

2007 New Jersey State Jefferson Awards



SALUTE YOUR 2007 AWARDS HONOREE, PATROLMAN ROBERT MELENDEZ

NOMINATED BY MARK GILLESPIE



From left: Nominator Mark Gillespie and honoree Patrolman Robert Melendez



From left: George Arwady, Publisher of the Star-Ledger, medalist Patrolman Robert Melendez and Sam Beard, co-founder of the Jefferson Awards

Do you know someone who makes a difference in your community?

If you do, then nominate them for the prestigious Jefferson Award by visiting www.nj.com/jeffersonawards

Jefferson Awards honor ordinary people who, through public service, do extraordinary things for other people, their community, their nation, or the environment.

Patrolman Robert Melendez of the Sea Girt Police Department has put a face to drug and alcohol prevention. In 2004, Melendez approached the Community Alliance with an idea for substance abuse prevention, to have 7th, 8th and high school grade students join forces with local police officers to play music together. Known as "Project PACKMAN," an anachronism for Police And Community Kids Music Against Narcotics. Led by Melendez, the cops and kids would try new songs, share important events of their lives, while learning about the negative effects of drugs and alcohol. Positive values are emphasized here, as the programs Code of Conduct stresses no glorification of violence, no drugs or alcohol, and no negative musical content. Officer Melendez has directed Projected PACKMAN to benefit Hurricane Katrina victims, Tsunami victims, local charities and the Monmouth Ocean FoodBank, as well as many others. Project PACKMAN has helped raise several thousand dollars for these causes. Officer Melendez has demonstrated what it means to be a "Good Citizen".