

Congress Honors Montgomery County Cop

By Elliott Francis, WAMU

The United States Congress has awarded a Montgomery County police officer for his bravery during the Discovery building hostage crisis last year.

On an otherwise quiet afternoon in September 2010, a suicide bomber walked into the Discovery Communications building in downtown Silver Spring, took three hostages, and terrorized dozens of others for hours. Officer Edward Paden was off-duty that afternoon, but he heard the call and entered the building to observe and transmit vital information to police in the area.

"As a result of that bravery, he prevented the suicide bomber from being able to penetrate the building and cause devastation," says Sen. Ben Cardin (D-Md).

Cardin, along with Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-Md.), awarded Paden the Congressional Badge of Bravery Jan. 9. Created in 2008, the award honors local, state, and federal law enforcement officers who have displayed exceptional acts of bravery in the line of duty.

Paden is quite modest about his actions that day, but did describe what he was able to do as he sat hidden from the bomber.

"Where he was positioned," says Paden. "What apparatus he was carrying, how it was designed. So for me to be able to relay that information to them while they were still en route, that was vital information."

The situation was extremely tense, he says. Because he was carrying a service weapon -- a rifle -- some witnesses mistakenly identified him as a second gunman. Paden says his training helped set things straight.

"...When we all set up, just like I was trained when you're coming into a situation when you're off-duty to identify yourself over the air, which I did," Paden says. "I described myself from head to toe, and we went from there."

Ingrid Romer, Officer Paden's adoptive mother, was watching the hostage crisis on local TV news when something caught her eye. "... And I was like ... I hope he's not down there, and then I saw this figure coming up the streets with shorts on and I said, 'Oh my God, that's probably Ed,'" Romer says. "I tried to call him and he's not answering the phone, so I know he's there right in the midst of everything."

Paden recalls the many messages he received that day. "She definitely mentioned that afterwards," he says of Romer. "I looked at my phone that evening and saw there were a lot of text messages, and voice mails, so I made some calls to let everyone know I was A-OK."

Paden's efforts helped SWAT teams find and kill the bomber, and all three hostages were rescued safely. Paden is one of 20 officers in the U.S. to receive the Congressional Badge of Bravery.

http://wamu.org/news/12/01/09/congress_honors_montgomery_county_cop

Montgomery County officer Edward E. Paden Jr. honored for bravery

By Atria Godfrey, WJLA

On Sept. 1, 2010 a suicide bomber/gunman stormed into the Silver Spring headquarters of Discovery Communications and took hostages. Officer Edward Paden Jr. was faced with a decision. Fight or flight.

On Monday, several members of Congress honored the off-duty Montgomery County Police officer who risked his life to save others.

Paden was off the clock and in plain clothes when gunman James Lee entered the building and put 1,000 lives in jeopardy.

"(The) alert tone went off on the radio and I heard the call go out," Paden said. "I just jumped in the car and said 'let's go'."

Within minutes, Paden was just feet away from gunman James Lee and was able to give SWAT teams the information they needed to catch Lee.

That bravery earned him the Congressional Badge of Bravery.

"I'm deeply honored to say the least," Paden said.

One of the men who was held hostage, Thomas Fisher, says that Paden truly is a hero.

"Without any concern for his personal safety, he did what was right to prevent the loss of life," Fisher said. "I'm proud to see that he's being recognized for what he did that day."

<http://www.wjla.com/articles/2012/01/montgomery-county-officer-edward-e-paden-jr-honored-for-bravery-71193.html>

Officer Edward Paden Jr. Honored for Bravery in Discovery Building Gunman Standoff

Beth Parker, FOX TV

ROCKVILLE, Md. - It was September 1, 2010. The 911 calls started rolling from employees and passersby reporting that a suicide bomber had taken over the lobby of Discovery Communications headquarters.

If you listen closely to those calls, you can tell that some employees think a second gunman is arriving.

Caller: *"Someone was running up to the center garden with a rifle in their arms."*

911 Operator: *"Does it look like a police officer?"*

Caller: *"No. He's in shorts, a t-shirt, black gentleman. He has a yellow fluorescent thing on his shoulder."*

911 Operator: *"You're good to go. You're good to go with that, OK?"*

Caller: *"Is that a police officer?"*

911 Operator: *"Yes."*

Caller: *"That's a police officer! That's a police officer!"*

The yellow armband let police know that person in plain clothes was really an officer.

That same Montgomery County Police Officer, Edward Paden Jr., was wearing something else on Monday - the Congressional Badge of Bravery.

On the day of the Discovery incident, Officer Paden was only scheduled to work a few hours in the morning. He did that. Then - because he was training for a triathlon - he went for a swim in the Chesapeake Bay. He can't remember exactly how many jellyfish stings he had that day.

"One too many. One too many," Paden laughs.

Even so, he returned to the station in Silver Spring, got in his car, and that is when the call went out. Paden entered the Discovery Communications building and got within 25 feet of the gunman.

"You click real quick. You see it. It's like 'Whew, OK.' Alright, this is it," says Paden.

Montgomery County Police Chief Tom Manger says Paden was an integral part of keeping the Discovery employees safe.

"He's giving us all the intel. What the bomb looks like, what the man looks like, where he is. [Paden] was also in a position where Mr. [James] Lee (the gunman) was not going to be able to get further into the building," says Chief Manger.

The Congressional Badge of Bravery is a new award that honors exemplary service in law enforcement. The 20 recipients were selected by Attorney General Eric Holder.

<http://www.myfoxdc.com/dpp/news/local/officer-honored-for-bravery-in-discovery-gunman-standoff-010912>

Officer Honored For Bravery in Discovery Standoff

By Kate Ryan, *WTOP*

ROCKVILLE, Md. - Officer Ed Paden was fresh off a training swim in the Chesapeake Bay when the jellyfish stings were getting to him. So he finished his workout and headed back to Montgomery County, and though he was off-duty, he headed back to his station.

That's when the 911 call came in on Sept. 1, 2010: A gunman -- reportedly with explosives strapped to his body -- had taken three hostages at the Discovery Channel headquarters in Silver Spring.

Paden worked the Silver Spring district and knew the Discovery building well. He sped to the scene -- still in shorts, a T-shirt and those funny little rubber shoes that triathletes wear.

The scene initially was chaotic, remembers Montgomery County Police Chief Tom Manger.

"Here's this guy in shorts and a T-shirt, running into the building ... carrying a rifle!" Manger said at a ceremony Monday honoring Paden for his bravery. "There was some discussion: 'Was there a second gunman?' Well it was folks that actually saw Ed."

Paden was first inside the building. He positioned himself in a way that would limit the gunman's ability to get deeper inside the facility. On the chilling recordings of police communications, Paden begins reporting everything he sees: He's less than 100 feet from gunman James J. Lee, who has three hostages on the ground.

"I am directly behind the suspect -- behind a wall -- I have visual of his apparatus," Paden reports in hushed tones. He describes in detail the canisters Lee had strapped to his body. "Looks like two canisters on the outside ... flashing light in his left hand ... almost like a death grip ... uh, red, luminous light ... same thing on his front, strapped around his waist."

Paden would keep up his narration until he was relieved by members of the SWAT team. All the while, he kept relaying intelligence, not knowing what the gunman -- who was berating the hostages and waving a gun around -- might do next, or whether those canisters really were live explosives.

At Monday's ceremony -- held at the police department's Public Service Training Academy in Rockville -- Paden was awarded the Congressional Badge of Bravery for his fast action and calm intelligence gathering. Manger couldn't help noting that Paden managed to respond with courage and calm despite the fact that those jellyfish stings were beginning to swell up something awful.

"If for no other reason, that alone ought to get you some sort of recognition," Manger joked. Then becoming serious, he noted the situation was the first time a police department was called to respond to a suicide bomber who had taken a hostage.

Lee eventually was shot and killed by the SWAT team after hours of negotiations failed.

Officials -- including U.S. Attorney for Maryland Rod Rosenstein, Sen. Ben Cardin, Rep. Chris Van Hollen and Montgomery County Executive Ike Leggett -- attended the ceremony, as did one of the hostages, Tom Fisher.

Fisher initially declined to talk to reporters, saying, "This is Officer Paden's day."

"I just want to show local law enforcement that I'm appreciative of everything they did for myself and the other two hostages at Discovery that day," he said.

When asked to speak to the crowd gathered for the ceremony, Paden was modest about his actions.

"I am honored to accept this award as a Montgomery County police officer, showing the citizens of Montgomery County what our department is made of every day of the week," he said, also crediting everyone who dealt with the situation that day in September: "Team: We put it all together, for one day, when it really counted."

He said getting the reports over the radio transmissions was chilling, and encountering the gunman was more so. But, he added, "Muscle memory and training took over."

David Leavy, with Discovery Communications, also recalled that day. He remembered the evacuation of staffers, and babies in daycare being rolled across the street in cribs on wheels.

Looking over to where the police officers were seated for the ceremony, he noted that it may seem cynicism has taken over the way public officials are viewed.

"Folks may ask, 'Where are the heroes? Where are the leaders?' -- I think I have the answer," he said, gesturing to the officers. "They're right over there. So on behalf of all the 5,000 worldwide Discovery employees, thank you Officer Paden, thank you so much.

"Thank you all for keeping us safe that day."

<http://www.wtop.com/?sid=2699100&nid=52>

MontCo cop receives Congressional Badge of Bravery

Rachel Baye, *Washington Examiner*

Montgomery County Police Officer Officer Edward Paden Jr. was awarded the Congressional Badge of Bravery on Monday morning for rushing to the Discovery Communications headquarters while off duty after hearing that a gunman was at the building on Sept. 1, 2010. Paden entered the building and provided support to the hostages and information to other security personnel responding to the scene.

U.S. Sen. Ben **Cardin**, D-Maryland, U.S. Rep. Chris Van Hollen, D-Montgomery and Prince George's counties, and Maryland U.S. Attorney Rod Rosenstein presented the award to Paden at a ceremony at the Public Safety Training Academy in Rockville. Paden is one of 20 local, state and federal law enforcement officers receiving the award.

Though Congress created the award in 2008, this is the first year it has been awarded.

<http://washingtonexaminer.com/blogs/capital-land/2012/01/montgomery-county-cop-receives-congressional-badge-bravery/2076836>

Congressional Badge of Bravery Goes to Montgomery County Police Officer

Esther French, Montgomery Village Patch

Montgomery County Police Officer Edward E. Paden Jr. became the first person from Maryland to receive the Congressional Badge of Bravery Award, joining 20 other officers across the country.

Paden was honored at a ceremony this morning at the Public Safety Training Academy in Rockville for his courageous actions during the suicide bomber situation in Silver Spring in September 2010.

Paden was the first police officer inside of the [Discovery Communications Headquarters building when employees were held hostage inside](#) the lobby. Although he was off duty, Officer Paden rushed to the scene and his quick thinking gained him access to the building. [Paden was able to confirm that the bomber identified as James J. Lee had an explosive device.](#)

[The Congressional Badge of Bravery Award](#) was created in 2008 in order to "honor exceptional acts of bravery in the line of duty by federal, state, and local law enforcement officers."

County and state officials praised Paden's selfless courage, emphasizing that he was not even on duty at the time. Sen. Ben Cardin (D-Md.) and Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-Dist. 18) spoke at the ceremony, as did Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett, Maryland U.S. Attorney Rod Rosenstein and Montgomery County Councilmember Phil Andrews.

Chief J. Thomas Manger, of the Montgomery County Police Department, added a touch of levity to the ceremony as he related the story of how Paden had been training for a triathlon earlier that day. He had gone swimming in the Chesapeake Bay--and had gotten stung by a lot of jellyfish, Manger said.

When Paden got back to the police station, he was just leaving again when the call came out for the Discovery situation. Paden changed out of his swimming clothes--but not his "goofy" rubber toe shoes--and all the while, he was suffering from those jellyfish stings.

"We can laugh about it now, but I can tell you now...that it was not a laughing matter at the time," Manger said.

This was the first time in the United States that a suicide bomber had taken hostages, Manger said.

<http://montgomeryvillage.patch.com/articles/congressional-badge-of-bravery-goes-to-montgomery-county-police-officer>