



**Los Angeles County
District Attorney's Office**

THE COURAGE AWARDS

**Friday, November 17, 2023
11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.**

Sponsored by the Rotary Club of Los Angeles

AWARD RECIPIENTS

ROBERT MEDRANO

Nominated by Deputy District Attorney Richard Gallegly

Los Angeles City Fire Department Firefighter Robert Medrano responded to a large residential fire on August 24, 2019. As an engineer, Firefighter Medrano's duty was to secure the water supply. After he had checked that the water supply was secured, he encountered residents who insisted that there were still two people inside despite an initial clearance by LAFD personnel.

Firefighter Medrano, alone and without a breathing apparatus, entered the home. He pushed through the heavy smoke and found a door that was slightly ajar, but it was blocked and he had to retreat from the residence to take a breath. Back inside, he could perceive a male torso but could not move it because the door was obstructed. Other firefighters came to his aid and broke down the door to extricate the victims. Unfortunately, the victims, brother and sister George Hills and Yolanda McGruder, passed away.

Firefighter Medrano's actions were unknown to the victims' family members until his testimony. Despite the victim's deaths, the family members were grateful and touched that Firefighter Medrano valiantly risked his own life in a heroic effort to save their loved ones.

JOSEPH COHEN

Nominated by Deputy District Attorney Cesar Rodriguez

On March 25, 2021, Joseph Cohen stopped at Lone Hill Park in San Dimas to use the public restroom. Defendant Ricardo Saldivar, holding a knife, walked toward Mr. Cohen and said that he was going to kill him. Mr. Cohen ran to his vehicle with Mr. Saldivar chasing him. Mr. Saldivar then focused his attention on 66-year-old Jeanne Edgar, who was walking her dog, Sachi. After threatening Ms. Edgar, Mr. Saldivar snatched the dog's leash and stabbed Sachi at least 24 times. Sachi became partially decapitated and died at the scene. Mr. Saldivar then stabbed Ms. Edgar nine times. During these attacks, Mr. Cohen had planned to hit Mr. Saldivar with his vehicle, but he was unable to do so because Mr. Saldivar was on top of Ms. Edgar. Instead, Mr. Cohen exited his vehicle, picked up a large rock and used it to hit Mr. Saldivar in the head. This rendered Mr. Saldivar unconscious until law enforcement personnel arrived.

Although Mr. Cohen's heroic actions were too late to save Ms. Edgar and Sachi, he stopped Mr. Saldivar from possibly carrying out any more attacks that day.

