

Delaware State Police Announce 2021 Trooper and Civilian Employee of the Year

Dover— At a ceremony held on Friday, April 1, 2022, Superintendent of the Delaware State Police, Colonel Melissa A. Zebley, announced the winners of the annual Trooper of the Year and Civilian of the Year awards.

To help recognize the significance of the ceremony Governor John Carney, Attorney General Kathleen Jennings, and Secretary of Safety and Homeland Security, Nathaniel McQueen Jr., were in attendance to offer congratulatory remarks.

Trooper of the Year

Each year the Delaware State Police Executive Staff selects one Trooper for the Trooper of the Year Award. To be nominated, a Trooper must exceed performance standards and be recognized by his or her peers, as one who epitomizes the **Core Values of the Division**, which are **Honor, Integrity, Courage, Loyalty, Attitude, Discipline and Service**.

This year, 10 Troopers were nominated, and out of those worthy nominees, the Executive Staff selected **Sergeant Pierre Lawler, as the 2021 Trooper of the Year**, for his outstanding efforts and contributions to the Division and the citizens of the State of Delaware. Sergeant Lawler is assigned to Troop 2 Patrol.

Sergeant Pierre Lawler has demonstrated all the key characteristics and Core values that make an exceptional Trooper in addition to his duties as a patrol Road Supervisor. As commander of "B" shift, this past year, his shift was responsible for several significant apprehensions and seizures through his guidance and instruction. His work ethic and

efforts demonstrate excellence above and beyond his scope of patrol supervisor. He is very attentive to the administrative patrol duties of a Sergeant as well as delegating responsibilities to develop his subordinates. In many ways he puts his shift mates in positions to excel and his presence on the street affords them on scene supervision.

Sergeant Lawler was also presented with the Randall Armistead Trooper of the Year Award on behalf of the Delaware State Troopers Association. Presenting the award was **Vice President of the DSTA, Master Corporal Mark Ryde.**

Trooper of the Year Nominees

Trooper First Class Richard Link- Troop 1 Patrol

Sergeant Pierre Lawler- Troop 2 Patrol

Detective Ryan Kirchenbauer- Troop 2 Criminal Investigations Unit

Corporal Andrew Valeski- Troop 3 Patrol

Trooper First Class Thomas Vincent- Troop 4 Patrol

Detective Alan Bluto- Troop 4 Criminal Investigations Unit

Corporal Andrew Shea- Troop 5 Patrol

Trooper First Class Kevin Kelleher- Troop 6 Patrol

Trooper First Class Michael Short- Troop 7 Patrol

Corporal Stephen Douglas- Troop 9 Patrol

Civilian of the Year

Each year the Delaware State Police Executive Staff also selects one civilian employee, for the Civilian of the Year Award. Civilian employees who are nominated for this award

display outstanding performance and meet the following criteria:

1. Exceptional service as identified by the employee's performance evaluations.
2. A consistent record of such service through their years of employment.
3. Recognition by their peers for outstanding character and integrity.

This year, five Delaware State Police civilian employees were nominated for the award, and the Executive Staff of the Delaware State Police selected **Purchasing Services Administrator, Kimberly Cuffee, as the 2021 Civilian of the Year.**

Ms. Cuffee continued to exemplify all of the values and work habits that we have seen from her over her numerous years of service, with enhanced challenges in 2021 from the global pandemic and supply chain shortages. Her performance during both 2020 and 2021 was exemplary.

Civilian of the Year Nominees

Ms. Kimberly Cuffee- Purchasing & Supply

Ms. Monica Holmes- Human Resources

Mr. Lance Lane- Communications (KENTCOM)

Ms. Rebecca Palicka- State Bureau of Identification

Mr. Andrew Valladares- Delaware Information and Analysis

In addition to the Trooper and Civilian of the Year, the following Troopers were also presented with the following awards:

Lifesaving Award:

TFC Hunter Bordley, Ms. Kayla Bright, Delaware City Volunteer Fire Company, TFC Anthony Carter, Tpr. Thomas Catalfamo, Sgt. Daniel DeFlaviis, Cpl/3 Justin Galloway, Cpl/1 Patrick Jackson, Cpl. George Justice, TFC Luke Justice, TFC Michelle Keane, Cpl. Kathleen Koff, Sgt. Edward Larney, Cpl. Mark Malloy, Cpl. Adam Orndorf – New Castle County PD, Cpl. Andrew Osgood, TFC Nicholas Panissidi, TFC Trevor Pendleton, Capt. Kerry Reinbold, Cpl. Courtney Schrader, Cpl. Jordan Smith, Cpl. Robert Spanier Jr., Mr. Ronald Stamper, Delaware City Volunteer Fire Company, TFC Brian Whitehead

Exceptional Performance:

TFC Michael Aberman, Cpl. Amina Ali, Cpl. Justin Decowski, Cpl. Everett Eschbach, Cpl/1 Michael Fiore, Tpr. John Hasson Jr., Tpr. Kenneth Haynes, Cpl. Peter Irwin, TFC Kevin Kelleher, TFC Joseph Klink, Sgt. Dave Kristunas, Capt. Rodney Layfield, TFC Thomas Leonardi, Tpr. Erik Lima-Munguia, Cpl/1 Cheri Magda, Cpl. Benjamin Nefosky, Sgt. Troy Ralston, Tpr. Sean Setting, Cpl/3 Robert Strecker, Cpl. Andrew Valeski, TFC Emanuel Velez, TFC Thomas Vincent, Sgt. Michael Weinstein

Superintendent's Citation:

Cpl. Derek Balaguer, Cpl. Christopher Delvecchio – Maryland State Police, Sgt. Michael Dill, Cpl. Zachary Drake, Tpr. Nicholas Gallo, Cpl. Christopher Garcia, Sgt. Bruce Graham – Clayton PD, Tpr. Jesse Guevara, Cpl. Dustin Hamilton, Deputy 1/C Michael Houck – Wicomico County Sheriff's (Ret.), Department Patrol Officer First Class Daniel Howard – Laurel PD, Sgt. Eric Landing – Wicomico County Sheriff's Office, Sgt. Pierre Lawler, Patrol Officer First Class Ashley Little – Laurel Police Department, Cpl/1 Rosendo Luna, Sgt. Christopher Martin, Cpl/1 Michael Morgan, Lt. Jerel Morton, Sgt. Daniel

Parks, Police Officer First Class Richard Pizzaia – Salisbury PD, Cpl. Alexander Ricketts, Cpl/1 Sean Rodrigues, Deputy 1/C Brandon Scott – Wicomico County Sheriff's Office, Cpl. Bruce Smith – Maryland State Police, Cpl. Christopher Story – Fenwick Island PD, , Tpr. Heather Swain, Cpl/3 James Wharton

Valor Award:

Sgt. Jason Aviola, Cpl/1 Jeffrey Baldwin, TFC Schatzschneider Billy-Attoh Jr., Cpl. Jermaine Cannon, Cpl. Joshua Cary, Tpr. Kody Eichlin, Cpl. Andrey Green, Cpl. Dean Johnson, Cpl. Brandon Yencer

Congratulations to all of the nominees and award winners!

Presented by Public Information Officer, Sergeant Heather Pepper

Released: 040122 1600

-End-