



South Carolina Department of Public Safety

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NIKKI R. HALEY
GOVERNOR

LEROY SMITH
DIRECTOR

September 17, 2015

Lance Corporal David A. Klimek
8 Ellore Way
Bluffton, South Carolina 29910

Dear L/Cpl. Klimek:

I have received notification of a mother's extremely appreciative words and action following the assistance she received from you after her vehicle became disabled on Highway 170.

This mother was glad to have you come to her aide. In fact, she continues to show gratitude by sharing her story wherever she can because you took such extra care with her situation, and especially that of her autistic son, as they waited for roadside assistance during one of South Carolina's infamously hot days. Not only was their situation precariously dangerous waiting off the side of a busy highway, but her son had not been feeling well that day and due to his special needs, the situation was becoming more than he could handle. Placing them in your air-conditioned vehicle, and giving the young man something else to focus on, was graciously brilliant. Without a doubt, your alertness to the situation at hand calmed everyone and made the difficult experience more tolerable, and even enjoyable, for her and especially her son. I have also received a copy of the picture taken of you with her son wearing your hat and badge – simply priceless.

Your response in this situation could not have been more perfect. You have left an indelible positive impression on this family. Job well done! We are so proud to have you on TEAM DPS.

Sincerely,

Leroy Smith
Director

LS/bb

C: Governor Nikki Haley
Colonel Michael Oliver
LTC Christopher Williamson
Major Melvin Warren
Captain J.T. Manley
Ms. Sherri Iacobelli



SOUTH CAROLINA HIGHWAY PATROL



STATE TRANSPORT POLICE



BUREAU OF PROTECTIVE SERVICES



IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT UNIT



Internationally Accredited Law Enforcement Agency



Mom to Trooper: 'Thanks for helping calm my autistic son'

Posted: Sep 15, 2015 3:01 PM EDT
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OKATIE, S.C. (WCIV) — When a mother and her autistic son were stranded on the side of Highway 170 with their disabled SUV, it was a South Carolina Highway Patrol Trooper who came to their rescue.

In a letter to the Highway Patrol, the woman described a Trooper who went above the call of duty to help her and her son stay safe and cool.

The woman says in the thank you letter to State Troopers that her son Jeriah is autistic and just wanted to make it home because he had been sick earlier in the day.

However, their SUV broke down while traveling on Highway 170 near Okatie, stranding them on a busy roadway. She said to make matters worse, not only was the SUV stuck in the roadway, the outside temperature was over 90 degrees.

"If any of you know Highway 170, it can be extremely dangerous when it's time for people to go to work or when they are getting off from work," she wrote. "My son was sitting in the seat nearest the highway and getting very antsy."

The mother called for roadside assistance, who forwarded the call to 911 since she was in a dangerous situation. Ten minutes later, Trooper L/Cpl. Adam Klimek of Troop Six arrived.

"To my son, he was just Officer Adam," she wrote. "After talking and laughing together for about 20 minutes he invited my son and I to get inside his SUV so that we could cool off."

She said Klimek also recognized her son's autism and pulled out a computer so Jeriah could watch *Curious George* in the air conditioned Trooper's SUV while they waited for the tow truck.

"This worked perfectly because it helped him focus on something else. My son was very happy and of course this was an experience that we will never forget," she said.

Klimek took the mother and son to a safe area once the tow truck arrived, and the woman asked Klimek for a photo with her son. But Klimek went just a bit further, giving Jeriah his hat and a badge.

"He also told him that he was officially a patrolman and to make sure that everyone in the car always buckle their seat belt. My son had a grin on his face about that," she wrote.

"As a mother of children with special needs it is very difficult to get the world to understand what we deal with from day to day. This was a very positive experience that I'd like to share."

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