

A chat with Capitol Police Officer Harry Dunn

by **Alexis Collins**

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NJ Urban News had a brief and powerful interview with Capitol Police Officer Harry Dunn during the annual Awards Gala hosted by the African American Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey (AACCNJ) on February 16th. Officer Dunn and his comrades valiantly defended the U.S. Capitol on January 6, 2021 and upheld the integrity of the 2020 election. He has been honored with numerous accolades and honors, including the Presidential Citizens Medal from President Joe Biden, the Congressional Gold Medal, the Capitol Police Service Medal, the Capitol Police Achievement Medal, and the Concerned Black Men Award, to name a few. At the AACCNJ Awards Gala, the 13-year veteran received the Gus Heningburg. The award is named after Newark, NJ-based community activist and leader Gustav “Gus” Heningburg, whose distinguished and illustrious career encompasses community leadership, civil rights, broadcast journalism, higher education, and public affairs. Officer Dunn took some time to speak with us after accepting his award.

NJ Urban News: “What does receiving the Gus Heningburg Award mean to you?”

Officer Harry Dunn: “I can’t say it enough, especially during Black History Month, with all that Black excellence up on the stage, just the thought that the [African American Chamber of Commerce of New

Jersey] thinks highly enough of me to honor me with that award, it just means a lot to me. I'm truly humbled."

NJ Urban News: "Why did you want to dedicate your life to serving and protecting the community?"

Officer Dunn: "I feel like we owe it to the world, we owe it to society to leave it in a better place than we inherited it; it's just something that's intrinsically in me that I want to help people out, and I wish more people cared about others more than they cared about themselves."

NJ Urban News: "Since the January 6 insurrection at the Capitol, what do you hope changes in the future?"

Officer Dunn: "I hope Donald Trump goes to jail."

NJ Urban News: "What are some things you learned during your service as a Capitol Police Officer and in law enforcement?"

Officer Dunn: "It's not necessarily a certain thing that I've learned, but I've heard different stories from different people, I've interacted with people, I've learned the different types of people that are out there, and everybody has a story, and everybody's story deserves to be heard."

NJ Urban News: "Lastly, what legacy do you want to leave, and what impact do you want to make in the Black community especially?"

Officer Dunn: "If I inspire somebody, I'm honored. I want to continue to lead and live the life that I was raised to live, [which involves] helping people and [performing] community service, and if that inspires somebody, that's fine; if it doesn't, that's fine. At the end of

my life, I'll be able to say, 'I did everything in my power to leave the world a better place.'"