



LOS ANGELES COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE MEDIA RELATIONS DIVISION

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District Attorney Jackie Lacey to Recognize Six Courageous Citizens

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey will present an award for courage on Wednesday to a Torrance man who stopped a brutal stabbing.

Muhammad Johnson, 36, will be honored at a luncheon ceremony from 12-1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 14, at The Queen Mary (Grand Salon), 1126 Queens Highway, Long Beach. The event is hosted by the Rotary Club of Long Beach.

“Each of these Courageous Citizens cast aside fear and risked their personal welfare to help victims of crime,” District Attorney Lacey said. “I extend my personal gratitude to this group of remarkable people for these acts of selflessness and bravery.”

The District Attorney's Office presents Courageous Citizen Awards several times a year to ordinary citizens who have performed extraordinary acts of valor and selflessness in assisting in criminal prosecution, aiding victims, preventing crime and capturing suspects. The honorees are:

Muhammad Johnson, 36, of Torrance / Case NA090469

In the early morning hours of Oct. 29, 2011, Johnson came to the aid of an 18-year-old woman at his Long Beach apartment house. The victim had been repeatedly stabbed by her sister and fled her apartment to get help but the assailant followed.

Johnson, awoken by his wife who heard the commotion, opened his front door and saw the attacker stabbing the victim. He immediately ran to the victim's aid, subdued and disarmed the knife-wielding assailant.

The defendant was found not guilty by reason of insanity and was sentenced in November 2012 to Patton State Hospital until her sanity is restored.

Johnson now resides in Torrance.

Marcelo Vera, 35, of Montclair; Jason Curiel, 21, of Huntington Park; and Jonathan Campos, 30, of Long Beach / Case NA094122 and NJ25329

On Dec. 1, 2012, Marcelo Vera, 35, of Montclair; Jason Curiel, 21, of Huntington Park; and Jonathan Campos, 30, of Long Beach, chased down and subdued two assailants who snatched a gold chain from a woman holding a baby.

Vera and Curiel heard the victim scream, got in their cars and chased the suspects. When the suspects split up, they continued to pursue one of the suspects, eventually cornering him and detaining him until police arrived. Campos witnessed the robbery from a parking lot, chased the second suspect on foot, tackled him and recovered the victim's necklace.

The adult suspect pleaded no contest and was sentenced to two years in state prison in February 2013; the juvenile was sentenced to six months in camp.

Scott Beaubien, 47, of Long Beach, and Mariano Bejarano, 33, of Los Angeles / Case NA093775

Scott Beaubien, 47, of Long Beach, and Mariano Bejarano, 33, of Los Angeles, also will be recognized for detaining a purse-snatcher who dragged his victim across a parking lot as she held on to her bag.

The 58-year-old victim, who was recovering from breast cancer surgery, was loading groceries into her car when the suspect grabbed her purse and pulled forcefully. The victim was dragged 24 feet before she let go.

The purse-snatcher ran and the victim followed. Beaubien and Bejarano, both Salvation Army truck drivers, saw the man running with the victim in pursuit. They joined the chase on foot and, when the suspect tripped, the men caught him and held him until police arrived.

The defendant pleaded guilty in November 2011 and was sentenced to two years in state prison.

All three cases were investigated by the Long Beach Police Department.

About the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office

Los Angeles County District Attorney Jackie Lacey leads the largest local prosecutorial office in the nation. Her staff of nearly 1,000 attorneys, 300 investigators and 800 support staff members is dedicated to seeking justice for victims of crime and enhancing public safety. Annually, the [Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office](#) prosecutes more than 60,000 felonies and 140,000 misdemeanor crimes.

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