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Alabama Department of Public Safety

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Alabama State Trooper Among Four Finalists Nationwide for IACP/Motorola Trooper of the Year

MONTGOMERY — Alabama State Trooper Michael Gillis has been selected as one of four finalists nationwide for the 2009 International Association of Chiefs of Police/Motorola Trooper of the Year Award, according to Department of Public Safety Director Col. J. Christopher Murphy.

IACP notified Public Safety Feb. 1 that Gillis had been selected as the IACP Southern Regional nominee for the award “for his heroic actions while dealing with an incident involving a deranged gunman on a shooting rampage on March 10, 2009.”

Gillis was nominated for the prestigious award in recognition of his response to the single deadliest crime in recorded state history, the March 10, 2009, attacks in Coffee and Geneva counties that left 10 victims dead, six others injured, and the perpetrator, Michael Kenneth McLendon, dead from a self-inflicted gunshot.

Gillis was the first law enforcement officer to encounter the heavily armed gunman. He initiated pursuit that soon involved his fellow officers, and persisted in his mission to halt the attacks, despite repeated gunfire from the perpetrator. Gillis’ patrol vehicle was hit multiple times by gunfire, and he suffered facial lacerations from glass fragments caused by the gunfire.

“Were it not for the brave, professional response of Trooper Gillis, and that of his fellow officers, there’s no way to know how many more innocent lives might have been lost that day,” said Murphy.

In recognizing Gillis, Murphy also had high praise for the extraordinary teamwork of the other troopers, state, county and local law enforcement officers, as well as police communications officers, criminal analysts, and private citizens who worked to bring the deadly incident to a conclusion.

A 13-year veteran of DPS, Gillis was on patrol duty, assigned to the Highway Patrol Division, Dothan Post, when the shootings occurred. He currently serves as agent/investigator with Public Safety’s ABI Division.

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for more information contact:

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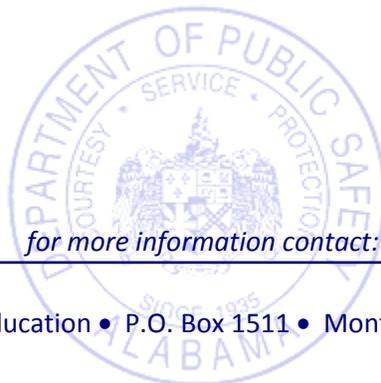
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IACP initiated the award “to recognize some of our agencies’ most dedicated professionals.” Nominees are submitted by member agencies of IACP’s Division of State and Provincial Police. The Trooper of the Year will be announced during a ceremony at the organization’s midyear conference in March in Alexandria, Va.

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