



**St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office**  
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## **M E M O R A N D U M**

To: Whom It May Concern

From: Captain Maureen Gelston

Date: Friday, February 27, 2026

Reference: Letter of Recommendation for Lieutenant Joseph Chevis- Crime Stoppers Award

I am honored to recommend Lieutenant Joseph Chevis for the Crime Stoppers award. I have known Lieutenant Chevis since he started his career with the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office in 2005, when we were both young deputies beginning our journey as first responders. Lieutenant Chevis and I attended the St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office Regional POST Level 1 Basic Academy together, graduating in December of 2006. Even early on Lieutenant Chevis displayed loyalty, teamwork, and leadership. He would often provide words of encouragement to the other cadets in the academy, and he never left anyone behind. If he noticed someone struggling during physical training, Lieutenant Chevis would circle back to finish the run or other training exercise with them until the last cadet was done. He continues to carry this teamwork mentality with him today.

As a watch commander, Lieutenant Chevis continues to encourage his team to work together and with other members of the sheriff's office to ensure a safe environment for all personnel and the offenders in our care. He is able to connect with people on many different levels; when someone needs a father figure, he takes on that role, he can be direct yet tactful when necessary, and he is gentle and empathetic. He is always professional and maintains his composure during stressful situations. Lieutenant Chevis is an adaptive leader who shows up for his team at all times.

This ability to adapt and maintain control during significant events was evident on October 5, 2025, when it was discovered that an offender housed at NCCC had tied his sheet around his neck and to the metal bunk in his cell in an attempt to commit suicide. Within seconds of the radio call for assistance, Lieutenant Chevis and his team arrived on the dorm and entered the cell. While Deputies Jared Clark, Jose Martinez, and Forest Whitney held the offender's body up to relieve the pressure from the sheet around his

neck, Lieutenant Chevis cut the sheet away from the bunk. The deputies were then able to immediately secure the offender on the ground. This is when Lieutenant Chevis transitioned from rescue to mode to incident commander. He gave orders to personnel that ensured his team's safety and the safety of the offender attempting self-harm. After the incident, he spoke with the deputies involved to confirm they were okay, as some of them were new to law enforcement and had not experienced an event such as this. The lieutenant also praised the shift for their teamwork during their next roll call briefing and offered assistance and guidance for those who may need it.

Lieutenant Chevis again displayed his leadership skills and ability to maintain care, custody, and control during another recent incident at the correctional facility. On January 23, 2026, an offender housed in an open-style dormitory jumped from the second floor balcony, landing on the dayroom floor. Lieutenant Chevis and multiple personnel responded to the incident. Upon ensuring other personnel were providing medical aid and the scene was safe, Lieutenant Chevis made sure the facility's medical staff were aware of the situation and he relocated to his office to review video footage of the incident. This provided personnel with valuable, factual information regarding how the offender came to be lying on the floor (self-harm attempt, a slip and fall, pushed, etc.) and whether or not the offender may have sustained a possible head injury when he landed. The lieutenant also formulated a plan to remove the remaining offenders from the dorm in which this incident occurred and assigned a team to relocate those offenders. After the injured offender was transported to the hospital, Lieutenant Chevis worked with other members of the NCCC team to relocate the dorm offenders back to their housing assignment. He and other members of the security and medical staff later spoke to the offenders who witnessed the incident to ensure they were okay and offer counseling services. The lieutenant expressed compassion and concern during this conversation. He did the same with the personnel that responded and praised his team. He told me the deputy who radioed for assistance as soon as the offender jumped did an excellent job because he heard a loud noise and immediately looked in the dorms for anything unusual. Lieutenant Chevis was not bragging about what he taught his team; he was genuinely proud of them and wanted to make sure others knew they deserve praise for their actions and quick thinking.

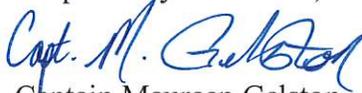
This is the type of leader Lieutenant Chevis is. He never seeks credit for what he did in any given situation. Instead, he wants to recognize others for their actions. He supports everyone. He offers guidance and care, not just in a supervisory/law enforcement role, but also as a trusted friend and mentor. When asking other deputies how they would describe the lieutenant, the common qualities that emerged were his great leadership and that he genuinely cares about others.

Corrections personnel are not what people think about when referring to law enforcement or first responders. We are the quiet professionals who often prefer not to be recognized for our contributions to the community. We are "hidden behind the wall" and do the work most people in society do not want to think about. We come to work daily knowing we are outnumbered and facing people who may see us as the enemy because their freedom has been restricted. We are the gate keepers between those who break the

law and polite society. Lieutenant Chevis has found a way to balance authority with compassion. He is not only well-respected by his fellow law enforcement officers, but also by the offender population at NCCC. Lieutenant Chevis is often able to de-escalate situations or gain compliance from offenders due to the respect they have for him. He is an excellent leader, supervisor, and role model for the younger generation of law enforcement officers. I am proud to have him represent his team and our agency as a nominee for the Crime Stoppers award. Even though he will probably say he does not deserve any special recognition, I believe it is time for Lieutenant Chevis to step from “behind the wall” and be acknowledged for his contributions to not only law enforcement, but the profession of corrections as a whole.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Respectfully Submitted,



Captain Maureen Gelston  
Assistant Warden, NCCC  
St. Charles Parish Sheriff's Office