

NEW BEDFORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

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P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Lieutenant Jeffrey P. Silva
Public Information Officer

See Also: CR# 2008-9582

Office: 508.991.6300 – Ext. 148

Email: jpsilva@newbedford-ma.gov

POLICE OFFICERS RECOGNIZED FOR THEIR HEROISM

New Bedford, Massachusetts – Two on-duty New Bedford Police Officers, an off-duty New Bedford Police Sergeant and a Massachusetts State Trooper rescued a man from the frigid waters of New Bedford Harbor Monday night just after 10:30 PM.

While on patrol, Trooper Edmund DaCosta noticed a male walking on Coggeshall Street who appeared in need of assistance. The male rejected the trooper's offer for help, but the trooper's gut instinct led him to monitor this male's activities from a short distance away. Suddenly and without warning, the male jumped into the waters beneath the Coggeshall Street Bridge so Massachusetts State Trooper Edmund DaCosta sprang into action. The trooper caused the New Bedford Police Department to be contacted while he and arriving New Bedford Police Officer John Pereira (*a member of the New Bedford Police Dive Team who was on-duty in a cruiser*) monitored this male's position as he drifted underneath the Route 195 overpass towards the harbor. New Bedford Police Officer Christian Gomes, assigned to the Port Security Team (*and also a Dive Team member*), then arrived and immediately donned his dry suit and flippers and began to swim out to rescue the victim who had now drifted several hundred yards away from where he had jumped in.

At the same time, off-duty New Bedford Police Sergeant Jill Simmons (*head of the Port Security and Dive Teams*) was also notified of the situation and responded in her **personal boat** as the Department's boat was down for repairs. In **under five minutes**, Sergeant Simmons responded to the area, picked up Officer Gomes, located the victim whose position was being monitored by Trooper DaCosta and Officer Pereira, and with the assistance of Officer Gomes, pulled the victim to safety.

New Bedford Police District 1 Commander, Captain Joseph Cordeiro, has since requested that the officers involved receive the Department's highest award, the **Lifesaving Ribbon**, citing the officers' actions as demonstrating, "*composure, vigilance, and quick actions above and beyond routine patrol activities and duties.*"