

Nomination of Master Deputy Joseph Runquist

Since joining the Alexandria Sheriff's Office in 2007, Master Deputy Joseph Runquist has consistently pursued additional responsibilities, joined specialized teams, and never hesitated to assist fellow law enforcement officers or members of the public facing life threatening situations.

Deputy Runquist began his career with the Sheriff's Office by serving in the Detention Center and for the last eight years, he has been the Gang Unit Coordinator. In this capacity, he works closely with deputies assigned to housing units and together, they monitor and share gang-related intelligence to protect inmates and staff and to prevent gang members from participating in gang-related activity while in custody. He also networks with other agencies and exchanges information with his counterparts throughout the region as part of a coordinated effort to reduce gang influence and crimes.

However, Deputy Runquist's work extends far beyond that official assignment. He has been a member of the award-winning Honor Guard since 2010. He is committed to training, working as part of a team, and representing the Sheriff's Office in the most positive and professional manner. Deputy Runquist was part of the four-member unit that took first place in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' annual honor guard competition in 2019, and he most recently represented the Sheriff's Office and Honor Guard by participating in a modified memorial ceremony on May 1 for National Correctional Officers Week.

Deputy Runquist has also served as a select member of the Motorcycle Unit since 2016. With only two deputies, this elite unit represents the Sheriff's Office in parades and in official escorts with other local motorcycle units. As with the Honor Guard duty, Deputy Runquist's professional appearance and precision skills with the Motorcycle Unit are impressive.

Deputy Runquist is committed to his colleagues and eagerly supports them through staffing and training. When another unit needs assistance to transport an inmate, to execute warrants, or to provide staffing at the jail or courthouse, Deputy Runquist is able to help out.

He also assists the entire organization by training new deputies as well as veterans. A state-certified instructor, Deputy Runquist is a law enforcement field training deputy and a defensive tactics instructor.

Whether on or off duty, Deputy Runquist is vigilant and quick to respond in emergency situations. In two cases of note, his actions saved someone from serious harm and potential death. In 2011, he observed and interrupted an inmate attempting suicide and in 2015, while off duty, he observed a woman choking and successfully performed the Heimlich maneuver.

Last year, when a resident of an apartment building along Richmond Highway began shooting, Deputy Runquist did not hesitate to respond. He joined several Alexandria police officers who entered the building and went to the fourth floor where the shots were still being fired. As residents of nearby apartments ran out, Deputy Runquist and the officers assisted in getting them to safety. As the incident continued, Deputy Runquist and others were directed to the floor above

to check on the apartment below. He remained on site for seven hours and the incident was later peacefully resolved.

Finally, Deputy Runquist served as a youth mentor for many years at Charles Barrett Elementary, provided outreach to the homeless, and enthusiastically participates in community events like National Night Out.