

COUNTY OF KENT
OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF

LAWRENCE A. STELMA, SHERIFF



Sheriff Larry Stelma would like to extend a personal invitation to all our friends in the media to attend the Kent County Sheriff's Office Annual Awards Ceremony scheduled on Thursday, May 4, 2017, doors open at 5 PM, award presentation starts at 6 PM, at the Kent County Sheriff's Office Equestrian Training Center, 4687 Kroes Avenue, Rockford.

Awards to be presented include a Distinguished Police Service award, Life Saving awards, Department Bravery Awards, and Unit Citations. Citizens will also be recognized for their contributions to public safety; receiving Life Saving Awards and Letters of Appreciation.

We are also pleased to announce that the following employees have been selected as the 2016 Deputies of the Year and Civilian Employee of the Year (see attached information):

Jennifer Robinson, Emergency Communications Supervisor 1, selected as 2016 Civilian Employee of the Year

Deputy Paul Rodriguez, selected as 2016 Deputy of the Year - Corrections

Deputy Andrew Kozal, selected as 2016 Deputy of the Year - Law Enforcement

John Shumay, selected as the 2016 Traffic Squad Special Deputy of the Year

These individuals will be honored during the Kent County Sheriff Department Annual Awards Ceremony on Thursday, May 4, 2017. Please join us in celebrating all of these accomplishments.

Media contact: Undersheriff Michelle LaJoye-Young– 616-632-6236

2016 CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR
JENNIFER ROBINSON, ECS 1



It is with great pleasure that the Kent County Sheriff's Office name Jennifer Robinson as 2016 Civilian Employee of the Year.

Jennifer began her career at the Kent County Sheriff Department on June 10, 2010 as an Emergency Communications Operator 1 in the Communications Center. Her duties included receiving emergency calls, dispatching proper equipment or personnel, typing call notes, and maintaining two-way radio communication for first responders.

On September 30, 2013, she was promoted to Emergency Communications Supervisor 1, providing work direction for operators responsible for dispatching emergency calls.

Jennifer wears many hats and, with the addition of Wyoming Public Safety, her role has become more complex. She not only supervises "C" squad, she also manages the Communication Training Officer (CTO) program and oversees the Dispatch Academy.

Jennifer is focused on the success of the CTO program and Dispatch Academy and it shows in her dedication. Jennifer researches new training materials and facilitates group discussions allowing trainers to help new ECOs reach their goals. She constantly strives to learn from each academy and implement changes that will lead to success. Jennifer is available to the CTOs to help navigate difficult scenarios. She is known to come in on her time off to aid a trainer or new hire. Jennifer established creative scheduling tactics to get new ECOs trained, while focusing on not creating trainer burnout.

Jennifer creates a comfortable and productive work environment, she exhibits high morale, is knowledgeable, and decisive. Her squad is free to make confident decisions knowing she will back them.

Jennifer leads by example. Her commitment and dedication is responsible for developing the next generation of dispatchers into the professionals the Kent County community expects from the Sheriff Department.

Jennifer Robinson has exhibited qualities and standards of excellence well worthy of our praise. Along with your fellow officers, I wish to extend my personal gratitude for a job well done and congratulations on being named 2016 Civilian Employee of the Year.

2016 DEPUTY OF THE YEAR - CORRECTIONS DEPUTY PAUL RODRIGUEZ



It is with great pleasure the Kent County Sheriff Department name Deputy Paul Rodriguez the 2016 Deputy of the Year – Corrections.

Paul began his career at the Kent County Sheriff Department on February 14, 2000 as a Corrections Officer, responsible for the general supervision and custody of inmates, conducting inmate searches, transfers, and investigations regarding alleged incidents within the facility.

Paul is assigned to night shift as a C-Letter, assigned as D/B rover. He is willing and capable to work any position within the jail and does so without complaint.

Deputy Rodriguez possesses great communications skills. Not only when relating with his co-workers but a necessity when diffusing situations with inmates. Deputy Rodriguez is knowledgeable in tactics to manage the jail population. He assists his partners with policy and best practices while managing the inmate population. He provides less experienced staff with veteran leadership when handling adverse situations within the jail.

Deputy Rodriguez is extremely reliable and always responds for calls for assistance. He offers assistance with floor activities without hesitation. He is a great asset and is a great representative for how a deputy should perform. He takes time to mentor staff and has a great attitude that is contagious and improves the overall attitude of the shift.

Deputy Rodriguez is trusted and respected by his peers. He is professional and respectful to the inmate population. He is a team player ensuring others feel supported and safe. He's energetic, motivational, and has a high work ethic.

Deputy Paul Rodriguez has exhibited qualities and standards of excellence well worthy of our praise. Along with your fellow officers, I wish to extend my personal gratitude for a job well done and congratulations on being named 2016 Deputy of the Year – Corrections.

2016 DEPUTY OF THE YEAR - LAW ENFORCEMENT DEPUTY ANDREW KOZAL



It is with great pleasure that the Kent County Sheriff Department name Deputy Andrew “Andy” Kozal the 2016 Deputy of the Year - Law Enforcement.

Andy began his career at the Kent County Sheriff Department as an Emergency Communications Operator on March 11, 2002. He was transferred to a County Patrol Officer on September 22, 2003. Since 2007, he has been assigned as School Resource Officer (SRO) at Northview High School. As an SRO, Andy trained 400 staff members at Northview Public Schools in active shooter response, including teaching Civilian Response to Active Shooter (CRASE). In Fall 2016, Andy brought CRASE training to a Church Safety Summit, teaching 150 church staff members.

Andy builds relationships with students by simply being present and interacting with them. He gives short safety programs teaching Halloween, bike, and gun safety. During Public Safety Day, Andy invites police and firefighters to serve lunch to over 300 students. For students struggling with behavior issues, he works with teachers, counselors, and parents to mentor the student and reinforce good behaviors. If the student meets their goals, they are awarded by being a “junior deputy” for the day. In the 7th-8th grades, Andy uses the Teaching, Educations, and Mentoring (T.E.A.M) program, teaching good citizenship, laws, leadership, and police work, using current events for that day’s lesson.

Andy works with Plainfield Fire and Mercy Health Systems to develop and complete a fatal car crash presentation for the junior class, including multiple “victims,” crashed vehicles, emergency responders, extractions, an emergency room scene, and courtroom re-enactment. The presentation takes the students through an emotional roller coaster and has an immense impact, bringing home the realization of the dangers of distracted driving.

In order to provide the school district the greatest value, a School Resource Officer must build a trusting relationship, assess their needs, and develop pertinent school programs. Andy exemplifies this ability in his work as the Northview’s School Resource Officer.

Deputy Andrew Kozal has exhibited qualities and standards of excellence well worthy of our praise. Along with your fellow officers, I wish to extend my personal gratitude for a job well done and congratulations on being named 2016 Deputy of the Year - Law Enforcement.

**KENT COUNTY TRAFFIC SQUAD
2016 SPECIAL DEPUTY OF THE YEAR
JOHN SHUMAY**



It is with great pleasure that the Kent County Traffic Squad name Deputy John Shumay the 2016 Traffic Squad Special Deputy of the Year.

John Shumay joined the Kent County Sheriff Department's Traffic Squad in August of 2009. He completed and graduated from the Traffic Squad Reserve Officer Academy in May of 2010. Although John has been involved in several varying aspects of The Squad, he has been particularly passionate about training and the reserve academy. In 2014 he was appointed Training Lieutenant and Senior Lieutenant in 2015, becoming part of The Squad's administrative team. In that position, he has been tasked with managing and coordinating the academy for the past three years.

Managing the academy is no small task as it requires an annual review and update of the classes and curriculum, which is done in conjunction with the Department's Training Unit. Once that process is completed, John is responsible for coordinating and scheduling the classes, the instructors, and then conducting the four-plus hour classes on Monday and Wednesday evenings from the first of December through mid-May of the following year. This constitutes a significant commitment of both time and energy!

In addition to his commitment to the academy, John coordinates the annual continuing education and training for those who are in the Enforcement Unit. He also maintains an active involvement in the Enforcement Unit and the administrative team.

Outside of the time he dedicates to The Squad, John has significant experience in boxing, having sparred with ranked boxers and fought in the Michigan Golden Gloves and he continues to preserve these skills. Maintaining a high level of physical fitness is an integral part of his daily routine.

John is a graduate of West Michigan University with a degree in Business Administration and General Management with additional studies in Criminal Justice, Business Law, Psychology and Organizational Behavior. When he is not devoting time to The Squad or his other activities, he finds sufficient time to commit to his position as General Operations Manager at FCI Automation, an automation and fluid power distributor in Wyoming.

Deputy John Shumay has exhibited qualities and standards of excellence well worthy of our praise. Along with your fellow officers, I wish to extend my personal gratitude for a job well done and congratulations on being named 2016 Kent County Traffic Squad Special Deputy of the Year.