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Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce Honors Public Safety Heroes at 46th Annual Public Safety Awards Luncheon

ROCKVILLE, MD: On Friday, March 13, 2020, the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC) will host its 46th Annual Public Safety Awards Luncheon. This is the largest valor event of its kind in the D.C. Metropolitan Region, honoring public safety personnel from Montgomery County's five public safety agencies. The event takes place from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the Bethesda North Marriott Hotel and County Conference Center.

The event will begin with an invitation-only Meet the Chiefs Reception at 10:00 a.m. sponsored by **Pepco – An Exelon Company**. Concurrently, a General Reception will take place, sponsored by **Marriott International, Inc.**

The luncheon and awards ceremony will begin promptly at 11:30 a.m. This year's honorees award winners include:

- Richard Leotta, The Officer Noah Aaron Leotta Foundation
- Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)
- Target
- Valor Awards, Unit Citations, and Community Service Awards (announced live at the event)

Richard Leotta of The Officer Noah Aaron Leotta Foundation is the 2020 Public Safety Champion of the Year. This award recognizes an organization or individual who advances the mission of public safety agencies in Montgomery County through their advocacy.

“We are grateful and humbled to receive this prestigious award in the memory and service of Officer Noah Leotta and all the victims of drunk and drugged driving,” said **Richard Leotta**. “This award recognizes and acknowledges the continuing efforts and progress we are making to eliminate drunk and drugged driving. Drunk and drugged driving is a life and death issue that impacts all of us.”

The 2020 Public Safety Government Partner of the Year is **Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)**. This award recognizes a federal, state, or other governmental agency that strengthens Montgomery County public safety agencies through outstanding leadership and collaboration to ensure a positive and integrated response to challenges that impact the National Capital Region.

Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce

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“Partnerships play a vital role in keeping our students safe every day,” said **Montgomery County Public Schools Superintendent Jack R. Smith**. “We are especially grateful for our partnership with the Montgomery County Police Department, other law enforcement and public safety agencies in the County, and the many officers who work in our schools and serve our community. We thank the Chamber of Commerce for this award and look forward to building many more partnerships that will help our more than 165,000 students to thrive in the future.”

“The Board of Education thanks the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce for this recognition,” said **Montgomery County Board of Education President Shebra Evans**. “We appreciate the many partnerships that help us keep our students safe every day, as well as introduce them to leadership opportunities and meaningful careers in public safety.”

Target is this year’s Public Safety Corporate Vital Link, presented by **TD Bank**. This award recognizes a commercial enterprise that transforms and advances the mission of public safety agencies in Montgomery County, Maryland to meet the 21st Century challenges that impact the National Capital Region.

All the Valor Awards, Unit Citations, and Community Service Awards will be announced and presented during the awards ceremony. The Valor Awards recognize acts of bravery beyond the call of duty performed at great personal risk. Unit Citations recognize the outstanding collective performances of a unit or units whose professionalism and actions demonstrate excellence in response to a public safety incident. Community Service Awards are presented for volunteer dedication and initiative above and beyond the call of duty over time that has affected and benefited the citizens of Montgomery County and beyond. Community Service Awards include: Chief Bernard D. Crooke Jr. Community Service Award (Police), Chief Leslie B. Thompson Community Service Award (Fire), Chief Donald A. Deering Community Service Award (Park Police). To view the full list of past winners, visit <https://www.mccc.md.com/publicsafetyawards.html#Archive>.

The Chair of the 46th Annual Public Safety Awards Luncheon is **Steven A. Robins, Esq.**, Managing Partner at **Lerch, Early & Brewer Chtd.**, past MCCC Board Chair, and member of MCCC’s Board of Directors. Mr. Robins is chairing the Public Safety Awards Luncheon for the 20th year.

The emcees for this year’s event are **Jim Handly**, Evening Anchor for **NBC Washington** (Channel 4) and **Claudia Curiel**, Anchor/Reporter for **Telemundo Washington, DC** (Telemundo 44).

To learn more about registration and sponsorship, please visit www.mccc.md.com/publicsafetyawards.html.

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About the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC) is a membership organization that accelerates members’ success through effective advocacy, programs, and events. Its membership includes small, medium, and large organizations representing a wide range of industries. For more information, visit www.mccc.md.com.

About the Annual Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce Public Safety Awards

The Public Safety Awards Luncheon is an outgrowth of Montgomery County Executive James P. Gleason’s Executive Order, dated April 25, 1974, establishing the official awards program in cooperation with the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce.

This program originally provided official recognition to Montgomery County Police Officers and Firefighter/Rescuers and Emergency Medical personnel who performed heroic acts and community service which go beyond the call of duty.

In December 2000, the Public Safety Awards Committee welcomed the Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office and the Maryland-National Capital Park Police, Montgomery County Division. In January 2003, they welcomed the Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation as part of the public safety awards program.

Nominations for the awards come from field supervisors through official channels to respective department administrations: Administrator, Montgomery County Fire & Rescue Service; Chief, Montgomery County Department of Police; Sheriff, Montgomery County Sheriff's Office; Chief, Maryland-National Capital Park Police, Montgomery County Division; and Director, Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation. The department leaders then present the nominations to the Public Safety Awards Selection Committee for final determination.