



2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Awards Recipients

Public Service

The following recipients of the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Public Service have taken the initiative to create or participate in a program or system, which has a significant positive impact on the general population of a community, exceeding the normal expectations of job performance.

The following award goes to **Police Chief Jeremy Massey** of the **Reno Police Department** for his creation of the Reno PD Special Heroes Unit to support local children in his community fighting their own heroic battles.

For years, Reno Police Chief Jeremy Massey has gone above and beyond for children in his community. In 2018, Chief Massey named a little girl who was terminally ill as an Honorary Sergeant of the Reno Police Department in support of the battle she was fighting.

In 2022, Chief Massey created the Reno PD Special Heroes Unit to support local children fighting life-threatening medical conditions. In the Reno PD Special Heroes Unit, the children are named as an Honorary Reno PD Sergeant and even given a Special Heroes Unit shirt and badge. Some of the children he has honored in the Special Heroes Unit include 6-year-old Alex Stephens who suffered from an aggressive brain cancer, and 4-year-old Tobias Gonzalez who suffered from Leukemia. A local print shop even designed "Sergeant Alex Stephens" t-shirts to help raise money for Sergeant Alex and his family.

In one instance, Chief Massey drove all the way to a children's hospital in Dallas just to bring a special heroes unit shirt and badge to a terminally ill child who was enduring chemotherapy.

The Reno Special Heroes Unit created by Chief Massey is an incredible show of support for these local families and shows these Honorary Reno Sergeants that not only are they warriors, but also that they are not alone in their fight.

For his tremendous community engagement, compassion, and support he provides his community through the Reno Special Heroes Unit, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present this 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Public Service to Chief Police Jeremy Massey of the Reno Police Department.

The following award goes to **Corporal Joseph Price** of the **Wichita County Sheriff's Office** for his creative approach to helping incarcerated individuals find a productive outlet through art.

In 2022, Corporal Price developed the idea for an art contest called Art in Transition for the inmates of the Wichita County Jail who meet good behavior requirements. Corporal Price helped write the policy for the program and reached out to the Arts Council of Wichita Falls for donations of supplies to get the program started. He tracks enrollment into the contest and screens all requests to participate for eligibility, collects the entries, and selects the judges. Once the winners are chosen, he coordinates the prize of a pizza and movie night for the top five scored drawings. The first contest had over 100 entries under the theme "Winter Holidays," and future contests are expected to grow.

This contest not only gives the inmates a fun activity, but creates an opportunity for them to be recognized for something positive while incarcerated. The winning submissions hang in the detention center's main hallway, and are published on the social media sites of the Arts Council of Wichita Falls. Corporal Price's initiative and dedication have expanded the Arts Council's ability to reach their intended audience in the county jail.

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Public Service to Corporal Joseph Price of the Wichita County Sheriff's Office.

The following award goes to **Chief Deputy Joseph "Danny" Maldonado** of the **Tarrant County Constable's Office, Precinct 5**, for his service to at-risk youth as part of the Fort Worth Police Assistance League's boxing program.

Chief Maldonado found boxing as a way to reach children at a young age to establish trust, confidence, respect, and to build a relationship with police that was many times lacking in inner-city communities like the one he serves.

Since 2016, Chief Maldonado has served as a trainer and mentor for the Police Assistance League's Calvert location. On a busy day he coaches about 25 students, and it is estimated that he has reached upwards of 1,000 students over the years.

The boxers usually participate in tournaments at least twice per quarter depending on readiness. Chief Maldonado schedules sparring matches with different boxing clubs to provide real training for the boxers in the PAL program. Recently, his attention, mentorship, and coaching paid off in the form of two female champions that sit at the top of the champion list in the nation. Through this program, Chief Maldonado provides the students with opportunities they might never get on their own.

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Public Service to Chief Deputy Joseph “Danny” Maldonado of the Tarrant County Constable’s Office, Precinct 5.

The following award goes to **Officer Nestor Martinez** of the **Fort Worth Police Department** for continually donating his time and service to the Fort Worth community.

Officer Nestor Martinez serves as President of the Fort Worth Police Department Athletic League and is passionate about serving his community. Officer Martinez has organized multiple fundraisers and drives within his community on top of his regular duties within the department.

To promote the safety of the citizens of Fort Worth, Officer Martinez raised money for the Northside Neighborhood Association to purchase carbon monoxide detectors to pass out to the public at no cost to them.

In addition, Officer Martinez organized a teddy bear drive with the Fort Worth Chapter of the United Lowrider Council. The teddy bear drive helps to build a positive relationship between the organization and the Fort Worth Police Department. The stuffed animals that are raised are distributed to officers to pass out to children while on patrol or when responding to calls, providing a positive influence on the relationships between the officers and citizens, and helping to create trust within the community.

Officer Nestor Martinez is both admired and respected by the community he serves and protects. His participation and support in numerous events such as parades, fundraisers, and festivals in community parks have been commended by city, faith-based, and community leaders alike.

For his tremendous dedication as a public servant in his community, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present this 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Public Service to Officer Nestor Martinez of the Fort Worth Police Department.

The following award goes to **Investigator Kit Corcoran** of the **Houston Arson Bureau**, a subdivision of the Houston Fire Department’s Fire Marshal’s Office, for securing valuable resources and tools for the Houston Arson Bureau, within the agency’s limited budget, to assist the agency with an increase in fire investigation requests.

Investigator Corcoran’s accomplishments and contributions to his agency have enhanced the capabilities of the Fire Investigation Unit within the Houston Arson Bureau allowing the agency to

better investigate and assist in the prosecution of arsonists. At a time when fiscal responsibility is paramount and law enforcement must adhere to a “do more with less” mantra, Investigator Kit Corcoran found ways to fill the gaps that remained, to honor the agency’s commitment to protecting the community.

In 2022, the Houston Arson Division responded to a marked increase in fire investigation requests, putting a strain on the agency’s resources. Investigator Corcoran secured and implemented the use of numerous additional, and economically responsible, investigative tools that are now used by the members of the arson division in their investigations. These investigative tools include community camera surveillance programs and services, a license plate reader system, community communications and outreach services, a wi-fi signal tracking system, access to Harris County mugshots, and an inmate phone call transcription service. Investigator Corcoran established contacts and beneficial investigative resources from national partners such as the National Insurance Crime Bureau and the U.S. Marshal’s Office. Investigator Corcoran also procured new cameras for all the investigators in his division, implemented a new system for case management, and created a shared resources site for all the members of the division to access the division’s investigative notes and tools.

For his resourceful innovation of the Houston Arson Bureau’s fire investigation capabilities, systems, and processes, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present this 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Public Service to Investigator Kit Corcoran of the Houston Arson Bureau’s Fire Investigation Unit.

The following award goes to **Corporal Erica Trevino** of the **Dalhart Police Department** for her service to underserved members of her community.

Corporal Trevino, under the direction of Interim Police Chief Jimmy Johnson, has created several community engagement programming opportunities within the Dalhart Police Department. This type of programming was quite new to the police department, and Corporal Trevino successfully shepherded a network of community partners, including the Dalhart Volunteer Fire Department and City of Dalhart employees, to create a Thanksgiving food drive. The drive resulted in Thanksgiving meals for 125 local families.

In addition to the Thanksgiving food drive, Corporal Trevino created and implemented the Blue Santa program within the Police Department. In Trevino’s experience with children involved in CPS investigations, she found that many were lacking basic necessities in the home. This troubled her for years. Corporal Trevino spent the better part of three months working with local businesses to ask for support, and with the help of a committee within the PD, collected donations and packaged them for the students of Dalhart ISD. The Blue Santa program provided over 400 students with Christmas packages consisting of hygiene items, blankets, and toys.

Finally, as the first Deaf female police officer in Texas, Corporal Trevino lends her time to educating students in the Deaf community about their career options and inspires them to reach for the stars.

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Public Service to Corporal Erica Trevino of the Dalhart Police Department.

The following award goes to **Investigator Richard Baker** of the **Southwest Independent School District Police Department** for his dedication to the Southwest ISD's PROMISE Program.

PROMISE stands for Promise, Recidivism, Opportunities, Mentoring, Interventions, Support, and Education. The program is designed to give first-time offenders aged 10 to 17 a second chance at life for any non-violent offense they may have committed. The program is six weeks long, consisting of communication skills, advice, and mentorship, as well as community service, such as trash clean-up at district campuses. If successful, the first-time offenses are cleared from the students' records. The Promise Program has a 90 percent success rate with participants not offending again. Investigator Baker has routinely demonstrated methodical thinking and self-composure for these students. He has given up his weekends and personal time to mentor juveniles and change lives one day at a time.

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Public Service to Investigator Richard Baker of the Southwest ISD Police Department.

The following award goes to **Chief of Police Dr. Jonathan B. Flores** of the **Alton Police Department** for his service to members of the community with cognitive or communication challenges and their families.

First, Chief Flores implemented a safety sticker program which allows for individuals with a qualifying illness or cognitive disability to register and receive a safety sticker. Their information is entered into the department's computer aided dispatch system to prevent any miscommunication or misunderstanding during a traffic stop with a driver or regular passenger who is Deaf, diabetic, diagnosed with a disease affecting cognitive function such as Alzheimer's disease, etc.

Additionally, Chief Flores implemented the Take Me Home program for his community. Launched in May 2021, the Take Me Home program is designed to assist in the timely reunification of loved ones who may become displaced from their homes. The program can provide law enforcement crucial information about the registered person even before officers arrive at their residence. Individuals with Autism, Dementia, Alzheimer's Disease and Down Syndrome are examples of members of the community who might benefit from this registry. Take Me Home assists law enforcement personnel by providing critical information including emergency contact information, detailed physical descriptions and photographs. An individual's communication abilities, routines, behaviors and other helpful information also may be entered to assist law enforcement in identifying these individuals and reconnecting them with their families.

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Public Service to Chief of Police Dr. Jonathan B. Flores of the Alton Police Department.

The following award goes to **Assistant Chief James “Willie” Richards** of the **Round Rock Police Department** for his inventive community-oriented policing effort called Step N2 Success.

Since 2014, the Round Rock Police Department has hosted a back to school celebration for local students. Leading up to the 2022 event, Assistant Chief Willie Richards had an idea. He came from humble beginnings, and he knows what it’s like to have hand-me-down or ill-fitting clothes on the first day of school. He remembered the joy and confidence he felt putting on a new pair of shoes. If the Department could provide shoes to Round Rock students in need, that could help put those kids on the path towards a successful school year. And so the idea for “Step N2 Success” was born and the hard work of bringing this idea to fruition began. Like all of the Department’s community outreach programs, the goal is to partner with the local business community to sponsor the program and reduce the reliance on taxpayer funding.

Asst. Chief Richards began to reach out to various organizations and foundations. Among the donors was A Plus Federal Credit Union, the Round Rock Police Foundation, and the Round Rock Chamber and its Leadership Round Rock Class of 2022. Shoe vendors agreeing to allow bulk purchases at a discount included Shoe Carnival, Reebok, and Ready to Run. Kalahari Resorts provided the venue for the event and gave each child a water park day pass. The Round Rock Express provided four baseball game tickets to each child. Nearly 200 students attended the inaugural Step N2 Success event on Aug. 14, 2022. Asst. Chief Richards, Chief Allen Banks, and Officers physically escorted each family as they picked out shoes and tried them on. These 200 students will no doubt remember this experience and the feeling of confidence in their new shoes to start off the school year. Hopefully, next time they need help, they will remember their positive interaction with the Officer and not hesitate to reach out. The plan is for Step N2 Success to become an annual event. The goal is to continue to assist these 200 children all the way through high school and to grow the total number of children assisted each year. This all started with a childhood memory of Asst. Chief Richards trying on a new pair of Kappa sneakers, and his desire to provide Round Rock kids in need with a similar experience.

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Public Service to Assistant Chief James “Willie” Richards of the Round Rock Police Department.

The following award goes to **Sergeant James Armstrong** of the **Houston Police Department** for the exceptional service he provides through his leadership of the Houston Police Department’s Honor Guard Unit.

Sergeant James Armstrong has been a member of the Houston Police Department’s Honor Guard Unit since June of 1987, and has been the full-time supervisor of the Honor Guard Unit for the past

8 years. Through his extensive knowledge and support, Sergeant Armstrong has grown the unit to include 4 full-time officers for the increasingly demanding role of the Honor Guard Detail.

Sergeant Armstrong is vital to the operations of the unit and takes special care to coordinate with stakeholders involved in national, state, city, community, and departmental events to ensure an honorable service is provided on behalf of the City of Houston.

In 2022, Sergeant Armstrong initiated, planned, and facilitated memorial services for two Fallen Houston Police Officers, as well as four memorial services for Fallen Officers of other agencies. Sergeant Armstrong's professionalism and dedication assists him in developing strong relationships with department, funeral, and church representatives to ensure these events reflect honor and respect for our fallen officers and their families in largely attended and media-related events. His experience and knowledge have meaningfully enhanced the services provided by the Houston PD Honor Guard Unit for both active line-of-duty fallen officers and retired officers. He is the subject matter expert and provides training to honor guard officers on the various facets of a line-of-duty memorial service, departmental honors, various casket guard ceremony methods, flag presentation detail, the folding and presentation of both the American and Texas flag to family members of fallen officers, the 21-gun salute and overall facilitation of these types of services. He is compassionate with family members who are experiencing the loss of their loved one, and officers who have lost their peer. In 2022 alone, Sergeant Armstrong facilitated and participated in approximately 80 retired officers' memorial services, 49 flag presentation details, and 49 community events.

In addition, Sergeant Armstrong strives to include the Houston PD Honor Guard Unit in national and state memorial events honoring fallen officers. He has worked alongside stakeholders to support members of the community through the involvement of the unit in local community events and celebrations such as 9-11 ceremonies for various first responder agencies, immigration ceremonies, Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebrations, Italian National Day, Ukraine Independence Day, Turkish National Day, Special Olympics ceremonies, and various other events and parades throughout the year. Sergeant Armstrong strives to involve the unit in these types of events because he believes these events are instrumental in building positive relationships and partnerships throughout the diverse City of Houston.

For his exceptional service and dedication to honoring Texas' Fallen and Retired Officers with dignity and respect, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present this 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Public Service to Sergeant James Armstrong of the Houston Police Department's Honor Guard Unit.

The following award goes to **Officer Patrick O'Neal** of the **Grapevine Police Department** for his logistical mapping of district campuses to improve emergency response times on school campuses throughout the community.

With the growing number of school shootings each year, the safety and security of our nation's students and educators is paramount to law enforcement and the citizens of Texas. While many agencies across the nation have focused on prevention, and with good reason, Grapevine Police

Officer Patrick O'Neal had the foresight to develop ways to improve response times to active threats on school campuses within his community.

Officer Patrick O'Neal is a crime prevention officer, a member of the Northeast Tarrant County SWAT and serves on the Active Shooter Committee. Through his experience in these roles, Officer O'Neal realized that based on the high number of school campuses in Grapevine, officers may not be familiar with all the entry and exit points for each location in the case of a critical incident. Officer O'Neal's primary concern was making logistical information readily available to all officers so that they could identify the fastest route to an emergency situation on campus.

Officer O'Neal approached Grapevine Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping staff in 2021 with the idea of gathering data on access points and navigation of all Grapevine school campuses. GIS developed standardized data with the categories of entry points, room numbers and room types. Officer O'Neal agreed to collect the information for each category from campuses across the community. This tedious work included gathering photos, information on door strength and breaching possibilities, location, and room numbers at over 20 district campuses. To give an idea of the scope of this work, Grapevine High School alone has 60 exterior doors.

The extensive research and mapping of each campus, including drone imagery of the schools, provided essential information for dispatchers, police officer, medics and incident commanders to more efficiently and expediently respond to critical incidents inside Grapevine schools. Grapevine GIS earned a 2021 Special Achievement Award from Esri, a global leader in geographic information software, for their role in the project, which could not have been done without the dedication of Officer Patrick O'Neal.

For his invaluable service to the citizens, educational employees, children, and families of the Grapevine community, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present this 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Public Service to Officer Patrick O'Neal of the Grapevine Police Department.

The following award goes to **Lieutenant Julie Pleasant** of the **Houston Police Department** for the invaluable service she provided to the City of Houston by developing and obtaining funding for the Houston Police Department's Domestic Abuse Response Team, referred to as D.A.R.T.

As a public servant dedicated to helping those in need, and out of her deep concern for the welfare of thousands of domestic violence survivors in Houston, Lieutenant Julie Pleasant saw the need and took the initiative to develop and coordinate a pilot program to expand the range of trauma-informed services offered to survivors.

D.A.R.T. units consist of specially trained police officers paired with credentialed civilian victim advocates who respond to "high risk" domestic violence crime scenes, such as Aggravated Assault with Serious Bodily Injury or Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon, while the scenes are still in-progress.

Once on-scene, D.A.R.T. units use trauma-informed care to make danger assessments and to coordinate with a network of providers to offer emergency medical care, emergency shelter, clothing, food, and any other dire needs. The next day, advocates follow-up with victims to ensure continuity of care, such as legal assistance, counseling, medical benefits, and to process Crime Victims Compensation (CVC) claims with the Texas Attorney General's CVC Division.

Lieutenant Pleasant developed a data collection system that provides a detailed quarterly and annual D.A.R.T. report that includes, among other data points, both the victims' and offenders' demographics, prior interactions with law enforcement, disposition of D.A.R.T. response and outcome of services rendered. Lieutenant Pleasant carefully analyzed the data to evaluate D.A.R.T. program efficiencies and effectiveness with an eye toward continual improvement of the D.A.R.T. program.

Following the successful results of the program at a Houston PD patrol station, she was instructed by Houston Police Chief Troy Finner to implement the D.A.R.T. program city-wide in 2022. Lieutenant Pleasant worked with city partners and outside agencies to expand the program's services throughout the City of Houston. She coordinated the involvement of the Forensic Nurse Examiners, allowing domestic violence survivors with serious bodily injury, specifically survivors of sexual assault, to speak with a highly trained, trauma-informed medical professional who can attend to their physical injuries as well as recover and document evidence in a manner that will meet all legal requirements.

In 2022, D.A.R.T. units responded to 936 scenes which generated 3,801 family violence related "follow-up" contacts. There is no way to quantify the number of lives the D.A.R.T. Program has saved, but it can be said with certainty, that D.A.R.T. units under the leadership of Lieutenant Julie Pleasant, are making a huge difference throughout the City of Houston.

For her invaluable service to the past, current and future survivors of domestic violence in Houston throughout her leadership of Houston's Domestic Abuse Response Team, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present this 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Public Service to Lieutenant Julie Pleasant of the Houston Police Department.

Professional Achievement

The following recipients of the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Professional Achievement have, through personal initiative, fixity of purpose, persistence, or endeavor, created a program, organization, or system, which has a significant positive impact on the law enforcement profession.

The following award goes to **Officer Robert “Steve” Cherry** of the **Grayson College Police Department** for his founding and development of the annual Law Enforcement Forensic Conference.

In 2003, Officer Cherry approached the Criminal Justice Chairman at Grayson College about the need to offer quality forensic training to local law enforcement officers. The following year, the first annual Law Enforcement Forensic Conference was held, and has continued each year since then. This conference is offered to officers across the state free of charge, allowing agencies to conserve important training dollars. The topics presented have been described as timely and relevant, and Officer Cherry has been credited for bringing in specialists in every area of police forensic work and seeking out interesting case studies.

In addition to a law enforcement audience at the conference, Officer Cherry has invited high school and college students to attend. This has given them the opportunity to mix with police officers, experience valuable training, ask questions, and be exposed to lessons learned from law enforcement leaders involved in some of the most consequential criminal matters in our state’s recent history.

Despite his 50 years of law enforcement service, Officer Cherry continues to search for ways to grow and improve the conference and make it a valuable experience for all attendees.

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Professional Achievement to Officer Robert “Steve” Cherry of the Grayson College Police Department.

The following award goes to **Sergeant Jose Rico Gomez** for his dedication to mental health response.

In today’s modern policing environment, few subjects are more prominent than methods for law enforcement to respond to individuals experiencing mental health issues. Sergeant Gomez has been an integral part of many revolutionary programs initiated in the law enforcement profession surrounding law enforcement response to mental health.

Sergeant Gomez goes above and beyond to ensure the citizens of Harris County receive professional and safe law enforcement response and mental health services. Sergeant Gomez is part of several collaborative efforts with the mission to provide exceptional service to the community. These include

collaborations with organizations such as the Police Executive Research Forum, the Council of State Governments, and the Department of Justice. As a result of his efforts, in 2021 the Harris County Sheriff's Office was named by the Council of State Governments as a Mental Health Learning Site, one of only 14 in the nation. Additionally, Sergeant Gomez was part of the initiation of the Clinician and Officer Remote Evaluation (CORE) tele-health program in Harris County. This program started in 2017 as three deputies responding to 31 mental health calls in three weeks with iPads to connect the community member in need with a psychiatrist. Through proof of concept, the program has grown to 250 deputies equipped with iPads and a network of six clinicians.

As a supervisor, Sergeant Gomez oversees many critical mental health-related programs the Sheriff's Office offers to the citizens of Harris County. This includes Project Guardian, which is designed to provide a safe and effective response to individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder, Project Lifesaver, to help locate individuals who wander due to cognitive disabilities such as Alzheimer's Disease, and the Co-Responder Program to partner CIT-trained deputies with masters-level clinicians from the Harris Center in providing response to mental health calls.

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Professional Achievement to Sergeant Jose Rico Gomez of the Harris County Sheriff's Office.

The following awards go to **Corporal Jastin Williams** and **Corporal Chris Holder** of the **Arlington Police Department** for their creation of an internationally recognized training entitled ***Hate Crimes: Recognition and Reporting***.

In 2018, Corporal Williams and Corporal Holder were charged with developing a course on hate crimes. They were responsible for creating, planning, and presenting the course material. The course addresses various perspectives of the relationship between the community and law enforcement.

This 8 hour course discusses all of the federally protected classes, starting with a foundation as to how we have reached the current level of "haves and have nots." The class received such a positive response from the nearly 700 Arlington PD officers taught that Arlington PD administration submitted the class to the Community Oriented Policing Services office and the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

In the fall of 2019, Arlington PD received the IACP Leadership in Human and Civil Rights Award, based largely on the new hate crime training developed by Corporals Williams and Holder. ***Hate Crimes: Recognition and Reporting*** is now nationally certified by the International Associations of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training (IADLEST) and has been presented to the International Law Enforcement Educators and Trainers Association with several more presentations scheduled.

In January 2020, Corporals Holder and Williams were invited to present at IACP's national headquarters to a variety of investigators, supervisors, commanders, and chiefs as well as subject matter experts and curriculum developers. With the overwhelmingly positive response from this presentation, Corporals Holder and Williams have partnered with the IACP's Collaborative Reform Initiative Technical Assistance Center and continue to roll out their course to audiences nationwide.

Most uniquely, the leadership at the head offices of Walmart heard of the course and in January 2022, asked that it be presented to their executives and law enforcement agencies in the area surrounding their headquarters in Bentonville, Arkansas. Since then, Walmart has requested further training for other executives and stores around the country.

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Professional Achievement to Corporal Justin Williams and Corporal Chris Holder of the Arlington Police Department.

The following award goes to **Senior Corporal Daniel Canete, Retired Senior Corporal Misty Van Curen, and Officer Joe King** for their development of the Assist the Officer: Bridging the Divide podcast.

“Bridging the Divide” is described as a platform for first responder professionals to tell their first-hand stories of their critical incidents and the healing afterwards.

While attending a wellness conference, Officer King saw the need for a platform for officers and various other first responders to share the stories of their career, life, and adverse circumstances. The first episode of the podcast was recorded in August 2021 and had over 50,000 downloads in its first year.

The podcast is hosted by Officer King with the help of various co-hosts including Corporal Canete and Retired Corporal Van Curen. The podcast has a variety of guests from police officers to therapists, to firefighters and paramedics, to law enforcement supporters. Each episode and each guest brings a unique experience and perspective that highlights the struggles first responders face, how those struggles may impact family and mental health, and how those guests may have overcome those struggles. The podcast has undoubtedly improved the much-needed conversation around mental health in the law enforcement profession, a topic which until recently has been considered taboo.

It is not just police officers from the Dallas area that are so impacted by the podcast. Officers King, Canete, and Van Curen have received messages from officers and civilians all over the country reiterating what the podcast means to them. One officer in Iowa messaged the podcast and stated that he felt he responded better during his own officer-involved shooting after having listened to the podcast. That police department later reached out to Officer King for help with suggestions for their own officer wellness policies.

The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Professional Achievement to Senior Corporal Daniel Canete, Retired Senior Corporal Misty Van Curen, and Officer Joe King of the Dallas Police Department.

Valor

The following recipients of the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor have performed an act of heroism or bravery exceeding the normal expectations of job performance, such as placing one's own life in jeopardy to save another's life, preventing serious bodily injury to another, or preventing the consequences of a criminal act.

The following awards go to **Investigator Austin Elmore** and **Deputy Sheriff Christopher P Braly** of the **Brazos County Sheriff's Office** for their life-saving actions on the scene of a major accident in the early morning hours of November 20th, 2022.

Investigator Elmore was headed home from an off-duty job in College Station when he noticed what appeared to be a burning vehicle ahead. He notified dispatch over the radio of a possible vehicle fire and proceeded to pull over to render aid. As Investigator Elmore approached the scene, he realized there had been a two-vehicle collision and both vehicles had caught on fire. A bus and another vehicle had collided.

The driver of the burning bus was still trapped inside the bus. Investigator Elmore tried over and over to pull the driver out of the burning bus as the flames continued to grow, but the driver's legs were trapped. Investigator Elmore attempted several more times to pull the driver out as the College Station Police Department began to arrive on scene. Shortly after the driver's seatbelt had burned off a CSPD Officer was able to finally pull the driver out of the burning bus to safety.

Just as the driver was being pulled out of the bus, Deputy Braly arrived on scene and immediately began assisting in extinguishing the driver's burning legs. Deputy Braly then used his prior training as a paramedic to begin patient care until the Paramedics arrived. Once paramedics arrived on scene the driver was airlifted to a Houston hospital for treatment where he would remain for long-term care.

The Sheriff's Office policy manual defines "bravery" as an act of admiral human action under a stressful and dangerous situation. Investigator Elmore and Deputy Braly demonstrated exceptional bravery as they both performed these heroic, life-saving actions. For their heroism and their dedication to protecting and serving their community, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor to Investigator Austin Elmore and Patrol Deputy Christopher P. Braly of the Brazos County Sheriff's Office.

The following award goes to **Officer Henry Vargas** of the **Dallas County Hospital District Police Department** for his extreme bravery and life-saving actions on September 27th, 2022.

At approximately 11 p.m. on Tuesday, September 27th, 2022, Officer Henry Vargas was heading home after completing his shift at Parkland Memorial Hospital when he witnessed a two-vehicles crash on Interstate 30 at Jim Miller Road. A truck had stalled on the highway and another vehicle had rear ended the truck causing it to catch on fire and become completely engulfed in flames.

Officer Vargas pulled over and ran to the burning vehicle and found a woman inside. With no regard for his own safety, Officer Vargas opened the door and pulled the woman out of the burning vehicle, dragging her to safety. Emergency Medical Services arrived on scene and began immediate medical care of the driver who was then transported to Baylor Scott & White Hospital for what were thankfully non-life-threatening injuries due to the swift and courageous actions of Officer Vargas.

Officer Vargas merely continued to return home after the incident, however, the incident received significant media attention and Officer Vargas was hailed as the Good Samaritan Officer throughout the community for his heroic actions and saving the woman's life.

For his bravery and his commitment to the safety of his community, whether on or off duty, Officer Vargas has truly earned his title as the Good Samaritan Officer. The Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor to Officer Henry Vargas of the Dallas County Hospital District Police Department.

The following award goes to **Deputy Aljoscha Hirsch** of the **Harris County Constable's Office Precinct 4** for his life-saving actions on December 27, 2022.

Deputy Aljoscha Hirsch was dispatched to a call regarding a suspicious male running naked through the streets on the cold winter day of December 27, 2022. Deputy Hirsch was the first to arrive on scene and he was advised while speaking with witnesses that the suspect had possibly entered a backyard.

Once entering the backyard where the male was said to have entered, Deputy Hirsch noticed there was a pool in the backyard. Deputy Hirsch found the 6 foot, 6 inches tall, 300-pound naked man face down in the pool. The male had overdosed on drugs and fallen into the stranger's backyard pool. His unconscious body had sunk to the bottom of the pool, and he was drowning.

Deputy Hirsch immediately acted. Without hesitation, Deputy Hirsch removed his duty belt and vest and within seconds had jumped into the freezing cold water still fully clothed in uniform. The temperature was around 30 degrees Fahrenheit, and both the male and Deputy Hirsch were at risk from being submerged in such cold temperatures.

Deputy Hirsch swam to the bottom of the freezing pool and pulled the unconscious male up to the surface. He pushed the male's unconscious body onto the concrete edge of the pool where other deputies had arrived and assisted Deputy Hirsch in giving CPR to the male.

While performing CPR on the male a pulse was recorded and the male was then transported to the nearest hospital for further medical treatment. Were it not for Deputy Hirsch's heroic actions and jumping into the freezing pool to save the man, he would have likely drowned.

For his brave and heroic actions on that cold winter day and for saving that man's life, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor to Deputy Aljoscha Hirsch of the Harris County Constable's Office Precinct 4.

The following award goes to **Mental Health Deputy Samuel Ferguson IV** of the **Milam County Sheriff's Office** for his exceptional bravery and heroism during a traumatic intervention with a person undergoing a mental health crisis.

On October 19, 2022, Mental Health Deputy Samuel Ferguson IV accompanied two counselors on a follow up visit with a mental health client and his mother. It was determined during the visit that the client was undergoing a mental health crisis and needed to be brought into a facility for an evaluation.

Shortly after that determination was made, the client brandished a firearm in the presence of his mother, the two counselors, and Deputy Ferguson, leaving Deputy Ferguson no choice but to draw his service weapon. Deputy Ferguson positioned himself in between the armed client and client's mother and the two counselors, who were just outside behind a thin wall.

Unfortunately, none of them were able to de-escalate the situation, and moments later a gunfight broke out, leaving both Deputy Ferguson and the client struck by gunfire. Deputy Ferguson was struck in the mouth, shattering the left portion of his mandible. Another bullet struck Deputy Ferguson but was thankfully absorbed by his Kevlar vest. He also suffered two injured shoulders from the impact of his fall after being shot. The client was fatally struck by gunfire. Fortunately, no other innocent bystanders were harmed.

Deputy Ferguson was transported to the hospital following the incident to receive emergency medical care. He is thankfully recovering from his injuries.

Since retiring from the UT Police Department in Austin and transitioning into the first CIT/ Mental Health Deputy for Milam County, Deputy Ferguson has been instrumental in starting the Mental Health Program within the Milam County Sheriff's Office.

For his heroic actions during this chaotic incident and the essential services he provides to Milam County, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present this 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor to Mental Health Deputy Samuel Ferguson IV of the Milam County Sheriff's Office.

The following awards go to **Deputy David DeLeon, Sergeant Eric Hooker, and Deputy William Snyder** of the **Potter County Sheriff's Office** for their heroic actions during the apprehension of an active shooter at the Amarillo Tri-State Fair and Rodeo.

Several Potter County Sheriff's Office Deputies, along with a Potter County Constable, were working an off-duty security job at the Amarillo Tri-State Fair and Rodeo on September 19, 2022, when an altercation broke out between several individuals. The Deputies attempted to separate the parties involved and were successful in detaining one of the primary aggressors. The second primary aggressor fled from the deputies on foot.

Potter County Deputies radioed the description and location of the second aggressor as he fled through the fairgrounds. Shortly after, Deputies located the suspect matching the given description and made initial contact. The suspect was observing holding his waistband with his right hand and refused to comply with the Deputies' commands to show his hands. The suspect attempted to flee again but was met with additional Deputies.

The suspect then pulled his firearm from his waistband and opened fire towards the responding Deputies and countless innocent bystanders. Deputy DeLeon, Deputy Snyder, and Sergeant Hooker immediately returned fire on the suspect.

Deputy Snyder was struck multiple times during the gunfight, yet he continued to stay and advance on the suspect despite his injuries. A Potter County Volunteer Fire Fighter and an innocent bystander were also struck. Fortunately, Deputy DeLeon, Deputy Snyder, and Sergeant Hooker were then able to neutralize the threat, incapacitating the suspect.

Additional responding Officers provided security and medical attention to injured bystanders, the wounded Potter County Fire Rescue Volunteer, Deputy Snyder, and the gunman. The gunman was transported to the hospital due to his injuries and was later released and booked into the Potter County Detention Center. The investigation revealed that the suspect was actively on parole and a confirmed gang member in the Amarillo area.

For their fearless heroism and for preventing this situation from resulting in casualties, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor to Deputy David DeLeon, Sergeant Eric Hooker, and Deputy William Snyder of the Potter County Sheriff's Office.

The following award goes to **Sergeant Robert Rangel** of the **Methodist Health System Police Department** for stopping an active shooter who murdered two hospital staff at the Methodist Dallas Medical Center.

On October 22, 2022, an enraged, convicted felon armed with a handgun opened fire on a nurse, a social worker, and Sergeant Rangel in the Labor and Delivery Department at the Methodist Dallas Medical Center. Tragically, the shooter murdered veteran nurse Katie "Annette" Flowers, and social worker Jacqueline "Jackie" Pokuaa. According to news reports from the Dallas area, the shooter was out on parole for aggravated robbery at the time of the incident and had cut off his ankle monitor. The suspect had reportedly accused his girlfriend, who had just given birth to their child, of cheating before opening fire on hospital staff.

Sergeant Rangel immediately responded to the threat and returned fire on the suspect, striking the suspect in the leg and wounding him. After being shot in the leg, the suspect barricaded himself in the room with his girlfriend and their newborn.

Sergeant Rangel maintained an even tone as he engaged with the suspect and expertly carried out de-escalation tactics as he convinced the suspect to slide the gun out of the room and surrender. Sergeant Rangel has been widely applauded for maintaining his composure and calmly defusing the situation.

Sergeant Rangel's heroic actions exemplify bravery and are a testament to his training and commitment to public service. Sergeant Rangel acted with honorable discipline and likely prevented additional injuries or casualties from occurring at Methodist Dallas Medical Center that day.

For remaining alert and assertive in persuading the shooter to surrender and his expert use of his law enforcement training, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor to Sergeant Robert Rangel of the Methodist Health System Police Department.

The following award goes to **Officer Rodney Wilmore** of the **Killeen Police Department** for his successful evacuation of an injured shooting victim and EMS personnel during an active shooter incident.

On November 20, 2022, the Killeen Police Department received multiple distress calls regarding an individual who was firing rounds from his backyard. Another distress call was then received from the same area indicating that a 90-year-old woman had been shot in the head. Multiple officers arrived on scene and began to canvass the area. As Officer Rodney Wilmore was on route to the scene, he received radio notification that Killeen EMS workers were with the female shooting victim inside of her house. They were trapped inside due to the active threat and therefore holding position inside the residence until the coast was clear. Killeen EMS needed to evacuate the woman from the residence due to the gunshot wound to her head.

Radio traffic confirmed that the male suspect had a rifle, that the suspect had put a silencer on his firearm, and then that shots had been fired. A command post was then called to be set up and the Killeen Police Department SWAT team was activated.

Officer Wilmore arrived on scene, parked about a block away, and began to walk toward the emergency vehicles parked outside the residence. The firetruck was parked on the street between the victim and the suspect's house. The ambulance was exposed and directly in the line of fire. Officer Wilmore entered the ambulance, exposing himself to the line of fire, and then backed the ambulance up on the grass in a position placing the fire truck between him and the shooter. He exited the ambulance and took a position in front of the fire truck, merely 20 yards or so from the shooter. With Officer Wilmore's eyes on the suspect, he began to approach the suspect and command him to come out of the back gate. Officer Wilmore was eventually able to convince the suspect to exit the gate and surrender.

Officer Wilmore distinguished himself with his heroic actions and gallantry during the evacuation. Officer Wilmore further distinguished himself by de-escalating the situation and negotiating with the suspect to secure his surrender without further injury or harm to any other persons involved.

For his dedication and heroism, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor to Officer Rodney Wilmore of the Killeen Police Department.

The following awards go to **Officer Anthony Alvarez, Officer Hector Recinos Diaz, Officer Daniel Hayden,** and **Officer Nathan Gadson** of the **Houston Police Department** for their bravery and fearless pursuit of a heavily armed felon in January 2022.

Houston Police Officers Alvarez, Recinos Diaz, Hayden, and Gadson were responding to a domestic disturbance call when the suspect spotted the responding officers and subsequently fled the scene in a car. The officers immediately gave chase and followed the suspect. Shortly after the chase began, the officers witnessed the suspect crash the vehicle into a parking lot gate. The suspect then exited the vehicle and opened rapid fire at the officers with an illegally modified, automatic weapon.

Even while dealing with multiple distractions and weapon malfunctions, Officer Gadson sought cover as he continued to return fire on the suspect. After emptying the magazine on his duty weapon, Officer Gadson ran into the gun battle, continuing to return fire on the suspect, to retrieve additional magazines that had fallen from weapon malfunctions during the gun battle which still contained usable ammunition.

Officer Alvarez was struck in the leg by the suspect's fire, shattering his femur, yet he was able to take cover behind a vehicle and continued to return fire, despite the excruciating pain he endured from his potentially life-threatening leg injury. Officer Gadson witnessed this and immediately provided cover and rendered aid to Officer Alvarez to ensure his survival.

Officer Hayden was struck in the arm, causing significant damage and rendering him unable to fire his weapon. He immediately extricated himself from the scene to apply a tourniquet to his injury and stop the excessive loss of blood.

The gun battle continued as the suspect then threatened the use of his automatic weapon to carjack an innocent woman's white Mercedes and flee the scene once again. Thankfully, the woman was unharmed.

Officer Recinos Diaz fearlessly pursued the suspect, despite seeing his fellow officers shot and wounded, and provided essential information via radio on the location of the suspect and the wounded officers.

Upon fleeing the scene, the suspect entered a house in Houston's Fifth Ward. The suspect barricaded himself inside the residence and fired at the HPD and SWAT officers standing outside. None of the SWAT officers at the scene were injured. The suspect eventually emerged from the residence and surrendered to officers with his hands in the air.

Officers Alvarez, Recinos Diaz, Hayden, and Gadson did not hesitate in their fearless pursuit of the suspect, despite being outgunned by the suspect's machine gun. These officers knowingly put themselves in danger to prevent this violent criminal from harming or murdering any innocent citizens in the community. For risking their lives to protect their community and their fellow officers, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor to Officer Anthony Alvarez, Officer Hector Recinos Diaz, Officer Daniel Hayden, and Officer Nathan Gadson of the Houston Police Department.

The following awards go to **Deputy Michael Munoz** and **Corporal Steven Crowley** of the **Harris County Constable's Office Precinct 4** for their heroic actions in which they risked their lives to stop an armed murderer.

On September 22, 2022, Deputy Michael Munoz and Corporal Steven Crowley responded to a welfare check call on a male who had possibly been shot. While enroute to the scene of the call, the deputies were advised that a call was made by a concerned mother saying her son may have been involved in a homicide and is still currently armed with a pistol. They were advised that the individual mentioned could be connected to a recent homicide in which gunfire was exchanged with Federal Officers that the Harris County Sheriff's Office was actively investigating. Corporal Crowley and Deputy Munoz arrived on scene at an apartment complex where they were met by an armed male in a vehicle in the parking lot. The deputies attempted to talk to the suspect and asked him to lay down his weapon, but the suspect refused their commands.

The male quickly pulled out his pistol, opening fire on the deputies and striking one of the patrol vehicles. Corporal Crowley engaged with the suspect who was firing at Deputy Munoz, dividing the suspect's attention so Deputy Munoz could retreat and seek better cover. Deputy Munoz was then able to re-engage and return fire on the suspect. With the suspect's attention divided between them, Corporal Crowley and Deputy Munoz struck the armed suspect multiple times and neutralized the threat.

Afterward it was learned that the suspect had pulled into the complex just after murdering his wife and shooting a federal agent with the Naval Criminal Investigative Service. It is believed that the suspect would have likely murdered additional family members residing within the apartment complex if it were not for the swift and fearless actions of Corporal Crowley and Deputy Munoz.

For their brave and heroic actions and protecting the family and the apartment's residents from injury and death, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor to Deputy Michael Munoz and Corporal Steven Crowley of the Harris County Constable's Office Precinct 4.

The following award goes to **Deputy Jarrett Decatur** of the **Harris County Sheriff's Office** for his prompt and brave actions during an active shooter incident on January 26, 2021.

On January 26, 2021, Deputy Brandon Barragan was conducting an arrest warrant service for a wanted fugitive in Houston, Texas, when the scene rapidly escalated into an active shooter incident. While executing the arrest warrant on the wanted felon, a Houstone Tango Blast gang member, Deputy Barragan was shot 6 times as he attempted to apprehend the wanted fugitive.

Deputy Jarrett Decatur, who was a field training officer and was training a probationary deputy at the time of the incident, responded immediately to the active shooter scene to assist Deputy Barragan, who had been seriously injured from his gunshot wounds.

Deputy Decatur swiftly extricated Deputy Barragan from the active scene and promptly checked him for serious injuries from his gunshot wounds. Deputy Decatur formed and executed a plan of action

to place Deputy Barragan in the back of his patrol vehicle and get him to medical treatment. Deputy Decatur showed exceptional professionalism as he remained calm in the presence of his trainee while executing his plan of action during this highly stressful event.

Once Deputy Barragan was placed safely in the patrol vehicle, Deputy Decatur immediately booked it to the nearest emergency hospital, which was located over 11 miles away from the scene. It was rush hour traffic in Houston, and Deputy Decatur drove as fast and safely as possible to get Deputy Barragan to the hospital for medical care. Deputy Decatur's swift and heroic actions performing a medical evacuation during the active scene was vital in obtaining medical treatment for Deputy Barragan.

It is in chaotic and deadly situations like these that we truly rely on our peers, and we must look out for one another, just as Deputy Decatur did in this incident. For his swift actions in extricating Deputy Barragan from the active shooting scene to safety, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor to Deputy Jarrett Decatur of the Harris County Sheriff's Office.

The following award goes to **Texas State Trooper Daniel Walker** of the **Texas Department of Public Safety** for his exceptional bravery and life-saving heroism displayed at the scene of a fiery car crash.

On November 28, 2022, Trooper Daniel Walker was on routine patrol duty when he observed traffic stopping and pulling onto the shoulder of North FM 920. As Trooper Walker approached the top of the hill, he observed a white passenger vehicle in the grass engulfed in flames. Trooper Walker immediately notified TXDPS Communications and stopped his patrol vehicle.

He exited his patrol vehicle and sprinted towards the burning vehicle. A female bystander yelled to him that her boyfriend was trapped inside. Without hesitation, Trooper Walker used his duty-issued baton to break open the driver's window and reached inside to pull the driver out. With the aid of three civilians, Trooper Walker was able to extract the driver through the window and pull him away to safety moments before the flames soared rendering any rescue attempt or extraction impossible.

The driver, later identified as Tyler Lee Stageman, suffered multiple major injuries, including third degree burns to his arms and face, broken ribs, and a broken back, and he was airlifted to a hospital for emergency medical treatment. Had it not been for Trooper Walker's courage and quick actions on that night, Tyler certainly would not have survived the fiery wreck.

As part of the nomination materials submitted for Trooper Walker, a letter from Tyler Stageman's mother was included. As a humble reminder of the significance of ALL your dedication to the law enforcement profession, and the service to and protection of your valued communities, we would like to read from her letter:

I work at a Level 1 Trauma hospital in Fort Worth. I got a phone call, one you think you will never get because it only happens to other people, towards the end of my shift. A veteran nurse had pulled up on a wreck outside of my property line. She told me my son had been stopped, had his turn signal on and was waiting to turn into our shop when a driver

hit him going at least 60mph, that his car was pushed close to 60 yards and ignited. He would be coming to me via AirEvac with significant burns to his body. She also told me she watched all of it and if it hadn't been for Trooper Daniel Walker that my son wouldn't be here.

As I look at my son every day in this hospital bed, with his 2nd and 3rd degree burns to his face and arm, his several broken ribs, his broken back, the donor site from his skin grafts, and his heel that was almost sliced off, all I can do is smile and thank God.

For his outstanding courage and heroism, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Life-Saving Valor to State Trooper Daniel Walker of the Texas Department of Public Safety.

The following awards go to **Officer Mohammed Nasser**, **Officer Ali Abulateb**, and **Officer Tallal Salameh** of the **Houston Police Department** for their heroic actions during an active shooter incident inside of a Houston shopping mall in which **San Jacinto County Constable's Office Precinct 1 Deputy Neil Adams** was tragically murdered.

On February 23, 2022, Houston Police Officers Mohammed Nasser, Ali Abulateb, and Tallal Salameh responded to a service call for officer assistance at the PlazAmericas shopping mall in Houston, Texas. The call was to assist Deputy Neil Adams, who was working an extra job at a store inside the mall, following a violent, and ultimately deadly, encounter with an irate mall-goer. Deputy Adams had attempted to de-escalate the situation with the suspect but was unable to, and the suspect punched Deputy Adams in the face, knocking him to the ground. Unbeknownst at the time, the suspect had extensive mixed martial arts training, and even owned a local gym. The suspect attacked Deputy Adams repeatedly until Adams was no longer able to defend himself and was able to retrieve Adams' duty weapon from his holster. Tragically, Deputy Neil Adams was subsequently killed with his own weapon. After emptying the weapon, the suspect dropped the gun and proceeded to calmly walk out of the store.

Once Houston Police Officer Mohammed Nasser arrived on the scene, he met with a security guard outside of the mall who briefed him on the incident and provided a more detailed description of the suspect. Officer Nasser proceeded into the mall and into the store where Deputy Adams was shot, but he was unfortunately too late.

Officer Nasser then continued his search for the suspect, who was subsequently pointed out by several patrons in the mall courtyard. Officer Nasser witnessed the suspect calmly ride the elevator down to the first floor of the mall, noticing a sharp-edged weapon in the suspect's hand. Officer Nasser repeatedly commanded the suspect to drop his weapon, which he refused. Officer Nasser began to retreat backwards as the suspect refused to comply and continued to walk towards Officer Nasser with the weapon.

At that time, Officer Tallal Salameh and Officer Ali Abulateb arrived on the scene to assist Officer Nasser. Officer Nasser attempted to create more distance between himself and the suspect, but the suspect chased after him with the sharp weapon. Officer Nasser and Officer Salameh had no other choice at that point than to use deadly force to neutralize the threat. The suspect was brought down

by the Officers' gunfire; however, moments afterwards, he rose from the ground and began walking away from the officers. Officer Abulateb then had to tase the suspect to once again bring him down to the ground and bring him into custody. Once on the ground, the suspect continued to fight the officers as they attempted to provide him with medical aid. The suspect was then transported to the hospital where he was later pronounced dead from his injuries.

Officers Nasser, Salameh, and Abulateb showed great bravery in the face of an incredibly dangerous and chaotic situation. These officers encountered a grave and unexpected scene that day at the PlazAmericas Mall. They were vigilant in locating and stopping the suspect and ensuring the safety of the citizens inside the mall. For their courage and bravery, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor to Officer Mohammed Nasser, Officer Ali Abulateb, and Officer Tallal Salameh of the Houston Police Department.

The following awards go to **Senior Police Officer Brandon Cordell** and **Senior Police Officer Paul Lisowski** of the **Corpus Christi Police Department** for their brave actions.

Around 3 a.m. on June 29, 2021, in Corpus Christi, Texas, Senior Police Officer Brandon Cordell and Senior Police Officer Paul Lisowski responded to calls from multiple residents of a neighborhood for a suspicious male who had been checking car doors throughout the night.

Once on scene, the Officers split up and began the search for the suspicious person. As Officer Lisowski headed to the bank yard of the residence, Officer Cordell spotted a male matching the description given by the neighbors. The suspect took off running and Officer Cordell immediately gave chase in a marked police vehicle as the suspect fled. As the suspect rounded the corner, he took cover and hid behind some parked cars. Officer Cordell exited his patrol vehicle and began searching for the suspect on foot. The suspect jumped out from behind a parked car and began firing, striking Officer Cordell in his arm and causing him to fall on his back.

Officer Cordell fired back at the suspect from the ground and Officer Lisowski, hearing gun shots, ran towards the gunfire. Immediately after Officer Lisowski saw that Officer Cordell was on the ground, he began firing at the suspect, bringing him to the ground. The suspect continued to fire his weapon towards both officers from the ground. The officers continued to fire at the suspect until the suspect ceased to fire his weapon and they were able to bring the suspect in.

Both Officer Cordell and the suspect were subsequently transported to the hospital for medical treatment. We are grateful to announce that Officer Cordell was eventually released from the hospital and has since recovered from his injuries.

These Officers' fearless actions have demonstrated their commitment to the law enforcement profession and serving their community. For their courage and bravery in the face of danger, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor to Senior Officer Brandon Cordell and Senior Officer Paul Lisowski of the Corpus Christi Police Department.

The following award goes to **Corporal Timothy Brock Tullos** of the **Borger Police Department**, honoring his fearless and life-saving actions on September 19th, 2022.

On that day, Corporal Timothy Brock Tullos was dispatched to a residence in Borger in response to a domestic disturbance call made to the Borger dispatch from a child at the residence. Once arriving on scene Corporal Tullos made contact with the suspect and his girlfriend in a small hallway. The suspect was partly hiding behind the door jam and using his girlfriend as a hostage. Corporal Tullos commanded the suspect to show his hands, but the suspect refused to comply.

The suspect then raised up a firearm and fired six shots at Corporal Tullos, striking him in the forearm and his vest in his abdomen area. The suspect then fled out the backyard and was apprehended by additional law enforcement on scene who were waiting outside. Corporal Tullos made his way back to the front of the residence to take cover and apply his duty issued tourniquet to his injuries. Corporal Tullos was then able to command the rookie officer on scene, whom he was training, to drive him to the hospital, while keeping the rookie officer calm and calling in his own injuries while enroute to the hospital.

It was later learned that the suspect had assaulted his girlfriend and had attempted to sexually assault the child who made the call to Borger Police Department as well. The survivor stated to law enforcement that the suspect had stopped once he had heard the law enforcement officers enter the living room. Corporal Tullos arrived on scene just in time to save the child who called for help.

For his bravery and his commitment to his profession and the protection of the innocent, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor to Corporal Timothy Brock Tullos of the Borger Police Department.

The following awards go to **Officer Kenneth Donohue** and **Officer Jose Salinas** of the **Houston Police Department** for their courageous actions while confronting a violent suspect who attempted to murder Officer Salinas.

Officer Kenneth Donohue was investigating a robbery when the complainant pointed out the suspect driving by. Officer Donohue immediately radioed the suspect's location and proceeded to chase after the suspect.

As he was gaining on the suspect, Officer Donohue witnessed the suspect purposely ram into Officer Jose Salinas' patrol vehicle. The suspect then exited his vehicle, walked toward Officer Salinas' wrecked patrol vehicle, and open fire at Officer Salinas.

After his patrol vehicle was struck by the suspect, Officer Salinas swiftly and strategically reversed his vehicle, switching lanes to safely avoid drivers passing by. Upon witnessing the suspect ram into Officer Salinas' patrol vehicle, damaging the driver door and deploying the vehicle's air bags. Officer

Donohue promptly engaged the suspect with accuracy, distracting the suspect and preventing him from closing in on Officer Salinas to cause bodily injury or death.

Officer Salinas struggled to force the damaged driver door open to exit his wrecked patrol vehicle after being hit by the deployed airbags. Officer Salinas then returned accurate fire on the suspect who had continued to fire his weapon at the Officers.

As the officers continued to apprehend the suspect and take him into custody, the suspect continued to resist. Even as the officers brought the suspect down, he refused to comply with their commands. Once the suspect was finally handcuffed, the officers were able to render him medical aid.

Officer Donohue displayed an exceptional act of heroism and bravery while confronting the suspect who attempted to murder Officer Salinas. Officer Salinas maintained outstanding situational awareness and quick decision-making in a potentially deadly situation. For their fearlessness in the face of danger, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor to Officer Kenneth Donohue and Officer Jose Salinas of the Houston Police Department.

The following awards go to **Corporal Andy Whitley, Officer Jose Avila, Officer Zachary Tabler, Officer Juan Ramirez Orona, Officer Michael Samilo** and **Officer Timothy Barton** of the **Haltom City Police Department** for their brave actions in protecting community residents against an active shooter in their neighborhood.

Several calls were made to the Haltom City Police Department from residents of a Haltom City neighborhood. One of the 911 callers had been shot by an active shooter. Officer Jose Avila, Officer Zachary Tabler, and Officer Timothy Barton responded to the call and were dispatched to the neighborhood. Once arriving on scene, the officers located an individual lying in a driveway who had been shot and wounded.

As they approached the individual to render aid, the officers were ambushed with gunfire. Officers Barton, Avila, and Tabler were struck by the rounds fired by the suspect. The suspect was hiding inside a nearby residence. Officer Barton was able to self-extricate from the area under fire to apply a tourniquet to his own wound. Officer Tabler and Officer Avila were unable to extricate from the area and engaged the suspect, despite being wounded. Officer Samilo and Officer Ramirez Orona engaged the suspect from the front yard of the residence despite the suspect's barrage of rifle fire, eventually causing the suspect to cease fire and flee the scene. Corporal Whitley was instrumental in evacuating the injured officers from the active scene to render them aid and have them transported to the hospital. The 28-year-old male suspect was later found deceased from a self-inflicted gunshot with a military style rifle and a handgun in his possession.

The immediate and fearless response of these officers who put their own lives in danger without hesitation, put an end to the shooter's deadly rampage, preventing further injury and death. While putting themselves in grave danger and sustaining injuries, these officers saved the lives of citizens and stopped the suspect's attack on the neighborhood.

For their heroic actions and putting the needs of their community above their own safety, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor to Corporal Andy Whitley, Officer Jose Avila, Officer Zachary Tabler, Officer Juan Ramirez Orona, Officer Michael Samilo and Officer Timothy Barton of the Haltom City Police Department.

The following awards go to **Sergeant Jeff Brady** and **Officer Brisie Leon** of the **Fort Worth Police Department** for their heroic actions on June 29, 2022.

A police officer is trained for many types of calls, but sometimes there is no training for what an officer may face. For officers to win or survive, they must rely on their guts and instincts. On June 29, 2022, a frantic, pregnant female made multiple 911 phone calls because she was in fear of her brother who had come to her residence. The female stated that her sister-in-law and kids were staying with her, and that her brother was in the front yard pointing a rifle at the house demanding that the wife and kids leave with him. While the female was on the phone with the call taker, the brother forced his way through the front door. The call taker could hear the terror in the caller's voice as she pleaded for help for herself, her sister-in-law, and seven other children inside the residence.

Officer Leon rushed to the scene with several officers from her team but they were unable to apprehend the brother who had already fled the scene. Officers began their investigation and determined that the brother had committed multiple counts of aggravated assault with a deadly weapon. Officers put out a broadcast for him and the vehicle he was driving.

The vehicle was soon located by police who attempted to stop the vehicle, but he refused to pull over. As officers pursued the male, he repeatedly contacted his wife through facetime, and while holding a gun to his head, threatened to kill her, their children, other family members at the residence, and himself. This conversation was witnessed by Sergeant Brady, and it became apparent that the brother was driving back to his sister's residence. Officer Leon and Sergeant Brady believed that the brother's threats were real, that he was armed and dangerous, and was coming back to the scene to do harm.

Sergeant Brady attempted to dissuade the brother from returning to the scene by blocking both ends of the street with patrol units. This unfortunately was unsuccessful as the brother attempted to drive through one of the parked units and crashed. Sergeant Brady bravely placed himself in a position to observe the brother's actions. The brother locked eyes with Sergeant Brady, floored the accelerator, and reached for his rifle. Sergeant Brady was left with no choice but to aim, fire his service pistol, and bring an end to the brother's reign of terror on this family. The heroism and courage displayed by Sergeant Brady and Officer Leon bring great credit upon themselves and their department.

For their brave actions and for protecting the family from further danger or harm, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor to Sergeant Jeff Brady and Officer Brisie Leon of the Fort Worth Police Department.

The following awards go to **Officer Benjamin Herrera, Sergeant Nathan Roach, Sergeant Adrian Tijerina, Officer Robert Allen, and Officer Manuel “Ben” Luna** of the **Duncanville Police Department** for their heroic actions performed at the location of a children’s summer camp roughly three weeks following the tragic Uvalde School Shooting.

At approximately 8:45 a.m. on June 13, 2022, Duncanville Police Officers were dispatched to the Duncanville Fieldhouse in response to a major disturbance call. Duncanville Dispatch notified the officers of a suspect reportedly shooting inside or toward the building and that hundreds of children were inside the building attending a summer camp hosted at the Fieldhouse.

As the officers responded, dispatch provided the suspect’s description and advised that call-takers had heard what sounded like a second shot fired while speaking with a caller.

Officer Robert Allen was the first officer to arrive on scene. Believing citizens, including hundreds of children, were in danger of being seriously injured or killed, Officer Allen immediately entered the Duncanville Fieldhouse where he saw the suspect in one of the gymnasiums inside the fieldhouse. Officer Allen radioed for additional officers, and without hesitation or delay, he entered the gymnasium to confront the still-armed suspect.

As Officer Allen entered the gymnasium, the suspect ran off into a corridor off of the gymnasium, closing the door behind him. Officer Allen could no longer see the suspect. The Fieldhouse gymnasiums and corridors fed from one gym to another and into storage areas. Officer Allen knew from experience and training that citizens hide wherever possible during active shooter incidents if they cannot escape. Given that, he could not be certain where any innocent children or citizens might be hiding throughout the maze of the Fieldhouse. Officer Allen quickly positioned himself to where he could see the closed door the suspect entered, while maintaining some concealment, and immediately began to demand the suspect come out. Within a few seconds, the suspect opened the door and engaged Officer Allen in a gunfight by firing a semi-automatic pistol at Officer Allen.

Officer Manuel "Ben" Luna along with Sergeant Nathan Roach, Sergeant Adrian Tijerina, and Officer Benjamin Herrera all arrived in the gymnasium just seconds before the suspect began to fire upon Officer Allen. They then ultimately stopped the suspect as he ran from the corridor and into the gymnasium while still possessing the pistol in one hand and thereby still posing an imminent danger to the officers and everyone else hiding inside the Fieldhouse at that time. Once they neutralized the deadly threat, these officers immediately called for medics and began to provide first aid to the suspect, who had sustained several gunshot wounds. Still, other responding Duncanville Police Officers cleared the building of any other potential suspects and began to evacuate hundreds of emotionally distraught kids and staff counselors to safety.

All five Duncanville Police Officers, through their immediate and decisive deployment, demonstrated outstanding courage and incredible discipline to avoid or correct any crossfire potential among themselves as they fired upon the suspect. Had it not been for the quick and decisive actions of these officers, who acted without regard for their safety, this incident may have been one from which innocent victims were added to a long list of senseless casualties perpetrated by citizens terrorizing communities with their unlawful use of firearms.

For their bravery and heroic actions, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor to Officer Benjamin Herrera, Sergeant Nathan Roach, Sergeant Adrian Tijerina, Officer Robert Allen, and Officer Manuel “Ben” Luna of the Duncanville Police Department.

The following award goes to **Sergeant Brittany Re** of the **Brazos County Sheriff’s Office** for her bravery and willingness to put herself in danger to protect her community.

At approximately 11:18 a.m. on December 30, 2022, Sergeant Brittany Re located an orange Ford Mustang that had been reported stolen from a business in the City of Bryan in the early hours of that morning. After further investigation and recovery of video surveillance, it was determined that the suspect who had stolen the vehicle had just been involved in a shooting with an on-duty Bryan Police Officer the prior evening.

Sergeant Re activated her overhead emergency lights and attempted to initiate a traffic stop on the stolen vehicle, but the driver did not stop and continued to attempt to evade law enforcement. While Sergeant Re was following the stolen vehicle the driver began to shoot at Sergeant Re through the rear window and the driver side window of the stolen vehicle. The suspect continued to shoot his firearm and while slowing for a 90-degree road turn, the suspect then stuck a rifle out of the driver side window, shot at Sergeant Re, and struck her in the shoulder. She also suffered shrapnel injuries to her left eye and at least ten bullets were recovered from her patrol vehicle.

After striking Sergeant Re the suspect drove the stolen vehicle into a field where he then got stuck in the mud. The suspect fled the vehicle on foot leading to a three-hour manhunt throughout which the suspect fired at law enforcement several times, including at the drone being used to track him. The suspect was ultimately taken into custody by law enforcement after suffering a gunshot wound to his face.

Since being named the first female Patrol Sergeant in the history of the Brazos County Sheriff’s Office, Sergeant Re has certainly demonstrated her commitment to the law enforcement profession, to the safety of her community, and her willingness to put herself in danger to fearlessly pursue a dangerous criminal.

For her bravery and commitment, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present the 2023 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor to Sergeant Brittany Re of the Brazos County Sheriff’s Office.

The following award goes to **Chief Enrique “Henry” Dominguez** of the **Atascosa County Attorney’s Office**, honoring his courageous and strategic pursuit and elimination of an armed and dangerous murderer.

On the evening of June 2nd, 2022, Chief Enrique “Henry” Dominguez had returned from his shift and was resting at home with his family when he heard a radio transmission. A wanted person, escaped TDCJ fugitive and convicted murderer Gonzalo Lopez, was possibly headed South down Interstate Highway 37. Lopez was the subject of one of the largest inmate search efforts in State history following his escape from a TDCJ prisoner bus and subsequent tragic murders of three members of the Collins family. Law enforcement officers believed him to be fleeing to Mexico in a truck stolen from the Collins Family’s property.

Chief Dominguez did not hesitate to respond. Realizing there were more than enough law enforcement resources on IH 37, Chief Dominguez decided to set up surveillance at the North County line, positioning his unmarked Ford Explorer in a crossover on Highway 16 and began observing Southbound traffic. Shortly thereafter, a white Chevy pickup truck matching the description broadcasted in the BOLO passed by. Although the truck did not have any visible body damage as stated in the BOLO, Chief Dominguez decided to follow the vehicle, directly in the line of fire. Confirming the license plate number, Sheriff David Soward advised Chief Dominguez that he was indeed behind wanted fugitive Gonzalo Lopez. Chief Dominguez continued to discreetly follow the fugitive without giving up that he was law enforcement, while calmly dispatching his location and devising a plan of action to bring the suspect in. A plan was developed to disable the vehicle with a spike strip North of the City of Jourdan and overwhelm the suspect with multiple law enforcement agencies. The plan went on as devised and all four tires were spiked without Lopez ever seeing a single law enforcement officer. Chief Dominguez along with several law enforcement agencies pursued Lopez once his vehicle was disabled, until Chief Dominguez observed him exit the vehicle. Lopez was armed with an AR-15 and a pistol believed to be stolen from the home where he had killed the Collins Family. Chief Dominguez fearlessly engaged the suspect with his duty rifle and the suspect was ultimately killed in the shootout with law enforcement. Chief Dominguez’s windshield was struck by a bullet but thankfully no law enforcement officers were injured in the event.

Chief Dominguez demonstrated his commitment to his profession and the safety of his community through his extreme courage and expertise throughout this event. For his valorous actions and preventing any others from suffering the same fate as Lopez’s victims, the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement is honored to present this 2023 State of Texas Law Achievement Award for Valor to Chief Enrique “Henry” Dominguez.