



VILLAGE OF PINECREST

Press Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Pinecrest Police Officer commended for saving the life of a resident who was choking

Pinecrest, Fla. – Pinecrest Police Officer Alexandra Martinez was recognized with a Certificate of Commendation for saving the life of a resident who was choking on food during a Neighborhood Watch block party.

While conducting a crime prevention briefing November 8, Officer Martinez observed a woman acting frantically as she asked the man next to her if he was okay. When she approached the man, he was clutching his throat and drooling from his mouth.

Without hesitation Officer Martinez stepped behind the man and wrapped her arms around his abdomen and began to perform the Heimlich maneuver. Due to her training and experience, she realized the maneuver was not effective due to the man's size. Officer Martinez immediately transitioned from abdominal thrusts to administering four to five powerful back blows to the upper back area of the man. As a result, a large piece of food became dislodged from his mouth. He took a deep breath and color returned to his face.

Officer Martinez then calmly went back to her crime prevention briefing without missing a beat. Police Chief Samuel Ceballos attributes Officer Martinez's actions as being in line with the department's mantra: To Safeguard Life and Property.

"Officer Martinez's professionalism and steadfast dedication to her duties are in keeping with the highest standards of the Village of Pinecrest Police Department and of professional law enforcement," said Police Chief Samuel Ceballos.

Choking is the eighth leading cause of unintentional injury deaths in the United States, according to the National Safety Council. Foods are responsible for most choking incidents. Choking can cause a simple coughing fit or something more serious like a complete block in the airway, which can lead to death. Knowing techniques such as the Heimlich maneuver and other alternatives may mean the differences between life and death.

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