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Brandt Jean Receives 2019 Ethical Courage Award from ILEA
Jean recognized for showing forgiveness, compassion at sentencing hearing for the Dallas police officer who killed his brother, Botham Jean.

(Dec. 3, 2019—Plano, TX) – The Institute for Law Enforcement Administration (ILEA) presented its 2019 Ethical Courage Award to 18-year-old Brandt Jean for his display of empathy and forgiveness during the sentencing of Dallas police officer Amber Guyger on Oct. 2, 2019. Guyger was convicted of murder for the death of 26-year-old Botham Jean after she mistakenly entered his apartment thinking it was her own.

“Each year, we present the Ethical Courage Award to recognize an individual or organization for outstanding ethics and integrity,” said Gregory Smith, M.A., Director of ILEA. “Brandt Jean represents the best in us. Despite an unimaginable loss, he saw the humanity in the person responsible for his brother’s death. He saw her pain and regret, and had the ability to show empathy, caring and forgiveness.”

During the sentencing hearing, Jean addressed Guyger, saying that he forgave her and didn’t wish anything bad for her. Then he asked Judge Tammy Kemp if he could give Guyger a hug, which the judge granted, resulting in a long, emotional embrace.

“I can’t think of an act that was more courageous,” said Smith. “That one act did much to help the Dallas community heal.”

At the award ceremony, Jean was joined by his mother, father, and sister who traveled from their home in St. Lucia. The award ceremony took place during ILEA’s Contemporary Issues and Ethics Conference. About 50 police officials from throughout Texas and surrounding states were on hand for the award ceremony.

“I want to thank the Institute for Law Enforcement Administration for offering me this award and I’m honored to accept it on behalf of my brother, Botham Jean, who was an example of ethical leadership,” said Jean.

ILEA provides top-quality, academically based courses, seminars and workshops to prepare law enforcement officials for today’s challenging management and ethical issues. ILEA is a division of The Center for American and International Law, a non-profit educational organization that works to improve the quality of justice throughout the U.S. and the world.

“I am well aware that this agency is responsible for the training of officers in leadership positions around the country. I’ve come to believe that it was a lack of training and poor utilization of proper techniques at the opportune time that caused Amber Guyger to murder my brother. That is the reason that I stand before you today,” said Brandt Jean in accepting the award. His speech was received by applause and a standing ovation.

Following the speech, ILEA Director Smith said, “Brandt, I see the values instilled in you by your parents. I see the strength given to you by your faith. If the rest of us could tap into just a slice of your moral courage and principles that you displayed in that moment, this world would be a better place.”

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