

Officer Daniel Canniff, Certificate of Valor



On April 12, at 11:56 a.m., Officer Daniel Canniff was dispatched to the 200 block of South Van Dorn Street to assist Medics with a disoriented, medicated female who was attempting to leave the residence. It was reported that the victim's father was holding her down to prevent her from leaving.

Officer Canniff was the first officer to arrive at the scene. The Fire Department was already on scene and were staging to await the officers. Officer Canniff cautiously entered the front door of the building and immediately was overwhelmed by a very strong chemical smell emanating from a nearby apartment.

He could hear the voices of a male and a female, which sounded to be in distress, coming from inside. As Officer Canniff approached the apartment the chemical odor grew stronger. He knocked on the door and a male yelled for help, just as an elderly female opened the door.

Officer Canniff saw an elderly man lying on the floor and a middle-aged woman lying on the couch just inside the apartment. Both appeared to be either disoriented or ill. Battling a strong language barrier, Officer Canniff attempted to advise the family that they needed to evacuate the residence. He tried to escort the family from the residence, but due to their chemically induced state, they forcefully resisted him. Officer Canniff called for assistance over his police radio, but was advised that the additional police units were denied access to the building due to the chemical odor and that fire personnel were not yet prepared to make safe entry. Again, Officer Canniff attempted to evacuate the family, but they continued to resist him. The chemical smell was beginning to overwhelm Officer Canniff and he had no choice but to exit the building.

Once outside, he was advised by the Fire Department that a serious, life threatening Hazmat incident was occurring in the building. Undeterred, Officer Canniff went back into building and assisted the Fire Department in attempting to activate the building's fire alarm. It was quickly determined that the alarm system was inoperable. Thinking quickly, Officer Canniff ran to his cruiser and began making continuous announcements over its public address system for residents to evacuate

the building and directing the evacuees to safety.

As a result of Officer Caniff's actions, none of the residents were seriously injured. We award Officer Daniel Caniff a Certificate of Valor for his ingenuity in notifying residents of the danger and evacuating them to safety.