

September 20, 2021

To: Sergeant Joe Slenk, Holland (MI) Department of Public Safety
From: Jeff Felts, Chairman of the NPRC



RE: Chudwin Award Notification

Dear Sergeant Slenk,

On November 21, 2019, Officer Jon Osborn of the Holland DPS nominated you for the Chief Jeff Chudwin Patrol Rifle Award.

The NPRC's Executive and Advisory Boards, consisting of 45 armed professionals from around the country, concluded voting on September 19, 2021, at 3:00 pm, on the actions of this year's nominees.

Sir, on behalf of the NPRC's Boards, it is my honor and privilege to notify you that you are the 2021 Chudwin Award Winner for Patrol Rifle Excellence.

You were selected for your heroic, lifesaving actions on April 22, 2018, when then Officer Slenk, who was assigned to patrol duty, responded to assist the Ottawa County Sheriff's Department with an ongoing hostage situation north of Holland. The suspect, Matt Hartman, had already shot two people in Muskegon and was holding his wife Mary hostage in their trailer at West Olive Estates.

Shortly after your arrival, dispatch broadcast that Suspect Hartman was outside in the carport, holding a gun to Mary's head. Unbeknownst to you at the time, Suspect Hartman had told Mary to say goodbye to their son and to "get ready," because he was going to kill her shortly.

Suspect Hartman had positioned Mary as a human shield between himself and the perimeter officers while holding a loaded 9mm Taurus handgun to Mary's temple. Only two-thirds of Suspect Hartman's face was visible, offering a limited shot opportunity. Due to the circumstances, only a cranial vault shot placement from a high velocity rifle round would have any chance at saving hostage Mary's life.

Sergeant Slenk (then P.O. Slenk), your background and training as an agency firearms instructor and tactical team member (SWAT), made you the right man, at the right time, armed with the right tool for the job. After taking up a standing shooting position from the turret of an up-armored Humvee, you patiently took aim with your agency issued Colt M-4 rifle and Aimpoint optic and waited for the best moment to save hostage Mary's life. From 27 yards you fired a single shot striking Suspect Hartman just below the right eye, causing his instantaneous death while leaving hostage Mary unharmed.

This event and your individual actions validate why America's first responders must have rifles and quality training if there is to be any hope of swiftly stopping those who are happy to do violence to innocent people.

Sergeant Slenk, your actions and success during this incident should serve as a wakeup call for all LEOs to improve their

individual and organizational readiness. You are a great credit to yourself, the Holland Department of Public Safety, and to our profession. THANK YOU!

CHIEF JEFF CHUDWIN PATROL RIFLE AWARD

In honor of the nation's primary champion of the modern-day law enforcement patrol rifle movement, it is only fitting that this prestigious award be named after the man who has educated and trained so many individuals and organizations on the benefits of a sound patrol rifle program. His professionalism, candor, and counsel has helped countless law enforcement officers through extremely difficult times. His selfless service to the greater good is evident by his every day actions and his motto: "Just do the right thing."

AWARDED FOR ONE OR A COMBINATION OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS

1. An act of **valor** using a patrol rifle.
2. **Excellence** in the field of law enforcement patrol rifle for a particular event or series of events.
3. **Longstanding contribution** in training, education, development and/or leadership in the realm of law enforcement patrol rifle.

THE CHUDWIN AWARD WINNER RECEIVES

1. Travel expenses for the award winner, one family member and one member of their chain of command to come to the NPRC to receive the award. Includes airfare or mileage expenses and shuttle to and from airport if required.
2. Hotel accommodations for the award winner, family member and the chain of command member. Includes up to two dinners and two lunches for each person.
3. There is no cash or money given to the award winner. Instead we offer training opportunities and equipment prizes from our sponsors.
4. The winner receives an etched glass trophy and a framed certificate.
5. An additional framed certificate for display in that officer's police department, town hall, etc.
6. Photographs from the awards ceremony.
7. In addition, you will receive various logo and equipment gifts from Center Mass and may receive the same from the event's other sponsors and vendors.
8. Finally, the winner receives a free slot for themselves and one fellow officer to attend next year's NPRC.

This year the NPRC and [North American Active Assailant Conference](#) are on **October 14-16, 2021**, near Detroit, MI. It is our sincere hope that you will join us. Please contact us as soon as possible to let us know if you will be attending. [For more info about the NPRC click this link](#). Your award will be presented to you at the NAAAC on Friday, **October 15th** in front of roughly 1,500 1st responders.

Congratulations and I hope to see you in a few weeks.



Chairman of the Board, NPRC

800-794-1216 / jfelts@centermassinc.com

www.centermassinc.com

Center Mass, 33825 Plymouth Rd., Livonia MI 48150