

# Illinois Sheriffs' Association

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **2021 Correctional Officer of the Year**

LaSalle County Correctional Officer Justin Cogdal was awarded the 2021 Correctional Officer of the Year for life-saving actions in the Spring of 2021.

On April 15, 2021, Correctional Officer (CO) Cogdal was conducting Medical Protocol in LaSalle County Jail, along with the nurse on duty, to coordinate with patients requiring health services. Per standard procedure, CO Cogdal brought two patients into the Health Care Unit and stood guard. The nurse started attending to an inmate on the examination table when she turned her gaze away momentarily. At that moment the inmate jumped up and grabbed the nurse by the neck, pinning her against the wall with a metal object in his hand. The inmate stated he was looking for the fastest way out of the jail.

CO Cogdal responded immediately by grabbing the arm of the inmate that was holding the metal object and quickly freeing the nurse. As she ran down the hall for assistance, CO Cogdal disarmed the inmate while fending off the attack. During multiple attempts to restrain the inmate, CO Cogdal received lacerations on his neck, nose, and shoulder from stabbing attempts made by the inmate.

The immediate action taken by CO Cogdal saved serious physical injury to the nurse on duty and subverted a possible escape attempt and hostage situation.

The Illinois Sheriffs' Association would like to thank Correctional Officer Cogdal for his heroic actions and dedication to the members of his community.

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