

# BLACKSTONE POST



The Voice of Blackstone Security

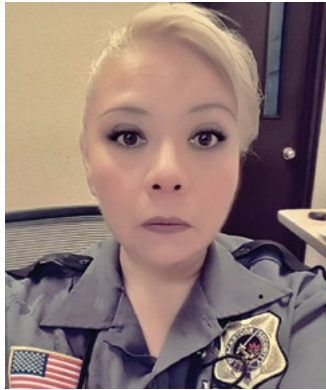


The Secret to Our Success is in Our People

SUMMER 2019

## Terror in El Paso

# “I said, Oh My God, this is Real!”



Cecelia Morales

**El Paso, Texas** – On August 3rd Blackstone security officer Cecelia Morales had just left Sam’s Club and was at the Walmart Supercenter store next door at 7101 Gateway West Blvd. on the city’s east side looking for tortilla chips and chili for her mother, who was at home. She tried to tell her mother in a phone call that with all the visitors from Juarez, it was too crowded, but her mother won the argument and told her she was a good girl.

When Morales reached the aisle with the tortilla chips, all hell broke loose. People in the crowded store began screaming and running and that’s when she heard the gunshots.

“I asked what was going on and a young boy said run, run,” Morales recalled. “I asked why, and another couple said someone is shooting. I turned around and saw all the people running. I said oh my God this is real!”

Morales did not know how many people were shooting but

she did see some who were wounded and many more who were running in a panic. “A man who was an associate asked us to keep quiet,” she said. “Parents were covering their children’s mouths. The associate was directing us to an exit. When we were leaving, an older lady said she was not going to make it. She said take my phone and call my daughter and tell her I love her so much. I said no ma’am, if he shoots you, he is going to have to kill both of us. I’m not going to leave you!”

The two exited the store safely with the help of another customer.

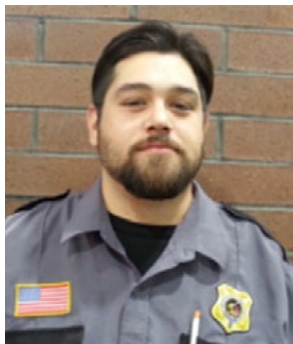
Blackstone guard Andres Diaz was visiting his mother when they received a phone call from his mother’s boyfriend who was working on the highway in front of the store. He told them that shots had been fired.

“He called us immediately,” Diaz said. “We started calling all of our family and that’s when we learned my uncle was at the store. At first, they told us he was okay and that he was not on the injured list. The next day our grandmother told us he was on the deceased list. I couldn’t believe that one of my favorite uncles was gone. It was very difficult.”

Diaz’s uncle was among 22 people who were killed that day. Another 24 people were wounded.

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## James Pilon is Blackstone’s 2018 Officer of the Year



James Pilon

**Phoenix** – James Pilon describes himself as an easygoing, quiet kind of guy who listens more than anything else. “As a supervisor, it has served me well,” said the 18-year career security veteran.

Blackstone Operations Manager Ken Vandiver acknowledges the results of Pilon’s demeanor. “He worked several different posts and took the time to make sure each was as secure as possible,” Vandiver wrote in his nomination letter. “This set the foundation to promote (Pilon) to a patrol driver where he exceeded expectations by taking the lead in training others.

“I would like to give a hand to the men and women who start their careers in security and progress to leadership roles,” Vandiver continued. “I believe Pilon’s 18 years of service shows (his) dedication and he would make a great ambassador for Blackstone Security as Officer of the Year.”

The selection committee agreed with Vandiver and chose Pilon as the 2018 Officer of the Year. Pilon received a trophy and a check for \$100.

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# POST ORDERS

Dan Swindall, President & CEO

## We are Part of the Communities We Serve

In this issue I have some words of sympathy, caution, thankfulness, congratulations and encouragement.

Since June, three members of the Blackstone Family were touched intimately by two shootings. Both shootings were unexpected, and one was deadly.

The first happened in Tucson this past June. A Blackstone security officer escaped injury while on a late-night foot patrol at a fast-food restaurant when an unidentified assailant fired several rifle shots in his direction striking his car on the driver side door. A U.S. Marine, his military training kicked in and he took cover. He was never in any imminent danger.

A few years ago, one of our security officers was killed while walking a late-night post at a construction site here in Phoenix. That crime remains unsolved.

Blackstone is part of each community we serve. Many of our employees are hired from their home communities. What happens in these communities affects all of us. The El Paso shootings is evidence of that. One of our team was shopping at Walmart when

the shooting began. The uncle of another of our team was among those killed.

To say that our hearts go out to the families of the victims in the El Paso shootings would be a woeful understatement. Everyone in El Paso, including our colleagues, has been victimized by this shooting. And through our El Paso colleagues, those of us in Phoenix, Dallas, Houston, Albuquerque, Gallup and Tucson likewise feel their pain.

While we mourn those who lost their lives, we are thankful that more damage was not done.

While these occurrences are rare, they do happen. The point I'm trying to make is to always be aware of your surroundings on duty and off duty. Train well and lean on it when necessary. El Paso is proof that anything can happen to anyone at anytime and anywhere. We always need to stay alert.

I'll end this installment on a couple positive notes. I'd like to offer my personal congratulations to our 2018 Officer of the Year, James Pilon from our Phoenix office. When we say the secret to our success is in our people, James is the type of security professional we are describing.

I'd also like to congratulate Mohamad Zaid A Alloush in Houston for being selected as the recipient of the Bill Richards Memorial Scholarship Award for 2019. Mohamad is attending Sam Houston State University this fall where he is majoring in Biomedical Sciences. Mohamad wants to be a cancer researcher and eventually become a surgeon. Good luck Mohamad. Glad to help.

### Shots Fired at Guard's Car

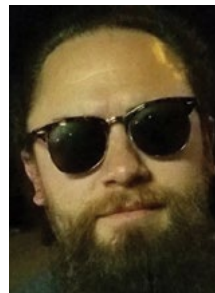


## Tucson After Dark

**Tucson** – Blackstone security officer Dan Papp said it was not something he expected to happen while he was on duty and he is still somewhat confused about why it happened.

In a rare occurrence, someone used Papp's vehicle for target practice thinking he was still in it.

Papp had just arrived at his post at a fast food restaurant renovation project on West Ajo Road at about 9:30 p.m. on June 20. He exited his vehicle and entered the building when he heard what sounded like fireworks, according to his Special Incident Report (SIR).



Dan Papp

Papp went outside and saw a man approaching him from a field to the northeast carrying what appeared to be a backpack and a walking stick. Shortly afterward, Papp said he heard the fireworks again. Visibility was very limited, but Papp noticed the subject's erratic behavior and decided to call Tucson police.

A few minutes later Papp placed a second

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<p><b>DALLAS</b>          Division 53          Edith Fikes. - Division Mgr.</p>		



**“Education is the golden way to greatness”**

## Scholarship Winner Eyes Becoming a Surgeon

**Houston** – Two years ago when his English teacher asked Mohamad Zaid A Alloush about his goals and plans that would impact the world in positive ways, he replied that he wanted to become a surgeon.



**Mohamad Zaid A Alloush**

“Yes, a surgeon.” Mohamad wrote in his entry. “This was my dream when I was in junior high. While growing up, I saw people suffering from (no) health care and I was starting to witness more people seeking health care but unfortunately, not much light was shined on them. This was one of the big reasons pushing me to continue my education and plan something for these ordinary people in order to help them with their stressful lives.”

Mohamad is the fourth recipient of the Bill Richards Memorial Scholarship Award of \$1,000 and the second recipient from the Houston Division. Mohamad is enrolled in Sam Houston State University where he is majoring in Biomedical Sciences. Richards

is a former employee whose expertise and contributions in the area of customer service, helped keep Blackstone among the leaders in the security industry.

Before becoming a surgeon, Mohamad said he will become involved in cancer research. He wrote that according to the World Cancer Research Fund the United States’ cancer rate is fifth in the world. “I know our scientists are doing a great job by trying to find a solution for (cancer), but they could not,” he wrote. “So, this is also one of my aims.”

Mohamad wrote that the more educated a person is the more influence that person will have on his or her community. “Completing (my) education means a lot to me,” he wrote. “After hard work in achieving the degrees, it feels great and it opens tons of opportunities to get more accomplishments. Education is the golden way to greatness.”

“Mohamad pretty much personifies the spirit of the Bill Richards Scholarship Award,” said Blackstone Executive Vice President Jeanne Croft. “It’s meant to help members of the Blackstone family achieve their educational goals. Congratulations Mohamad and good luck with your dream.”

### Blackstone Staffers Recall August 3rd Tragedy

## El Paso Strong!

The echoes of the fatal shootings at a Walmart in El Paso Texas are still reverberating through this West Texas community, traumatized by the swiftness of the event and the number of dead and wounded.

That includes the staff at Blackstone Security Services’ Division 52 office in El Paso. The office, at 7717 Lockheed, Suite D, is less than a mile from the site where the shooting took place. All were deeply impacted by the shooting. Many staffers are from El Paso and are active in various community groups. Below are their reactions to the August 3rd tragedy.

**Vanessa Polanco, Div. Mgr.** – “The world stood still in our area. It was almost like a hurricane came and swooped up half the town. People started to develop fear and anxiety. We had a lot of media in our city and we were suddenly on the TV constantly.

Personally, I feared for my officers. I wanted them safe and I felt compelled to be there for them. My officers needed assurance in this time of fear, uncertainty and need. I know they were scared and unsure of what would happen as service increased, they might have felt overwhelmed.

*“El Pasoans are people of culture and compassion. Yes, there is bad stuff here and there, but nothing horrible or direct hatred. But on August 3rd after the shooting all that changed and so did everyone else.*

*It takes away an innocence from our community I don’t think we will ever get over.”*

But like our entire town we stood together and kept our team spirit. I felt so saddened by the threat of racism. I would never think or like to believe we can be hated by a person so angry with us (he’d) come from his home and shoot people in our community. It was all surreal. It is hard to prevent something you can’t see or know where and when it is coming. And that is scary.

El Paso is next to Juárez Mexico. We have always been close to violence, but it never ever hit El Paso in any way. So much so, that El Paso was voted one of the safest cities in the United States. We were proud of our city and the way we lived and trusted each other. El Pasoans are people of culture and compassion. Yes, there is bad stuff here and there, but nothing horrible or direct hatred. But on August 3rd after the shooting all that changed and so did everyone else.

It takes away an innocence from our community I don’t think we will ever get over.”

**Vincent McConaughy, Acct. Mgr.** – “The first thing that came to my mind was the safety of my guards as I have a site just across the street from where the event took place. Luckily on this day there were no officers assigned to that site and I was given some peace of mind. There was however a sandbag distribution site open just a few blocks down the road from the Walmart. After a call to the client we were able to close that site for the day and let the officer go home. From there I made several wellness-check calls to my officers. Some were more upset than others. Everyone seemed to be concerned and rightfully so. Tension in the following weeks had



## Francisco Peinado

**Officer of the Quarter  
Division 32 Phoenix**

**Phoenix** – Two words Blackstone Director of Operations Ken Vandiver uses to describe Francisco Peinado are “longevity” and “dedication.” Like the Energizer Bunny, Peinado has been going for 25 years in the security industry, the last 10 with Blackstone. His dedication is reflected in his professionalism.

That’s why Peinado is the Officer of the Quarter for Blackstone’s Division 32 in Phoenix.

“His dedication to the sites he is assigned shows his professionalism and wanting to make sure the client is taken care of,” Vandiver wrote. “His attention to detail while performing his duties shows his personal dedication to his job.”

Vandiver’s comments about Peinado, a native of Oakland, California, are indicative of why security companies seek out military veterans. Peinado spent six years in the US Army, receiving an honorable discharge as a sergeant.

What he likes most about Blackstone is “working with other security guards.” What he enjoys most about his job is, “working to protect the client’s needs and Blackstone.”

When Peinado is not taking care of the client’s needs, he is immersed in his favorite hobby, which is auto repair.

Congratulations Francisco, and thanks for being a Blackstone ambassador.



## Gary Delaney

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

**El Paso** – Gary Delaney is the kind of person everyone in the security business wants to work with. He’s friendly, always willing to help a coworker, knows the business and he knows the turf.

These are the reasons why Delaney is the Officer of the Quarter for Blackstone’s Division 52 in El Paso.

“This officer is always willing to help when we ask for assistance,” wrote Account Manager Raquel Deal. “He is very light-hearted and has a great sense of humor.”

Delaney is a native of Baltimore, Maryland who has been in the security industry for 18 years, the last five years with Blackstone. He has certificates from truck driving school and welding school.

He enjoys the people in the El Paso office and the feeling is mutual. “He always comes into the office with a smile and fills the room with joy and laughter,” Deal said. He has a diverse knowledge of almost every site in the greater El Paso area. He ensures client satisfaction as well.”

On the job, Delaney is no nonsense and does not like distractions. His philosophy on security? “Observing and reporting. Being observant and knowing your boundaries and providing good information.”

When Delaney is not observing and reporting, he enjoys spending time with his wife, Eva Delaney, and caring for home.

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

## Tucson

*Continued from Page 2*

call to the police. “I notified the Tucson police to advise them that the individual laying in the field under a tree was in possession of what looked to me to be a rifle,” Papp wrote in his SIR. “At this time, I had reasonable suspicion that he was moving into position to fire on me and my post.”

Before joining Blackstone, Papp was an infantry machine gunner in the Marines with deployments to Afghanistan and Iraq. Attaining the rank of sergeant, Papp was also a boat captain for a combat landing craft, a mortar man and an MP. His combat experience and instincts kicked in.

“This post is an un-armed post and as such, I had no sound recourse if I came under fire,” he wrote.

“I thought it prudent to move to real cover (not just concealment) and stay in contact with the police and my backup.”

Papp’s SIR narrative said the fireworks sound seem to dimin-



ish shortly after this time, and then he made a startling discovery – three bullet holes in the driver’s side of his vehicle. “One was in perfect alignment to strike me in the head if I had been sitting in the driver’s seat had I not taken cover,” he wrote.

Papp notified his shift supervisor and police. A search of the area revealed five spent .22 caliber brass casings, a small ammunition box and several beer cans.

“It was weird because he was out there in a field next to a Dollar Store and a QT station was on the other side,” Papp said later. “If he was shooting at me there were families coming out of the stores. I never found out what his whole purpose was. He may have seen me and thought I was a good target. If he was doing a sniper thing, he didn’t do it very well.”

Papp said that after he called the police he stayed under cover and kept an eye on the individual. “He got close,” Papp said. “I’m guessing he thought I was still in the car.”

Papp said he left thinking about the guard coming on the next shift, hoping the same thing didn’t happen to him.

**Ryan's Song**

# Swindall to Lead Tucson Division

**Tucson** – Ryan Swindall, who has been with Blackstone Security Services, Inc. for 10 years, has been selected to manage the company's Division 34 office in Tucson, a position he has held on an interim basis until now.

Ryan joined Blackstone in the summer of 2009 as the corporate Information Technology technician. In this role he was tasked with upgrading and improving the IT capabilities of all Blackstone divisions.

After being promoted to an operations management role, Ryan has been instrumental in the growth of the Tucson division during the past two years. On numerous occasions he has demonstrated a willingness to sacrifice his personal time to see that company goals were achieved.

"Ryan has shown steady improvement since he started with the company 10 years ago," said Blackstone Executive Vice President Jeanne Croft. "We believe that with the time, travel and technical expertise he has exhibited, that he has legitimately earned an opportunity at a permanent leadership role."

Ryan filled in as the interim division manager when his predecessor took an unplanned, extended leave for health reasons. Under his leadership, the Tucson Division actually improved its operational efficiency and experienced some growth.

While in the interim role, Ryan demonstrated a willingness to work long hours with current and prospective clients to ensure that they received the right level of security for their needs that was cost-effective and efficient. When working in an outside sales capacity he oversees all the southern Arizona region.

Ryan has consistently maintained contact with many of the new guards and supervisors who work at remote locations and do not have access to daily interaction with a field supervisor.

Ryan is trained in every aspect of the daily operations of the company, including sales before moving into his current position.



**Ryan Swindall**

## This is Real *Continued from Page 1*

Diaz said he hoped that no one he knew was in the store at the time, calling it a "popular shopping place" that he patronized periodically even though it is across town from where he lives. He later learned that his dad was in the store during the shooting and witnessed some of the carnage.

My dad said he heard a lot of screaming and saw a lot of blood," Diaz said, adding that he expects the El Paso community to recover eventually. "This is a close-knit community and we're still trying to get over it," he said. "We're trying to be strong about it."

Morales also saw her share of carnage. "I did not see the shooter, but I heard the bullets," she said. I saw a young boy who was 17 years old. I saw a young couple on the floor with the husband on top of his wife. I did not know there was a (live) baby under them. Nobody stopped because there was already a lot of blood. There were people with gunshot wounds in their arms and legs. The shooting took no more than 10 to 15 minutes. It happened so fast. I cried because it was so bad. My mother lives five minutes from there. When she saw the news, she kept calling me and I could not answer my phone."

Morales gave an emotional television news interview right after the shooting. She expressed dismay that someone would drive 650 miles to El Paso just to target Hispanics. "He said he was there to shoot as many Mexicans as he could," she said. "We have good Mexicans and bad Mexicans, good Americans and bad Americans."

Morales, who is receiving cancer treatments, is very active in the community and said she will help El Paso recover from this tragedy.

"It was a bad experience, but I am on a committee for El Paso Strong to assist those who have been hurt in the shooting," she said. "I will always serve my community in El Paso."

## Pilon *Continued from Page 1*

Pilon said he was in "a state of shock and disbelief" when he learned of his selection. "I just don't expect any kind of reward or something like that for doing my job," said Pilon, who has been with Blackstone since 2011. "And that's all I do is my job, or so I've been told."

Pilon said he enjoys the interaction with officers in the field, especially the patrol guys. He has been a Field Supervisor since 2016.

"We have a very tight crew at night," he said. That and the leadership of Ken Vandiver and John Watson, it makes the job worth doing."

Pilon said he also likes the hands-on approach of upper management.

"Dan (CEO Dan Swindall) seems to get involved in a way you don't see in larger companies and it's nice to see the interaction and involvement from that level," he commented. "From what I've seen and heard they are very hands on. Dan, John, Ken and even Jeanne (executive VP Jeanne Croft and Mitzi (human resources manager Mitzi Hagan)."

The 38-year-old Arizona native attended Mountain Ridge and Goldwater high schools. He has three children, Lauren 8, Lucas 13 and Sabrina, 17.

*"I failed my way to success."*

Thomas Edison



## El Paso Strong

*Continued from Page 3*

seemed to grow as underlying anxiety kept many homebound. I live just two minutes away from the Walmart, and it was very surreal to think everything I was seeing on the news was happening just moments away. I or my family could've very easily been shopping at Walmart on that day. It was a quick and somewhat chilling reality check that we weren't prepared for. El Paso is a proud city that isn't afraid to share its culture and welcoming nature. Although this event was shattering to the community it has made us more aware and stronger as a unified front. We really are El Paso Strong and proud of it!

*"El Paso is a proud city that isn't afraid to share its culture and welcoming nature. Although this event was shattering to the community it has made us more aware and stronger as a unified front. We really are El Paso Strong and proud of it!"*

**Connie Contreras, Acct. Mgr.** - "On August 3, 2019 I was home, when I received a call from my friend from high school to go to the store with her. My response was, no thank you. I received a group text from my son at 11:26 am saying, do not go to Walmart, a shooting just happened. I did not know what was going on, I kind of got upset, like what, I'm the mom, why am I receiving orders from my son, who does he think he is? Then I started to receive texts on my phone from my health promoters' classmates, then my niece was putting things on Facebook. I called my friend to see if she was home, and no answer. Then she texted us on the health promoter group to inform us that she was at Walmart where everything was going on. It got me thinking I could have been there if I had told her yes come for me. Now after all this I'm planning to get my concealed carry license. I think that if someone had a gun, they could get him down and save so many innocent people, and little kids. It gets me super mad! Now what? He's in jail being protected from the other inmates and they're watching him, so he doesn't commit suicide? That's not right. He is going to claim that he is not right in his mind, that his inside voices told him to do it. All this gets me so mad! Innocent people need to have someone defend them, and only the ones that commit the crimes are the ones that become the victims. One time a lawyer told me we don't defend the victims we only defend the bad people that's how we get our reputation! Sorry if I sound bad but these are my feelings."

*"Now after all this I'm planning to get my concealed carry license. I think that if someone had a gun, they could get him down and save so many innocent people, and little kids. It gets me super mad! Now what?"*

**David Garcia, Recruiter & HR Mgr.** - "On the morning of August 3, my son had a football team photo shoot at a park in the downtown area of El Paso at 8 am. This was also the annual game between the Cathedral High School football team and their fathers which followed with a picnic with family members. My wife joined my son and me shortly after the game. My wife informed me that on her way to the park that she noticed several police vehicles rushing away from the downtown area heading west on I-10. During the picnic, everyone who had a cellphone began receiving alerts regarding an active shooter situation at Walmart which was only 10 minutes away from our location. Since my wife and I are veterans, we switched to our military training and began searching for information. Due to little information regarding the number of suspects, the intentional targets and if they were apprehended, we decided to leave and head home quickly. As I drove home, I was vigilantly scanning my surroundings and noting anything out of the ordinary to ensure the safety of my family. Once we arrived home, I turned on the news which turned this wonderful family morning to a shocking and sad day. As my wife and I watched the news, we knew that we were very fortunate due the fact that my wife is usually at the Cielo Vista Mall on Saturdays which is next to Walmart. We stayed home for the rest of that day and I escorted my wife on Sunday to do our weekly shopping. This event has shaken the El Paso Community, but we have come together to be El Paso Strong!"

*"Once we arrived home, I turned on the news which turned this wonderful family morning to a shocking and sad day."*

*"This event has shaken the El Paso Community, but we have come together to be El Paso Strong!"*

**Raquel Deal, Sales Mgr.** - "Nothing has been the same. With that number of people being hurt, it has impacted everyone. I went to a Target store a few days later and it was like a library. It was so quiet, it was eerie. It was nice there was a police officer at the door,

*"I went to a Target store a few days later and it was like a library. It was so quiet, it was eerie. It was nice there was a police officer at the door, but you didn't feel safe. Everybody was quiet so they could hear anything that happened, and everyone kept their eyes on the door."*

but you didn't feel safe. Everybody was quiet so they could hear anything that happened, and everyone kept their eyes on the door. El Paso is a very tightknit community. You say hi to someone they say hello back. People are in fear right now. People are scared that something bad is going to happen again.

My heart sank when I heard the news because I had one of my sons at work and I didn't know if he was in the vicinity or not. My mom was going to go to Walmart and fuel up and buy some things she needed but decided to first go visit her sister who had a stroke. I called my mom first. Next I texted Vince that there had been a shooting. The mood around the office is we're affected by it but we're working to support the community. They are looking for our services, so we have to set our fears aside to help them."

Fringe Benefits with Blackstone

♪♪ **Take me out to the ball game** ♪♪



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

### Fourteen Years

Jerry Snyder

### Ten Years

Tareq Ghabam

Joseph Sojack

### Nine Years

Jack Thurston

### Eight Years

Daniel Calderon  
Michelle Chatham

James Pilon

### Six Years

Lawrence George  
Eddie Risley

Andrew Vasquez

### Four Years

Koffi Afanou  
Lana Callen  
Malcolm Carnazza  
Mauro Castro

Michael Edmiston  
Robert Freeman  
Ray Parke

### Three Years

Benito Avelarde  
Anthony Collins  
Caroline Deal

Darnese Lazenby  
Bryon Medina  
Gregory Ratcliff

### Two Years

Haroon Amireey  
Andy Armendariz  
Curtis Bellard  
Betty Jo Garavito  
Sandra Lerma

Richard Martinez  
Michael Pharris  
Raquel Regalado  
Chris Rose

### One Year

Muqdad Algburi  
Raymundo Bazan  
Jacob Beard  
Ken Bartelt  
Abigail Bustamante  
Manuel Caperon  
Steven Castillo  
Mercedes Chapman  
LinQuendolyn Clebourn  
Ryan Dixon  
Benjamin Fontenot  
Jose Garduno  
Manny Hernandez  
Jeremy Jemela  
Velsa King  
Donald Larimer

Luis Lopez  
Ian Nish  
Maria Orozco  
Deven Owens  
Claudia Parra  
Rashon Pina Peterson  
Jose Ponce  
Samantha Ponce  
Juan Prieto  
Edward Sanchez  
Kristhian Santamaria  
Warren Santos  
Anthony Taylor  
Hernold Terrazas  
Eduardo Torres  
Lukas Valdez

## Tucson

*Continued from Page 4*

No arrests have been made. The site has been cancelled.

Three years ago, in Phoenix, Blackstone guard Michael Randall was shot and killed by an unknown assailant while on late night duty at a construction site. That crime is also unsolved.

Blackstone Quality Assurance Manager Bobby Holley said Papp should be praised not only for the actions he took, but also for the clarity and conciseness of his SIR. He said such detailed reports can be of great use in prosecuting perpetrators.

“While such instances are rare, they do happen,” said Holley, himself a retired US Army Military Police Investigator. “Dan Papp’s military and security training served him well and he took the correct actions in view of the situation. It is a reminder to us all, though, to be careful out there.”

*“The pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity.  
The optimist sees opportunity in every difficulty.”*

Winston Churchill

*“All progress takes place outside the comfort zone.”*

Michael John Bobak

## Louisiana Dreaming

### Blackstone Seeks Louisiana Licensing

**Phoenix** –Blackstone President & CEO Dan Swindall is awaiting word on his application for a business license from the state of Louisiana. Meanwhile, here is some fun trivia that should introduce us to that state’s proud pedigree.

- The region was originally named “La Louisianne” in 1682 by European explorer Robert Cavalier Sieur de La Salle in honor of Louis XIV of France.

- Residents of Louisiana are called Louisianians or Louisianans.

- The official nickname is the “Pelican State” although “Bayou state” and “Sportsman’s Paradise” have also been used. It’s called the Pelican State because of the abundance of Brown Pelicans that populate its coastline.

- The state bird is, you guessed it, the Brown Pelican.

- The state motto is, “Union, Justice, Confidence”.

- Louisiana became the 18th state on April 30, 1812. The Louisiana black bear was dubbed the state’s “official mammal” in 1992, the same year the US Fish and Wildlife Service listed it as threatened.

- The green tree frog is the Louisiana state “official amphibian”.

- The official drink is not a mint julep, nor bourbon or beer – it’s moo juice, milk!

Now you know the rest of the story.

## Blackstone Security is a Proud Member of:

