

PC Joanne Tawton – Police Officer Excellence Award

Constable Joanne Tawton works in headquarters at the Duty Desk and is one of the first people the public encounters when entering the building. She treats everyone with respect and compassion, and goes above and beyond to help them no matter what they need.

In the past, Joanne has assisted with getting people to a hospital, finding a shelter, giving verbal support or even a hug. She has an ear to listen, gives out a pop or bag of chips and even coffee to help calm a person down who is in a crisis.

She does numerous pay duties at the Scott Mission and continues to assist those in need by buying them a meal, a taxi ride or even bird food for a woman who likes to feed the birds and ducks.

At headquarters, Joanne and a colleague organize a yearly coat drive for the homeless. They collect coats, boots, scarfs and gloves donated by TPS employees, which then get distributed to shelters within Toronto.

PC David Manserra – Police Officer Excellence Award

In March 2015, Constable David Manserra became involved in an investigation that ultimately resulted in more than eight different children identified as being victims of a single offender. He followed the investigative leads to many different jurisdictions.

It was his care, compassion and excellent investigative skills that assisted in making these victims feel empowered and ready to face their abuser by giving sworn testimony.

He dedicated many hours preparing the victims during their several court trials.

He also assisted the victims and ensured that they received all the help they required through Victim Services Toronto.

PC Dale Swift — Police Officer Excellence Award

Constable Swift grew up in a vibrant Toronto neighbourhood, which had a history of violence. He saw firsthand the difference police can make when they invest in building relationships with members of the community they serve.

With his personal experience, he made it his mission to support at-risk youth outside of his job and help them understand the opportunities available to them. He did this by delivering leadership conferences, talks on resilience and mental health and workshops on gun violence.

As part of the BeYOUth Project, he created a youth mental health group, which included over 200 young people who took part in bi-weekly conferences.

His social media platform has gained thousands of followers of all ages and backgrounds, and some of his postings on social media have received over a million views and thousands of shares.

On a regular basis, investigative units contact him for assistance in identifying witnesses and suspects because of his connection to the community.

Sgt. August Bonomo – Police Officer Excellence Award

Sergeant August Bonomo has been part of the Mobile Crisis Intervention Team (MCIT) since 2011, and with his nurse partner, has been responsible for responding to calls for people experiencing a mental health crisis.

The Service assembled a team of experts to facilitate the implementation of several key recommendations on how to respond to those experiencing a mental health crisis and August was chosen to co-ordinate this group.

In October 2018, Sergeant Bonomo began his role as the MCIT coordinator and implemented a number of innovative changes that have enhanced and evolved the MCIT program. He has developed solid working partnerships among mental health and hospital practitioners and experts.

He became the driving force to establish a joint hospital/police committee, which allows for the development of memorandums of understanding and protocols for communication defining roles and responsibilities and sharing of information while respecting privacy laws.

His commitment to the mental health portfolio is not limited to serving the needs of the public but he understands the importance of the mental health, well-being and resilience of the members of the Service.

Sgt. Michael Fonseca – Police Officer Excellence Award

On June 13, 2018, Sergeant Michael Fonseca was off duty and asleep in his home when he was abruptly awakened by a sound. As he is a qualified bomb technician, he was aware that the sound was that of a propane tank, which had been super-heated and was expelling its gas before it exploded.

He looked out of his window and observed that his elderly neighbour's home was fully engulfed in visible orange flames and knew that the property had two propane tanks used for heating and cooking.

He entered the burning home that had thick black smoke billowing from the front door. The sound of the fire was deafening and the smoke and heat were intense, making it impossible to see.

He found the elderly woman and was told that her husband was in the bedroom. He took her to a place of safety and rushed back into the home. He next found her husband and got him out to safety and reunited with his wife outside.

His superior dedication to duty and genuine concern for the safety of vulnerable persons overrode any concern for his own safety.

PC Brian McFadyen – Police Officer Excellence Award

On Monday, June 17, 2019, a celebratory parade was held in downtown Toronto for the Toronto Raptors NBA Basketball team because they won the championships. This event drew millions of spectators.

At approximately 3:45 p.m., a shooting was reported downtown which caused panic by those on the streets and people running in all directions. Numerous officers attended the area and it was Constable Brian McFadyen who observed two males running, one of whom appeared to be holding something in his waistband consistent with a characteristic of an armed person. He alerted the rest of his team that he believed the man was armed.

The two males ran into a nearby restaurant followed by the team of officers.

A struggle ensued with the armed male and after a Conducted Energy Weapon was used he stopped resisting and was arrested with no injuries. A loaded firearm was located within his waistband.

The second male was arrested by officers and provided a false name. Further investigation at the station revealed that he was wanted for 17 firearm and drug related offences.

Det. John Margetson – Police Officer Excellence Award

Detective John Margetson was part of a team that was able to uncover the persons responsible for four homicides spanning from 2011 to 2012.

He built the trust of members of the community who were understandably frightened to speak to police but were tired of the violence in the community.

Through developing relationships, integral information was given to the investigative team including statements and names which then covert work could ensure evidence.

By building the person's trust, he was able to convince people to become a cooperative witness.

Thanks to his dedication, commitment and patience, three people were convicted for first-degree murder.

PC Kristine Kiss – Police Officer Excellence Award

PC Benjamin Schneider – Police Officer Excellence Award

On September 16, 2019, Constables Benjamin Schneider and Kristine Kiss were dispatched to a radio call for a fire, where a great deal of smoke was emanating from within an apartment.

They arrived within minutes of being dispatched and made their way to the fifth floor where large amount of smoke was now filling the hallway and obscuring their vision.

They located the apartment and opened the unlocked door and were immediately consumed by heavier smoke forcing them to their knees in order to breathe.

The Officers called out to any occupants within the apartment as they crawled inside and initially a male's voice was heard. The officers made the decision to separate and one went towards a bedroom and the other went toward the apartment balcony.

Once on the balcony, the lone male was located in a confused state and suffering from smoke inhalation and was somewhat unresponsive. Constable Kiss called out to Constable Schneider to attend the balcony and both officers together were able to assist the male out of the apartment.

All were treated at the scene for smoke inhalation and the male was transported to hospital.

Both officers acted bravely and without hesitation rushing into a hazardous environment, placing themselves in danger in order to rescue a disoriented male and prevent more serious injuries.

Sgt. Royce MacDonald – Police Officer Excellence Award

PC David Monteiro – Police Officer Excellence Award

PC Zelijko Katanic – Police Officer Excellence Award

PC Nathalie Urbas – Police Officer Excellence Award

PC Sukhjit Gill – Police Officer Excellence Award

On November 23, 2018, an Unknown Trouble call was received by 911. Sergeant Royce MacDonald and Constables David Monteiro, Nathalie Urbas, Sukhjit Gill and Zelijko Katanic attended the area and located two females with severe injuries to the head, neck, jaw and face.

Both the mother and 16-year-old daughter were in medical distress and losing a great deal of blood.

On recognizing that the situation was life-threatening the officers requested a rush on ambulance. Constables carried the young girl down the six flights of stairs in order to accelerate her transport to hospital. Sergeant MacDonald accessed his trauma kit and immediately rendered First Aid until EMS arrived.

The mother was taken by ambulance, treated at the hospital and then released.

The suspect was identified. The quick actions of the officers saved the life of the 16-year-old girl as she would have succumbed to her injuries.

Sgt. David Lim – Police Officer Excellence Award

PC Alexandre Poltavets – Police Officer Excellence Award

PC Richard Slater – Police Officer Excellence Award

PC Todd Garbutt – Police Officer Excellence Award

On February 25, 2019, a man entered a bank branch wearing clothing to hide his identity. He was carrying a duffel bag and was armed with a firearm, which he brandished menacingly and pointed at several staff at the bank and customers waiting in line. He was given money in a dye pack and fled the scene.

A short time later, the same man, dressed in the same clothing and carrying the same bag, entered another bank branch. Similar actions as in the previous hold up took place but it escalated. He vaulted over the counter after throwing his bag to an employee and ordering her to “fill it.” He then held his firearm to the head of another employee when ordering them to open the vault.

While the event was transpiring, another employee was able to contact police and relay what was happening. Sergeant David Lim and Constables Alexandre Poltavets, Richard Slater and Todd Garbutt were dispatched to the call.

The four officers arrived on scene within seconds of each other and the man was still inside the bank. They were quick to follow training and procedures.

The man exited the bank mere minutes after their arrival, carrying the bag and firearm in his hand. The four officers followed the man a short distance and initiated a gun point arrest in a safe area.

He was arrested and charged accordingly for the two robberies that day and another from earlier in that month.

SDO Penny Rivers – Civilian Excellence Award

Station Duty Operator Penny Rivers has been a long-serving extremely valuable employee and member of 51 Division for many years, working the front desk handing a regular flow of phone calls, plus walk-in and administrative duties.

On November 15, 2018, she took a phone call from an officer regarding a man who has daily conditions to sign in at 51 Division. During the conversation she learned the man is wanted by police for threatening to go to several schools in the Sarnia and Windsor area to kill staff and students.

Operator Rivers tended to the matter immediately and noticed on the paperwork that the name matched a person who came to 51 Division the previous day at 11 a.m. It was approaching 11 a.m., she notified a supervisor who attended the front desk.

The man attended the station and was arrested for threaten death. The phone used to make the threats was located in the man's pants pocket.

As a result of her quick actions, Toronto Police was able to confirm the man's arrest, which allowed the schools in the Sarnia Region and Windsor area to release the lockdowns.

Sgt. Brett Moore – Business Excellence Award

Sgt. Alex Crews – Business Excellence Award

In January of 2019, the Command Team directed Traffic Services to coordinate a Service-wide traffic enforcement campaign intended to highlight recent changes in legislation, and to educate motorists regarding the social costs associated with distracted driving. Sergeants Moore and Crews were assigned the task of coordinating this campaign. They drafted an operational plan that would allow for officers to be deployed when and where they would be needed most to conduct enforcement. With the assistance of the Fleet and Materials Unit, they arranged for the assistance of unmarked vehicles.

They partnered with Toronto Transit Commission to deploy officer observers on streetcars and buses who could broadcast offender information to patrol officers on parallel routes. This resonated with local media who reported on the campaign and its results.

They collaborated with Traffic Injury Research Foundation, Drop It And Drive, Canadian Coalition on Distracted Driving, Friends and Families for Safe Streets, Walk Toronto and Cycle Toronto. Sergeants Moore and Crews were observed throughout the campaign on every national, provincial and local news outlet creating awareness.

The enforcement for this campaign was precise, targeted, and resulted in over 670 motorists being charged. The effective use of awareness and education strategies, combined with leveraging recognized experts and advocates with a zero-tolerance approach to enforcement, made this distracted driving campaign coordinated by Sergeants Moore and Crews an unprecedented success.