

Officer Michael Nugent, Gold Medal

On February 28, at 9:45 a.m., a call came in for a suicidal subject threatening to jump off the bridge at the Interstate 495 overpass on South Patrick Street. Due to extremely cold temperatures, the roadways and sidewalks were extremely icy.

Officer Nugent was near the area and immediately responded. Upon arrival, he spotted a woman standing on top of a jersey wall. On the other side of the wall was a 75 foot drop down to I-495 and Cameron Run. He saw another woman, Ms. Mamie Doyle, attempting to communicate with her. Officer Nugent jumped out of his cruiser. The woman began to make a step motion as if she was going to walk off the wall. He began shouting at her to stop and talk to him. The woman did not listen. She leaned forward and fell from the jersey wall. Ms. Doyle was closer to the subject than Officer Nugent. As the woman went over the edge, she heroically ran forward and managed to catch the woman's arm as she went over the wall. This prevented the woman from falling to her death and instead she landed on an icy ledge, no more than a few feet wide, between where the two ramps came together.

Officer Nugent ran up behind Ms. Doyle and grabbed the woman's other arm. Determined to complete her task, the woman continued to struggle and fought to free herself from their grip. Both Officer Nugent and Ms. Doyle began to lose their grip on the woman. Without hesitation and thoughts of his own safety, Officer Nugent jumped over the jersey wall and onto the ledge. Due to the freezing temperatures, the ledge was covered with a layer of ice over an inch thick. Officer Nugent attempted to restrain the woman. She continued to fight. The woman was able to grip the edge of the ledge with her legs and pull herself forward on the icy ledge taking Officer Nugent with her. Several times, Officer Nugent was able to hold onto the woman and pull her back from the edge, but she continued to struggle. It became difficult for Officer Nugent to maintain control as they kept slipping closer to the edge. Officer Nugent told Ms. Doyle he didn't think he could hold onto the woman much longer.



Suddenly, Ms. Doyle leapt over the jersey wall and sat on top of the victim, pinning her down and preventing her from moving closer to the edge. After several long minutes, the Fire Department and additional officers arrived on scene. As a group, they were able to bring the victim, Officer Nugent, and Ms. Doyle back to the safe side of the jersey wall. The victim was transported to Alexandria Hospital and was mentally evaluated.

As a result of Officer Nugent's actions, the woman was survived to get the help she needed. We award Officer Nugent a Gold Medal in recognition of his heroic actions.