

BLACKSTONE POST



The Voice of Blackstone Security



The Secret to Our Success is in Our People

SPECIAL EDITION 2017

The Secret to our Success is in Our People

Houston's Sabrina Taylor is Blackstone's 2016 Officer of the Year!

Houston – Sabrina Taylor is thinking she's finally found a home after being named the recipient of The "33" Award as Blackstone Security Services, Inc.® 2016 Officer of the Year.

"I never thought something like this would happen to me, not in a million years, no I didn't," Sabrina gushed about winning the highest employee award at Blackstone. "This honor means a lot to me. I love it. I'm thinking about making Blackstone my home for many years to come."

Sabrina is the sixth Blackstone security officer to receive the award, named for the 33 private security officers who were killed on 9-11 going up the stairs in the Twin Towers with emergency personnel trying to save civilian lives.

Although she has been with Blackstone just shy of a year, Sabrina, who is a shift supervisor, is



Sabrina Taylor

also impressed with her post and her working conditions.

"I love my boss and I love the job, she continued. "My coworkers are awesome, and that has not always been the case, but the ones I have now are great."

The 4-year security veteran said she tried three other security companies before landing at Blackstone and none of the others measured up. "I am so happy that someone acknowledges hard work," she said. "Some of the other security companies I've been with do not. I've been with three different companies, and no doubt, Blackstone is the best of the bunch."

Houston area District Manager Tony Browe said Sabrina was selected because from the day she

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The Secret to our Success is in Our People

Contreras Personifies Blackstone Commitment to El Paso Community



Connie Contreras (sitting) and A.Y.U.D.A. friends at Sen. Jose Rodriguez's office.

El Paso, Texas – Concepción "Connie" Contreras is described by her supervisor as a hard-working person who takes her job seriously "because she has a strong passion for what she does." And she doesn't boast.

That's why Blackstone leadership was pleasantly surprised when they learned that Connie and five of her cohorts

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POST ORDERS

Dan Swindall, President & CEO

Community Involvement and Professional Excellence

Community involvement, professional excellence and employee recognition are in Blackstone's DNA. Let me explain.

Lately, words such as community involvement and corporate citizenship have become catch phrases whose meanings are often-times lost in a maze of marketing slogans for a product or service. Many businesses talk the talk, but few actually walk the walk.

A colleague of mine whom I've known for more than a decade once said that true community involvement occurs when a company does not exploit a community for monetary gain, but dedicates its assets to a sustained effort to make that community a stronger, better place to live.

Strong, vibrant communities make good customers.

Community involvement is part of the Blackstone credo and there is no better proof that Blackstone walks the walk than the activities of El Paso's Connie Contreras and her compatriots at A.Y.U.D.A., Adults & Youth United Development Association. Ayuda is Spanish for "help," and that's what this association does. A.Y.U.D.A. advocates on behalf of low-income residents living in the colonies (see page 1) to remove the barriers and obstacles preventing them from obtaining drinking water, quality health care and decent housing and improve educational programs that contribute to economic development.

There is no better feeling or service than to speak for those whose voices cannot be heard. Connie and her group did just that when they traveled to the Texas State Capital and met with lawmakers to convey their message.

It is said that no one stands as tall as when they bend to help a child. Right now, Connie, A.Y.U.D.A. and Blackstone are standing tall.

Also, a tip of the hat to Blackstone's Division 54's Sabrina Taylor, who earned Officer of the Year honors for 2016. Sabrina is another outstanding example of Blackstone's dedication to professionalism, customer service and teamwork that has helped Blackstone make its indelible brand on security in the Southwest.

Connie and Sabrina are great examples of why we say the secret to our success is in our people.



3 Steps Toward Being a Great Security Officer, Where are You?

By Shane Brown, Division 53, Dallas

Dallas – The exact duties of a security officer may vary from post to post but the overall mission of providing quality security services in an efficient professional manner remains the same. Here are a few points that may remind us of why we are here and why we should be proud of who we are.

"Security Officer" is not just a body that is placed at a post not knowing how to perform or understand the expectations of the job. It is important to be vigilant, aware, observe, and document any and all activity. Doing so will provide your clients with clear and conscious understanding of the meaning of a security officer and show them the importance of your job.

"Running the business as if it were your business"– When reporting for duty look at your appearance and how you present yourself when approaching everyday work situations. Remember, you are not only representing yourself but you're representing the company as well. Your appearance and how you present yourself physically and verbally will dictate your level of professionalism and either positively or negatively impact the meaning of "security officer". We are to fulfill all our clients' expectations by being firm and upholding their requests but at the same time being respectful to all we interact with. Being a professional security officer will show leadership for your company and your peers.

"Take pride in what you do!" When reporting for duty and conducting the same business day-in and day-out, it is very easy to lose interest in your responsibilities. Staying vigilant and understanding the expectations of a security officer will keep you alert and expect the unexpected. Security officers are also a deterrent



Shane Brown

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Growth and Excellence

When Blackstone Raised the Bar for Security Companies



Jeanne and Dan at 2012 BBB Ethics Awards Dinner

Phoenix – Five years ago, Blackstone Security Services, Inc. set a new standard for security companies when it won the Arizona Better Business Bureau's Torch Award for Business Ethics in 2012, the first private security company to ever achieve that distinction. Blackstone outdistanced several national companies from other industries in Category 5, where the largest companies compete.

Blackstone became, and remains, the only private security company in the state to be recognized by the BBB for its ethics. It was just another jewel in the crown for President & CEO Dan Swindall in a furious half-decade during which Blackstone was recognized three times nationally by Inc. Magazine for its growth and once for job creation. It was also runner up for the prestigious Spirit of Enterprise Award from the W.P. Carey School of Business at Arizona State University.

Blackstone and Dan maintained a relationship with the BBB. Dan represented the BBB at the 4th Annual Integrity Summit, where he shared the po-

odium with Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton, executives from several Fortune 500 companies and former Phoenix Suns owner Jerry Colangelo, a co-founder of the Integrity Institute. Dan also served on a BBB Best Practices panel and several ethics selection committees.

Also during that run, Dan was selected CEO of the Year by C-Level Magazine which targeted executives throughout the Phoenix Metropolitan area. Blackstone now has permanent offices in Tucson, El Paso, Houston, Dallas, Albuquerque and a satellite office in Gallup, New Mexico.

"It's been quite a run," Dan says. "Our relationship with the Better Business Bureau has been so beneficial to me personally and to the Blackstone family. The Torch Award competi-

tion is a pathway to excellence. Even if you don't win it, you still emerge a better company."



Jeanne and Dan at 2017 BBB Torch Awards Dinner

**Trainers to undergo background checks**

House Bill 2319 is Now the Law!

The Arizona Private Security Professionals' Association reached a major milestone on May 2 when Gov. Doug Ducey signed into law HB 2319, legislation that was crafted and promoted by the APSPA Legislative Team.

The new law, named "Security Guard Training Instructor, Certification," requires security guard trainers to submit to the same background checks and meet the same standards set by the Arizona DPS as the guards they train. Heretofore, anyone could set up shop as a trainer, even a convicted felon. No one would know and DPS was powerless to do anything.

Blackstone President and CEO Dan Swindall is also the chairman of the APSPA Board of Officers. Swindall called the law groundbreaking because it is "the first meaningful piece of legislation passed in the Arizona security industry in recent memory."

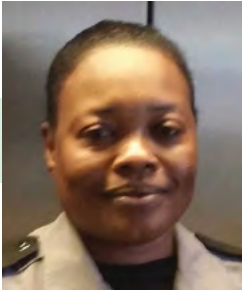
The bill was supported by Rep. Vince Leach, R- District 11, and sponsored by Rep. Jay Lawrence R- District 23. It passed the House by a stunning 58-0 vote.

Rep. Lawrence, chairman of the House Military, Veterans and Regulatory Affairs Committee, said he felt "very strongly" about the bill. "One would think this would have been part of training security guards for a long time," Lawrence said.

Rep. Leach, chairman of the House Sub-Appropriations-Public Safety, Infrastructure and Resources Committee, said the need for such legislation was immediately evident to him when he learned its purpose, calling it "clearly a public safety issue."

"Because it is a public safety issue, we cannot allow any loophole to exist that would make it possible for any unqualified person to train those who are charged with the safety of the public," Leach said.

The effort was spearheaded by APSPA Lobbyist Steve Enteman, a former DPS captain who oversaw the licensing division. "Placing these requirements on training instructors as well as allowing the state hearing board to review those training requirements serves to enhance standards within the industry in Arizona."


Gisma Dabura


**Officer of the Quarter
Division 32 – Phoenix**

Phoenix – Gisma Dabura is one of Blackstone's longest tenured security officers, having served 10 of her 16 years in security with the Company. Eight of those 10 years has been on the same post at a state agency. The agency heads are so pleased with her performance, they have been heard saying, "can we get five more like her."

It's that type of sustained level of performance that has propelled Gisma to Officer of the Quarter for Blackstone's Division 32 in Phoenix.

Phoenix Director of Operations Ken Vandiver says Gisma was selected as Officer of the Quarter because of her "unheard of dedication" to the job, adding that even though she greets people with a smile, her authority goes unchallenged.

"Nothing gets past Gisma as she calmly watches over her post checking IDs," Vandiver said. "And while she smiles, she commands the respect and compliance from any homeless person trying to enter the property on a daily basis."

Harvey's Devastation

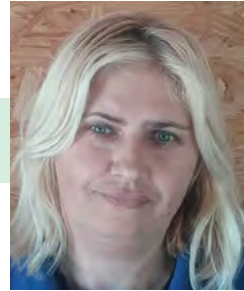
This traffic light is about 300 yards from the front door of a Blackstone client in Houston, evidence of the destruction caused by Hurricane Harvey.



Photo by Tony Browe

"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."

Winston Churchill


Ljubica Tadic


**Officer of the Quarter
Division 53 – Dallas**

Dallas – Ljubica Tadic is known for her willingness to exceed what is expected of her. That is why Ljubica is the Officer of the Quarter for Blackstone's Division 53 office in Dallas.

Her tendency to exceed expectations should come as no surprise. The 17-year security veteran not only has a degree in street smarts, she also has a degree in technology from Tehnoloski Fakultet, an educational institution in her native Tuzla, Bosnia; she also owns a degree as a medical assistant from Collin County Community College District in Plano, Texas.

"Officer Tadic performs her duties as asked and in a courteous and professional manner," Blackstone Division 53 District Manager Shane Brown said of Ljubica. "She has gone above and beyond her required duties on many occasions and is always willing to help the team by staying late and filling in on her scheduled days off if needed."

Ljubica, a woman of few words, said what she enjoys most about Blackstone is the "good management and team spirit."

The two-year Blackstone employee said she enjoys her job because of the "easy interaction with clients."

Ljubica's philosophy on security is taken directly from the security guard's credo: "Be alert, observe and report suspicious activities to my chain of command," she said.

Others who have supervised Ljubica describe her as having an even temperament and one who will not ignore her duties even when faced with personal crises.

Brown agrees with that assessment. "Officer Tadic is an asset to the Blackstone Team," he said. "And she continues to embrace her duties and responsibilities with each passing day."

When Ljubica is not protecting her plot of ground at her post, she enjoys fishing, traveling, gardening with her children; Sandra, Adrian and Zlatana.

Congratulations, Ljubica, and thanks for being a Blackstone ambassador.

3 Steps *Continued from Page 2*

for those that are looking to cause trouble and even harm. By being vigilant, respectful, and professional in your everyday tasks, the more you will understand the importance of what it means to be a security officer. Security officers have always deterred theft, saved lives, protected property and provided assistance during emergency situations. No good deed goes unnoticed within the company you work for and in the eyes of the clients you provide security services for. Taking pride in what you do and knowing you are a professional security officer will make your job more enjoyable, rewarding and secure.



John Fernandez

**Officer of the Quarter
Division 52 – El Paso**



El Paso, Texas – John Fernandez spent 22 years serving his country in the U.S. Army spending time in duty stations such as Vietnam, Germany, Italy, Korea and Taiwan. He's also been to New Jersey.

John ended his military career as a 1st Sergeant, so besides being well-traveled, he has a well-developed sense of service and duty. That's why John is the Officer of the Quarter for Blackstone's Division 52 in El Paso.

"(Officer Fernandez) was nominated because he has performed outstandingly in his duties at the El Paso International Airport," said Blackstone Account Manager Anthony Collins. "I have also received numerous reports from the assistant airport director and airport operations on a job well done and his attention to detail."

This was all said before John's latest display of efficiency.

As an international airport overseen by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the El Paso International Airport is subject to periodic, unannounced covert exercises that attempt to breach security.

John was on duty when officials decided to run an unannounced covert operation to test security personnel and procedures. John detected the attempted breach, followed procedure and thwarted the effort. He did this by recognizing a bogus ID badge. That was his attention to detail expressed previously by airport operations and the assistant airport director.

This performance did not go unnoticed by Tim Berroyer, federal security director of the DHS Transportation Security Administration.

"I could not be more pleased of the performance of your team

in today's covert testing results...." Berroyer wrote in a letter of commendation. "The Blackstone Security Guard (John Fernandez) deserves a huge pat on the back. His actions were critical in the initial detection that something was wrong. The steps he employed significantly contributed to the defeat of an attempt to expose the airport to a simulated, grave threat."

Thanks to John's effort and dedication, Blackstone is enjoying recognition from the number one agency charged with the security of the nation against terrorist threats and actions.

This makes Collins a bit of a prophet because he said before the unsuccessful security breach that, "Officer Fernandez represents himself, Blackstone and the airport with the utmost regards and standards while performing his duties."

John is just a couple months shy of 14 years as a security officer. He has been with Blackstone almost two years. Prior to becoming a security officer, John served four months as a detention officer and was a member of the Color Guard in the mid-sixties at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey.

It's a mutual admiration society between John and the airport operations staff, which he enjoys interacting with, as well as his fellow Blackstone security officers.

When John is not protecting the airport, he enjoys spending time with his wife, Cecilia; daughter, Tori; and sons Michael and Anthony. He also enjoys running, the NBA, NFL and Major League baseball.

Congratulations, John, and thanks for being a Blackstone ambassador.

Taylor *Continued from Page 1*

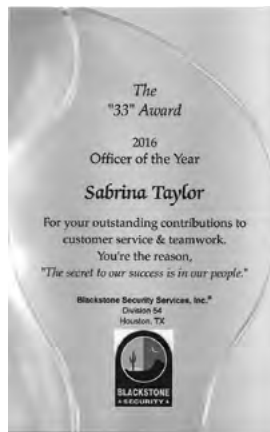
was hired, she has tried to help the team. "I respect that," Browe said. "Our success not only as a company, but as individuals as well, depends on the belief in the "team" concept. Sabrina has shown many times over that she wants to succeed and is willing to work hard for Blackstone, for her teammates and for the client."

Browe added that as the officer in charge for one of Blackstone's largest clients, Sabrina has been singled out for praise many times for her performance on the job. "I am hopeful she continues on (with Blackstone) and if she does, I see greater opportunities for her in the future."

Sabrina said her family was elated that she won the award because now she'll stop moving around. "My family is grateful I found something I can stick with," she said laughing. The other companies were headaches but I managed. My family understood my situation."

Sabrina said she enjoyed working various jobs to get a lot of experiences under her belt. She was working in the garden department of a home and garden store when the security bug bit her. "I love to meet new people and in this job, you meet new people every day," she said.

The Houston native is a graduate of Alphonso Crutch High School where she enjoyed reading and science. When Sabrina is not on duty, she enjoys spending time with her children and cooking. And if anyone is looking for a job, Sabrina has some friendly advice: "I would suggest that as many people as possible apply at Blackstone because this is a wonderful, trustworthy company that works with you all the way around," she said. "I encourage them to apply at Blackstone, I really do."



Contreras *Continued from Page 1*

had visited the Texas legislature earlier this year to advocate for less fortunate, poverty-stricken residents in the greater El Paso area.

Connie is a member of Adults and Youth United Development Association, Inc. (A.Y.U.D.A.), a nonprofit, social services agency founded in 1992 with the aim of obtaining better health services, housing and life training opportunities among other services for those in need. Ayuda means “help” in Spanish.

“Our primary mission is to fight on behalf of low-income residents living in the Colonias who have no services such as running water, electricity or gas,” Connie said, explaining that the Colonias is a poverty-stricken community east of El Paso.

“They have to order their water from a truck that delivers it on a weekly basis. Part of the community has no natural gas so they have to use propane. Our aim is to eliminate the barriers and obstacles for them to obtain drinking water, quality health care and decent housing.”

Connie said another objective is to pursue educational programs for children and adults and encourage economic development through better paying jobs.



Sen. Jose Rodriguez

These are the goals that landed Connie and her coworkers from A.Y.U.D.A. at the state capitol where they met with Sen. Jose Rodriguez, Rep. Poncho Nevarez and Rep. Joe Moody. Sen. Rodriguez lauded Blackstone and the efforts of Connie and the folks at A.Y.U.D.A. for their efforts to help the less fortunate.

“It’s important for our community that companies doing business here support their employees’ volunteer efforts,” said Sen. Rodriguez, who is also the vice chair of the Senate Agriculture, Water and Rural Affairs Committee. “Project A.Y.U.D.A. is an important component to our community’s safety net and it was good to meet with them in Austin during the legislative session. Congratulations to Connie on her work for El Paso!”

“Connie is very determined and she cares for people even though she doesn’t always come across that way,” says Blackstone Division 52 Manager Vanessa Polanco. “She has a strong passion for what she does. She’ll spend all her time and effort to get her point across to show that she cares. She wants to get things done perfectly.”

Connie, an operations supervisor and account manager for Blackstone, is also a licensed health practitioner in the State of Texas and volunteer activities is one of the caveats she must fulfill to keep her license current. She traveled to Austin to meet with lawmakers to improve the healthcare benefits of construction workers and the National Domestic Workers Alliance.

She has been active with A.Y.U.D.A. since 2014 when a friend approached about joining the group. Though she was unemployed at the time, Connie paid for the year of training needed for her to qualify. She learned communication skills, how to deliver the information and to interact with the group’s clientele. It is totally volunteer.

“Even though I’m not getting paid, I love it,” Connie says. “These people don’t have money, no cars, no schooling and they have big families. We teach them how to grow vegetables and live on that. If their mobile home is falling apart we build them a house from the ground up.”

Connie is also a member of Estrella Dorado Gold Star Laughing Doctors, a group that visits adult daycare centers, nursing homes and children’s hospitals. They also visit a mental health facility in Juarez Chihuahua called Pelos Duros, which means Hard Hair. “It’s a weird name but we give time to our older people, Connie explained. “We play music for them from way back when and they sing along if they remember the song and we dance with them if they are able to dance.”

Connie sometimes receives celebrity assistance from her daughter, Ashley Garner, who was named Miss Texas Latina, named Miss US Latina and placed third in the Miss World Latina competition. “She enjoys what we do and likes talking to the kids,” Connie said.

With all Connie does, she says she wished she could do more. “What I like most about serving is the smiles I see on people’s faces when they know they are being helped.”

A.Y.U.D.A. is headquartered in San Elizario, Texas.

Blackstone in the Community



Blackstone sponsored a hole in a golf tournament recently to raise money for a local charity. L-R Art Gissendaner, Tom Hodge, Mike Hammon and Greg Keeler represented Blackstone.

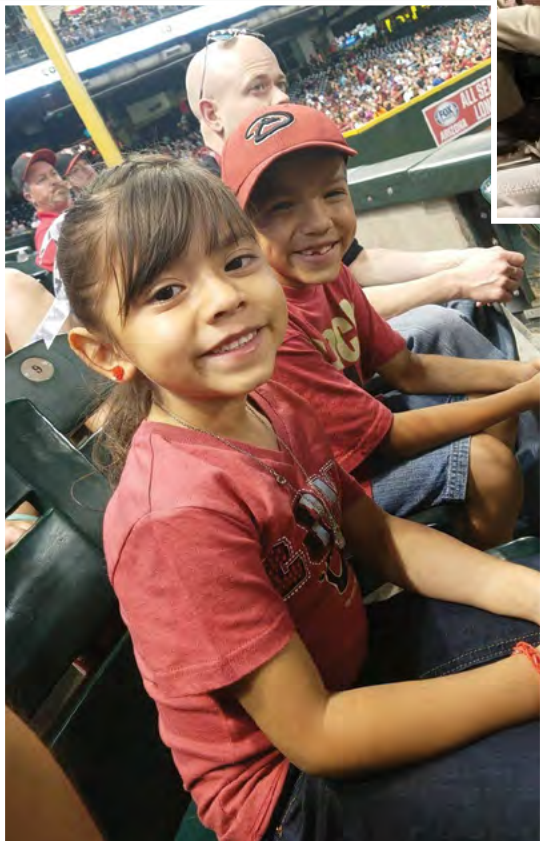
Junior Achievement of Arizona President Katherine Cecala speaks to students at the 2017 JA You’re Hired! event in Phoenix. Blackstone has participated in this event for the past five years, mentoring students on business skills such as resume writing, job interviewing and networking. The event is supported by more than 100 area businesses.



Fringe Benefits with Blackstone



Root, root, root for the home team ...



Blackstone clients attend Arizona Diamondbacks baseball games, Arizona Cardinals' football games and the Arizona Rattlers' Indoor Football League games with family and friends as guests of Blackstone Security Services, Inc.® where treating clients to these top-notch sports venues has become a tradition. Attending MLB, NFL and IFL games is a great way for family members to bond with each other and with BFFs. This is just one of the ways Blackstone demonstrates its appreciation to clients. Yell if you see anyone you know!





Employee Anniversaries

Fifteen Years

Claudia Riedel

Eleven Years

Tyler Croft

Ten Years

Gisma Dabura

Nine Years

James Nally

Eight Years

Terry Rachas

Seven Years

James Allen
Philip Castorena

Mohamed Gaafar
Mike Quinn

Six Years

Steven Curty
Albert Cushman
Bill "Hutch" Hutchison

Donta Thomas
Phyllis Tomaszewski
Miguel Torres

Five Years

Bobby Holley
Betty Morrow

Sandra Price

Four Years

Judy Brown
Norman Brown
Kevin Burns
Alex Chamberlain

John Gad
Richard Qualls
John Watson
Mitchell Williams

Three Years

Robert Cassady
Scott Clark
Mark Davis
Marvin Gibbs
Ahmed Hussain
Rose Marie Lodgek
Vincent Lomeo
Mark Manlove

Julian Padilla
Karen Rebel
Raymond Reyes
Donavon Singer
Frederick Thomas
Ralph Tiffany
Benson White

Two Years

Luciano Barrios
Mary Coleman
Concepcion Contreras
Harry Cutshall, Jr.
John Deflippo
Gary Delaney
Ralf Genz
Johnny Gidron
Gilbert Gomez
Margaret Graham
Jorge Hernandez
Fernando Holguin
Edwin Ingles
Guadalupe Jacobson

David Kaup
Aaron Matsusaka
Jamecia Mayes
Coy McCullough
Anthony Nunez
Miguel Pacheco
Jose Portillo
Lorenzo Portillo
Yolanda Shoals
Jimmie Thompson
Daniel Tovar
Robert Ward
Michael Wynn

One Year

Alfonso Acosta
Alejandra Aguilar
Shoshoni Alexander
Stephen Benoy
Jesus Bentancourt
Cedric Cannon
Jamie Charley
Lidia Gomez
Miguel Guerrero
Paul Harris
Michael Hill

Mark Johnson
Courtney McDuffie Lambert
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Stephen Stewart
James Sullivan
Kelcie Ward
Treva Washburn
Patrick White
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