

NEWS RELEASE

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SUFFOLK PUBLIC SAFETY PERSONNEL HONORED AT VALOR AWARDS

SUFFOLK, VA (April 27, 2015) Suffolk Fire & Rescue and Suffolk Police personnel were recognized for their service to the community at the third annual Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce Valor Awards on Friday, April 24, 2015 in Portsmouth, Virginia. The awards ceremony highlighted the work of more than 40 police officers, firefighters, and first responders for their extraordinary acts of courage and resourcefulness in the line of duty.

Suffolk Fire & Rescue Lieutenant Steven A. Henkle received a Bronze Medal of Valor for his response during an April 15, 2014 residential structure fire in the 200 block of Holladay Street. Lieutenant Henkle was advised that a victim was still inside the home and proceeded to enter the residence to find the person. Henkle found the woman and single-handedly picked her up and handed her out of a window to another firefighter. The woman received onsite medical care before being taken to the hospital with non-life threatening injuries. During the time when Henkle was searching for and rescuing the victim, there were heavy fire conditions and a loss of water pressure. Lieutenant Henkle faced extreme conditions and risked his life to save the trapped victim.

Suffolk Police Department Detective William Shockley received an award for Investigative Merit for his efforts in the investigation into an initial report of an injured man on September 22, 2014. The victim was located and transported to the hospital where he succumbed to his injuries. Detective Shockley worked nearly 24 consecutive hours on this case to bring it to a successful closure with the arrest of three suspects. He utilized his knowledge, training and experiences as a violent crimes investigator to not only receive full confessions but also the disclosure and location of key evidence relevant to this investigation. In addition to the arrest, Detective Shockley conducted numerous follow up tasks and completed the roughly 500 pages of documents necessary for the prosecution's preparation.

Detective Alex Johnson and Sergeant Jeff Lurie were honored with an award for Investigative Merit for their work to solve several burglary incidents in 2014. On February 8, 2014, an incident at the Metropolitan Church Credit Union involving the theft of a safe was reported. Detective Johnson and then Detective Lurie teamed up to work the investigation. Detective Johnson had developed information regarding possible suspects and their whereabouts. Several interviews were conducted with multiple subjects, however, their efforts did not yield an arrest. The detectives continued to investigate the case. On March 27, 2014, a burglary alarm brought Suffolk Police to the Northern Star Federal Credit Union ATM in the 5800 block of Harbour View Boulevard where officers observed damage to the entry door. Evidence was found at the scene which included a document which yielded a lead for detectives. Detective Lurie and Detective Johnson were assigned to investigate this case. A search warrant was prepared and executed during which burglary tools that were similar to a previous incident were located. As a result of their investigation, the primary suspects with breaking and entering both credit unions and a second suspect from the Metropolitan Federal Credit Union were charged.

Suffolk Police Officer Ashley Allen received a Lifesaving Award for her response to an incident on February 8, 2014 where a neighbor began banging on her residence's door. Reportedly, the neighbor's husband was trying to commit suicide. Officer Allen entered the other residence and found the victim lying on the floor but not breathing. Allen moved the victim's head to open his airway and rolled him over onto his back at which time he began breathing normally. Officer Allen's calm and collected response to the critical incident prevented a different outcome from occurring.

Officer Shane Sukowaski and Officer Daniel Nesbitt received Lifesaving Awards for their quick actions at an incident on July 14, 2014. Both officers responded to a cardiac arrest call where, upon arrival, the victim was found to have no pulse and not breathing. Officer Nesbitt began to administer chest compressions while Officer Sukowaski attached AED pads to the victim. Officer Nesbitt continued compressions until the AED advised him to stop and a shock was administered by Officer Sukowaski. Officer Nesbitt continued chest compressions while Officer Sukowaski placed a CPR Mask on the victim and began to administer rescue breaths. The victim began to breathe on his own and was handled by medics before being transported to the hospital. The victim made a full recovery thanks to the actions of the two officers while on the scene.

Officer Samantha Blake was presented with a Lifesaving Award for her response to an incident on April 12, 2014 involving the report of a cardiac arrest. Upon arrival at the scene, Officer Blake checked for pulse on the victim and found none. She began CPR and repeated the process three times after which the victim began taking breaths on his own. Medics arrived shortly thereafter and, following treatment, transported the victim to the hospital. If it was not for the quick actions of Officer Blake, the victim may not have survived.

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