

## **South Carolina Highway Patrol Valor Award**

### **Cpl. Q.M. Brown**

All trooper trainees who attend the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy are taught that there is no such thing as a routine traffic stop. They attend hours of officer survival lectures that specifically address the proper response to an armed engagement. But for any troopers for whom the message may have become stale, this point was reinforced on a quiet Sunday afternoon in Orangeburg County, South Carolina.

On May 4, 2008, Corporal Q. M. Brown initiated the traffic stop on a vehicle with an out-of-state license plate. The driver of the vehicle pulled over in the parking lot of a nearby gas station. As Corporal Brown approached, he saw what he believed to be marijuana on front seat of the vehicle.

Corporal Brown searched and detained the driver, and was in the process of handcuffing the front seat passenger when the rear seat passenger pulled out a gun and began firing from within the vehicle. Corporal Brown reacted quickly, immediately returning fire and creating distance between himself and the shooter. The shooter fired at least eight shots before climbing out of the vehicle and fleeing into nearby woods.

Corporal Brown was struck twice in his bullet-proof vest and once in his forearm before seeking cover in the gas station. Once inside the gas station, he asked for someone to call 911, and then ensured that customers inside the store had not been harmed. After a witness rendered first aid, Corporal Brown went back outside and secured the area until back-up arrived.

The extensive training Corporal Brown received, both in the U. S. Army and at the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy allowed him to remain calm while under heavy gun fire. Maintaining his composure even after being shot multiple times, Corporal Brown put the safety of the public before of his own.

Corporal Brown has been with the South Carolina Highway Patrol since January 2000. Prior to joining the Highway Patrol, he served five years in the U. S. Army.