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Congressional Badges of Bravery Presentation

Florida 1st District Congressman Jeff Miller today presented Law Enforcement Congressional Badges of Bravery (CBOB) to Okaloosa County Sheriff's Office Investigators Steve Hough and Todd Watkins.

The surprise presentation was made during today's Swearing-In of deputies by Sheriff Ashley in connection with his new term, and as part of the agency's Annual Awards Ceremony at the Northwest Florida Fairgrounds.

The Law Enforcement Congressional Badge of Bravery is awarded by the U.S. Attorney General to law enforcement officers who engaged in exceptional acts of bravery while in the line of duty. To meet the definition of an act of bravery, nominees for the CBOB must have either - sustained a physical injury while engaged in the lawful duties of the individual, while performing an act characterized as bravery by the agency head who makes the nomination, being at personal risk OR although not injured performed an act characterized as bravery by the agency head who makes the nomination and that placed the individual at risk of serious physical injury or death.

Investigator Steve Hough was shot three times during a gunfight while working to take a violent fugitive into custody outside the suspect's Milton home on December 9th 2011. Investigator Todd Watkins, whose weapon malfunctioned, used a ballistics shield to try to position himself between the advancing suspect and his fallen partner. The shield was hit by multiple rounds. Investigator Watkins moved Investigator Hough out of the immediate area and began aid.

"Investigator Hough and Investigator Watkins put themselves at personal risk to ensure the suspect did not escape, knowing the threat he posed to others," said Sheriff Ashley. They were working as part of a U.S. Marshals Service Violent Fugitive Task Force at the time of the incident.
