

2022

Patrolman Jackson Hyams

Willoughby Police Department

Lightening rarely strikes twice in one place. So it is in the life of a first responder. A situation which forces one of them to act in a manner over and above the call of duty, is a rare occasion. But in the case of Patrolman Jackson Hyams it unbelievably happened twice in one year, but even more remarkably, twice in 15 days.

On October 14, 2022, Willoughby officers were dispatched to an attempted suicide. The caller state that her 51 year old son had cut his wrists. Officer Hyams was the first on scene, and found the victim with a deep cut on his left wrist, and an extreme amount of blood pooled around him. Hyams began trying to apply a tourniquet, but the male physically resisted his efforts. Hyams struggled to overcome the male and was able to apply the tourniquet and control the bleeding. Responding Willoughby Fire Department personnel credited Hyams for his efforts in potentially saving the male's life. Hyams subsequently rode with the squad to the hospital, due to the continued resistive behavior of the subject, and to protect the fire personnel.

Then on October 29, 2022, a dump truck went out of control on Vine Street, striking a utility pole, and above ground gas main, and then the front porch of a house. A gas main on the house was ruptured igniting a fire which enveloped the truck and the front of the house. As Hyams arrived on scene, he learned that citizens had already assisted the driver to exit the vehicle. A passenger remained trapped. Hyams opened the vehicle door and made an attempt to extricate the passenger. As the fire grew in intensity, he obtained a fire extinguisher and attempted to control the fire. In spite of downed electrical lines and the ruptured gas lines feeding the fire, Hyams made a second attempt to get the passenger out. During his attempts, Hyams suffered burns on his face, hands, and arms, along with smoke inhalation.

Despite his heroic efforts, Hyams was unable to free the victim and he unfortunately did not survive. Later it was determined that the victim's legs and waist were so badly pinned in the wreckage that his body was only removed through the use of rescue tools.

Chief James Schultz nominated Hyams for the Jorge Medina award citing several examples of his proactive community service and "his work ethic which is driven with integrity, professionalism, unselfish commitment, service, and loyalty. "

The board of the Lake County Blue Coats, Inc accepted Chief Schultz' nomination, and are very proud of Hyams, who exemplifies exactly what the Jorge Medina award is meant to honor.