

***Brevard County Sheriff's Office Florida Crime Prevention Association 2014 Nomination for  
"Crime Prevention Unit of the Year" Award***

**Brevard County Sheriff's Office Community Services Team members and Chain of Command:**

Brevard County Sheriff Wayne Ivey

Commander Michael DeMorat

**Members assigned to the Community Services Team:** Sergeant David Marich, Corporal Pamela Hibbs, Corporal John Martinez, FTO Sherri Somers, Crime Prevention Officer Wanda Mulcahy, Teen Driving Coordinator Tonja Tucker, Community Services Support Specialist Elizabeth Humphreys, Community Relations Coordinator Lindsey Deaton, Public Information Officer Maria Fernez, Media Specialist Cheryl Sink, Media Productions Engineer Ray Dils, Citizen Volunteers Catherine Nedrud, William Donovan and Joseph Downs

**Geographical Area and Demographics:** Brevard County is located along the east coast of central Florida (approximately 50 miles east of Orlando) and is 1,557 square miles. In 2013, the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that Brevard County had a population of 550,823 with racial demographics being 84% White, 10.6% Black and 9% Hispanic.

**Community Services Team Accomplishments from October 2013 to September 2014:**

In January 2013, newly elected Brevard County Sheriff Wayne Ivey outlined his vision for the agency which included our new organizational focus on crime prevention. Part of Sheriff Ivey's vision included the creation of the Community Services Unit, which would encompass the existing Crime Prevention Unit and Teen Driver Program, add a newly created Public Information Officer position, a new Community Relations Coordinator position, a Community Services Support Specialist and a Media Productions Engineer, in addition to the citizen volunteers that work exclusively with this Unit.

This new Community Services Team was charged with delivering a strong and powerful crime prevention message to our citizens. Areas of focus were identified and priorities were established. The Community Services Team examined and reviewed every existing program and process, re-engineered virtually every program, and developed a host of new concepts and opportunities from which to build future programs. The groundwork was being laid for a total transformation of our crime prevention message and our relationship with the community.

In the ensuing months, our Brevard County Sheriff's Office Community Services Team has done an exceptional job in building partnerships and delivering our Crime Prevention message to our community. Below is a summary of our major accomplishments from October 2013 to September 2014.

**Brevard Sheriff TV:** In January 2014, Sheriff Ivey started "Brevard Sheriff TV," which is available to anyone with Internet access and offers the community crime prevention videos in a wide variety of categories. All of the videos are written, produced and directed by members of the Community Services Team and video topics include:

**Weekly Crime Prevention Tips** on topics such as Internet Safety, Back to School Cell Phone and Transportation Safety, Beach Safety, Teen Home Alone Safety, Teen Driving Safety, Heat and our Pets and Hurricane Preparedness.

Public Service Announcements for Holiday Safety, “Move Over Law,” Tips for Teen Driving, Beach Safety, Heat and our Pets, I-95 Safety, Motorcycle Safety, non-profit fundraisers, Social Media Usage, DUI, Stranger Danger and Anti-Bullying.

Sheriff Ivey’s Presentation Videos on B.E.L.T. (Brevard’s Employee Lookout Team) to help law enforcement identity theft as well as theft prevention and human trafficking.

Stay Informed Videos include general topics of personal and family safety.

**Use of Social Media:** Our Community Services Team has also taken a very proactive approach in using social media as a method to provide our citizens with the most up to date crime prevention information to prevent them from becoming a victim. The Brevard County Sheriff’s Office currently has nearly 24,000 account holders on our Facebook page. From October 2013 through August 2014, each Brevard County Sheriff’s Office Facebook post reaches approximately 97,000 people. During the month of August 2014, the BCSO Facebook page reached approximately 20 million people! Our agency also has an active “Twitter” account with over 1,000 followers.

**Community Presentations:** One area of primary focus has been community presentations and 203 were completed in this period to include: Parent Leadership, Fraud, Identity Theft, Scams, Bullying, Senior Safety, Child Safety, Workplace Safety, Home Safety, Personal Safety, Current Crimes, Drug Awareness, Holiday and Internet Safety.

**Brevard Safe Kids Academy:** The “Safe Kids Academy” concept and curriculum was completely started by our Community Services Team and is offered to children ages 5-12. It is conducted in a classroom setting and children receive hands on practical experience in stranger awareness, dialing 911, internet safety, home safety, anti-bullying and fire safety. Since the start of this Academy in June 2014, we’ve had 13 classes and reached 220 children.

**Project Life Saver:** Project Lifesaver helps rescue “at risk” individuals by providing a timely response for adults and children who wander due to Alzheimer’s, autism, and other related conditions or disorders. This program includes GPS bracelets to help first responders locate the individuals quickly. Through the hard work, determination, and compassion of Volunteer Joe Downs, he has raised the number of citizens being served in this program to approximately 80 clients, with nearly 20 more waiting to be issued transmitters. Mr. Downs has also secured the necessary funding and purchased not only additional transmitters but also additional receiver equipment. This additional equipment will expedite the process of responding deputies to aid in the search for these missing endangered persons.

**Crime Prevention Task Force:** The Brevard County Crime Prevention Task Force was initiated by Sheriff Ivey and is a multi-agency partnership designed to work collaboratively on crime prevention initiatives in an effort to reduce crime throughout Brevard County. In addition to the creation of consistent crime prevention messaging, the partnership works collectively to develop innovative crime prevention programs for our communities. The Task Force serves as a force multiplier in the area of Crime Prevention for all participating agencies and their communities. Combining personnel and resources allows each participating member to broaden their respective crime prevention efforts. While developing this concept, other programs around the country were researched regarding their respective operations, effectiveness and efficiency. While other prevention programs exist, this concept appears to be the first where multiple law enforcement agencies, volunteers, and citizens have partnered for the purpose of reducing crime.

This unique concept is based upon educating our citizens and equipping them with the knowledge and tools necessary to safeguard themselves, their families and their homes. Through an aggressive prevention program, we provide our citizens with the information needed to protect themselves from becoming a victim. In addition to monthly information sharing meetings, the Crime Prevention Task Force developed and conducted four “Operation Shred” events, to deter identity theft, and developed two public safety awareness videos which were played on the local television network for the entire community. The entire Community Services Team has been engaged and remained active in Task Force events, and all agencies work very well together in reaching the community.

**DUI Taxi “Choose Your Ride”:** The Community Services team proposed the concept of the DUI Taxi based upon a similar idea in use by Savannah-Chatham County Police in Georgia. The rear half of a surplus patrol vehicle is painted like a taxi with the front still remaining as a patrol car. At events, an audio/video display is placed on the roof of the vehicle with a crime prevention message from Sheriff Ivey discussing the consequences of drinking and driving. The DUI taxi assists people in making the right choice when choosing their ride, a ride home in a taxi or a ride to jail. The actual “cost” of the ride they choose is also listed on the taxi to include a simple fare on the rear half of the car, to the breakdown of costs for being arrested, bail, insurance etc. listed on the law enforcement half of the vehicle. The DUI Taxi has been displayed at a wide variety of 24 events, each receiving very positive reviews. By utilizing corporate sponsorship, the DUI Taxi was completed at a very minimal cost to the taxpayers.

**Neighborhood Watch:** In continuing our agency’s very proactive Neighborhood Watch Program, 23 new Neighborhood Watch programs were established during this period.

**Security Surveys:** Our Crime Prevention Team continues to be very active in this area and 92 residential and business security surveys completed during this period. The property owners also received a Sheriff’s Office decal for display to indicate their participation in the program.

**Holiday “Shop with a Cop” Program:** “Shop with-a-Cop” is a program that fosters positive relationships between youth and deputies. Young children are selected during the year based on the financial need of their families. During the holiday season, a day is selected (which is sponsored by two local retail stores) and the children are given a \$100 gift card to shop with a deputy to purchase gifts for themselves or family members. With the help of an amazing fundraising team, and over 100 dedicated BCSO employee volunteers, 2013 proved to be our most successful Shop with a Cop event ever, serving 198 children.

**Community Special Events:** There were 117 special events completed at various locations to include child fingerprinting, parades, “Back to School Bashes” and informative crime prevention table displays.

**“Time to Be a Parent Again” Presentation:** Presented by Sheriff Ivey, with assistance from State Attorney Phil Archer, these seminars are designed to empower parents to become the “Chief Law Enforcement Officer” in their children’s lives by giving them the tools, resources and philosophy to steer their children away from trouble and towards success. Over 2,000 parents have attended to date and the Florida Governor’s Office also awarded funding to hold this seminar in Polk, Osceola and Seminole Counties as a pilot program. If “Time to Be a Parent Again” continues its current level of success, it will be considered as a state-wide initiative.

**Sheriff Wayne Ivey “In-person Crime Prevention Presentations”:** During this period, Sheriff Ivey has personally done over 200 crime prevention presentations countywide, reaching thousands of Brevard County residents on topics such as Identity Theft, Personal Safety, Human

Trafficking, Work-Place Violence, Senior Safety and Parenting Skills. As Sheriff Ivey has previously quoted “*We don’t care whether it’s a group of 5 or 500, we will show up and provide important presentations to the public about ways to improve crime prevention.*”

**Teen Driver Challenge:** Of the 36 Sheriff’s offices teaching Teen Driver Challenge, the Brevard County Sheriff’s Office Teen Driver program continues to be the number one provider of teen driver instruction program in the State having done 28 classes and reaching 279 teens.

**Driving Simulators:** Our Teen Driver simulators were used at 9 events and are an excellent complement to our Teen Driver Challenge. *We have also researched and developed a plan to reach more teens by recently ordering a 24' customized, enclosed trailer which our team is going to outfit with five teen driver simulator stations. This “one of a kind” trailer simulator will be “wrapped” advertising this program and will be completed in early October. The funding for this trailer was also provided by a grant.*

**Anti-Bullying:** A tragic bullying event in another community brought the topic of bullying to the forefront for our citizens. Since bullying type activities can be a crime, Anti-Bullying presentations have become a significant component of our provided services. Starting simply with an idea, the Community Services Team developed a substantial curriculum and presentation targeting school age children. The Community Services Team visited 19 separate schools, conducting Anti-Bullying presentations to 7,200 Brevard school children.

**Sheriff’s Citizen’s Academy:** The Citizen’s Academy is a nine-week program designed to give our citizen’s an inside look and a working knowledge of every aspect of our Sheriff’s Office. There have been 60 graduates during this time period who attended this program, which also included several days of “hands on” interaction at our firearms range and tours of various agency facilities.

**Sheriff’s Explorers Program:** Explorers is open to young men and women ages 14-19 who are interested in learning more about law enforcement and possibly making it their career choice in the future. Our program has 15 young men and women enrolled who also assist our Crime Prevention Team at various community events.

**College Bound Readiness:** This extremely popular program provides valuable instruction in personal safety and practical advice to high school seniors as they prepare to start living away from home and attend college. During this school year, our team was able to reach **EVERY** High School senior class in Brevard County and present this program, offering student’s crime prevention tips and information on what to expect when heading off to college.

**Camp Chance:** Sheriff Ivey formulated a plan to partner with seven local not-for-profit organizations for their children to attend the Sheriff’s Office “Camp Chance” program. Camp Chance previously reached only a select number of children during the summer months. Under this new vision, nearly 300 children for a day were able to interact with deputies and experience canoeing, fishing, basketball, airboat rides, K-9’s and helicopter displays as well as Safe Kids Academy demonstrations by agency personnel. The majority of the funding to support Camp Chance was also donated by local businesses and is now operated on a year-round basis.

Overall, Brevard County observed a significant 7.3% decrease in the reported Crime Rate for 2013 as compared to 2012. This is the lowest crime rate (per 100,000 residents) reported over the past 18 years. This decreasing crime rate in Brevard County has also continued for the first six months of 2014. During this period, the reported Crime Rate has decreased by 6% from 2013.