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Florida Attorney General's Office News Release

Back the Blue Alert: AG Moody Recognizes FHP Sergeant for Rescuing Potential Trafficking Victim



TALLAHASSEE, Fla.—Attorney General Ashley Moody today presented a Back the Blue Award to a Florida Highway Patrol Sergeant for his persistent efforts to safeguard a potential sex trafficking victim. Sergeant Roger Thomas responded to a vehicle and pedestrian crash in Duval County where a 17-year-old female sustained critical injuries. Due to the victim's condition, authorities were unable to determine her identity; however, Sgt. Thomas worked beyond his midnight shift to identify the victim and reunite her with family. While verifying the victim's identity, Sgt. Thomas discovered that the victim might be involved in a sex trafficking ring. The Trooper then made it his mission to protect the female while in the hospital and coordinated correspondence between investigating authorities looking into the criminals that exploited the victim.

Attorney General Ashley Moody said, "Sgt. Roger Thomas' dedication to the citizens he serves is moving. He could have responded to this accident and let others finish the investigative work after his shift concluded, but Sgt. Thomas is a true public servant. He was a guardian and protector of this young woman and I am so thankful to have a Trooper like him serve our State, help us fight human trafficking and rescue victims."

Attempts to identify the female through the state issued Rapid ID and the NCIC/FCIC fingerprint database both came back unsuccessful; however, Sgt. Thomas persisted and used the victim's mobile phone carrier law enforcement liaison to contact a family member. Sgt. Thomas eventually got in touch with the victim's aunt who raised the female since six months of age. The aunt disclosed that the victim had a history of running away from home and may be involved with a sex trafficking ring. Sgt. Thomas immediately contacted the Lake County Sheriff's Office and

the Florida Department of Children and Families, who were collectively investigating the case. Sgt. Thomas made sure to put these authorities in contact with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office to coordinate the safety of the victim while under medical care.

Attorney General Moody today visited the Florida Highway Patrol's Troop G Headquarters in Jacksonville and presented the award to Sgt. Thomas. Sgt. Thomas has served FHP for more than 17 years and is currently one of the agency's top training instructors in high liability topics.

To nominate a law enforcement officer, citizen or organization for a Back the Blue Award, please email Georgia.Pevy@MyFloridaLegal.com.

For more information about the Attorney General's Back the Blue Award, click here.

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Attorney General Ashley Moody's Back the Blue campaign highlights law enforcement officers, citizens and organizations taking extraordinary steps to forge positive relationships between law enforcement and the communities they serve. Supporting law enforcement is a top priority for Attorney General Moody and the mission of Back the Blue is to commend Florida's brave law enforcement officers and Floridians who back them.