



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Ed Maddox 213-974-2222
James Bolden 213-200-5314

SUPERVISOR RIDLEY-THOMAS RECOGNIZES L.A. COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH'S PSYCHIATRIC MOBILE RESPONSE TEAM

LOS ANGELES -- Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas today saluted Shawn Kim, MSW, and Jimmey Loya, RN, members of the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health's (DMH) Psychiatric Mobile Response Team (PMRT), whose quick and brave actions prevented injury to a client and his family during a home invasion robbery in the City of Gardena.

"I am pleased to recognize Mr. Kim, and Mr. Loya and thank them for their calm professionalism and poise under pressure as they serve the people of the Second Supervisorial District and Los Angeles County as a whole," Supervisor Ridley-Thomas said.

On March 29 at approximately 6:11 p.m., the DMH's ACCESS Center received a call from the mother of a 28-year-old man requesting an evaluation of her son, who reportedly has had a history of mental illness.

According to the mother, the man was repeating himself and exhibiting disconcerting behavior. Although she denied he had a history of violence, she described her son as occasionally having a "bad temper" with his girlfriend, with whom he had recently broken up with.

While Mr. Kim and Mr. Loya were assisting the family, three armed men entered the home in an apparent home invasion and robbed the family and DMH workers at gunpoint.

During the robbery, the client who was being assisted ran toward the suspects, startling them and causing them to flee the scene.

Gardena Police Department responded and conducted a neighborhood search with Kim and Loya but no suspects were located.

Kim and Loya returned to the home, completed their assessment, provided assistance to the family, and developed a follow-up plan for the client.

The incident highlighted the inherent risks in after-hours field response activity but did not reveal a problem with existing safety protocol.

“Mr. Kim and Mr. Loya are experienced clinicians with an exceptional degree of professionalism, dedication, and skill. Their ability to remain calm, re-assure family members, secure the location, and work with law enforcement under an extremely trying and life threatening situation, demonstrated their ability to work effectively and efficiently in a very dynamic and dangerous environment,” the Supervisor said.

Mr. Kim is a 2008 graduate of California State University, Long Beach School of Social Work. He joined EOB/PMRT in July 2009 and is assigned to PMRT SA 7.

Jimmy Loya is a 1999 graduate of University of Southern California, School of Nursing. He joined EOB/PMRT in June 2009 and is assigned to PMRT SA 4.

“Their commitment to field work and the community embodies the mission of the Department of Mental Health.”

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