



2025 STATE OF TEXAS LAW ENFORCEMENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARD HONOREES

PUBLIC SERVICE

Communications Manager Elias Martinez
Edinburg Police Department

School Resource Officer Dan Thomas
Celina Police Department

Senior Officer Travis Pace
Corpus Christi Police Department

Detective Jeff Prater
Colleyville Police Department

Officer William Edward Blackburn, III
Knox City Police Department

Officer Mitch Daniel
Officer Code Nelson
Senior Officer Chris Campbell
Houston Police Department

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Longview Police Department

Sergeant Mark F. Stahlin
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Detective Nathan Bishop
Detective Frank King
Sergeant Grant Gildon
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VALOR

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Officer Robert Garcia
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Deputy Jerry Montiel
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Sergeant Garrett Scott Lindley
Harris County Constable's Office - Precinct 4

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Officer Scott Durfee
Officer James Marks
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Officer Dominique Akins
Allen Police Department



PUBLIC SERVICE

The following recipients of the 2025 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Public Service have taken the initiative to create or participate in a program or system, which has a significant positive impact on the general population of a community, exceeding the normal expectations of job performance.



Communications Manager Elias Martinez
Edinburg Police Department
Public Service

Elias Martinez played a crucial role in implementing new features for his department's 911 system, *Intrado Multimedia-to-911*.

This software utilizes over-the-top communication technology to transmit media information over the internet from wireless callers. This information may include pictures or live video streams with sound. With access to the caller's camera, dispatchers can examine the situation more thoroughly and expedite the appropriate help.

The project began in March 2024 when the Rio Grande Valley Communication District approached the Edinburg Police Department to spearhead the implementation of the new system. Martinez helped lead the initiative, working alongside communication supervisors to establish necessary policies and procedures. Additionally, he sought insight from agencies outside the area to identify best practices.

Training materials were developed for dispatchers who would be interacting with the public while using this service. *Intrado Multimedia-to-911* was successfully completed by December 2024 and is now actively used by the public. Currently, the Rio Grande Valley Communication District is planning to expand the service to other agencies, positioning the Edinburg Police Department Communications Division as a key subject matter expert.

Martinez strives to elevate innovation in the telecommunicator's role in the ever-changing world of law enforcement.



**School Resource Officer Dan Thomas
Celina Police Department
Public Service**

In addition to fostering a strong bond with students as a School Resource Officer, Officer Dan Thomas organizes extracurricular programs designed to promote community building.

He led the annual summer Junior Police Academy program, which focuses on teaching junior high students basic law enforcement functions and building their confidence through team-building activities. Since the program's inception in July 2024, eight junior police academy classes were established with approximately 108 students having graduated. Additionally, one Advanced Junior Police Academy was completed.

Officer Thomas makes it a point to engage with students at various points throughout the day, showing genuine interest in their lives. Approaching every situation with empathy and patience, Thomas has earned the trust of the student body, who see him not only as a protector but also as a mentor.



**Senior Officer Travis Pace
Corpus Christi Police Department
Public Service**

Officer Travis Pace works in partnership with an array of businesses and organizations, instructing them on critical topics such as active shooter and human trafficking. This partnership was integral to Officer Pace where he assisted the Corpus Christi Regional Transportation Authority (CCRTA). Officer Pace created, implemented and taught an Active Shooter Training Program as well as a Human Trafficking Awareness Program. Furthermore, CCRTA soon benefitted by being nationally recognized for its efforts in Bus Security and Emergency Management.

The purpose of this special training is to safeguard Transit Authority patrons, the workforce, and the community. The training equips employees and community members with the knowledge and skills to effectively recognize and respond to these kinds of potential threats.

Officer Pace has been actively fostering the partnerships between the CCRTA and the Corpus Christi Police Department. His involvement in community initiatives, such as "Red Ribbon Week" and "Hide, Lock, and Take," has helped promote safety and security to CCRTA's customers and community.



**Detective Jeff Prater
Colleyville Police Department
Public Service**

Detective Prater's careful, quick actions have been beneficial to several residents, helping them recover stolen funds. His expertise in investigating fraudulent scams is done without seeking acknowledgment yet casts a positive light on the department. Detective Prater recently assisted an individual who was able to recover \$100,000 stolen from him.

When presented with this case, Detective Prater immediately recognized that the victim had nearly exceeded the five-day window banks require to report this crime. This is significant because banking institutions only hold the funds for five days before they release them.

Detective Prater worked with numerous victims, banks, and technology companies to get justice for elderly individuals from all over the nation were victimized and scammed out of millions of dollars via an elaborate romance scheme. His work on this investigation led him to become the 2021 IACP Leadership in the Prevention of Transnational Crime Award Recipient.

Detective Prater is dedicated to protecting the elderly community from fraud and works to restore their financial and personal dignity.



Officer William Edward Blackburn, III Knox City Police Department Public Service

Just a few years into his service with the Knox City Police Department, Officer William "Eddie" Blackburn has established a strong presence in the community.

The young officer has engaged with the community through several events such as National Night Out, Neighborhood Watch Meetings, Fourth of July Celebrations, Halloween Trunk or Treat, and others.

It's clear his commitment to serving goes far beyond the badge. Officer Blackburn continuously assists and coordinates the annual Knox City Community Luncheon, having served several hundred residents who might otherwise not have a meal during Thanksgiving.

Officer Blackburn has served as the designated Knox City Fire Marshal. Since his first year, he has collaborated with local stakeholders to provide every child in the school district with a smoke alarm to take home. He also maintains the department's social media pages, consistently giving tips on fire safety.

He is a member of Child Fatality Review Team and a certified Storm Spotter providing severe weather updates to the local community.

Officer Blackburn has planned and coordinated with other local leaders to establish the first annual 4H First Responders Camp. He has also authored the Knox City Juvenile Diversion Program and acted as the Assistant Youth Diversion Coordinator.

When he's not going above and beyond in his roles as an officer or volunteer firefighter, Blackburn has also served as a Little League coach, a volunteer at Knox County Hospital, and a member of the Knox City Elementary PTO and booster club.

From day one, the young officer has continued to strengthen the relationship between his department and the community through his unwavering commitment to serve.



**Senior Officer Chris Campbell
Officer Mitch Daniel
Officer Code Nelson
Houston Police Department
Public Service**

Recognizing the power of the technology and strategically positioning themselves in areas where suspects were most likely to be intercepted, Officers Daniel, Nelson, and Campbell utilized the FLOCK Safety System to recover over \$7.4 million worth of stolen vehicles. The FLOCK Safety System, a crime-fighting tool utilized by the Houston Police Department, employs roadway cameras to read license plates.

Their innovative use of the system yielded impressive statistics agency-wide while also contributing to an enhanced sense of security in the community. By apprehending individuals who posed a serious threat to public safety, the officers made a lasting impact on crime reduction in the city. Their initiative has demonstrated an unparalleled commitment to public safety.



PROFESSIONAL ACHIEVEMENT

The following recipients of the 2025 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Professional Achievement have, through personal initiative, fixity of purpose, persistence, or endeavor, created a program, organization, or system, which has a significant positive impact on the law enforcement profession.



**Sergeant Drew Allison
Longview Police Department
Professional Achievement**

In 2022, Sergeant Drew Allison worked to make the Longview Police Department a training hub in the state's northeast region for ALERRT active shooter training. While serving at one of the larger agencies in the area, Allison leveraged the department's resources to provide smaller, rural agencies with access to training.

After applying for and receiving grant funding, Allison's vision came to fruition. At the conclusion of 2024, training was accessible to over 50 agencies, including firefighters, emergency medical personnel, and law enforcement officers. As a regional training provider, Sergeant Allison has taught or administered over 60 end-user classes and 16 train-the-trainer classes, reaching more than 1,500 students.

Thanks to Sergeant Allison's work ethic and committed partnership, the Longview Police Department and ALERRT, have completed an MOU to establish the Northeast Texas ALERRT Training Hub.



**Sergeant Mark F. Stahlin
Houston Police Department
Professional Achievement**

As the principal investigator of fatal overdoses for the Houston Police Department, Sergeant Mark Stahlin has developed a personal wealth of investigative procedures and protocols. Since critical prosecution criteria with state and federal prosecutors was established, Sergeant Stahlin was able to file charges in nearly 20 fatal overdose cases, most of them before the Fentanyl Murder statutes were enacted. Prior to creating the department's Overdose Investigations Unit, no fatal overdoses had been prosecuted in Harris County.

Stahlin receives over 600 fatal overdose cases annually and prosecutes them when possible.

With his expertise, he has consistently provided training, consulting, and hands-on investigative assistance to numerous local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, as well as various prosecutors' offices.



**Detective Nathan Bishop
Detective Frank King
Sergeant Grant Gildon
Arlington Police Department
Professional Achievement**

As a result of a collaborative five-month-long investigation, Sergeant Grant Gildon, Detective Nathan Bishop, and Detective Frank King of the Arlington Police Department identified and arrested the suspect that killed fellow Officer Darrin McMichael in a hit-and-run incident on September 21, 2023.

Two days after the crash, the trio was notified that they had been placed on special assignment to work with the Dallas County Sheriff's Office on the McMichael Death investigation. Not long after the investigation began, the officers interviewed several witnesses and obtained a description of the vehicle.

Attempts were made to identify the vehicle and a suspect through cell phone data obtained. Working with the FBI and Secret Service, the Arlington Police officers were able to narrow down their list from thousands of devices to a more manageable 385.

On December 8, 2023, Detective King was assigned device #261 and found that it belonged to an individual from Mississippi. He discovered the individual was out on parole in Mississippi for embezzlement related to stealing cars. Detective King built a case around the individual traveling out of Mississippi and being at the location of the hit-and-run at the time it occurred.

He worked with the Mississippi Department of Corrections and Mississippi Capitol Police to have the individual's parole revoked. On February 5, 2024, Sergeant Gildon and Detective King traveled to Mississippi to interview the person of interest. The individual originally stated that he was a passenger, but after further investigation, it was found that he was the driver and had sold the car in Dallas. The vehicle had been taken to a crusher and scrapped.

The investigation concluded on March 8, 2024. Motors Officer McMichael's name was engraved on the Arlington Police Wall of Honor, the Texas Peace Officers' Memorial, and the National Law Enforcement Memorial soon after.

Dedication and initiative led these officers to track down a suspect of the murder of Officer McMichael, offering his family some closure. Their commitment to finding answers serves as a tremendous example for other departments conducting similar investigations.



VALOR

The following recipients of the 2025 State of Texas Law Enforcement Achievement Award for Valor have performed an act of heroism or bravery exceeding the normal expectations of job performance, such as placing one's own life in jeopardy to save another's life, preventing serious bodily injury to another, or preventing the consequences of a criminal act.



**Officer Karina A. Legaretta Prieto
Alpine Police Department
Valor**

March 20, 2023, Alpine Police Officer Karina Legaretta was dispatched to a residence on fire. After alerting responding units, Legaretta crawled through the window, discovering a victim who became combative. Officer Legarreta was able to pull the victim out of the burning home assisted by the fire department. EMS transported the victim to a hospital in serious condition before he was later released and ultimately arrested. It was determined that the individual was suspected of attempting suicide by fire.

According to the hospital facility and EMS staff, Legaretta's actions directly contributed to the individual's survival. Officer Legarreta was commended for her actions by her agency and the Alpine Fire Chief.



**Chief Robert Crawford
Northlake Police Department
Valor**

On December 30, 2024, Northlake Police Chief Robert Crawford assisted the Tarrant County Sheriff's Deputy on a call related to a suicidal individual.

The suicidal individual had a gun pointed at her head, while sitting in front of her car. Deputies and officers attempted to negotiate with her. The individual told the officers that she didn't want to harm them even as she retrieved another gun from her vehicle and pointed it at the ground.

Seeing the individual do so, Crawford positioned himself behind the individual, grabbed hold of her and was able to subdue her without further incident. The individual was taken into custody. His life-saving actions not only saved the life of a person dealing with a mental crisis but also of other officers on the scene.



**Officer Reginald Boseman
Officer Thomas Marcum
Officer Regginald Slaughter
Officer Mason Stutes
Beaumont Police Department
Valor**

On January 10, 2025, officers with the Beaumont Police Department were dispatched to a residence in response to a 911 call, during which the caller was heard screaming, followed by a sudden disconnection of the line.

Officer Thomas Marcum was the first to arrive at the scene to see a residence fully engulfed in flames and smoke. Hearing banging sounds coming from the garage door, Officer Marcum was able to pry it open and rescue one individual.

Officer Mason Stutes was the second officer to arrive on the scene. He was informed that others may still be inside the residence. Officers Stutes and Marcum entered the residence through the front door. Joined by Officers Reginald Boseman and Regginald Slaughter, the officers faced heavy smoke but continued to search for any additional victims.

Officer Stutes located a second victim, which he found to be unresponsive. He dragged the victim towards the door assisted by Officer Boseman. Together, they carried the victim outside, where Officers Boseman and Slaughter began administering medical assistance.

Despite the heavy smoke, Officer Stutes went in a final time to search for any remaining victims. He remained in the residence until he was forced to withdraw for his own safety. These officers' willingness to put their own lives at risk to save others serves as a testament to their unwavering commitment to duty.



**Officer Horace Scott
Houston Police Department
Valor**

On May 4, 2024, three days after a significant flood hit the City of Houston, Officer Horace Scott responded to the reported location of a male yelling for help.

Moving through the fast current on a jet ski, dodging fallen trees and other floating debris, Officer Scott eventually made his way over to the location but found it difficult to pinpoint the address due to the high waters. After obtaining a description of the building from Google Earth, he managed to maneuver the jet ski closer to where he believed the victim was. Still unable to locate him, Officer Scott called out to him receiving a faint response. The victim was neck-deep in the water with a dog slung over his shoulders.

After being stranded in the water for hours, the victim and his dog were rescued by Officer Scott. Officer Scott was told about a second dog stranded in the victim's mobile home. From there, he located the second dog and pulled it onto the jet ski. After alerting dispatch of his location, Officer Scott was able to connect with a fellow patrol boat. The victim and his dogs were loaded and taken to safety.

Moments later, Officer Scott found and rescued another victim who was stranded on top of an overturned boat followed by rescuing another dog by lassoing it with a mooring rope pulling it onto the jet ski. Despite the dangerous situations he encountered, Officer Scott's training and bravery never wavered.



**Officer Robert Garcia
Officer Jose Ramos, III
Edinburg Police Department
Valor**

On March 9, 2024, Edinburg Police Officers, Robert Lee Garcia and Jose Ramos, III responded to a house fire. After arriving on scene, they were notified that a 6-year-old boy living in the home was unaccounted for and possibly still in the residence.

With the house filled with smoke and their vision impaired, Garcia and Ramos didn't hesitate to run inside. Officer Ramos made his way into a bedroom to find a mattress on fire. As he turned to exit the bedroom, he noticed the boy hiding in a closet.

Officer Ramos grabbed the boy with assistance from Officer Garcia as they exited the residence. Together, the three emerged from thick smoke in stable condition. The courage of Officer Ramos and Officer Garcia led to each of them receiving a Life Saving Award from the Edinburg Police and Fire Departments.



**Sergeant Alexander Cappi
Sergeant Garrett Scott Lindley
Deputy Constable Jerry Montiel
Harris County Constable's Office - Precinct 4
Valor**

On May 30, 2024, Sergeant Garrett Lindley, Sergeant Alexander Cappi and Deputy Jerry Montiel responded to a call of a reported verbal disturbance followed what they perceived to be gunshots. Upon their arrival, they were directed to a specific apartment where they believed the shots originated from. The officers discovered three people had been injured by gunshot wounds in a reported murder-suicide that left a 10-year-old girl in critical condition.

With the scene still under threat, EMS personnel were kept outside a safe perimeter to the apartment. Sergeant Lindley, Sergeant Cappi and Deputy Montiel began administering first aid to the child, employed a chest seal while attempting to stop the bleeding. Additional deputies cleared and secured the apartment. Had the officers not done so, the child would not have survived.

Furthermore, the officers made the critical decision to carry the child nearly a quarter mile through the active scene, navigating hallways, three flights of stairs, the distance of a potentially dangerous courtyard. They eventually made their way to safe zone where the EMS personnel was staged. Although the lives of the other individuals were beyond help, the heroic actions of this trio saved the life of this child.



Officer Caleb Thomas Bryan Police Department Valor

On August 31, 2024, Officer Caleb Thomas of the Bryan Police Department responded to an aggravated kidnapping call at an apartment complex. The caller stated the suspect was known to carry guns and suspected of being involved in a drive-by shooting in Houston.

Once they were on the scene, law enforcement officials heard a disturbance in the courtyard. As Officer Thomas approached the courtyard, he was met by the suspect, who was pulling his victim behind him with one hand while carrying a pistol in the other.

The suspect ignored Thomas' command to drop the weapon and instead raised his pistol at him. The suspect fired the first shots, which prompted Thomas to return fire.

Officer Thomas struck the suspect on the right side of the torso as he dragged the victim, using her as a shield. Officer Thomas and the suspect proceeded to exchange a series of shots before the suspect ultimately fled the courtyard, making it to a vehicle before being apprehended.

Officer Thomas left the scene having sustained a pair of lacerations, but his heroic efforts in preventing serious consequences for others will always be remembered.



**Deputy Constable Deteryon Fontonet
Harris County Constable's Office - Precinct 4
Valor**

On June 14, 2024, Deputy Constable Deteryon Fontonet was dispatched to a suspect vehicle that was involved in an aggravated robbery of two Academy Sports and Outdoors stores on the north side of Harris County.

Fontonet located the vehicle and attempted to conduct a traffic stop. However, the suspect refused to stop, and a chase ensued. The pursuit came to an end in a neighborhood where the suspect exited his vehicle retrieving an AR-15 style rifle.

The suspect turned and fired over a dozen rounds toward Fontonet, striking his patrol vehicle multiple times. Taking on shrapnel, Fontonet returned fire as the suspect retreated to a relative's home. Multiple units responded and the suspect was apprehended.

Fontonet was transported to the hospital, where he was treated for non-life-threatening injuries. The suspect was arrested and charged with Aggravated Assault on a Public Servant, Aggravated Robbery, and Theft.



**Officer Scott Durfee
Officer James Marks
Houston Police Department
Valor**

On September 17, 2024, a pair of young men forced entry into a home after posing as delivery drivers in a Spring Branch neighborhood. A neighbor heard screaming and alerted the authorities.

Officer Marks and Officer Durfee responded within a few minutes. When they arrived on-scene, they discovered a woman seated on a couch with her wrists bound. The woman's two young children, ages 1 and 3 years-old, were inside the residence while the two suspects were in the midst of robbing them at gunpoint. With the suspects moving around the residence, Officer Durfee and Marks acted quickly apprehending one suspect following a short pursuit into the kitchen.

While Officer Marks was detaining the first suspect, the other one came out from the back room with a firearm and opened fire, hitting Officer Durfee in the leg.

Durfee fell to the ground but returned fire forcing the suspect to retreat allowing the female victim to crawl to her children. The suspect fled from the residence but was located about a block away before being taken into custody without further incident.

Officer Marks performed first aid to Officer Durfee quickly applying a tourniquet before EMS rushed him to the hospital.

A third suspect, who was waiting in a vehicle, also fled the scene but was located several hours later and taken into custody without incident.

The swift actions of Officer Durfee and Officer Marks were pivotal in saving the lives of the woman and her two children, exemplifying extraordinary courage in the face of danger.



Enforcement Agent Adrian Josue Herrera Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission - Region 3 Valor

On the afternoon of February 11, 2024, TABC Enforcement Agent Adrian Herrera was working as an off-duty security officer at Lakewood Church in Houston when a suspect, with her child, entered the building with a rifle.

Another off-duty officer approached the suspect after being notified of the suspect by a church volunteer. That officer engaged the suspect, trading gunfire.

Agent Herrera moved to the suspect's location and also engaged. During the incident, the suspect's child and a church volunteer were both struck by gunfire and transported to the hospital.

The shooter was eventually neutralized. Agent Herrera quickly checked on all the others in the proximity of the gun battle for wounds.

The series of events all unfolded just before an afternoon service, as thousands of people were packed inside the megachurch. Through his swift decision to act upon the danger, Agent Herrera prevented the situation from escalating further.



Officer Dominique Akins Allen Police Department Valor

On the afternoon of May 6, 2023, Allen Police Officer, Dominique Akins, was finishing up an unrelated call at the Allen Premium Outlets when he heard gunshots.

Without hesitation, Officer Akins ran towards the shots, going from the south to the north part of the crowded shopping center. As the lone officer on the scene, he remained connected to dispatch to update responding officers on the movements of the suspect. As Officer Akins moved closer to the suspect, he observed several people who had been wounded by the suspect's gunfire, including several small children.

The suspect continued moving as he fired off several more rounds toward innocent shoppers and vehicles. In pursuit, Officer Akins rounded the last corner when he witnessed the suspect shoot and kill his final victim.

From more than 90 yards away, Officer Akins engaged the suspect with his patrol rifle. He stepped out of cover and fired his weapon, hitting the suspect three times –killing him.

From the sound of the first shot Officer Akins heard to the moment he neutralized the suspect was approximately four minutes. The suspect murdered 8 shoppers. An additional five people were shot but survived after responding officers provided first aid applying tourniquets, chest seals, and packing wounds.

In total, the suspect fired more than 130 rifle rounds. It was learned later that the suspect carried three additional firearms and more than 520 rounds of ammunition. During the investigation, it was determined that there were more than 2,000 rounds of ammunition in the suspect's vehicle, along with several additional firearms.

Officer Akins's agile response, tactical readiness and tactical readiness saved an untold number of lives that day.