

OFFICER JAMES ERICKSON



The Medal of Valor is the highest recognition of achievement presented by the Department. It is awarded to employees who distinguish themselves with extraordinary acts of bravery or heroism above and beyond that normally expected in the line of duty.



On August 6, 2001, Officer James Erickson and Officer Shane Oien responded to 8 N. Post to take a report of an order of protection violation. While conducting their investigation, the suspect returned. When Officer Erickson and Officer Oien tried to talk to the suspect, he drew a handgun and shot into the office at both officers and the employees there. Without hesitation, and at great risk to themselves, Officer Erickson and Officer Oien returned fire and pursued the suspect out into the hallway. At the same time, they never forgot about the potential victims, and were yelling for them to get down. The suspect again displayed his weapon in the officer's direction. Officer Erickson and Officer Oien had taken up a position with limited concealment. They showed great courage in jeopardizing their own lives by placing themselves between the assailant and the persons located in the office. Their only option was to shoot to protect themselves and the other people present.

After he went down, the suspect continued to move. Maintaining their position between the suspect and the other persons, Officer Erickson and Officer Oien told them to exit the office to a safe location. The officers followed their training by reloading, directing backup officers, and remaining in position until a SWAT stick was able to safely approach and secure the suspect and his weapon. Sergeant Walter noted that both Officer Erickson and Officer Oien have been very humble about what they did, thanking those persons who had trained them, in preparation for a possible incident such as this.

During this extraordinary act, they displayed bravery and heroism above and beyond that normally expected in the line of duty. Their actions undoubtedly saved the life of the victim and the lives of her co-workers, and the Department is proud to recognize them both with the Medal of Valor.

