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## Three DHS Officials Named Finalists for 2016 Service to America Medals

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WASHINGTON – Three employees at the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) have been named finalists for the 2016 Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals, known as the Sammys: Tate Jarrow, U.S. Secret Service; Mariela Melero, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS); and Ajay Bhatt, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

“Congratulations to Tate Jarrow, Mariela Melero and Ajay Bhatt on being named finalists for the 2016 Sammys,” said Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson. “Their achievements are a testament to the extraordinary work performed by the men and women of DHS each and every day.”

The Partnership for Public Service will announce this year’s winners in the fall and select one winner in each category: Federal Employee of the Year, Career Achievement, Call to Service, Citizen Services, Homeland Security and Law Enforcement, Management Excellence, National Security and International Affairs, and Science and Environment.

**Tate Jarrow**, a Secret Service special agent, is a Call to Service finalist. After more than 100 million people had their personal information compromised in a cyberattack, Jarrow worked with the FBI to identify those responsible and trace their footprints through cyberspace. His investigation and the evidence collected were critical to recent indictments made in relation to the case. Reflecting on his job, Jarrow said, “cyber criminals are victimizing millions of people and stealing hundreds of millions of dollars, and everybody is paying for that... It is important to hold these people accountable.”

**Mariela Melero**, associate director for Customer Service and Public Engagement at USCIS, was named a Citizen Services finalist. She led a team tasked with streamlining the process for those seeking information on immigration to the United States. “I came to this country with my parents as a refugee,” Melero said. “It is both an honor and a privilege to be able to help others navigate our immigration system.” Her efforts resulted in myUSCIS, a site for users to access information online and prepare for naturalization. Since its launch, the number of users has grown exponentially and in 2015 alone, myUSCIS welcomed more than 1.8 million visits.

**Ajay Bhatt**, associate legal advisor at ICE, is a Homeland Security and Law Enforcement finalist. Calling upon a decade of experience as an ICE attorney, Bhatt played an instrumental role in the execution of Operation No Safe Haven, which culminated in the arrest of more than 70 fugitives and human rights violators in cities across the country from Boston to San Francisco. “Hopefully, by denying safe haven to human rights abusers, Americans can see that we have due process in the United States and we believe in human rights,” he said.

As finalists for the 2016 Sammys, Tate Jarrow, Mariela Melero and Ajay Bhatt will represent the DHS workforce at a black-tie gala early this fall, where they will be honored for their excellence among federal employees. To learn more about this year’s finalists, visit the Sammys website at [servicetoamericamedals.org](http://servicetoamericamedals.org).

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