



EMBARGOED UNTIL 12:00 PM
March 31, 2017

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**Business, Government, and Public Safety Leaders Celebrate Montgomery County's
Heroes at the 43rd Annual MCCC Public Safety Awards Luncheon**

Rockville, MD – On March 31, 2017, the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC) assembled over 1,100 business, government, and public safety leaders at the 43rd Annual MCCC Public Safety Awards Luncheon to thank the brave men and women who protect our community 24/7.

In total, there were 21 Valor Award Recipients for 8 incidents, 3 Unit Citations and 1 MCCC Public Safety Community Service Award. Incidents were presented by emcees Aaron Gilchrist, NBC News4 Anchor, and Erika Gonzalez, NBC News4 Anchor.

For more information on the event and award recipients, see the 43rd Annual MCCC Public Safety Awards [program book](#).

The event culminated with a video showing dramatic body camera footage from the August 2016 Flower Branch Apartment fire where MCPD and MCFRS worked tirelessly to save and protect lives. The video will be posted on the Montgomery County Police website, www.mymcpnews.com on Friday, March 31.

Recognized for their actions in the Flower Branch Apartment Fire were:

- Police Officer III Jeffrey Hughes (Silver)
- Fire Fighter Rescuer III David Braun (Bronze)

In addition, two MCCC Unit Citation of Valor awards were presented for actions related to the incident:

- Montgomery County Department of Police 3rd District patrol officers, represented by Sergeant Troy Brenner, Corporal Jason Halko, Sergeant Paul Bandholz
- Montgomery County Fire and Rescue Service members.
 - Captain William Cooke (Truck 716)
 - Fire Fighter Rescuer III Enrique Escolero (Truck 716)
 - Fire Fighter Rescuer III David Wakeley (Paramedic Engine 701)

Other incidents and individuals recognized for their response and actions in 2016 included:

- Shooter in Clarksburg - Corporal Johnny Beason (Silver)
- Deadly Shooting Spree in Prince George's and Montgomery Counties
 - Police Officer III David Kocevar (Bronze)

- Members of the Montgomery County Police Department Repeat Offenders Unit: Sergeant Brady Clouser, Corporal Jeffrey Rachael, Detective Donnie Oaks, Detective Kenneth Halter, Detective Roger St. Louis, Detective Thomas Tippet, Detective Richard Volpe, Detective Charles Bullock, Detective Dominic Dinisio (Bronze)
- Suicide Attempt in Germantown - Police Officer III Dale Steffen (Honorable Mention)
- Domestic Violence in Germantown - Sergeant Manuel Saponara and Police Officer III Brian Holloway (Honorable Mention)
- Lifesaving attempt in Pre-Release Center - Resident Supervisor II Alicia Jackson and Resident Supervisor III Andre Stepp (Honorable Mention)
- Suicide Attempt in Silver Spring - Deputy Sheriff III Jason Carew and Deputy Sheriff II Steven McDonald (Honorable Mention)
- North Hampton Drive Repeat Offender - Police Officer III Yves Didier N’Kodia (Honorable Mention)

An MCCC Unit Citation was awarded to:

- Montgomery County Department of Correction and Rehabilitation Critical Stress Management Team which manages the Critical Incident Stress Management Program to respond to the escalating need to reduce employee workplace and personal stress associated with the public safety profession.

An MCCC Public Safety Community Service Award was presented to:

- Sergeant Sabrina Pirtle, a 16 year veteran of the Maryland-National Capital Park Police who founded JEDI Works, Incorporated that encourages young people to help build communities, explore their talents and develop skills to support a sustainable community.

The United States Attorney’s Office for the District of Maryland received the MCCC Public Safety Government Partner of the Year for their investigation and prosecution of a number of complex cases that have led to the arrest and sentencing of the most dangerous offenders. The award was sponsored by Motorola Solutions and accepted by United States Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein.

The MCCC Public Safety Corporate Vital Link award, sponsored by TD Bank, was given to the Coalition of Ignition Interlock Manufacturers: Intox-a-lock, LifeSafer, and Smart Start. These three companies manufacture interlock devices that prevent a driver from starting a vehicle if alcohol is detected on the driver’s breath. The devices include an image of Officer Noah Leotta who died from injuries sustained when he was struck by a drunk driver while conducting a traffic stop.

This year, MCCC also recognized a Public Safety Champion of the Year, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). MADD mobilized citizens and law enforcement officers from across the State to give testimony and provide letters of support for Noah’s Law, which passed in 2016. The award was sponsored by Fitzgerald’s Lakeforest Toyota.

Congressman Chris Van Hollen, Congressman John Delaney, Congressman Jamie Raskin, Montgomery County Executive Isiah Leggett, and Montgomery County Council President Roger Berliner also shared their gratitude during the ceremony.

Prior to the Awards Ceremony, awardees and special guests met the five Public Safety Chiefs of Montgomery County at the Meet the Chiefs Reception, sponsored by Pepco, an Exelon Corporation, followed by the General Reception, sponsored by Total Wine & More.

The Annual MCCC Public Safety Awards is the largest of its kind in the region. Forty three years ago, the MCCC was chartered by Montgomery County Government to host an annual event where the community, colleagues, families, citizens and officials could honor first responders from the public safety agencies.

The MCCC PSA Committee, chaired for the last 16 years by Steven A. Robins of Lerch, Early and Brewer, meets for months to review incidents and select award winners. Since the event began, MCCC has recognized 40 Gold, 139 Silver, 2,324 Bronze, 238 Honorable Mentions, and 14 Unit Citations for a total of 665 Valor Awards.

Photos from the event will be available on the [event web page](#).

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