

Milwaukee POLICE Association

Local #21 IUPA



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PRESS RELEASE

February 7, 2019

As I write this message, I fight back tears. Yet again we face the tragedy of another fallen Milwaukee police officer, Matthew Rittner. He is our third officer killed in the line of duty in the last eight months or so. This, as we were still mourning the loss of our beloved officers Chuckie Irvine Jr. and Michael Michalski, both of whom lost their lives last year while honorably and bravely serving their community. Tragedy has struck again and I am stunned. I am sad. I am angry.

I didn't know Matt personally, I wish I had the privilege. I've only seen him around and shared basic pleasantries as we saw each other in passing at work. I have, however, spoken to many officers that worked with him and knew him well. The consistent statement from each and every person that knew him was that he was a fantastic guy, great cop, and one tough United States Marine who had experienced the violence of war via multiple tours in Iraq.

By all accounts, what we had in Matt was a man whose entire adult life was dedicated to the service of his country and the citizens of this community. When I say "service", I mean that in all the jobs that he has had as an adult, he had chosen to pick up a weapon, intentionally place himself in harm's way every single day in the defense of good vs. evil, and was willing to lay his life down for his country and for the citizens of this community. Ultimately, that's what Matt did. He died during the service of his police duty, all in the name of keeping us safe. He didn't do any of these things for the money (nobody gets rich in the military or as a police officer), glory, or notoriety, he did it because he was selfless, a man of honor, a man that was willing to stand up to those willing to do us harm, and a man whose ethos was to protect the innocent, at all costs.

I wanted to say thank you to Matthew Rittner, for without heroes like you, chaos would prevail. Thank you my friend and brother, for your service to our beautiful country and to the good people of this great city. I know I cannot repay you, but I sure can honor you and celebrate you every chance I get. I can make sure that your memory never fades and that you are always appreciated. I will make sure that you are respected for your sacrifice, the ultimate sacrifice.

In the coming days and future, I commit to doing whatever I can as an individual and in my official capacity to ensure that your family has what they need to get through this incredibly tough time. I can guarantee that every Trustee within my organization is also willing to do anything to assist your family in their time of need. We will also be there for our brothers and sisters in blue in their time of need, as they too are hurting and missing you. This is the least we can do for you, for you have done so much for us.

God bless brother. American hero, Matthew Rittner. End of Watch, February 6, 2019.

With my deepest respect,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. C. Lauda', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Shawn C. Lauda

President

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