Order of Police

Police Officer Douglas Weaver
Nominated by the Florida Police Chiefs Association

On January 24, 2011, while the governor and I along with thousands of law enforcement officers were attending the funerals of Miami-Dade Detectives Roger Castillo and Amanda Haworth, we received word of an ongoing shooting in St. Petersburg where two St. Petersburg police officers had been killed and several others had been shot.

United States Deputy Marshall Scott Ley and members of the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office, and St. Petersburg Police Department had combined efforts to locate and arrest violent wanted fugitive, Hydra Lacey. They went to the suspect's home and were told by his wife that he was not home. Not believing her story, the wife was escorted from the house while Taskforce members searched the home, while requesting a K-9 unit and additional backup from St. Petersburg Police Department. After searching the home three times, the third time with the assistance of Officer Yaslowitz and his K-9 partner, Ace, the officers decided to take a look in the attic, even though there was no obvious evidence that anyone had recently accessed this area.

After searching the attic opening with a mirror and not finding any evidence of the suspect, Officer Yaslowitz and Deputy Marshall Ley pulled themselves into the attic in order to conduct a more thorough search. Neither officer was able to locate anyone in the attic during their initial search therefore Marshall Ley came down from the attic to speak with the other officers. While speaking with the officers below, he heard Officer

Yaslowitz challenge the suspect in the attic and he immediately returned to the attic to assist Officer Yaslowitz.

During the next several minutes, the suspect was located by both officers and they had a good view of him with their flashlights. He was cooperating with their commands, and they could see that his hands were empty. After Officer Yaslowitz moved in to handcuff him, the suspect began to resist and ultimately produce a handgun he had hidden from view and fired three shots striking Officer Yaslowitz.

Before Marshall Ley could return fire, the suspect shot him once in the vest and then in the groin area which cause him to lose footing and fall through the attic opening and onto Detective Herron who was standing waist high in the attic while on a ladder. Suspect Lacey continued to fire down at the fallen officers from the attic causing drywall and the floor tiles around them to erupt from the impact of the gunfire.

Sgt. Karl Lounge, Sgt. Tom Baitinger, Officer Douglas Weaver, and Officer Max McDonald knew they had to react quickly to save their friends who were wounded and trapped in the kill zone. Sgt. Baitinger led the entry with a ballistic shield as they rushed inside. He was hit with a round in the vest as he passed under the attic opening while observing Officer Yaslowitz in the attic.

He tried desperately to rescue Officer Yaslowitz, by grabbing his boot in an attempt to drag him out of the hail of gunfire from the suspect. Suddenly, Sgt. Baitinger was struck just above his vest and he fell mortally wounded. Officer Weaver then tried the rescue until he too was struck with a round that cut through the back of his hand.

Sgt. Lounge poured round after round into the ceiling as cover fire while Officer Weaver called out for help to get the wounded out of the house. Though shot in the hand while trying to reach a fatally wounded officer, Officer Weaver still was able to remove the wounded U.S. Marshal through a bathroom window while Sgt. Lounge and the suspect

continued trading gunfire. The officers were also able to remove Sgt. Baitinger from the house.

With Officer Weaver and Sgt. Baitinger out of the house, Sgt. Lounge then exited. Despite the injury to this hand, Officer Weaver joined with a group of S.W.A.T officers and assaulted the house twice more while attempting to rescue Officer Yaslowitz's body, all the time encountering heavy gunfire from the suspect. In the second attempt, they were able to retrieve Officer Yaslowitz's body. The men and women of the Sgt. Petersburg Police Department lost two of their finest on that day. The suspect was also killed during the ferocious gunfight.

When the unthinkable happened, Sgt. Lounge, Officer Weaver and a host of brave men and women for the St. Petersburg Police Department and surrounding law enforcement agencies exhibited extreme courage under fire. Their heroism on that terrible day personifies the selfless bravery of those serving in law enforcement in our state.

