NEW BEDFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

AWARD & PROMOTION CEREMONY

NOVEMBER 18TH, 2026

"In valor, there is hope..."

-Tacitus


"Anyone can hold
the helm,
when the sea
is calm..."
-Publilius Syrus



On behalf of the New Bedford Police Department, I would like to welcome everyone to our 2026 Awards and Promotion Ceremony and thank you for joining us on this special occasion.

Today, we gather to recognize the accomplishments of some truly deserving members of our department. Whether being honored for extraordinary acts of courage, life-saving efforts, exceptional service, or advancement through promotion, each of these individuals has demonstrated a commitment to the profession and to the people of New Bedford that deserves our recognition and appreciation.

I would also like to extend a special thank you to the families and friends who have joined us. Your encouragement, patience, and sacrifices play an important role in the success of our officers. Having you here to share in their accomplishments makes today's ceremony all the more meaningful. To our distinguished guests, elected officials, community partners, and fellow members of the department, thank you for taking the time to celebrate these achievements with us. Your presence is a reminder that the work of our officers is valued and appreciated by the community we serve. Finally, to those being recognized today, congratulations. You have earned this moment, and I hope you take great pride in your accomplishments. I am proud to serve alongside you and grateful for the dedication you bring to this department each day.

Thank you all for helping make this a memorable occasion.
With gratitude and respect,

Jason Thody
Chief of Police

ORDER OF EVENTS

HONOR GUARD

NATIONAL ANTHEM

-PERFORMED BY OFC. ANDY SOARES-

OPENING PRAYER BY DAVID LIMA

REMARKS BY MARTIN BENTZ

COUNCILOR BRIAN GOMES

NBPD VIDEO

CHIEF JASON THODY

PROMOTIONS

AWARDS

CLOSING REMARKS

PROMOTIONS

-Sergeants-

Sgt. Terrel Parent

Sgt. Thomas Jupin

Sgt. James Ryan

Sgt. Jakub Cwiek

Sgt. William Sauve

Sgt. Michael Doyle

Sgt. Lorenzo Gonzalez

Sgt. Scott Alves

Sgt. Daniel Duclos

LIFE SAVING AWARDS

On the evening of January 4, Officers Axel Rodriguez, Helder Silva, Johnny Vongsouna, and Evan Bretal-Paiva responded to a report of a missing person. Upon arrival, officers learned that a male had left his home around noon after making suicidal statements. He had reportedly attempted to end his life by consuming a significant amount of alcohol along with multiple pills.

While dispatchers Kasey Medeiros, Alexis O'Sullivan, and Matthew Rego worked to ping the male's cellphone, officers conducted an extensive search of the area for nearly two hours. With temperatures in the mid-20s, the situation quickly became life-threatening. Officers continued searching on foot and ultimately located the male near the Buttonwood Park Zoo parking lot. He was found lying beneath a tree and suffering from exposure. He was transported to the hospital for treatment.

We commend the responding officers for their persistence during the search. We also recognize Dispatchers Medeiros, O'Sullivan, and Rego for their role in coordinating the response and assisting with efforts to locate the male. Their combined efforts helped ensure he received medical attention and may have prevented a tragic outcome.

LIFE SAVING AWARDS



Officer
Axel
Rodriguez

Officer
Helder
Silva



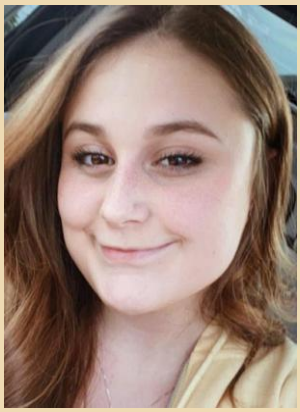
Officer
Johnny
Vongsouna



Officer
Evan
Bretal-Paiva



Dispatcher
Kasey
Medeiros



Dispatcher
Alexis
O'Sullivan



Dispatcher
Matthew
Rego

LIFE SAVING AWARDS

On March 4, just after 6:30 a.m., Officer Kenneth Almeida responded to the Fish Island area for a reported well-being check. The reporting party, later identified as the victim, had called 911 stating that he had fallen into the freezing water between two fishing vessels and was unable to pull himself out.

Upon arrival, Officer Almeida located the male in the water, gripping onto the dock lines. He immediately secured the male's hands and reassured him that help was on scene and that he would not let go.

Officers Mackenzie Sylvester, Abraham Nazario, Andy Soares, and Jesse Branagan arrived to assist. Together, the officers safely pulled the male from the frigid water. He was transported to the hospital for treatment.
The department recognizes all five officers for their role in this rescue. Their coordinated efforts ensured the fisherman was safely brought out of the water and received the medical attention he urgently needed.

The rescue attracted significant media attention beyond New Bedford, receiving coverage from nationally recognized outlets including People Magazine, the New York Post, FOX News, and CBS News. The incident also received television coverage from WFAA in Dallas-Fort Worth and was featured on Hearts of Heroes and the Discovery Channel. The widespread coverage brought national recognition to the officers involved and to the New Bedford Police Department.



LIFE SAVING AWARDS



Officer
Kenneth Almeida



Officer
Mackenzie
Sylvester



Officer
Andy Soares



Officer
Abraham
Nazario

Officer
Jesse Branagan

LIFE SAVING AWARD

On May 5, Officers Bruce Nicely and Johnny Vongsouna responded to a local business for a report of a medical emergency involving a male who had collapsed and stopped breathing. Upon arrival, Officer Nicely began to perform CPR with assistance from an employee at the scene. Prior to the officers' arrival, the employee had administered one dose of Narcan and deployed an AED. Officer Vongsouna arrived and immediately assisted Officer Nicely by preparing an Ambu bag for assisted ventilation.

The officers then worked together to perform CPR, with Officer Vongsouna providing chest compressions while Officer Nicely administered rescue breaths using the Ambu bag. They continued these lifesaving efforts until EMS and fire personnel arrived and took over medical treatment. The male's heartbeat was restored, and he was transported to the hospital for further treatment. He ultimately made a full recovery.

Officers Nicely and Vongsouna played a critical role in this medical emergency. Their ability to work together and provide immediate medical intervention helped save the male's life. Their actions are deserving of recognition.

Officer Bruce Nicely

Officer Johnny Vongsouna



LIFE SAVING AWARD

On August 24, officers responded to the intersection of Deane Street and Acushnet Avenue for a report of a stabbing. Upon arrival, officers located a male suffering from multiple stab wounds. Detective Nicole Rodriguez was already on scene providing first aid when additional officers arrived to assist.

The victim had sustained multiple stab wounds to various parts of his body. Detective Rodriguez worked to control the bleeding by applying tourniquets and dressing several wounds with bandages. Throughout the incident, Detective Rodriguez continued speaking with the victim and encouraging him to stay awake while providing medical care.
The victim had sustained a total of eight stab wounds. Officers assisted at the scene while Detective Rodriguez continued providing medical care. When EMS arrived, she accompanied the victim in the ambulance to the hospital.

Detective Rodriguez's actions demonstrated her ability to remain focused during a critical emergency. Her efforts to control the bleeding and keep the victim conscious while providing medical care were instrumental in ensuring he received immediate attention.

Detective Nicole Rodriguez



LIFE SAVING AWARD

On October 1, Officer Alexander Polson was working a detail near Cedar Grove and Purchase Street when he observed Officer Pedro Moco assessing an unresponsive male on the sidewalk. Officer Polson immediately stopped to assist.

The male was unconscious and could not be awakened. Officer Polson administered two doses of Narcan, but neither produced a response. When officers were unable to detect a pulse, Officer Moco immediately began chest compressions while Officer Polson requested emergency medical assistance. The officers continued lifesaving efforts before the male began showing signs of life. A faint pulse was detected, and the male eventually regained consciousness and became alert and oriented. New Bedford EMS responded and transported him to the hospital for further treatment.

We recognize Officers Moco and Polson for their quick response during this medical emergency. Their coordinated efforts provided critical intervention and helped save the individual's life.

Officer Pedro Moco



Officer Alexander Polson



LIFE SAVING AWARD

On October 10, multiple units responded to a nightclub on Acushnet Avenue for a report of a stabbing. Upon arrival, officers located two victims who had sustained stab wounds. Sergeant Lorenzo Gonzalez immediately began treating a male who had suffered multiple stab wounds, including a significant wound to his chest. Sergeant Gonzalez applied gauze and sustained direct pressure to control the bleeding. As blood continued to soak through the dressings, he obtained additional supplies and continued providing medical assistance. Throughout the incident, he reassured the victim, who repeatedly expressed fear that he was going to die.

Officer Axel Rodriguez assisted a second victim who had sustained a stab wound to the neck. He remained with her until EMS arrived and continued supporting her inside the ambulance while medics provided treatment. As she became increasingly distressed and had difficulty remaining still, Officer Rodriguez worked to calm her down.
Both victims were transported to the hospital for further treatment.

We commend Sergeant Gonzalez and Officer Rodriguez for their quick response, compassion, and dedication to helping others. Sergeant Gonzalez's immediate efforts to control severe bleeding and Officer Rodriguez's assistance to a second injured victim demonstrate their commitment to providing critical aid during a medical emergency.

Sergeant Lorenzo Gonzalez



Officer Axel Rodriguez



LIFE SAVING AWARD

On Halloween night, officers responded to a multi-unit residence on Adams Street for a report of an active fire.

Sergeant Daniel Duclos was the first to arrive and immediately entered the building to check the apartments and ensure residents had evacuated. On the third floor, he forced open a door and located a resident who was still inside. The resident had been asleep and was unaware of the fire. Sergeant Duclos directed him to evacuate.

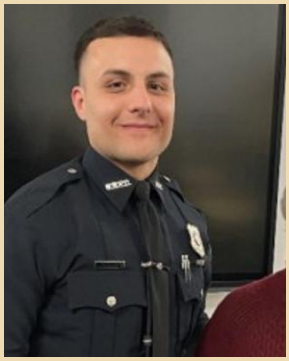
Detective Jacob Rebello arrived and assisted Sergeant Duclos with removing the door to allow the resident to exit. Detective Mackenzie Sylvester also arrived and joined Sergeant Duclos in forcing entry into a first-floor apartment where a family of four remained inside. The officers helped ensure the family safely evacuated.

After clearing the apartments, Detective Rebello learned that a dog might still be inside the building. He and Detective Sylvester re-entered the residence in an attempt to locate it. However, heavy smoke made further searching unsafe. All residents and pets were ultimately accounted for.

We commend Sergeant Duclos, Detectives Sylvester and Rebello for their quick response, bravery, and teamwork. Their willingness to enter the burning building, locate residents who had not yet evacuated, and ensure everyone was accounted for demonstrated their commitment to protecting the lives and safety of others.

Sergeant	Detective	Detective
Dan	Mackenzie	Jacob
Duclos	Sylvester	Rebello





LIFE SAVING AWARD

On November 1, Officers Meagan Pereira and Johnny Vongsouna responded to an apartment on Rounds Street for a welfare check after a concerned caller requested assistance. Upon arrival, officers located a female inside the apartment who appeared disoriented. As officers spoke with her, she lost consciousness and began to have a seizure. Officer Vongsouna assisted in guiding her to the ground, preventing her from striking her head during the collapse.

The officers turned the female onto her side after observing foam coming from her mouth and hearing gurgling sounds. When she did not respond to attempts to wake her and officers observed that her chest was no longer rising and falling, Officer Vongsouna checked for a pulse but could not detect one. Officer Pereira immediately began CPR.

New Bedford EMS and Fire Department personnel arrived shortly afterward and continued providing medical careThe department recognizes Officers Pereira and Vongsouna for their actions during this medical emergency. Their quick response and immediate decision to initiate CPR helped ensure the female received critical medical care. Their actions reflect the dedication and professionalism we expect from our officers.

Officer Meagan Pereira



Officer Johnny Vongsouna



HONORABLE SERVICE AWARD

Officer Leanne Fisher has devoted nearly 28 years of service to the New Bedford Police Department in a variety of roles and has distinguished herself through her dependability, enthusiasm, and dedication as a School Resource Officer. She serves students and staff at Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School and several other schools, building positive relationships while responding to incidents and supporting school activities.

Officer Fisher consistently goes beyond her assigned duties by assisting patrol personnel, helping with reports, volunteering at school and community events, and supporting the Department's summer youth program. Her commitment to students includes participation in activities outside regular school hours and sustained engagement with children and families.

Her supervisor, Sergeant Agnieszka Ciarka, has praised her work ethic, professionalism, willingness to learn, and positive reputation among school personnel, students, and fellow officers. Officer Fisher's many years of dedicated service and her continuing contributions to the community make her deserving of this recognition.

Officer Leanne Fisher



HONORABLE SERVICE AWARD

Officer Tyler Viera has demonstrated exceptional commitment to community policing, particularly in assisting individuals struggling with homelessness, substance use disorders, and related quality-of-life challenges. Rather than relying solely on traditional enforcement, he has built relationships, connected vulnerable individuals with services, and persisted through difficult circumstances to help people achieve sobriety and, in some cases, obtain stable housing.

His work has improved individual lives while addressing ongoing community concerns. The impact of his efforts has been recognized by members of the public, including an individual who independently contacted the Department to recommend that he receive recognition.

Officer Viera's compassion, persistence, and ability to balance accountability with practical assistance exemplify the principles of effective community policing. His accomplishments demonstrate that meaningful police work is not always captured by enforcement statistics and reflect great credit upon the Department.

Officer Tyler Viera



NBPD HONOR GUARD



Left to right: Sgt. Barry Pacheco, Ofc. Abraham Nazario, Ofc. Leanne Fisher, Det. Mohammad Mir, Ofc. Mark Conley, Ofc. Christopher Cotter, Ofc. Andrew Pereira, Ofc. Christian Gomes



Officer Andy Soares delivers today's national anthem.

Officer Soares graduated from the Plymouth Police Academy in January 2024 and has been serving with the New Bedford Police Department for approximately one and a half years. He participated in several high school choirs and continues to enjoy singing through local karaoke events. He also had the honor of performing the national anthem at his police academy graduation ceremony.

Drawing upon a rich and storied past, we lay the foundation for an even brighter future. We are one of the oldest police departments in the country and can take great pride in the many accomplishments that we've celebrated spanning the many generations of the New Bedford Police Department.

For over a century, we have protected this city, steadfastly upholding our commitment to New Bedford and its people. This proud history is a tapestry sewn together by many instances of valor, compassion, grit, and resilience. Although our fleeting careers provide only a glimpse, we are undeniably part of a greater and enduring legacy.

The proud moments of success propel us forward, while the challenges we face provide us with crucial lessons for the path ahead.

HIC SUNT LEONES

