

Rico Woods (1950-2008)



Retired sergeant Relis "Rico" Woods, an NCAUSBCA member, died Sunday, August 17. He retired from the Park Police in February 2006 as a sergeant in the Training Branch.

Rico was born on September 2, 1950, in Carrollton, Mississippi to Walter and Emma Woods. After graduating high school, he joined the Army and served as a medic in Korea. After being honorably discharged from the military, he went on to graduate with honors from George Mason University with a degree in criminology.

On February 20, 1979, Rico was hired by the United States Park Police and began his career. He served as a patrol officer throughout the National Capital Region. Rico was also detailed to Miami, Florida for the Cuban flotilla detail.

Rico began his career as a trainer while still a patrol officer when he acquired instructor certificates for PR-24 and STARS, which was soon followed by scooter instructor. In 1987, he became a permanent instructor assigned to the Training Branch. Rico also assisted the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center as a guest instructor for firearms and driver training.

After a promotion to sergeant in 1992 and a short return to the Patrol Branch, Rico returned to the Training Branch as a firearms/physical skills supervisor and was soon moved over to the administrative side of training as the training sergeant, where he was responsible for the recruit programs in the Washington metropolitan area. He helped establish a field training program for new recruits and was instrumental in its success.

Rico received numerous awards throughout his career, including the combat medal award from the Police Association of D.C., a lifesaving award from the U.S. Park Police, chief's certificates for excellence in police service, and numerous outstanding police service commendations.

Rico's favorite pastime was bowling. Focusing on bowling was symbolic of his way of battling anything he had to overcome, while enjoying the companionship of close friends. After many years in the game, he achieved every bowler's ultimate goal on March 13 this year by rolling a perfect game in the Anchor Mixed Tenpin league at U.S. Bowling.

Rico's memory is cherished by his devoted family, his children, grandchildren, and other family members and friends. His funeral was held August 26 at Mount Olive Baptist Church in Centreville, Virginia.