

2019 Incident of the Year Nominations

Bethany Otter - San Diego Police Department

On June 26, 2019, at 0608 hours, 911 Dispatcher Bethany Otter received a CHP transfer call from a crying male who wanted to commit suicide. The caller, Tom, did not speak to Bethany at first but she didn't stop asking questions and letting the caller know she was there. Exemplifying great compassion and understanding, Bethany did not Hot Call the incident and chose instead to message a Lead to monitor the call. She wanted to keep the emotional RP calm. It took over eight minutes for the caller to finally respond to Bethany's patient and comforting words. He shared that he had cut his neck and was bleeding. Bethany remained composed and unwaveringly patient. Tom was in the brush in his tent and it was difficult for officers to locate him. Bethany remained consistent in her serene demeanor asking for landmarks, trees, street signs, or anything that might help the officers locate him. She continued her questioning while also empathizing with the male who was expressing his troubles, commenting on how the officers can help and how sorry she was that he was going through such a difficult time. She did an amazing job both connecting with her caller as well as continuing to get the information needed to help him. Eventually, Tom was located, all because Bethany did not give up. She even convinced him to walk to the street and wave down an officer, despite his reluctance. This call was handled extremely well by 911 Dispatcher Bethany Otter who demonstrated great compassion for her caller while simultaneously making excellent dispatching decisions. Bethany is being nominated for a job well done.

Kristen Bonner - San Diego Police Department

On May 13, 2019, at 1506 hours, (then) 911 Dispatcher Kristen Bonner received a call from a female reporting that her estranged husband whom she still lived with was at home and threatening suicide with a firearm. Kristen immediately Hot-Called the event. The female was able to keep her husband on her personal cellphone while calling 911 from her business phone. The female kept Kristen updated on everything she was hearing. The female gave detailed information regarding her husband's various conditions which included but were not limited to: PTSD, a speech impediment due to a traumatic military incident which left him with over 80% of his tongue being injured, depression, as well as anxiety. The female stated her husband had numerous long guns and handguns in a safe in the residence which also complicated the officers' response. There were several times when the female broke down, frustrated at not being able to hear anything from her husband on the other end of the line. Kristen had a lot to

consider in her handling of this event, including a suicidal subject, an RP not at the location of the event, numerous firearms in the home, two schools in close proximity to the subject's residence ... under all of these circumstances, Kristen remained calm and was able to keep the female on the phone as calm as possible for well over 50 minutes. At one point, the female was able to convey to Kristen that she believed her husband had possibly intentionally overdosed on his medications and was going to fall asleep. Kristen told the female to ask him questions that would only require a one-word answer, in case he became groggy or unable to focus on responding in full sentences. ABLÉ was overhead within 15 minutes of the call and gave a layout to the officers who were setting up a command post down the street. The female became understandably impatient with the response time and decided to leave her work with her husband still on her cellphone – she left her business phone with her boss which allowed Kristen to continue to ask pertinent questions as to the description of the car the female was travelling in, the female's cellphone number, and the approximate driving time to her residence. At 1600 hours, a sergeant gave successful voice commands to the husband which led to him opening the front door as the female pulled up to the residence. The male finally exited the house at 1612 hours and was subsequently taken to Paradise Valley Hospital. The incident was handled extremely well by 911 Dispatcher Kristen Bonner. Kristen is being nominated for a job well done, and remaining calm and compassionate. She also did an excellent job informing the female as to the reasons why making contact with the husband in this situation took time as it brought many other layers to be considered, for the safety and welfare of the husband, anyone responding and also for those in the immediate vicinity.

Petra Santiago - San Diego Police Department

On the morning of Thursday, January 17, 2019, (then) Police 911 Dispatcher Petra Santiago received a 911 call from a female student at Mount Carmel High School who stated a male student was threatening to kill himself with a screwdriver in class, and he would not let students leave the classroom. After quickly verifying the RP's location and classroom number, Petra advised the RP she was getting her supervisor on the line and to not hang up. Petra continued to ask pertinent questions about the student who was threatening suicide. She was able to get the student's name and clothing description from the RP. Petra did a great job of keeping the RP calm and focused on answering questions. The RP advised Petra that teachers showed up and they were fighting with the student with the screwdriver. The RP also stated that she and classmates were running out of the classroom. Petra made sure to know where the RP and her classmates were headed; she also made sure whether or not any of the teachers needed medical treatment and if the student still had the screwdriver. Once the students and the RP were in a safe area, Petra made sure to know how officers could get to the RP and her classmates quickly and safely. She reassured the RP that police were on their way and kept the RP calm. Police 911 Dispatcher Petra Santiago is being

nominated for her compassion and professionalism. She did an exceptional job during this stressful situation and displayed exemplary composure. Petra's work demonstrates a high standard of proficiency and knowledge during a critical event.

Linna Kim - San Diego Police Department

On February 12, 2019 at 1939 hours, (then) Police Dispatcher Linna Kim dispatched Western Division patrol officers to a report of gunfire in the area of 435 University Avenue. The RP believed the shots came from a high-powered rifle. Soon afterward, a witness called to report a 245 – a male was seen shooting into a restaurant with an assault rifle. Linna repeated the location and description several times for responding officers as well as airing pertinent information that had been added to the event from other witnesses. Linna broadcast all information in a clear, organized and concise manner. While ABLE set up perimeter locations, Linna ensured each post had sufficient coverage. Soon afterward, a unit located clothing in an alley. After multiple witness sightings, another unit located a possible suspect. Linna started cover units and turned on the emergency tone. A K9 located a bag containing additional clothing and a gun several minutes later. The detained male was arrested after additional evidence was discovered. From the onset of the event, Linna's transmissions were composed and in control. Her demeanor set the tone for the officers to remain as calm as possible during an event that could have had a horrific ending. Linna's voice never wavered and she never stopped documenting the event. Linna knew all the moving parts and was able to immediately answer questions from the field. She enlisted the help of fellow dispatchers and other divisions to assist with priority calls in Western. A Lieutenant from Homicide who had listened to the radio traffic during the incident reached out to a Police Dispatch Administrator commending Linna for her outstanding work. Linna Kim is being nominated for her professionalism, job knowledge and dispatching skills, her ability to remain calm during a highly stressful situation, and her performance, which displayed the utmost concern for officer and citizen safety.

Lisa Biel - San Diego Sheriff's Department

On August 22, 2019 at 0132 hours, Emergency Services Dispatcher (ESD), Lisa Biel, was working the Santee dispatch radio. A deputy came up on the radio broadcasting a traffic pursuit. Within a few minutes, a subject bailed from the vehicle in the El Cajon area. The vehicle was still moving. Lisa coordinated the foot pursuit and traffic pursuit simultaneously with El Cajon PD and CHP assisting. Lisa obtained cover units for both locations and continued to process updates in a clear and concise manner. A patch was created to facilitate radio communications for the El Cajon location where the search for the football subject was occurring. Due to the location of the foot pursuit, officers from the El Cajon Police Department assisted with a perimeter. A call was received from a

resident advising that a male fitting the description came to his door indicating the cops were looking for him. The male tried to climb into the resident's window. The male subject was eventually detained at 0206 hours. The traffic pursuit moved onto Interstate 8 through La Mesa towards the City of San Diego. The traffic pursuit was called off at 0140 hours due to red light violations. A San Diego State University police officer assisted with the traffic pursuit while it was on the freeway before the pursuit was terminated. Coordination of a single critical event can be difficult. Coordinating of multiple critical incidents at the same time takes skill. Lis Biel was able to coordinate communication from multiple agencies at various locations always keeping officer and public safety in mind.

San Diego Sheriff's Communications Center - San Diego Sheriff's Department

On October 15th, 2019 at 1010 hours, Border Patrol agents requested Spring Valley deputies respond to the Jamul area to check the welfare of a male that had been seen acting abnormally. When responding units arrived at the scene, the male quickly became uncooperative refused to exit his vehicle to make contact with the deputies. Once contact was made, the male proceeded to stab Sheriff's K9 Bono in the head causing injury. Sheriff's deputies were also sprayed with OC spray by the male. Emergency Services Dispatcher (ESD) Marisa Metner quickly located an emergency veterinarian close to the area and notified them of Bono's injury. Bono was able to be rushed to the emergency veterinarian by his handler and has since recovered from his injuries. This incident showcased effective communication between the deputies, the radio dispatcher, Robert Kennedy, and other communications center staff, in order to coordinate an effective response and obtain a favorable outcome. Border Patrol and California Highway Patrol also assisted in the incident, validating the importance and benefit of allied agencies and working together as a region.

San Diego Sheriff's Department

On April 27th, 2019 an armed gunman entered the Chabad of Poway synagogue and opened fire. Neighbors in the area began frantically calling 9-1-1 as they saw patrons fleeing from the synagogue. Emergency Services Dispatcher (ESD) Sarah Ward was assigned as the Poway radio dispatcher. As a flood of calls came in, Sarah relayed information immediately with a calm and even tone. She used a cursory eye to sift through and broadcast new and pertinent information to responding units clearly. Before units arrived, the alleged gunman called 9-1-1. His call routed to the California Highway Patrol who promptly transferred him to the Sheriff's Communications Center. ESD Frank Klos answered the call and began obtaining the gunman's location, description, and other critical information. Frank maintained a calm demeanor and updated the CAD event quickly and accurately. The information provided and broadcast

to other agencies led to the quick apprehension of the shooter. One woman was killed and three others were injured during this incident. The horrifying nature of the event, large scale response and the sheer volume of calls left a lasting impact on our Communications Center. The exceptional teamwork between everyone working within the Sheriff's Communications Center as well as dispatchers and officers from other agencies throughout the County fueled a cohesive response which led to swift assistance to the patrons of Chabad of Poway that day.

Jessica Macias - Coronado Police Department

On May 27, 2019, at 1531 hours, Dispatcher Macias took a call from an elderly male who stated he was going to commit suicide by shooting himself in the head. He stated he had a loaded handgun sitting next to him and that he was intending to end his life, but was concerned about the welfare of his dog that would be left behind. Macias immediately developed a rapport with the caller by speaking with him about his dog, as well as his reasons for wanting to end his life. During this process Macias asked all the pertinent information required for the safety of the responding officers, including details about weapons. The caller ultimately did have a loaded handgun with him and the potential for injury to himself and the officers was great. Macias was able to convince the caller to abandon his plan and step outside to speak with an officer. She calmly directed him to stay on the phone with her as he went to the front of the residence. He was then taken into protective custody without incident and transported to a mental health facility. Macias remained calm and professional throughout the call, and displayed compassion for the caller. She quickly created a connection with the caller that allowed her to gather the critical information needed for a positive outcome. Suicidal callers are one of the most challenging types of calls that dispatchers receive, and Macias handled this call in a competent and exceptional manner. Macias' is to be commended for her actions that brought about a desired outcome for everyone involved.