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Prez carries fallen PA cop's badge of honor

By ED ROBINSON
and KIERAN CROWLEY

President Bush said last night the shield of a fallen Port Authority police officer will forever remind him of the tragedy at the World Trade Center.

Bush told a joint session of Congress he will always carry the badge of Officer George Howard, 44, that was given to him by the officer's grieving mother, Arlene.

"Each of us will remember what happened that day and to whom it happened," Bush said as he held the badge in his hand for the TV audience to see.

"We will remember the moment the news came, where we were and what we were doing," Bush said.

"Some will remember an image of a fire or story or rescue. Some will carry memories of a face and a voice gone forever. And I will carry this," the president said.

"It is my reminder of lives that ended and a task that does not end."

Bush was given the shield last week when he toured the World Trade Center rubble.

"I've gotten so many calls about how great my son was, from people whose lives he saved in fires and accidents," Arlene Howard said.

George Howard was buried Wednesday in his hometown of Hicksville, L.I.

A 16-year Port Authority veteran, he was assigned to the department's Emergency Services Unit at Kennedy Airport. Though he was off duty when the attack occurred, he rushed into the building to help save lives, said his partner Pete Johnson.

"He saved a lot of people. He got an elevator full of kids out," said Johnson, who was among those Howard rescued.

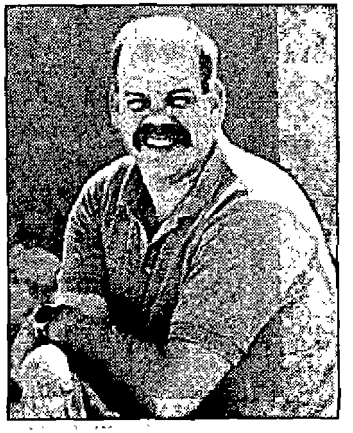
In the chaos, an officer who drove to the towers with Howard managed to escape when the blast pushed him to safety — "he got blown in a doorway," Johnson said.

"But it was like an avalanche, and George got buried."

Howard also was at the World Trade Center during the 1993 bombing. After that attack, Howard was worried a worse fate could someday befall the Twin Towers.

"George had thought that someone could ram a plane into the building," Johnson said. "He called engineers, and they said it could withstand a hit from a 707.

"They never anticipated that it would be hit by a 767."



GEORGE HOWARD
Hero cop tried to save others.

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