

**NEWS RELEASE** | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | May 23, 2023

### **NDHP & NDPOA Award Ceremony – May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023**

On Tuesday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, the North Dakota Highway Patrol (NDHP) and North Dakota Peace Officers Association (NDPOA) conducted an awards ceremony at the ND Department of Transportation – Fargo District Headquarters (NDDOT). In attendance were members of the NDHP and NDDOT. The following individuals received the NDHP Colonel's Award for Excellence and NDPOA Lifesaving Award for actions they took on November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022, along I-94 in Cass County. The individuals were:

- Sergeant Matthew Denault – NDHP
- Trooper Gabriel Irvis – NDHP
- Ryan Jamieson – NDDOT
- Willie Walski – NDDOT
- Jake Morton – NDDOT
- Scott Kaufman – NDDOT
- Tygr Palmer - NDDOT

All seven recipients were presented the Colonel's Award for Excellence and the Lifesaving Award for the following actions:

On November 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, ND Department of Transportation – Fargo District employees were repairing the cable median barrier along westbound I-94 near MM 334 in Cass County, about three miles east of Casselton. The NDDOT employees had placed advanced warning signs along westbound I-94 prior to the lane closure for the repair work. At the location of the repair, NDDOT had placed a plow truck with an impact attenuator. This plow truck had a large digital arrow board on top of it, directing traffic to merge right. In front of the plow truck was a NDDOT pickup with a large digital arrow board on top of it directing traffic to merge right. A third NDDOT pickup was on scene as well. All these vehicles were blocking the left lane of westbound I-94 to allow for the repair work to be completed in the median.

The day was clear and sunny, and the roadway was dry. The location had no physical obstructions and was straight and level. Up until the time the crash occurred, motorists followed the directions provided by the advanced warning signs and vehicles creating the lane closure. No issues were had throughout the workday.

At approximately 1:06 pm, a Cadillac Escalade approached the lane closure, traveling in the left lane of westbound I-94 at approximately 75 mph. The driver of the Cadillac did not adhere to the advanced warning signs and failed to merge right. Without braking, the Cadillac struck the impact attenuator, causing the driver of the Cadillac to lose control. The Cadillac began a spin on the roadway and spun into the first NDDOT pickup truck that was in front of the plow truck. The Cadillac then entered the median.

There were five NDDOT employees working in the median when the crash occurred. Four of the five were able to jump out of the way and were not struck. The fifth, Ryan Jamieson, was unable to avoid being struck by the Cadillac. The Cadillac struck Ryan and pinned him against the cable median barrier. Ryan's left leg was pinned between the bumper of the Cadillac and the cable barrier, causing a severe leg injury and Ryan was unable to move.

All five NDDOT employees sprang into action. Ryan told the others to use a chop saw to cut the cable. He remained calm during the ordeal. Jake Morton called 911 to report the incident. Tygr Palmer and Willie Walski worked on trying to use a chop saw to cut the cable and a plow truck to push the cable to release the tension. The chop saw wouldn't start, and the plow truck was unable to be moved because of the crash. Scott Kaufman jumped in the other NDDOT pickup on scene and drove it into the median. He used the bumper to push on the cable barrier. This action released enough tension so that Ryan could be removed.

The NDDOT employees then carried Ryan to the NDDOT pickup truck and continued to talk to dispatch on several 911 calls made by the NDDOT employees. Ryan was kept alert and conscious, until care was turned over to law enforcement and emergency responders.

Trooper Gabriel Irvis and Sergeant Matthew Denault were the first NDHP personnel and emergency responders on scene. They located Ryan in the NDDOT pickup and began to treat him. At first, they wrapped his leg in gauze to stem the bleeding and they kept Ryan awake and talking. The gauze was not sufficient, as the left leg injury was severe. Trooper Irvis provided Sgt. Denault with his tourniquet. Sgt. Denault applied the tourniquet to stem the bleeding. Trooper Irvis and Sgt. Denault remained with Ryan, monitoring his condition and the tourniquet until the Casselton Ambulance arrived, at which time they transferred care to the EMS personnel with the ambulance.

Ryan was transported to Sanford Hospital, where he received treatment for his leg injuries, which involved numerous surgeries. ER staff and Casselton Ambulance crew members described the actions by all involved had saved Ryan's life. He had lost a lot of blood during the incident and the quick actions to call 911, using the truck to release tension on the cable barrier to remove Ryan, and especially the application of the tourniquet all led to Ryan surviving the incident.

Ryan Jamieson received the awards for how he handled himself during the incident. He was directing the actions of the others and remained calm, which contributed to his survival. The others had all have shown a sense of responsibility and compassion for their fellow human.

Their actions were instrumental in the care Ryan Jamieson received on this day and Ryan surviving the incident.

The NDHP Colonel's Award of Excellence is awarded by the NDHP Superintendent to NDHP employees and citizens for actions that have benefited the NDHP and State of North Dakota.

The NDPOA Lifesaving Award is awarded by the ND Peace Officer's Association to first responders and citizens for actions that significantly contributes to the saving of a human life.

Below are six photos from the ceremony today:  
Not pictured: Trooper Gabriel Irvis

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Major Tom Iverson – NDHP, Sergeant Matthew Denault – NDHP, District Engineer Aaron Murra – NDDOT



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