

Greeley Tribune

Greeley police officer Michael Lohman awarded Congressional Badge of Bravery

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Joe Moylan
jmoylan@greeleytribune.com



Greeley police officer Michael Lohman poses with Colorado Sen. Cory Gardner, left, and Greeley police Chief Mark Jones, right, after receiving the Congressional Medal of Bravery during a ceremony Thursday at the Greeley Police Department, 2875 W. 10th St. (Todd Pillard/For The Tribune)

A Greeley police officer was honored Thursday for bravery in the line of duty following a 2017 incident that was more akin to a Hollywood movie script than a typical night patrolling a college campus.

Officer Michael Lohman, 28, received the Congressional Badge of Bravery during a ceremony Thursday afternoon at the Greeley Police Department, 2875 W. 10th St. Created in 2008 following the passage of the Law Enforcement Congressional Badge of Bravery Act, the Congressional Badge of Bravery is awarded to federal, state, local and tribal officers who engage in acts of bravery while in the line of duty.

The medal was awarded to Lohman by Sen. Cory Gardner, R-Colo. Greeley police Chief Mark Jones also participated in the ceremony, reading the official narrative of the incident.



Greeley police officer Michael Lohman stands Thursday next to Sen. Cory Gardner before receiving the Congressional Badge of Bravery (The Tribune)



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“As some of you know, this incident happened when Officer Lohman was with the Colorado State University Police Department, and it makes me very proud to have him here in Greeley regardless that this happened somewhere else,” said Greeley police Chief Mark Jones “When I read this, it seems like something out of a movie, but it’s real life.”

At 1:43 a.m. Sept. 7, 2017, Lohman was on patrol when he pulled a man over he suspected of DUI. Lohman didn’t immediately know the car had been reported stolen hours earlier in Fort Collins.

When dispatch did give Lohman that information, he ordered the driver out of the car. Instead of complying, the man pulled a gun and pointed it at Lohman, Jones said.

Lohman tried to wrestle the weapon away from the driver. While doing so, he was pulled partially into the man’s vehicle. The suspect then shifted into drive and sped away, dragging Lohman down the street, Jones said.

The vehicle struck several trash cans, one other car and a residence, Jones said, and Lohman was somehow able get the man the drop the gun. When the suspect hit a curb, Lohman was able to pull the man and free himself from the moving car.

Lohman's head struck the undercarriage of the vehicle as it continued to roll down the street, causing a laceration that stretched from his forehead to the back of his head. His Oakley prescription sunglasses shattered, causing glass to go into one of his eyes. He also sustained a serious concussion, Jones said. His uniform and most of his equipment was damaged beyond repair.

Despite those injuries, Lohman continued to fight the suspect and was able to hold him at gunpoint until backup officers arrived to place him in handcuffs. He insisted on staying at the scene to participate in the investigation and had to be escorted to a nearby ambulance to be treated for his injuries.

"As you guys know, this is a difficult job," Jones said to the audience comprised of friends, family and a couple dozen of Lohman's fellow officers. "This description of what happened is simply unbelievable."

Lohman declined to comment about the incident after the ceremony, citing the suspect's ongoing case in Larimer District Court. But he and his wife, Cayley, did talk about the aftermath.

In addition to being assigned to light desk duty for a month while he recovered from his injuries and that doctors were still pulling glass and other debris out of his head almost a year later, Cayley said the incident happened two weeks before their wedding date.

"This happened just in time for Michael to have a nice, big scar across his head for our wedding," Cayley said. "Luckily, the photographer was able to Photoshop the scar out of most of the photos."

Originally from Fort Collins, Lohman's job with Colorado State University police was his first in law enforcement. He's still in his first year with Greeley police, joining the agency Jan. 11.

— *Joe Moylan covers crime and public safety for The Greeley Tribune. Reach him at jmoylan@greeleytribune.com, (970) 392-4467 or on Twitter @JoeMoylan.*