



Law Enforcement Conference Awards Wednesday, October 30, 2013

Distinguished Civilian Leadership Award: Danielle Smoot, Cole's Warriors, Clark County

Danielle Smoot's mission in life changed in February 2011. That's when her 16-year-old son, Cole, died of a methadone overdose — the result of taking one prescription pill, one time. Noticing symptoms of drug ingestion, his parents took him to the emergency room, where he was evaluated and released. A few hours later, they found him dead in his bedroom. Setting aside plans for a nursing career, Mrs. Smoot founded Cole's Warriors. Its impact on Clark County has been huge. Billboards, presentations, teacher training, drug dogs, and voluntary drug testing in schools are just a few of its initiatives. The organization placed four prescription drug disposal containers in the county, a project Prosecutor D. Andrew Wilson credits with saving lives. The group also purchased an incinerator to allow for safe destruction of the drugs.

Distinguished Law Enforcement Lifetime Achievement Award: Chief Rick W. Patterson, Fairfax Police Department

Chief Rick W. Patterson devoted his entire career to protecting the citizens of Hamilton County, Ohio — from his appointment as a police officer for the village of Lockland in 1980 to his retirement in 2013 as chief of the Fairfax Police Department. He served in every capacity possible in his 28 years with the Fairfax department and always put its residents first, whether by establishing an emergency notification system for the community or a college scholarship program for high school graduates. Among many commendations throughout his career, he was recognized by the Ohio House of Representatives for rescuing a man trapped in a submerged vehicle and by Hamilton County groups with awards for police leadership and officer of the year. Chief Patterson served 20 years on the Hamilton County Police Association SWAT team as a sniper, team leader, field commander, and assistant field commander.

Distinguished Law Enforcement Community Service Award: Sergeant Thomas M. Aldrich, Jackson Police Department

Every community needs a public servant as selfless as Sergeant Thomas M. Aldrich of the Jackson Police Department. A full-time officer with the agency for 32 years, a sergeant for 28, and a school resource officer for 14, Sergeant Aldrich is active throughout his hometown. He has held numerous offices within the Jackson County Jaycees, the Jackson County Apple Festival Organization, and the Fraternal Order of Police, serving at the highest levels for each of the groups. His commendations are just as plentiful. They include Ohio School Resource Officer of the Year, Jaycee of the Year, Grange Association Officer of the Year, and community service awards from the Jaycees, Apple Festival Organization, Elks Club, Jackson County Grange, and Senior Citizens' Organization.

Distinguished Law Enforcement Community Service Award, Sergeant Donald E. Barrera, Highland County Sheriff's Office

Respect within the community is widespread for Sergeant Donald E. Barrera of the Highland County Sheriff's Office, and it's easy to see why. On and off the job, he is seen as an individual who is quick to volunteer, offer an encouraging word, and treat others with respect. In addition to his primary nominator, 13 individuals wrote letters of nomination or support for Sergeant Barrera. Sergeant Barrera is active in the Highland County Society for Children and Adults, VFW, Eagles, Rotary Club, and Buckeye State Sheriffs' Association, among other organizations, and frequently can be found working the gates at school events or the Highland County Fair.

Distinguished Law Enforcement Training Award: Deputy David S. Fatheree, Summit County Sheriff's Office

Deputy David S. Fatheree has given more than a decade of service to the Summit County Sheriff's Office Training Bureau. He began his current assignment in 2007 and also logged a stint with the bureau from 2000 to 2005. He also served his department in Corrections, Patrol, the Detective Bureau, and Court Services. Recognized for his ability to develop and present quality programming, Deputy Fatheree ensures that the curricula he teaches meets or exceeds legal standards, requirements, and best practices. He is constantly researching trends and litigation to guarantee the training bureau fulfills his agency's needs. The American Police Hall of Fame singled out Deputy Fatheree for distinguished service and the Akron Optimist Club named him Officer of the Year, both in 2011. The following year, the Summit County Sheriff's Office recognized him as Deputy of the Year. He serves on the Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy's Curriculum Advisory Board, maintains instructor credentials for many basic law enforcement and corrections courses, and teaches at Kent State University, the University of Akron, and Stark State College.

Mark Losey Distinguished Law Enforcement Service Award: Deputy U.S. Marshal Dean G. Michael, U.S. Marshals Service

Deputy U.S. Marshal Dean G. Michael has led the Northern Ohio Violent Fugitive Task Force (NOVFTF) Youngstown Division since 2004. In that time, the task force has cleared nearly 11,000 warrants and arrested more than 7,300 fugitives on charges of homicide, assault, robbery, narcotics, and more. It has seized hundreds of firearms and more than 33 kilos of illegal narcotics. As task force coordinator, Deputy Michael has supervised the team of federal, state, and local law enforcement officers responsible for tracking down and arresting the region's most violent fugitives. The task force grew under his leadership from about 10 officers to more than 80, representing dozens of agencies in the Youngstown area. Deputy Michael coordinates their extensive training regimen, playing an integral role in enhancing the skills of Youngstown area law enforcement officers, and works with the media to increase public awareness of dangerous wanted individuals. He and the task force have been recognized extensively for their accomplishments, expertise, and teamwork.

Distinguished Law Enforcement Group Achievement Award: Career Criminal Unit, Columbus Division of Police

NOTE: PHOTOS/VIDEO ARE NOT PERMITTED DURING THE PRESENTATION OF THIS AWARD.

An investigation by the Columbus Division of Police Career Criminal Unit led to the indictment of 52 individuals for their part in a Florida-to-Ohio prescription drug scheme and the arrest of three men in a fatal shooting on the city's near east side. Focusing initially on a man suspected of numerous illegal activities, the unit discovered the individual and a co-conspirator were sending dozens of associates to Florida pain clinics for prescription drugs to be resold in Franklin County. The ring is accused of funneling more than 94,000 doses of Oxycodone, worth in excess of \$2.8 million, into the Columbus area from 2010 to 2013. While in jail, several members of the drug ring — including the initial suspect — were indicted in an August 2012 fatal shooting as a result of information learned in the investigation. The Career Criminal Unit collaborated in the probe with the Franklin County Prosecutor's Office, the Attorney General's Ohio Organized Crime Investigations Commission, Ohio HIDTA, Tampa (Fla.) Police Department, Hillsborough County (Fla.) Sheriff's Office, and Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

Distinguished Law Enforcement Group Achievement Award: Craigslist Serial Murder Investigation Award winners include representatives from: Akron Police Department, Noble County Sheriff's Office, Noble County Prosecutor's Office, Summit County Prosecutor's Office, Ohio Attorney General's Special Prosecution Section, Ohio Attorney General's Bureau of Criminal Investigation, U.S. Marshals Service, Northern Ohio Violent Fugitive Task Force, Federal Bureau of Investigation

Investigators unraveled what appeared to be an isolated Noble County shooting to discover a premeditated serial killing spree that produced headlines around the world and encompassed witnesses and evidence in numerous jurisdictions. Craigslist ads lured out-of-state job seekers to Ohio in search of farm caretaker work. Instead of finding employment, the men fell victim to the serial murder and robbery plot of Richard Beasley and Brogan Rafferty. Three men were shot and buried in shallow graves. Another was wounded, but survived to share his story with law enforcement. The Noble County Sheriff's Office and FBI coordinated the initial investigation, locating crucial evidence from website companies, restaurant videos, residence and vehicle searches, computer and phone records, and witness interviews. Members of the Northern Ohio Violent Fugitive Task Force and Akron Police Department uncovered vital information on Beasley, his past crimes, and known associates, and the Noble County Prosecutor's Office gained incriminating statements from Rafferty. BCI processed multiple crime scenes, analyzed evidence, searched numerous computers and phones, and provided expert testimony at trial. The connection between the defendants and victims was crucial to the case, requiring BCI's analysis of months of cell phone calls, texts, and tower information and the preparation of intricate charts and diagrams for presentation at trial. BCI also organized volumes of evidence and assisted prosecutors before and during the trials. A prosecutorial team from the Summit County Prosecutor's Office and Ohio Attorney General's Special Prosecutions Section won convictions on all counts. Beasley was sentenced to death for spearheading the killing spree, and Rafferty received life in prison.

***Distinguished Law Enforcement Meritorious Service Award:
Officer Jason W. Huston, Franklin Township Police Department
Officer Terry L. Taylor, Franklin Township Police Department
Officer Robert E. Thomas, Franklin Township Police Department***

More than a dozen residents of a West Broad Street apartment complex relied on the quick thinking and bravery of three Franklin Township police officers the night of Nov. 5, 2012, and it saved their lives. Officers Jason W. Huston, Terry L. Taylor, and Robert E. Thomas were the first responders on the scene of an apartment building fire that trapped several residents on the structure's second and third floors. They headed straight to the third floor, where — confronting thick, gray smoke — they could hear an elderly woman calling, "I can't get out. I can't see how to get out." Using his uniform shirt as a makeshift mask, Officer Huston made his way toward the woman and guided her to safety. The officers then moved to the second floor, which was not yet filled with smoke, and began pounding on apartment doors and helping residents evacuate. Among those they rescued were another elderly woman and a mentally disabled resident. Fire personnel, who rescued residents via ladders, and Deputies David Aurigemma and Theresa Devine of the Franklin County Sheriff's Office also took part in the evacuations. Officers Huston, Taylor, and Thomas were treated for smoke inhalation along with other responders.

Distinguished Law Enforcement Valor Award: Officer Steven D. Davis, Solon Police Department

An OVI enforcement stop evolved into a deadly shootout in Solon the evening of March 17, 2013, and the actions of Officer Steven D. Davis prevented further risk to his community. Officer Davis stopped a driver who made an improper left turn and, in talking with the man, detected the smell of marijuana coming from the vehicle. He called for backup and checked the driver's record, discovering a history of drug and weapons offenses. As Officer Davis and his backup officer approached the vehicle to continue questioning, the man drove off. After a very short pursuit, the driver lost control while turning onto a side street, disabling his vehicle. Before the officers could even stop their cruisers, the man exited his vehicle and began shooting at the officers. A round to Officer Davis' chest hit his bullet-resistant vest and badge, and glass fragments from the windshield struck his hand. When the man turned his attention to the other officer, Patrolman Davis drew his weapon and fired through the windshield, striking and fatally wounding the subject.

Distinguished Law Enforcement Valor Award: Officer Brad A. Ditullio, Youngstown Police Department

The heroic actions of Officer Brad Ditullio of the Youngstown Police Department on Dec. 16, 2012, protected the public from a dangerous turn of events and took a violent repeat offender off the streets. Officer Ditullio was patrolling his beat when he observed a driver commit a traffic violation. He activated his lights and siren and pursued the vehicle, but the driver disregarded the officer. The man began driving through several backyards, creating a significant threat to residents and traffic. Officer Ditullio positioned his cruiser ahead of the subject's vehicle to prevent him from fleeing through the yards. Attempting to evade capture, the driver accelerated toward Officer Ditullio, knocked him to the ground, and began dragging him. Still commanding the driver to stop, the officer fired his weapon, striking the subject and bringing the situation to an end. The driver was charged with felonious assault.

Distinguished Law Enforcement Valor Award: Officer Gregory V. Ivory, Springfield Police Division

A Springfield woman and her friend are safe today thanks to the heroic actions of Officer Gregory V. Ivory, who sustained a gunshot wound to the abdomen in an Aug. 24, 2012, domestic incident. Officer Ivory was dispatched to a Springfield home about 11:20 p.m., arriving four minutes later. A female resident had called 911 and pretended to be talking with her mother in order to report that her estranged husband was at the house and could be armed. The man objected to the presence of the woman's male friend. When the officer arrived, the altercation was taking place on the street ahead of his cruiser. The husband saw the officer and turned to his wife, saying, "This isn't going to go well." He then turned toward the officer and began firing. Officer Ivory returned fire, striking the man, who fled on foot. Officer Ivory called dispatch and calmly summed up the situation, asking for medics because he and possibly the subject had been shot. When backup arrived, fellow officers found Officer Ivory checking on the woman and her friend. They located her husband in some bushes nearby and arranged for his transport to the hospital, where he died from his wounds. Officer Ivory was awarded the Police Star for saving the lives of citizens while sustaining physical harm and the Purple Heart for sustaining serious injury in the line of duty.