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Sent: 10/17/2017 3:46:29 PM
Subject: Governor Rick Scott Recognizes Florida National Guard Member and State Law Enforcement Officers for Hurricane Irma Response
Attachments: 10-17-2017_MedalsMeritandHeroism-1.jpg



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 17, 2017

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Governor Rick Scott Recognizes Florida National Guard Member and State Law Enforcement Officers for Hurricane Irma Response



TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – Today, during a meeting of the Florida Cabinet, Governor Rick Scott recognized Florida National Guard Lieutenant Colonel Julio Acosta with the Medal of Merit and seven state law enforcement officers with the Medal of Heroism for their commitment to Florida families before, during and following Hurricane Irma.

Governor Scott said, "Hurricane Irma was a massive storm that impacted families, communities and businesses across our state. I am proud of our many first responders, law enforcement officers and Florida National Guard members who bravely answered the call to help those in need. These individuals are some of the many heroes who put their lives on the line and stand ready to keep our families safe and protected every day. I am honored to recognize them today."

About the Medal of Merit recipient:

- **Lieutenant Colonel Julio Acosta**, *Florida National Guard*
 - Lieutenant Colonel Julio Acosta serves as the Battalion Commander of the 1-124 Infantry and led more than 600 guard members through live-saving missions in Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties in response to Hurricane Irma. His Battalion also served as the initial response command cell for the Florida National Guard in Monroe County and helped to coordinate search and rescue support, route clearance operations, re-opening of Key West and Marathon airports, and providing food, water and commodities to citizens in need.

About the Medal of Heroism recipients:

- **Corporal Justin Smith**, *Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services*
 - Corporal Smith served in response to Hurricane Irma as team leader of reconnaissance missions and was responsible for coordinating with state and federal partners to ensure objectives were met.
- **Major Benjamin Burns**, *Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services*
 - Major Burns served as Agricultural Law Enforcement Emergency Coordinating Officer during Hurricane Irma response and led the management of all agency personnel deployments and emergency response assets.
- **Forest Area Supervisor Butch Galbraith**, *Florida Forest Service*
 - Supervisor Galbraith deployed to the Florida Keys as part of the Gold Forest Service Incident Management team to coordinate search and rescue efforts throughout the community.
- **State Forest Ranger Kenny Harvey**, *Florida Forest Service*
 - Ranger Harvey led an eight-person chainsaw team across central Florida to clear debris from public roadways, allowing families to return to their homes quickly and safely following Hurricane Irma.
- **Officer Jefferson Carroll**, *Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission*
 - Officer Carroll worked with FWC officers Brittany Mobley and Clint Williams in their home community of the Florida Keys following Hurricane Irma. In the hours directly after the storm, they deployed to aid families whose homes were badly damaged.
- **Monroe County Officer Brittany Mobley**, *Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission*
 - Officer Mobley worked with FWC officers Jefferson Carroll and Clint Williams in their home community of the Florida Keys following Hurricane Irma. In the hours directly after the storm, they deployed to aid families whose homes were badly damaged.
- **Monroe County Officer Clint Williams**, *Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission*
 - Officer Williams worked with FWC officers Jefferson Carroll and Brittany Mobley in their home community of the Florida Keys following Hurricane Irma. In the hours directly after the storm, they deployed to aid families whose homes were badly damaged.

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