



Outstanding First Responder Nomination Summary

Nominee: Ranger Gary Phillips

Nominator: Major Corey Lain

Ranger Gary Phillips serves in Company "F" of the Texas Ranger Division stationed in Georgetown, Texas, Williamson County. Ranger Phillips stands head and shoulders above even the most driven, intelligent, and physically prepared first responders. He has aligned his professional work ethic and personal goals to the highest standards, accepting no less than the utmost in his service to and protection of the State of Texas and its citizens. I think Ranger Gary Phillips would be the ideal candidate to be the recipient of the Outstanding First Responder award.

Ranger Gary Phillips joined the Texas Department of Public Safety in 1999 and joined the Texas Ranger Division ranks in 2009. In that time, Ranger Phillips has proven himself to be an exceptional member of the Texas Ranger Division in the Texas Department of Public Safety. His work ethic, investigative talents, and his keen abilities in dealing with nearly every type of person allow him to provide exceptional assistance to his fellow Rangers as well as the agencies he assists. His advanced investigative talents and the lengths he goes to that are often above and beyond what is expected have directly resulted in the capture of an untold number of criminals and resolutions for victims seeking justice. Local agencies frequently express their appreciation for Ranger Phillips' leadership, the training he provides, and investigative assistance. Anyone who has spent time with Ranger Phillips is aware that he sets very high standards for himself, consistently striving for excellence in everything he does. His drive to assist others is beyond compare, and he never hesitates to help his local agencies, fellow Rangers, and DPS employees.

As a veteran Ranger in Company "F", Ranger Phillips has led or served in a leadership role in numerous complex and often high-profile situations. Some of these high-profile incidents include the 2016 Twin Peaks Outlaw Motorcycle Gang Shooting in Waco, Sutherland Springs Church Shooting in 2017, the Austin Bomber in 2018, and the Austin Riots of 2020. In each of these incidents, Phillips played a pivotal leadership role in the investigation that resulted in the voluntary commendation of those organizations or people he assisted. Phillips' decisive involvement in high profile situations and special operations is work done in addition to the volume of "routine" Ranger work he

conducts that include investigations of murders, missing persons, officer-involved shootings, public corruption investigations, and frequent specialized protection missions along the U.S. / Mexico Border to name a few examples.

Ranger Phillips' drive is further evidenced by the impressive list of titles and certifications he has achieved just in the past several years.

- Firearms Instructor
- Graduate of the Cooper Fitness Institute
- Team Leader for the Region 6 Special Response Team
- Arrest and Control Tactics Instructor
- Arrest and Control Tactics Committee Member
- Officer-Involved Shooting Working Group Member
- Certified Use of Force Expert through Force Science Institute
- Tactical Tracking Instructor
- Less Lethal Instructor
- SIG Sauer P320 Armorer

Ranger Phillips' lead-by-example mentality and adherence to always striving to achieve the next level of excellence includes focusing on his health and peers' health. Phillips is proactive in promoting a healthy and active lifestyle. In 2018, he was instrumental in initiating and developing the bi-annual physical fitness challenges for Company "F" Rangers, now in its third year. By creating exciting and competitive workout challenges, he drastically improved his fellow Rangers' overall fitness ability by increasing their fitness level by over 20% in the first year. This idea of a fitness challenge led to Phillips' development of the "*Guffey Fitness Challenge*" in 2020. The challenge is in honor of Ranger Stan Guffey, who died in the line of duty in 1987 in his unselfish sacrifice to save the life of a kidnapped child who, because of Guffey's bravery, was rescued unharmed. After seeing the program's successful impact, Texas Ranger Chief Chance Collins opened The *Guffey Challenge* to the entire Ranger Division to participate, including the Ranger Special Operations Group. Ranger Phillips' drive for excellence and fitness is directly responsible for over 200 Ranger Division personnel's overall fitness improvement.

In 2019, Ranger Phillips was selected to represent the Ranger Division at a recognition retreat for military and first responders held at a Central Texas ranch. Ranger Phillips met with former military personnel, other first responders, National Rodeo participants, and members from the Nation Finals Rodeo (NFR) executive leadership. While there, Ranger Phillips gave firearms demonstrations and gave a presentation about Rangers and Ranger history. The attendees were so impressed with Ranger Phillips, and they featured him in an NFR promotional video. The NFR then invited approximately 20 Rangers to be honored in their tribute to first responders during the National Finals Rodeo opening ceremonies in Arlington in December. The Rodeo played the NFR

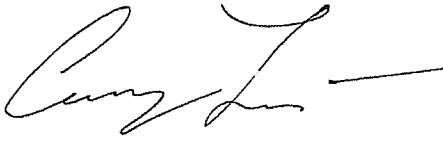
promotional video featuring Phillips' interview while Rangers appeared on the Rodeo's center stage. This event's positive impact on the public about first responders is beyond measure. It all came about because Ranger Phillips' expert knowledge of Ranger work, his personability, and liaison abilities highlighted the importance of a first responder's work.

As the *Team Leader*, Ranger Gary Phillips exemplifies leadership in his selfless commitment to the Region 6 Special Response Team (SRT). For years, Ranger Phillips has dedicated himself to becoming a better operator through physical conditioning, technical know-how, and honing his tactical skills. However, this is not merely self-improvement. As the Team Leader for SRT 6, Ranger Phillips continues his lead-by-example philosophy by continually pushing himself and encouraging his team to be and do their best.

As he has done with his Ranger peers, Ranger Phillips prioritizes physical fitness for the SRT team. He understands the benefits physical conditioning can provide both physically and mentally; he does this with positive reinforcement and beneficial incentives. Whether it is a team event or a physically demanding game, Ranger Phillips finds a way to incorporate physical fitness into the team's schedule. Ranger Phillips also seeks out relevant and challenging training to continue to hone the team's skills and help serve the mission. He is dedicated to mastering skills, not merely learning new ones. For example, after a grueling weeklong Close Quarters Battle course in October, Ranger Phillips scheduled the next three months' of training to master the skills he learned in training. Many team leaders would have been tempted to push on to the "next thing," not Ranger Phillips. During 2020 and early 2021, the nation was confronted by civil unrest and protests, and SRT 6 saw its share. Ranger Phillips continued to assess the team's equipment and needs to address these challenging situations. He selected additional less-lethal munitions and equipment to combat arsons, which are common during these types of violent protests. Phillips's ability to apply his experience, insight, and dedication makes him a highly valued member and leader within the Ranger Division and the Special Operations Team.

Ranger Phillips' outstanding leadership, work ethic, and dedication to improving himself and others bring unequalled credit to himself, the Texas Ranger Division, and the Department of Public Safety. Ranger Phillips sets the standard both on and off-duty that fellow Rangers, and other first responders, should model themselves after. His constant attention to perfecting the profession of serving and protecting others has saved countless lives and has made the State of Texas a safer place for all. Therefore, it is my honor to nominate Ranger Gary Phillips to receive the Outstanding First Responder Award to recognize his exemplary work as an Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer and an Outstanding Team Leader.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Corey Lain", followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Corey Lain, Major
Company "F"
Texas Rangers