



Yolo County Sheriff's Office

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Inmate Education
Inmate Programs
Inmate Training

Coroner's Section
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Field Operations
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Civil
Community Resources
Crime Prevention
Department Training
Investigations
Marine Patrol
Patrol
Search & Rescue
Aero Squadron
Cadets
Posse Reserves
STARS

Animal Services
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Leinberger Detention
(530) 668-5254
Corrections
Inmate Work Programs

Monroe Detention
(530) 668-5245
Corrections
Court Services
Foods Services
Records
Transportation

Press Release

Subject: 2015 Traffic Safety Award Winner

Contact: Sgt. Matthew Davis (530) 668-5280

Date: May 26, 2015

During National Police Week in Washington D.C. the Yolo County Sheriff's Office was honored by the "Destination Zero" program with the 2015 Traffic Safety Award. The National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund's "Destination Zero" program was created to provide all U.S. law enforcement agencies with the ability to research successful and/or promising officer safety and wellness programs and identify the resources necessary to begin their own risk management initiatives. Undersheriff Tom Lopez and Captain Larry Cecchettini received this award on behalf of the agency. Over 100 programs were submitted by law enforcement agencies nationwide with Yolo County receiving the inaugural Traffic Safety Award which will now be presented annually to the law enforcement agency that has taken proactive measures to demonstrate definitively, a program's success in improving officer traffic-related safety practices.

After Captain Cecchettini attended a P.O.S.T. "Safe Driving Symposium" in October 2012 which stressed the tenets of the Below 100 initiative, Sheriff Prieto embraced the concept and committed the agency to making this program successful. The Yolo County Sheriff's Office embarked on a pioneering effort to improve traffic safety within our 240-member agency. Below 100 is an Initiative to reduce police line-of-duty deaths to fewer than one hundred per year.

Leveraging data from the department's existing dashboard camera system that sends an "activation" whenever the vehicle exceeds 90 MPH, our office learned that there had been 616 instances of deputies exceeding 90 MPH in the most recent 12-month period. We also learned that department crashes during the past 10 years had injured, on average, 1.5 deputies per year, forcing two deputies into

"Service Without Limitations"

early retirement. The financial cost for the same period exceeded \$1 million in claims, damages, and legal fees.

In an effort to slow our deputies down, the agency began to monitor and address the excessive speed activations. In the three months following implementation of the program, unjustified speed activations dropped to 39 high-speed activations and half of the deputies dropped their activations to zero. The program recognized deputies who were in compliance operating their vehicles in a safe manner and rewarded them with certificates and department challenge coins. Those deputies who continued to record unjustified activations were issued memorandums of counseling in an effort to bring them into compliance.

Applying tenets from the Below 100 and the speed monitoring programs, the Sheriff's Office reduced unjustified speed activations by 91% in the first year and 94% in the second year (compared to pre-training activation levels). Since beginning the traffic program, there have been zero on-duty, at fault crashes by department personnel.

The agency uses both materials provided by Below 100, and internally created materials that showcase our own office's crash statistics, and videos of officer-involved crashes from our agency's dashboard cameras. The Sheriff's Office also created promotional posters, including one that shows the faces of two young sisters, their crushed vehicle, and a wrecked patrol car of an out of state agency belonging to the trooper who caused the crash. The trooper was driving in excess of 125 MPH while simultaneously operating a mobile in-car computer and cell phone. Unfortunately, the sisters were killed.

In addition to training, the Sheriff's Office now mandates that deputies record an audible justification for exceeding 90 MPH threshold (the department does acknowledge that there are justifiable circumstances). The patrol Lieutenants are required to review each speed activation monthly, in order to address concerns or violations of the policy. The department estimates this initiative has saved approximately \$250,000 in claims and damages.