



*Los Angeles County
District Attorney's*

Courageous Citizen Awards Ceremony

Thursday, November 7, 2019

Sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Northridge

AWARD RECIPIENTS

LATASHA GILLESPIE

Presented by Deputy District Attorney Diane Hong

Ms. Latasha Gillespie, a bus driver who was on a break, heard a woman scream and responded, helping to stop the attempted kidnapping of a girl at a Lancaster bus station on Nov. 5, 2017. Ms. Gillespie saw a woman struggling with a man, who minutes earlier had walked up to the bus stop, exchanged words with the woman and threatened to abduct her daughters. Ms. Gillespie helped rescue the girl, then shielded her and her sister from the man. Her willingness to testify in court led him to plead no contest to crimes carrying a significant prison sentence.

BIANCA GUERRA

Presented by Deputy District Attorney David Nary

When deputy district attorneys were faced with a difficult case against a serial rapist, they called upon Ms. Bianca Guerra, who years before testified against the same man, to ensure that a dangerous predator would once again be taken out of our community. Ms. Guerra took public transportation from East Los Angeles to the Van Nuys Courthouse for several days to bravely testify against the man who was convicted of raping her more than a decade earlier. Through her testimony, she helped prosecutors secure justice for the man's victims and made our community safer by returning her assailant to prison.

BRIAN ZERINGUE

Presented by Deputy District Attorney Tal Kahana

Mr. Brian Zeringue came to the aid of a woman and her children. On May 1, 2018, the children's father beat and threatened to kill their mother, then drove them to Castaic and hours later to a Lancaster Starbucks. The man held the children hostage at gunpoint while he forced the woman to panhandle for gas money. Mr. Zeringue heard the woman's quiet pleas for help and called 911, launching a 10-hour pursuit and standoff with authorities. His actions led to the safe release of the children and the man's felony conviction.