

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE _____

March 4, 2019



Contact:

Diana L. Klink
Office: 757.514.4104
Mobile: 757.359.1845

SUFFOLK POLICE DEPARTMENT PROMOTIONAL CEREMONY

SUFFOLK, VA (March 1, 2019) The Suffolk Police Department promoted 17 deserving individuals during a Promotional Ceremony held at Suffolk City Hall on Thursday, February 28, 2019.

Mayor Linda T. Johnson provided remarks after the promotees were sworn in and stated the following: "Congratulations for your individual accomplishments, and thank you for the courage and conviction of your characters, your sincerity of purpose and for the extraordinary services you will provide and sacrifices you will make on behalf of all of the citizens of Suffolk."

Those promoted included the following:

Major Alfred Chandler

Alfred Chandler has been with the Suffolk Police Department since April 1999 following his completion of the 40th Session of the Chesapeake Police Academy, where he served as Class President and graduated with honors. He has served in the Uniform Patrol Division, Criminal Investigations Division as a Detective, and was promoted to Sergeant in 2007. While serving in this capacity, he earned his Associate's Degree in Liberal Arts and a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice from

Saint Leo University. He was promoted in 2013 to the rank of Lieutenant, and was instrumental in the activation of the Search and Rescue Team. He was a Certified Hostage Negotiator and commanded that unit, and also received his Master's of Science in Criminal Justice Degree from Saint Leo University. In 2016, he was promoted to the rank of Captain, and served as the Sector One Patrol Division Precinct Commander. In 2017, he was selected to attend and successfully completed the prestigious 270th Session of the FBI National Academy in Quantico. He has received multiple awards during his time with the Department including departmental commendations and two lifesaving awards. Chandler is extremely active in the community and serves as the Assistant Pastor of Worship and Arts at Zion Community Church, a member of the Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc., and the Abraham Grand Lodge of Virginia. On February 1, 2019, Chandler was promoted to the rank of Major as the Deputy Chief of Investigations.

Captain Jesse Epperson

Jesse Epperson joined the Suffolk Police Department in July 2006. After completing Basic Law Enforcement Training at Hampton Roads Criminal Justice Training Academy he was assigned to Uniform Patrol. In 2010, Epperson was assigned to the Neighborhood Enforcement Team (N.E.T.) as a gang investigator. He became certified as a gang specialist and general instructor. In 2011, Epperson was promoted to the rank of Sergeant and was transferred to Uniform Patrol. In 2012, Epperson was assigned as the Sergeant in charge of the Department's Underwater Search and Recovery Unit. In 2013, Epperson was transferred to the Investigations Division as the supervisor of the downtown N.E.T. Unit. In September 2014, he was transferred to the Professional Standards Division as the Internal Affairs Sergeant. During his time in Internal Affairs, he also supervised the Department's Background and Recruiting Unit. He was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant in 2016 as the Command Level Officer of the Special Investigations Section, where he supervised the Special Investigations Unit and the Neighborhood Enforcement Teams. He was assigned as commander of the Underwater Search and Recovery Unit. He has received numerous awards including Supervisor of the Year on two occasions, several departmental

commendations and noteworthy performance awards, and a community service award. Epperson earned a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Troy University and a Bachelor's in Criminal Justice from ODU. He was promoted to the rank of Captain on February 1, 2019 and put in command of Precinct 1 in the Operations Division.

Lieutenant Cheryl Balzer

Cheryl Balzer began her career with the Suffolk Police Department in 2004 following in the footsteps of her great-grandfather, grandfather, uncle and brother. She spent her first 4 years in Uniform Patrol before being transferred to Criminal Investigations where she was assigned to the Youth & Family Services division for 5 years. She was promoted to Sergeant in 2013 and served in Uniform Patrol and Administration in the training division. She was previously a member of the Honor Guard, worked as the Crime Line Coordinator, and was an instructor with the Crisis Intervention Team and a Hostage Negotiator. She was promoted to Lieutenant and is currently assigned to the Precinct 2 day shift.

Lieutenant Jeffrey Lurie

Jeff Lurie began his career with the Suffolk Police Department in July of 2009. He was initially assigned to Uniform Patrol until transferring to Criminal Investigations as a Detective in November of 2011. In September of 2014, he was promoted to the rank of Sergeant. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and will complete his Master's degree in Public Administration and Disaster Management later this year. Throughout his career with the Suffolk Police Department, Lurie has been assigned to the SWAT Team, Mobile Command Bus Unit, Crisis Negotiations Team, and is now the commander of the Mobile Field Force Unit. He's earned several certifications from the US Department of Homeland Security to include Field Force Operations, Instructor Training Certification, and Incident Response to Terrorist Bombings Instructor. He was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant and is assigned to Sector 1 evening shift.

Lieutenant James Sobers

James Sobers was hired with the Suffolk Police Department in January 2008. He served in Uniform Patrol from 2008 to 2012 as a Field Training Officer, Fatal Crash Investigator and was awarded the MADD award in 2012 for his efforts in DUI enforcement. In 2013 James Sobers was transferred to the traffic unit and then promoted to Sergeant, and since that time was transferred to Uniform Patrol, and later to Administration as the Training, Inspections and Accreditation Sergeant. While assigned to Administration, he became a General Instructor, Mobile Field Force supervisor and Drone Unit supervisor. He was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant and is currently assigned to the Precinct Two Midnight shift.

Sergeant Wallace Weatherly

Wallace Weatherly began his career with the Suffolk Police Department in March of 2006. He was assigned to the Neighborhood Enforcement Team in 2008. In 2010, he was assigned to the Special Investigations Unit. While in the Special Investigations Unit he was partnered with K9 Rajjo and they were certified as a narcotics detection K9 team. He served seven years as a SWAT Operator and Sniper. He was a field training officer and fatality investigator and has also earned numerous instructorships. He was promoted to the rank of Sergeant and is currently assigned to Sector 2 Evening shift.

Sergeant Aaron Smith

Aaron Smith was hired by the Suffolk Police Department in March of 2013. He has served in the Uniform Patrol, Criminal Investigations and Special Operations Divisions and while assigned has served as a patrol officer, School Resource Office and a member of the Neighborhood Enforcement Team along with ancillary duties in each assignment. He has obtained several certifications, including through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in incident management and response to terrorist bombings and other events. He has recently been appointed as the Sergeant of the Underwater Search and Recovery Team and is a member of the Honor Guard.

He was promoted to the rank of Sergeant and is assigned to the Second Precinct, Midnight Shift.

Sergeant Joe Rivera

Joe Rivera joined the Suffolk Police Department in 2007. After graduating from the Hampton Roads Criminal Justice Training Academy, he was assigned to Uniform Patrol Precinct 1. During his time with the Department he became a member of the SWAT Team, Honor Guard and was assigned to the Neighborhood Enforcement Team. He has obtained several certifications. He was promoted to Sergeant and is assigned as an evening shift supervisor in Precinct 1 which is where he began his career nearly 12 years ago.

Sergeant Ashley Shockley

Ashley Shockley attended the Hampton Roads Criminal Justice Training Academy in 2012. After graduation and completion of Field Training, she served in Uniform Patrol and has earned numerous certifications. She has received Officer of the Quarter Awards, Departmental Commendations, and a Lifesaving Award. She holds a Bachelor's of Science in Business Administration from Liberty University and will graduate with her Master's of Science in Criminal Justice this coming May. She was promoted to Sergeant in August 2018.

Sergeant William Bradshaw

William Bradshaw joined the Suffolk Police Department in May of 2005. After completing the Hampton Roads Regional Training Academy and his FTO phase he was assigned to Sector 1 Uniform Patrol where he earned several certifications. He was assigned to both the Mobile Field Force team and the Drone team and has received several awards in his time with the Department including a Community service award, 3 Department Commendations, and 2 Life Saving awards. He was promoted to Sergeant and is currently assigned to Sector 2 evening shift.

The following six Master Police Officers were promoted on July 15, 2018:

Master Police Officer Jay Burton

Jay Burton was hired in March 2008 and completed training at the Hampton Roads Criminal Justice Training Academy in June 2008. He has been assigned to Uniform Patrol and Criminal Investigations during his career and is currently assigned to Uniform Patrol and serves as a Field Training Officer for the department. He has earned multiple certifications and has received multiple awards including Officer of the Week, Evidence Technician of the Quarter, Department Commendations, Mothers Against Drunk Driving award for DUI enforcement and a United States Attorney Public Service Award. He is a negotiator for the Crisis Negotiation Team and is a pilot for the Unmanned Aircraft System Team.

Master Police Officer Benjamin Johnson

Ben Johnson was hired in May 2001 after serving with the Wadesboro North Carolina Police Department. He attended the 43rd class of the Chesapeake Academy and when completed, was assigned to Uniform Patrol in both Precincts. He has obtained numerous certifications and has been a member of the Underwater Search and Recovery Team since 2007. He was promoted to the rank of Senior Police Officer in 2015 and Master Police Officer in July of 2018.

Master Police Officer John Lampe

John Lampe was hired in July 2007 and completed training at the Hampton Roads Criminal Justice Training Academy in October 2007. Previously, he served in the United States Navy from 1986 through 2007 achieving the rank of Chief Petty Officer. Throughout his career he has been assigned to Uniform Patrol, DUI Task Force, and School Resource Officer. He has earned multiple certifications, numerous awards and ancillary duties.

Master Police Officer Ryan Linville

Investigator Ryan Linville was hired by the Suffolk Police Department in March 2007. He graduated from the Hampton Roads Criminal Justice Training Academy in July

2007, and was assigned to Uniform Patrol until July 2011. From July 2011 to February 2015 he was assigned to Criminal Investigations Neighborhood Enforcement Team. In February 2015 he was transferred to the Special Investigation Section where he is currently assigned. Investigator Linville has been a member of the SWAT team for 8 years and a Police Motorcycle Operator for 5 years.

Master Police Officer Heather Linville

Detective MPO Heather Linville was hired by the Suffolk Police Department in July of 2009, after serving as an active duty member of the United States Navy in Aviation. She started her career in Uniform Patrol Sector 1 and remained there until she was named the Department's Accreditation Manager in 2012. In March of 2015, Detective Linville transferred to Criminal Investigations where she has served in the Department's Special Victims Unit ever since. She was responsible for establishing an MOU with the National ICAC (Internet Crimes Against Children) Task Force and currently serves as the Department's only ICAC Task Force member. She has been awarded Officer of the Year, is a General Instructor, and is a member of the Regional Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) as well as a sitting member of the Hampton Roads Child Fatality Team.

Master Police Officer Christopher Scherer

MPO/Detective Christopher Scherer began his career at the Suffolk Police Department in 2003. He graduated from the 45th session of the Chesapeake Police Academy. He then went on to serve 7 years in uniform patrol in the first precinct, after which he was transferred to the Detective Bureau and spent several years in general assignment before being transferred to the Second Precinct burglary unit where he now serves.

Communications Lead Operator Jodi Cuffee

Communications Lead Operator (CLO) Jodi Cuffee is a Suffolk Native who was hired by the Suffolk Police Department in May 2008. She completed the Hampton Roads Criminal Justice Training Academy Basic Dispatch Course. In September 2008, she

earned a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice. She has spent several years as a Certified Training Officer training new dispatchers. In February 2017, she was given a special assignment where she was tasked to focus her time on the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) to aid our 911 center in becoming CALEA accredited. CLO Cuffee was awarded Suffolk Police Department's "Dispatcher of the Year" in 2017. Jodi Cuffee was promoted to Communications Lead Operator on July 15, 2018.

Following the Promotional Ceremony, a reception was held at Suffolk Police Headquarters Training Room.

###