

logo not found or type unknown

## St. Croix Native Chosen Private Security Officer of the Year by Professionals' Association in Arizona

Community Center / **Published On April 05, 2022 04:44 PM /**

Staff Consortium **April 05, 2022**

Image not found or type unknown



**Arizona Private Security Professionals' Association Chairman, Phil Candy, congratulates Perry Turner, left, during a recognition ceremony. By. ARIZONA PRIVATE SECURITY PROFESSIONALS' ASSOCIATION**

Phoenix, Arizona — St. Croix native Perry Turner made history this year when he became the first Arizona Private Security Officer of the Year as recognized by the Arizona Private Security Professionals' Association, which also made history with its inaugural award, a release issued Tuesday has made known.

Turner, who works for Blue Steel Security Services, was a unanimous choice by the selection committee, according to the release.

Turner said his selection was a humbling yet proud experience because not only did it reflect the confidence his coworkers and supervisors have in him, but also refutes the negative stereotype of security professionals depicted in movies.

“My coworkers and the team I usually work with are very excited,” he said. “They feel I am one of the best out there and they appreciate what I do every day, so they are very happy about this.”

Turner said the fact that APSPA decided to select a security officer of the year casts a positive light on all security guards and refutes the negative stereotype of security professionals depicted in the movies.

“There are a lot of jokes about security guards out there and a lot of people make fun of security guards as people who sleep on the job or are like the guard in the movie Mall Cop,” he said. “I am nowhere near that.”

Mark Coxen, Blue Steel chief operations officer, agreed with Turner. “Perry is everything you’d want in a security guard for any company,” Coxen said later. “People look at security as a lower tier industry and Perry will change that. He will change the whole perception of security officers to the public.”

Born on the Island of St. Croix in the Virgin Islands, Turner came to the states when his mother started a water company. He said winning the award during Black History Month, was especially fulfilling. He recalled a story his mother told him about being called a racial slur while attending a company convention in Phoenix.

“I thought that I could take that and be angry for the rest of my life or I could make myself better, and I chose the latter,” Turner said. “When you’re black and you go through every-day struggles, it’s important to see an African-American succeeding whether it’s in sports or protecting the community but doing very positive things. A lot of times we’re surrounded by negativity and it’s important to overcome that every chance we get.”

According to the release, Officer of the Year candidates were evaluated on the weight of nominating narratives submitted by companies stating why their candidates’ leadership skills and professionalism would make them great ambassadors for Arizona’s private security industry.

Turner’s nomination narrative referred to an incident where he attended to a teenager with a mortal neck wound while tutoring a trainee.

“Being the first responder to a violent homicide is traumatizing for the most seasoned officer,” the narrative stated. “It’s almost unheard of on your first shift. (Officer Turner) used this incident as a teachable moment for his trainee, reassured him it was a very, very rare occurrence and helped the trainee work through it. The trainee went on to have a very successful tenure with our company, in no small part due to the reassurances received from 2021-01 on the first shift.”

While that isolated incident was cited, the narrative stated it was Turner’s consistency that won him the nomination. “Performing in a crisis does not make a great security officer. Showing up every day, having a great attitude about not just your job, but life in general, doing more than is expected and representing not only your employer, but the entire industry well, is worthy of such a nomination.”

The narrative continued, “The person who has earned this award not only “runs to the sound of the guns” when called upon but makes an impact each and every day when they come to work. They

change society's perception of our industry. (Officer Turner) is just such a person and deserving of this recognition."

Turner said winning the award was one of the best things that happened to him since his football-playing days at Southern Illinois at Carbondale. A standout at defensive tackle, Turner was recruited by the Los Angeles Chargers. When that did not work out, he sought another outlet for his abilities. "I looked for something physical where I could still use my mind," Turner recalled. "The next best thing was getting into security and providing professional services."

Turner said he was especially happy to tell his family about the award to give them something to cheer about. "They were very happy. They hear a lot of the stories about the days when the job is tough," Turner said. "They are very curious about my job, and they like to hear stories when I work with the police."

Turner also had high praise for the management at Blue Steel.

"I really want to say thank you for the opportunity to show them what I could do," Turner said. "When you walk into an office, and no one knows your ability, you have to be humbled because you know you are worth a lot. I am very happy the way I was treated and the opportunity I was given to show my skills."

**About APSPA** – The Arizona Private Security Professionals' Association advocates for the state's private security industry and is dedicated to improving public safety and asset protection in Arizona by promoting professionalism, ethical business practices, fair competition and training.