

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**9/16/07****VA NY Harbor Healthcare System New York Campus; not just for veterans**by Raymond P. Aalbue
Public Affairs Officer

BROOKLYN, NY --- It was a Sunday morning, just like any other Sunday morning in May in New York City. It was too early for the traffic to be backing up and delivery trucks were easily making their way on their appointed rounds along 23rd Street. Everything changed at approximately 7:55 am on that Sunday morning when a vehicle turned into the VA Emergency Department Ambulance Entrance.

A woman jumped out of the car shouting “HELP US, HELP US!” VA Police Officer Willie Lugo sprang into action and ran to the car. He was shocked at what he saw. There was a young woman in the back seat with a newborn baby in her lap. Lugo said the sight, “brought back a lot of memories.” Lugo spent 20 years on the NYPD and has experience in these matters. He delivered a baby while in the 67th Precinct in East Flatbush, Brooklyn. “It was an awesome experience at that time, and this was just as awesome,” he said.

Nature has its own timetable. In this case it was time for this baby to be born, and she didn’t really care what hospital she was in. That’s right, it was a girl.

Officer Lugo attended to the mother and her new daughter while Officers Richard Heyward and Robert Hernandez proceeded into the Emergency Department for assistance. Deromeo Lee (AOD) and Angela Cooper MSW responded to their call with a gurney and began attending to the mother and new born. “I never experienced anything like that,” said Lee. “It was very exciting.”

Officer Miguel Olivera also joined the party and the police officers gently lifted mom and baby onto the gurney.

Once in the ER the medical officer on duty Dr. Bart Muhs and his nursing staff members Carmen Valdez and Ophelia Ibalio assessed the baby and completed the delivery. Dr. Muhs said, “It was very unexpected and we all rose to the occasion. Both mother and baby were in good hands.”

An ambulance from NY City’s Emergency Medical Service arrived shortly thereafter and transferred the happy (relieved) family to Bellevue Hospital labor and delivery. Officer Hernandez has checked on the family since that day and said they are all doing well.

When the little girl grows up she will be able to say when she came into this world, she got the “best care, anywhere” at the VA NY Harbor Healthcare System.



The new Obstetrics team of the VA NY Harbor HCS NY campus give a thumbs up for a job well done: VA Police Officer Robert Hernandez; Carmen Valdez, RN; Angela Cooper, Social Worker; Ophelia Ibalio, RN; Deromeo Lee, AOD; and PO Richard Heyward.