Aurora Police Department

2014 Annual Awards, Commendations, Complaints, and Discipline Report

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Introduction

In conjunction with our core values of integrity, honor and duty, the Aurora Police Department strives for professionalism in the performance of our duties. We encourage positive behavior in our employees by the use of awards and commendations. We also encourage our employees and citizens to report any perceived misconduct by our officers. We investigate every complaint and concern reported to the Department and take appropriate action, protecting the rights of the citizen and the Department member. This report reflects our commitment to openness and transparency to the people we serve.

The Department has two systems to award outstanding performance and three systems to manage complaints and discipline. The two award systems are Formal Department Awards and Informal Commanders’ Commendations. The three systems used to manage complaints and disciplines are: the Automated Complaint and Commendation System; District / Bureau Discipline; and Formal Internal Investigations and Discipline.

Formal Department Awards

All employees of the Department who become aware of outstanding performance are encouraged to nominate employees and citizens for recognition through the Formal Department Awards program. The Awards Board reviews and investigates all nominations for formal awards and then makes a recommendation to the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police makes the final decision on the appropriateness of each award. Awards available under the Formal Department Awards program are: Medal of Honor; Distinguished Service Cross; Purple Heart; Life Saving Award; Meritorious Service Ribbon; Chief’s Commendation Certificate; Chief’s Unit Citation; Community Commitment Certificate; and the Certificate of Appreciation – Citizen’s Award. These awards are described in the Formal Department Awards section of this report.

Informal Commander’s Commendations

Any Command Level Officer may, without a nomination to the Awards Board, award a Commander’s Commendation Certificate. The Informal Commander’s Commendations section of this report describes the certificate.

Automated Complaint and Commendation System

The Aurora Police Department created the Automated Complaint and Commendation System in 2006 to manage the investigations of and record all complaints and commendations received on sworn officers of the Department. Regardless of how received, all complaints and commendations are entered into the automated system.

Citizens can enter their complaint or commendation directly online through the City’s website. If the Department receives a complaint or commendation in person, on the telephone or in writing, the receiving employee enters the information into the system. Once entered in the automated system, the complaint or commendation remains open until closed by the officer’s Division Chief.
The system directs the complaint or commendation to the officer’s immediate supervisor for an investigation. The supervisor reports his/her finding to his/her supervisor, who approves or disapproves the investigation. That process continues until the officer’s Division Chief ultimately reviews all decisions in the chain of command and approves the investigation and resulting actions.

Safeguards built into the system include the following: no one can delete the complaint or commendation. Only one supervisor can work on the complaint at a time (following the chain of command). Supervisors can add information but cannot remove it. All information inserted into the system is saved, documenting the date and time submitted and by whom. Supervisors can search the system to determine if the officer has like complaints and or commendations.

The system records all of the information and produces statistical information. Police managers use the information to determine future training needs as well as to decide an appropriate level of discipline

**District and Bureau Discipline**

The most severe result of incidents reported in this section are Written Reprimands, which are the lowest level of formal discipline. The Internal Affairs Section investigates cases that may require discipline greater than a Written Reprimand. Cases that result in corrective measures (training verses discipline) are recorded in the Automated Complaint and Commendation System. A Police Department Supervisor or Manager investigates all District / Bureau Discipline cases. He/she obtains all of the necessary information and reports his/her findings to his/her supervisor. The employee’s chain of command reviews the investigation. If any supervisor in the chain of command determines that the employee violated a Department Directive(s) and decides the appropriate level of discipline is a Written Reprimand, he/she makes that recommendation to the Chief of Police. If the Chief concurs with the findings, a Written Reprimand is prepared, reviewed, and approved by the Chief. The Chief of Police may personally issue and serve the Written Reprimand on the employee or delegate this duty to a command officer within the employee’s chain of command. The Written Reprimand is part of the employee’s permanent discipline file.

**Formal Internal Investigations and Discipline**

The Chief of Police orders all formal internal investigations. As a general rule, the Chief orders formal investigations on allegations that could potentially result in discipline that is greater than a Written Reprimand. Additionally, critical incidents (i.e. police shootings, use of force resulting in serious injuries or death, serious traffic accidents involving officers, etc.) may result in the Chief ordering a formal investigation regardless of whether there is any evidence or accusation of misconduct. The Chief’s order will allege a violation(s) of Department Directive(s). The Internal Affairs Section completes the investigation and reports its findings to the accused officer’s Division Chief. The officer’s Division Chief decides whether the evidence proves the alleged violation(s). If so, the Division Chief will sustain the allegation(s). When the Division Chief sustains an allegation, the Chief of Police orders discipline in accordance with the City’s and Department’s policies.
Perspective Statistics
The Department provides the following statistical information for the purpose of perspective. The Department currently employs 667 sworn officers and 137 civilian employees (total 804). During 2014, the Department handled 215,029 calls for service from the public, arrested 11,655 suspects, issued 6,763 criminal summonses (non-custodial arrests) and issued 53,708 traffic citations.

Formal Department Awards
During 2014, the Aurora Police Department presented 147 awards through the formal program. The Department did not present a Medal of Honor award. The Department honored six (6) officers with the Distinguished Service Cross. The Department presented one (1) Purple Heart Award. The Department presented ten (10) officers with the Life Saving Award. The Department recognized eleven (11) officers with the Meritorious Service Ribbon. The Chief commended one hundred-eight (108) officers with Chief’s Commendation Certificates. The Chief presented nine (9) Chief’s Unit Citations. The Department presented two (2) citizens with the Certificate of Appreciation - Citizens Award.
Medal of Honor

The Medal of Honor may be awarded by the Chief of Police to members who distinguish themselves by intentionally and knowingly placing themselves in a situation that involves an actual and imminent danger of death and whose actions demonstrate conspicuous bravery or heroism significantly above and beyond the call of duty. The member must perform an act so outstanding that it clearly demonstrates extraordinary courage beyond the requirements of the Distinguished Service Cross. The member must have been aware of the great personal danger to himself/herself prior to the performance of the act and the act must have involved an imminent, actual and substantial threat to the member’s life. This award will be a medal, pin and a certificate presented by the Chief of Police.

The department did not present a Medal of Honor award in 2014.
Distinguished Service Cross

The Distinguished Service Cross may be awarded by the Chief of Police to members who distinguish themselves by demonstrating exceptional bravery despite an imminent risk of serious bodily injury or death. A member may be aware or unaware of great personal peril to himself/herself prior to the performance of the act. This award will be a medal, pin and a certificate presented by the Chief of Police.

The department presented six (6) Distinguished Service Cross awards in 2014.

Sergeant Mike Holm, Officer Jeffrey Jacobs, Officer Tim King, and Officer Jason Petrucelli
On January 5, 2013, at 0400hrs, APD SWAT responded to the 16000 block of East Ithaca Place on a report of a barricaded suspect that may have shot and killed three people inside. Telephone contact was established with the suspect by the Crisis Negotiation Team, in which the suspect was determined to be delusional and uncooperative. A standoff ensued for approximately six hours under frigid temperatures. The suspect continued to be aggressive and combative, threatening to fire at officers if they attempted to come inside. A decision was made to attempt a breach of the front windows of the townhome for insertion of a robot and expose a view of the living room area. This exposure would impair the suspect’s movements throughout the townhome and isolate him to a particular area. SWAT Sergeant, Mike Holm, and other SWAT officers used a “Bearcat” armored vehicle to accomplish this plan. During the breach, Sgt. Holm left the security of the armored vehicle briefly and used a breaching pole to clear the large window on the ground floor, totally exposing himself to the suspect. Upon re-entering the Bearcat, the suspect fired on Sgt. Holm and the other officers, striking the Bearcat with a barrage of .223 rounds. The task was accomplished and it did in fact force the suspect to isolate himself to the second floor area. Negotiations continued to fail so an order was given to go into an “offensive posture”, meaning to engage the suspect upon visual contact. Chemical agents were introduced into the home to gain the suspect’s compliance. A short time later the chemical agents worked and the suspect exposed himself to a SWAT officer on the second floor who used deadly force to neutralize the suspect and bring closure to this horrific incident.

For demonstrating exceptional bravery despite facing imminent risk of serious bodily injury or death, these officers are commended for their actions and are hereby awarded the Aurora Police Department’s Distinguished Service Cross.
Agent Craig Hopkins

In June 2013, Aurora Police Department Agent Craig Hopkins, and other members of the East Metro Auto Theft Team (EMATT) became aware of a criminal suspect engaged in a metro-wide crime spree. The suspect in this investigation had previously attempted to “run-over” another Aurora Police Department Officer with a vehicle, attempted to kill a City of Aurora resident with a handgun, been involved in numerous motor vehicle thefts and burglaries and made previous statements to his family members that he would, “Shoot it out with the police before going back to prison.” On the morning of July 10, 2013, members of the Aurora Police Department Fugitive Apprehension and Surveillance Team (FAST) located the suspect in a residential area and called in members of SWAT for support. Upon seeing members of SWAT move in on his location, the suspect attempted to flee the area in a stolen vehicle, which he had used in a shooting incident the previous week. The suspect began driving this stolen vehicle in reverse at a high rate of speed in the direction of officers and civilians in the area. Agent Hopkins, recognizing the imminent danger the suspect posed to officers and citizens, took the decisive action of driving his patrol unit into the suspect’s stolen vehicle resulting in a major collision that disabled both vehicles. The suspect then attempted to flee the area on foot, but was apprehended by officers after a foot chase. Agent Hopkins sustained a major injury which required surgery and rehabilitation.

The heroic, courageous, and selfless actions of Agent Craig Hopkins on this day protected the citizens of the City of Aurora, his fellow law enforcement officers and enabled the arrest of a very dangerous criminal. Agent Craig Hopkins is hereby awarded this Distinguished Service Cross.

Officer Specialist David Wilson

On May 4, 2013, Officer Specialist David Wilson was performing patrol duties when a citizen frantically notified him that the US Bank at 2990 S. Peoria St. was being robbed. Officer Wilson immediately proceeded to the bank and observed a vehicle exiting the bank parking lot at a high rate of speed. Officer Wilson determined that the speeding vehicle was in fact the robbery suspect and gave chase. After a short vehicle pursuit, the suspect vehicle made a quick turn onto a residential neighborhood street that was a dead-end and crashed on a large landscape boulder. Officer Wilson gave numerous orders for the suspect to exit the vehicle and to get on the ground. The suspect did exit the vehicle but ignored all other orders. The suspect retrieved a bag from the driver seat of his vehicle and reached into it for an unknown object. Believing the suspect was going for a weapon, and fearing for his life, Officer Wilson fired his duty weapon striking the suspect with three rounds. After being seriously wounded by gunfire, the suspect ran from Officer Wilson through the residential neighborhood. Officer Wilson gave chase on foot and used his Taser to incapacitate and apprehend the suspect.

Officer Specialist David Wilson demonstrated exceptional bravery despite an imminent risk of serious bodily injury or death. He is highly commended for his devotion to duty and is hereby awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.
Purple Heart

The Purple Heart may be awarded by the Chief of Police to any member who sustains a gunshot wound, stab wound, or serious injury, under aggravated and hostile circumstances, which could have resulted in death or could potentially result in a permanent disability, which may force the member to retire. This award will be a medal, pin, and a certificate presented by the Chief of Police.

The department presented one (1) **Purple Heart** award in 2014.

Agent Craig Hopkins

In June 2013, Aurora Police Department Agent Craig Hopkins, and other members of the East Metro Auto Theft Team became aware of a criminal suspect engaged in a metro-wide crime spree. The suspect in this investigation had previously attempted to “run-over” another Aurora Police Department Officer with a vehicle, attempted to kill a City of Aurora resident with a handgun, been involved in numerous motor vehicle thefts and burglaries and made previous statements to his family members that he would, “ Shoot it out with the police before going back to prison.” On the morning of July 10, 2013, members of the Aurora Police Department Fugitive Apprehension and Surveillance Team (FAST) located the suspect in a residential area and called in members of SWAT for support. Upon seeing members of SWAT move in on his location, the suspect attempted to flee the area in a stolen vehicle in which he had used in a shooting incident the previous week. The suspect began driving this stolen vehicle in reverse at a high rate of speed in the direction of officers and civilians who happened to be in the area. Agent Hopkins, recognizing the imminent danger that the suspect posed to officers and citizens, took the decisive action of driving his patrol unit into the suspect’s stolen vehicle which resulted in a major collision that disabled both vehicles. The suspect then attempted to flee the area on foot, but was apprehended by officers after a foot chase. Agent Hopkins sustained a major injury which required surgery and rehabilitation.

The heroic, courageous and selfless actions of Agent Craig Hopkins on this day protected the citizens of the City of Aurora, his fellow law enforcement officers and enabled the arrest of a very dangerous criminal. For injuries suffered as a result of this incident, Agent Craig Hopkins is hereby awarded the Purple Heart.
Life Saving Award

The Life Saving Award may be awarded by the Chief of Police to members who personally save a life. The lifesaving effort will normally involve one of the learned life supporting processes: mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, the Heimlich maneuver for choking victims, or the control of severe bleeding. Actions meriting this award will be significant actions by the member. The award will only be bestowed if the victim survives the incident. The request for a life-saving award will be accompanied by a document from witnesses or an attending physician stating the methods applied contributed significantly to the victim’s survival. This award will only apply when victims are at imminent risk of death. This will normally not include deliberate actions taken by the victims, unless the victims have inflicted injury upon themselves that is actually life threatening. This award will be a pin and certificate presented by the Chief of Police.

The department presented ten (10) Life Saving Awards in 2014.

**Officer Steven Ficco, Officer Steven Garcia, Officer Juan Gonzalez, Officer Jeremy J. Jenkins, and Officer Edward Vance**

On November 11, 2013, Officer Steven Garcia was responding to a robbery alarm when he observed a stationwagon make a lane change and strike a motorized scooter. The motorized scooter and its male rider were completely runover by the stationwagon and dragged underneath for about two-hundred feet before coming to a stop. Officer Garcia quickly aired the accident and Officers Juan Gonzalez, Jeremy Jenkins, Steven Ficco and Edward Vance rapidly responded to the scene to assist. Working as a team, Garcia, Jenkins and Vance lifted the stationwagon up off the ground while Ficco and Gonzalez pulled the driver of the scooter from underneath the vehicle. This was a very difficult task as the victim had been wearing a backpack which had gotten entangled in the undercarriage of the station-wagon. Additionally, the two occupants of the stationwagon were still seated inside the vehicle, making it more difficult for the officers to keep the car suspended while the rescue actions proceeded. Once the victim was freed, officers performed first aid and maintained the subject’s airway until AFD Rescue personnel arrived on-scene. The injured party was transported to the hospital and treated for life threatening injuries to the head, neck, leg and pelvis.

Due to the swift and decisive actions by these officers, the victim of this horrific accident survived. Their courageous actions exemplify the very best qualities of Law Enforcement. Aurora Police Department Officers Steven Garcia, Juan Gonzalez, Jeremy Jenkins, Steven Ficco and Edward Vance are hereby awarded the Life Saving Award.

**Officer Fermin Moreno and Officer Carlos Wilkendorf**

On November 7, 2013, Aurora Police Officers responded to 1926 Galena Street on report of an attempted suicide. Officer Fermin Moreno responded to the scene and located a hysterical mother in the garage of
the residence, attempting to perform CPR on her 18-year-old daughter. The young woman was unconscious, bleeding from her arms, surrounded by broken glass and had fresh lacerations around her neck from attempting to hang herself. Officer Fermin quickly verified that the young woman was not breathing and had no pulse. Officer Moreno immediately began chest compressions while Officer Carlos Wilkendorf responded with a breath mask and began providing the young woman with rescue breaths. Officers Moreno and Wilkendorf continued these life-saving efforts, enabling her heart to beat and restore her breathing. City of Aurora Fire and Rescue personnel responded and transported the young woman to the hospital where she made a full medical recovery. The officers completed an extensive and thorough investigation into the matter. On November 12, 2013, Aurora Fire Lieutenant John Lauder later reported to former Aurora Police Chief Daniel Oates, “I am proud to work amongst police officers of such high caliber.”

The Life Saving efforts of Officers Moreno and Wilkendorf set a tremendous example of commitment to community, excellence in law enforcement and provided a young woman with another opportunity at life. Officers Fermin Moreno and Carlos Wilkendorf are hereby awarded the Aurora Police Department Life Saving Award.

Officer Michael J. Moore
On September 12, 2013, Aurora Police Officer Michael Moore was working in an off duty capacity at 10190 E. Colfax Ave, US Bank, when he witnessed a vehicle being pushed sideways by a heavy current of flood waters, which were a result of a torrential down-pour of rain. Officer Moore noticed that the vehicle was occupied by two elderly people who were helpless to evacuate themselves from the situation. Officer Moore attempted to rescue the elderly couple but the fast moving current of flood water was too strong to maneuver through alone. Aurora Citizen Jose Cebollos observed Officer Moore’s efforts and immediately proceeded to his location to assist. Officer Moore and Jose Cebollos moved through the flooded roadway, working together as a team, to open the doors of the flooded vehicle. With great effort, they extracted the elderly couple one at a time, making two trips through the flooded roadway, and moving the couple to a safe area where they received medical attention. The elderly couple was later released from the scene without any significant injuries related to the incident. Due to the courageous and cooperative teamwork of Officer Moore and Jose Cebollos, the victims were able to escape this dangerous, life threatening situation without harm. Officer Michael Moore is hereby awarded the Aurora Police Department Life Saving Award. Officer Moore was also recognized with a Commander’s Commendation for his actions.

Officer Randall Carroll
On April 13, 2013, at 0141 hours, APD officers responded to a call of a shooting at Primo’s Bar at 1443 Chester Street. Officers Carroll and Burke were the first to arrive on scene and found two victims (Bryant and Adams) suffering from multiple gunshot wounds. There was an unruly bar crowd, 30 to 40 people, surrounding the victims; some were actively fighting each other. Both Officers made their way to the victims and began life saving efforts as best they could. Other officers arrived on scene and forced their way into the crowd to create a 10-foot perimeter around Carroll, Burke and the victims. Officer Carroll noticed a large amount of blood coming from a gunshot wound of Adams’ leg. Carroll quickly obtained a
t-shirt and belt from a by-stander and applied a make shift tourniquet to stem the loss of blood. Patrol Sergeants Jonsgaard and Hildebrand arrived on scene and immediately requested more patrol units to respond with riot control gear. Responding officers were able to push the aggressive crowd back so these life-saving efforts could be completed and the victims evacuated for medical treatment. Sadly, Bryant did not survive the ordeal. However, ER Dr. Michael Jobin advised later, “The use of the tourniquet by the officer was instrumental in countering the loss of blood from Mr. Adams and did aid greatly in keeping him alive following the shooting.”

If not for the courage of these officers, this hostile situation could have been much worse, and another life lost. Due to Officer Randall Carroll’s life-saving efforts and performing a difficult task under unusual hostile circumstances, he is hereby awarded the Life Saving Award.

**Officer Jimmy W. Bath**

On May 16, 2013, Officer Jimmy Bath responded to a report of an injury accident in the area of S. Havana St. and E. Mexico Ave. Upon arrival, Officer Bath quickly located an unconscious male inside of a wrecked vehicle involved in the accident. The unconscious party’s wife informed Officer Bath that she believed her husband had sustained a heart attack during the vehicle accident. Officer Bath quickly assessed the unconscious male and determined that he was not breathing and had no pulse. Officer Bath took it upon himself to immediately begin CPR on the unconscious male who was still inside his wrecked vehicle. Officer Bath tirelessly continued this effort until Aurora Fire and Rescue personnel arrived. The unconscious party was transported by ambulance to the hospital where he was successfully treated and eventually released from medical care.

The quick and decisive actions of Officer Bath in this incident were instrumental in saving the life of a citizen in dire and life-threatening circumstances. Officer Bath performed his job in such a manner as to reflect great credit upon himself, the Aurora Police Department and the City of Aurora. Officer Jimmy Bath is hereby awarded the Aurora Police Department Life Saving Award.
Meritorious Service Ribbon

The Meritorious Service Ribbon may be awarded by the Chief of Police for service rendered in the line of duty when a member, because of diligence and perseverance, performs difficult tasks under unusual circumstances and goes far beyond that which is normally expected of members. This award will be a pin and certificate presented by the Chief of Police.

The department presented eleven (11) Meritorious Services Ribbons in 2014.

Officer Ryan Burke, Officer Randall Carroll, Sergeant Specialist Mark Hildebrand, Sergeant Specialist Gerald Jonsgaard, Officer Cynthia Lengyel, Officer John Moreland, and Officer Benjamin Petering

On April 13, 2013, at 0141 hours, APD officers responded to a call of a shooting at Primo’s Bar at 1443 Chester Street. Officers Carroll and Burke were the first to arrive on scene and found two victims (Bryant and Adams) suffering from multiple gunshot wounds. There was an unruly bar crowd, 30 to 40 people, surrounding the victims; some were actively fighting each other. Both Officers made their way to the victims and began life saving efforts as best they could. Other officers arrived on scene and forced their way into the crowd to create a 10-foot perimeter around Carroll, Burke and the victims. Officer Carroll noticed a large amount of blood coming from a gunshot wound of Adams’ leg. Carroll quickly obtained a t-shirt and belt from a by-stander and applied a make shift tourniquet to stem the loss of blood. Patrol Sergeants Jonsgaard and Hildebrand arrived on scene and immediately requested more patrol units to respond with riot control gear. Responding officers were able to push the aggressive crowd back so these life-saving efforts could be completed and the victims evacuated for medical treatment. Sadly, Bryant did not survive the ordeal. However, ER Dr. Michael Jobin advised later, “The use of the tourniquet by the officer was instrumental in countering the loss of blood from Mr. Adams and did aid greatly in keeping him alive following the shooting.”

If not for the courage of these officers, this hostile situation could have been much worse, and another life lost. The diligence, perseverance, and dedication to duty on this date by these officers brought great credit upon themselves, the Aurora Police Department, and the Law Enforcement Profession.

Officer Steve Garcia, Officer Jonathan McCants, Officer Benjamin Petering, and Officer William Stricklin

On December 15, 2013, at 0454hrs, APD officers responded to a man with a gun report in front of 1742 Jamaica Street. The RP related the man with the gun was her boyfriend, Stephen Adams, and he was armed with a shotgun, which he had fired in front of the residence two days prior. The RP related Adams had left the scene and gave a vehicle description. Officer Jeffrey Olson found the suspect vehicle and followed it, going in various directions until the suspect drove back to the Jamaica address and parked in front of it. Officers arriving on scene immediately attempted a felony stop and gave orders for Adams to exit the vehicle. Adams, for the next 45 minutes, challenged the officers to shoot him, got in and out of the vehicle, started it and attempted to back up and then go forward. At 0530 hours, Adams produced a
12-gauge shot gun and pointed it out of the driver’s window at the officers positioned to the left and rear. Officers did not fire at this point and Adams placed the shotgun into his own face and demanded to talk with his girlfriend. Adams again pointed the shotgun at officers out the open window and officers fired, striking Adams several times. Adams was taken into custody without incident and treated for his wounds.

Due to the calm and professional actions of all officers and supervisors involved with this call, a dangerous suspect was taken into custody. For performing a difficult task under unusual circumstances and going far beyond that which is normally expected of members.
Chief's Commendation Certificate

The Chief’s Commendation Certificate may be awarded by the Chief of Police to a member for exceptional contribution to the progress of the Department, or to individuals who perform their duties in an unusually effective manner. The contribution must be adopted by the Department and increase the administrative or operational efficiency of the Department. The Chief of Police may recognize individual members of other law enforcement organizations, or multi-jurisdictional task forces, for this award.

The department presented one-hundred-eight (108) Chief’s Commendation Certificates in 2014.

Officer Roland Albert, Sergeant Christopher Amsler, Officer Daniel Baginski, Sergeant Matthew Brukbacher, Sergeant Christopher Carleton, Sergeant David Cernich, Officer Diana Cooley, Officer Jeremiah Cooley, Officer Dennis Dempsey, Officer Reginald DePass, Officer Alex Diz, Lieutenant Marcus Dudley, Officer Shane Ellison, Officer Brian Elwood, Officer Matthew Ewert, Officer Mark Finnin, Officer Mark Fitu, Officer Richard Garcia, Officer Brad Graham, Officer Matthew R. Green, Sergeant Michael Haniffin, Agent Patricia Sprows-Hardin, Officer Benjamin Holston, Officer Daniel Iovine, Officer Jeremy W. Jenkins, Sergeant Jon Kessler, Officer Chad Lampson, Lieutenant Christian Lertch, Officer Judy Gurley-Lutkin, Officer Jason McIrvin, Sergeant Franklin Michelson, Officer Jason Moore, Officer Nicholas Muldoon, Officer Daniel Pell, Agent David Perry, Agent Joseph Petrucelli, Officer Robert Ragain, Sergeant Todd Renner, Officer Cassie Schell, Agent Thomas Sobieski, Officer Chris Stubbings, Officer David Sutherland, Officer Jay Van Kam, Officer Nicole Weiffenbach, Officer David Wells, Agent Robert Wilson, and Officer Patrick Youngquist

On April 18, 2014, at 1100 hours, multiple APD Officers responded to Smoky Hill High School, 16100 E. Smoky Hill Road, on a report of a student who was attempting to ignite an unknown device within the school and stating to others he wanted to blow the school up. Units responded to the scene and quickly located the suspect in a school office where he was found to be covered with an unknown white powder. He also had a backpack in which other suspicious items were located. Officers Shane Ellison and Patrick Youngquist took custody of the student, knowingly exposing themselves to the unknown substance. The school was evacuated and a full response by AFD HAZMAT and other APD Officers occurred. Lieutenant Christian Lertch established incident command and managed the scene. The school was searched thoroughly by multiple APD units utilizing gas masks. ERT Officers Van Kam and McIrvin donned SCBA units to support HAZMAT with their investigation of the white powder. School Resource Officer Judy Lutkin, who was off sick that day, responded from home on her own accord and assisted with the incident until the conclusion of operations. Sergeant Franklin Michelson, along with Detectives Patricia Hardin, Robert Wilson, David Perry and Thomas Sobieski responded and took control of the criminal investigation. The white powder was determined to be harmless, but the response to the incident was handled in a professional and exemplary manner by all involved. The incident was a fine example of teamwork among all three Districts of APD patrol, special assignments, members of the Investigations Bureau and members of the Aurora Fire Department.
Officer Robert Aragon, Officer Luke Barker, Officer Chad Berger, Officer Daniel Bertelson, Officer John Cassell, Officer Todd Chanos, Officer Todd Elliott, Officer Steven Ficco, Officer Matthew T. Green, Lieutenant Michael McClelland, Sergeant Kevin Rollins, Officer Matthew Springer, and Former Officer Adam Warren

On July 14, 2013, at 1843 hours, APD officers responded to 16486 E. Amherst Ave. on an intoxicated party with a gun (2013-26448). The RP, later identified as Patricia Applehans, advised her husband, David Applehans, suffers from clinical depression and had been drinking beer all day. After an argument with David, she later found him in the garage, sitting in his vehicle with the engine running, apparently attempting to commit suicide. When she confronted David, he exploded in a fit of rage, firing his pistol at the ceiling. Upon arrival, officers quickly set up a perimeter around the house. Patricia advised David was still inside the home with the gun and was very intoxicated. CIT/Negotiator Officer Daniel Bertelson arrived on scene and began communications with David via the phone. After negotiations broke down, Lt. Mike McClelland got on the phone with David, negotiating with him for almost an hour, trying to convince him to come outside. David stated several times he wasn’t coming outside and if we came into his home he would shoot at officers. An arrest team was set up to the east of the residence consisting of Officers Matt T. Green, John Cassell, Chad Elliot, Adam Warren, Steve Ficco and Daniel Bertelson. David came outside several times onto the porch during the negotiations but he retreated back inside upon observing officers pointing guns at him. David continued to threaten he would get his gun and make officers shoot him. During one appearance, Officer Bertelsen discharged his less lethal shot gun, striking David in the midsection twice, but the rounds didn’t seem to affect him. At 2003 hours, David exited his home for the fourth time and continued to ignore orders while screaming at officers. When it appeared David was going back inside once again, Officer Warren discharged his Taser, striking David in the midsection, incapacitating him enough to allow officers to place him into handcuffs and gain custody. Due to the perserverance and patience, a dangerous and volatile situation was controlled and avoided.

Sergeant Damon Vaz

During the winter of 2012, Community Resources Section Sergeant Damon Vaz was confronted with a serious problem which affected numerous school children in the City of Aurora. Some students did not own or have access to proper winter coats and apparel, and were often forced to walk to their schools in sub-zero temperatures. Children were arriving at their schools “in tears” because they were so cold. The majority of these children came from homeless or low income single parent families who were also refugees from foreign countries. Many of these families were simply not prepared for the inhospitable climate Colorado can produce in the wintertime. Sergeant Vaz took it upon himself to research and provide a solution to this serious problem. Sergeant Vaz initiated the “Cops, Coats and Kids Campaign.” This campaign produced over 342 coats and numerous winter hats and gloves which were distributed to the school children in need. The “Cops, Coats and Kids Campaign” continues to grow and facilitate the spirit of giving for the children who need it the most.

Sergeant Damon Vaz is commended and recognized for his charity, good will, professionalism, and community commitment to the children of Aurora. His actions reflect favorably upon himself, the Community Resources Section, the Aurora Police Department and the City of Aurora. Sergeant Damon Vaz is hereby awarded the Chief’s Commendation Certificate.
Officer Roland Albert, Officer Patrick Benda, Sergeant David Cernich, Officer Kevin Chester, Officer Rick Cisneros, Officer Darrin Degon, Officer Jonathan Dennis, Officer Specialist Alfred Eways, Officer Specialist Mike Hawkins, Sergeant Specialist Mark Hildebrand, Sergeant Brian Kelly, Officer Matthew Milligan, Lieutenant Gary Milsapgh, Officer Darnesha Montgomery, Officer Christopher Neiman, Officer Jason Oviatt, Officer Jeffrey Prince, Officer Michael Quirk, Officer Randall Ricks, Sergeant Kevin Rollins, Acting Sergeant Doug Rystrom, Officer Specialist Jake Stull, and Officer Jason Weber

On January 5, 2013, at 0300 hours, APD officers responded to 16005 East Ithaca Place, Unit C, on a report of shots fired. Upon arrival, officers contacted the suspect’s wife who escaped the townhome by jumping out of a second story window. She advised her husband may have just shot her sister, her sister’s boyfriend and her father inside the house and thinks he may have killed himself. Responding officers and patrol supervisors quickly surrounded the residence, set up an inner/outer perimeter and used a patrol car to pin the garage door of the townhome shut to prevent the escape of the suspect. Patrol supervisors also set up a rescue and crisis entry team in the event more shots were fired inside and it became an active shooter incident. Surrounding homes were evacuated and the residents transported to a nearby fire station for safety and security. Telephone contact was established with the barricaded suspect who was delusional and uncooperative, precipitating a SWAT call out. A standoff ensued for approximately six hours under frigid temperatures. The suspect continued to be aggressive and combative, firing at SWAT officers with an assault rifle. After stressful negotiations with the suspect failed and all efforts were made to gain his compliance and surrender, the suspect was shot and killed.

If not for the courageous actions of the first responding officers and supervisors, more innocent lives may have been lost. Their actions reflect great credit upon themselves, the Aurora Police Department and the City of Aurora.

Officer Timothy Eha, Officer Levi Huffine, Sergeant Stephen Jokerst, Sergeant Gerald Jonsgaard, Officer Mason MacDonald, Officer John Moreland, Officer Jeffrey Olson, and Officer David Sanderson

On December 15, 2013, at 0454 hrs, APD officers responded to a man with a gun report in front of 1742 Jamaica Street. The RP related the man with the gun was her boyfriend, Stephen Adams, and he was armed with a shotgun which he had fired in front of the residence two days prior. The RP related Adams had left the scene and gave a vehicle description. Officer Jeffrey Olson found the suspect vehicle and followed it, going in various directions until the suspect drove back to the Jamaica address and parked in front of it. Officers arriving on scene immediately attempted a felony stop and gave orders for Adams to exit the vehicle. Adams, for the next 45 minutes, challenged the officers to shoot him, got in and out of the vehicle, started it and attempted to back up and then go forward. At 0530 hrs, Adams produced a 12-gauge shot gun and pointed it out of the driver’s window at the officers positioned to the left and rear. Officers did not fire at this point and Adams placed the shotgun into his own face and demanded to talk with his girlfriend. Adams again pointed the shotgun at officers out the open window and officers fired, striking Adams several times. Adams was taken into custody without further incident and treated for his wounds. Due to the calm and professional actions of all officers and supervisors involved with this call, a dangerous suspect was taken into custody.
Officer Faith Goodrich
In May 2013, Officer Faith Goodrich was assigned to the Special Operations Bureau to specifically work on the Century 16 Theater Shooting After Action Report (AAR). The very same week she was assigned was the first on-site visit by the After Action Team. This team was made up of experts from outside of Colorado and had a very tight and demanding schedule. Faith worked diligently with team members, coordinating interviews, researching reports and getting the team the information they needed to conduct meaningful interviews. In the following months and subsequent visits by the AAR team members, Officer Goodrich coordinated the interviews and corresponded with the team ensuring proper information flow. Faith was instrumental in working with outside agencies to get their participation and cooperation with the AAR and she had the unenviable task of coordinating with some of the victims from the shooting so they could participate in the AAR. In addition to working on the AAR, Officer Goodrich helped the Major Crimes/Homicide Unit with the incident. She helped with the defense’s review of the evidence and performed other tasks as needed by the unit. Officer Goodrich’s willing attitude, attention to detail, professionalism and dedication were then and remain unmatched. She consistently carried out all of her duties which required her to work with inter and intra-agencies.

Officer Goodrich’s work will become a part of the public record and available to the world once the court allows it. Her efforts reflect great credit, not only upon herself, but on the entire Aurora Police Department. Officer Faith Goodrich is hereby awarded the Chief’s Commendation Certificate.

Officer Tim King
In September 2013, while assigned to the Aurora Police Department Fugitive Apprehension and Surveillance Team (FAST), Officer Tim King was assigned the task of locating and affecting the arrest of an armed and dangerous criminal who was wanted for serious felony charges. Officer King spent numerous hours performing surveillance on the suspect’s last known locations for over a two week period. During this time, Officer King discovered through informants that the wanted party was becoming increasingly antagonistic with threats against law enforcement personnel and had armed himself with an AK-47 rifle, a handgun, and had obtained a gas mask in the event SWAT attempted to capture him at his residence. On October 1, 2013, Officer King obtained additional information from an informant the suspect was hiding from law enforcement inside of his residence. Due the suspect’s previous criminal history and threats to harm law enforcement personnel, SWAT was activated. After a 10-hour call-out, SWAT did locate and apprehend the wanted party who had attempted to hide inside of the attic of the residence. Due to Officer King’s surveillance and investigation, the Arapahoe County District Attorney’s office raised the bond on this dangerous criminal to $75,000.

Due to the investigative efforts of Officer King, a dangerous criminal was safely apprehended. Officer King’s steadfastness, professionalism and dedication to duty brought great credit upon himself, the Aurora Police Department and the City of Aurora. Officer Tim King is hereby awarded the Chief’s Commendation Certificate.
Chief Marshall Jeffrey Peitersen

Shortly after midnight on March 22, 2014, Jeffrey Peitersen, the Chief Marshal with the Denver County Marshal’s Office, was driving southbound on E470 in his personal vehicle, in an off duty status. At approximately E. 6th Parkway he observed a Honda CRV bearing CO license plate 300TZJ going at a high rate of speed. Peitersen recognized the vehicle and plate from a BOLO robbery bulletin which he recently read, which was put out by the APD District 3 Investigations Unit. The vehicle had been carjacked at a Safeway near Federal Blvd. at E. 26th Ave. on March 20th by a Hispanic male, and later used in two subsequent robberies in Aurora and an attempt kidnapping in Arapahoe County over a 12-hour time period. Peitersen immediately notified the Aurora Police Communication Center and a call for service was generated. Officers Chad Berger and Andy Eways responded to the area and observed the suspect vehicle southbound on E470, going past Smoky Hill Road. A high risk stop was initiated on E470 @ Gartrell Road. The suspect was safely taken into custody without incident. At the Aurora Detention Facility, the suspect was interrogated by APD D3 Detectives, which as a result, gained a full confession from the suspect regarding his violent crime spree in the Metro Denver area.

Due to his superb observation and expeditious communication, Peitersen’s actions led to the capture, arrest and full confession of a violent criminal. Chief Marshal Jeffrey Peitersen is hereby awarded the Chief’s Commendation Certificate.

Officers Daniel Pell and Timothy Eha

On June 4, 2013, at 0258 hours, APD Officer Timothy Eha was performing patrol duties in the area of E. 16th Ave and Peoria St when he observed a silver Jeep Liberty speeding through the area. Officer Eha recognized that the Jeep matched the description of a stolen vehicle recently involved in a City of Denver burglary due to a BOLO he had previously reviewed. As Officer Eha was verifying that the Jeep was stolen, the occupants attempted to elude Officer Eha by driving into a residential area. Officer Eha located the stolen Jeep and discovered the two occupants were still seated inside the vehicle. After completing an initial investigation, Officer Eha discovered that the driver of the stolen Jeep was in possession of methamphetamine drugs, and that the passenger had an active warrant for his arrest. Officer Eha also discovered a large quantity of items inside the stolen vehicle consistent with stolen property from a burglary. APD Officer Daniel Pell, who was also on-scene, performed detailed interviews with the suspects that later implicated both men in past burglaries which had taken place in the City of Aurora as well as Denver.

Through initiative, hard-work and investigative prowess, their actions reflect great credit to themselves and the Aurora Police Department and the City of Aurora. Officer Timothy Eha and Officer Daniel Pell are hereby awarded the Chief’s Commendation Certificate.

Officer Jeffrey D. Prince

On February 26, 2014, a 13-year-old girl was brought into the Children’s Hospital by her parents. The juvenile had run away from home and subsequently been located by her parents. Patrol Officer Jeffrey D. Prince was dispatched on this incident because the child disclosed to her mother that she was sexually assaulted during her absence. During his investigation, Officer Prince was able to obtain from the victim
detailed information as to the area the assault occurred and the suspect vehicle it occurred in. On his own initiative, Officer Prince searched the area the victim described and was able to locate the vehicle at 1035 S. Dearborn Way in a back parking lot. Officer Prince seized the vehicle as evidence and also learned the vehicle was reported stolen during an armed robbery/carjacking a few days prior. Officer Prince notified CAC and EMATT investigators of his findings, along with notifying the victim’s mother.

Due to Officer Prince’s actions of establishing excellent trust and rapport with the victim and her family, along with the self-initiated search and location of the suspect vehicle, Officer Prince obtained critical evidence to assist and help solve several felony related cases. Officer Jeffrey D. Prince is hereby awarded the Chief’s Commendation Certificate.

Volunteer Coordinator Karen Rogers
Administrative Technician Karen Rogers is the Volunteer Coordinator for the Aurora Police Department. One of her primary duties and responsibilities is the large-scale planning of the annual APD Volunteer Awards Banquet. This banquet recognizes the accomplishments of over 400+ volunteers who contribute to the betterment of the APD while saving the City of Aurora hundreds of thousands of dollars annually. Karen begins planning and preparations for this event for the APD volunteers in the preceding September of each year. Most recently, APD hosted the 32nd Annual Volunteer Awards Banquet, with over 300+ people in attendance. Karen routinely invests and dedicates hundreds of hours of planning into this event, ensuring the delivery of professional product in every sense of the word. Her meticulous planning includes the compilation of hours of service by each volunteer, soliciting information from the various APD units and supervisors regarding the accomplishments of their personally assigned volunteers, working closely with other City entities and personnel, ordering of awards, securing of the banquet venue, ordering of banquet prizes, solicitation of door prizes from various local businesses, authoring the multi-paged power point program, proof-reading and ensuring quality control of the volunteer program booklets, mass-mailing of the invitations, testing and ensuring the quality control of the menu items, etc..... Without her dedication, hard work and attention to detail, the volunteers of the Aurora Police Department would not be properly recognized for their valuable contributions. Karen Rogers is a true professional who embraces and embodies the term “Customer Service” and is hereby awarded the Chief’s Commendation Certificate.

Officer Jeremy Sexton
On April 13, 2013, a homicide occurred at Primo’s Bar located at 1443 Clinton Street in the City of Aurora. Investigating Detectives from the Major Crimes Unit (MCU) quickly developed a primary suspect in this case. Efforts included providing security video surveillance footage from the bar, which captured a potential suspect, to members of specialized units within the Aurora Police Department in the hopes that a member may positively identify this suspect and assist in identifying other accomplices involved. Direct Action Response Team Officer Jeremy Sexton reviewed the video and was able to identify a male involved in the incident as being a ‘Ho Hop’ gang member. As a result of Officer Sexton’s investigative actions, MCU was able to confirm the identity of the primary suspect, an accomplice and obtain warrants for their arrests.
Officer Jeremy Sexton’s efforts and dedication in this case significantly assisted MCU’s investigation and reflect great credit upon himself, the Aurora Police Department and the City of Aurora. Officer Jeremy Sexton is hereby awarded the Chief’s Commendation Certificate.

**Officer David L. Wells**
During his assignment to the District 3 PAR Team, Officer David Wells began witnessing increases in hazardous traffic behavior in Aurora Public School zones and listening to concerns about school traffic safety from school officials, parents, community members and students. Officer Wells took the initiative and adopted an innovative program developed by the Arapahoe County Sheriff’s Office in 2006, to enhance traffic enforcement within school safety zones. The S.T.O.P. program, which stands for “Slow Down, Think, Observe and Proceed with Caution” relies on a partnership between school employees and the APD to identify unsafe traffic behavior and to serve as a notice to motorist who are observed committing violations in school zones. Officer Wells developed an innovative training program to educate school faculty on how the program works, and the process for sending information to the APD in order to notify problem drivers. The S.T.O.P. program has proved so popular with school staff, as well as parents, that the program has expanded to all APS and Cherry Creek elementary schools. The results of this hard work and dedication has contributed to reducing the amount of school zone related accidents and injuries throughout the Aurora Public School system.

Officer Wells’ passion, integrity and commitment to the children of Aurora serve as a reminder to all of us on just how one officer’s initiative can improve the quality of life for so many. Officer David Wells is hereby awarded the Chief’s Commendation Certificate.

**Sergeant Christopher J. Amsler**
From 2002 to 2013, Sergeant Christopher J. Amsler was instrumental in putting new life back into the Aurora Police Department Police Explorer Program. He played an active role in improving recruitment and retention, increasing the overall number of Explorers in the program. His most recognizable contribution was the creation of the APD Explorer Training Academy. He developed the curriculum, schedules and structure that are currently in place today. This initial training for the Explorer candidates set the standards of learning, character building and professionalism, providing a solid foundation for their time in the program, and to prepare them for future careers in law enforcement. Chris also assisted in creating training programs and competitions used by LEEPAC (Law Enforcement Explorer Post Advisors Association of Colorado). Sgt. Amsler updated old policies and procedures; created an Explorer uniform patch to improve moral and boost esprit de corps; developed an internet webpage, as well as a social media account on Facebook to further expand the reach of the program to the community.

Sgt. Amsler’s years of dedication and service to the Explorers is reflected by the level of motivation and commitment by the members of Aurora Police Explorer Post 2024, who continuously display the highest level of honor, duty and integrity. Sergeant Christopher J. Amsler is hereby awarded the Chief’s Commendation Certificate.
Officer Gary Rogers
Officer Gary Rogers has served as the Aurora Police Department’s lead liaison for the annual Colfax Marathon for many years. This labor intensive position requires many hours of planning, preparation and meetings with race organizers, city government representatives, the Denver Police Department, barricade companies, volunteer groups and the citizens who live in the area that are affected by this major event. The Marathon is a very large event for which Officer Rogers has sacrificed much time and effort to ensure its success. Due to the security concerns created as a result of the Boston Marathon bombing, the 2013 Colfax Marathon demanded even greater time and effort to ensure its safe and efficient implementation. Officer Rogers took it upon himself to plan and implement contingency responses for potential disruptions of the race. He developed action plans with the Office of Emergency Management and he implemented an event staffing plan of over 200 people.

Due to the tireless and diligent efforts of Officer Rogers, the 2013 Colfax Marathon was a tremendous success. Officer Gary Rogers is hereby awarded this Chief’s Commendation Certificate for his professionalism, dedication and exceptional organizational skills.

Management Analyst Jered Elmore
Management Analyst Jered Elmore initiated several important contributions to the progress of the Aurora Police Department while working for the City of Aurora Services Section during calendar year 2013. Jered prepared a spreadsheet for the patrol bid tracking system which improved user interface and order preparation. He also coordinated with the bid committee and created representational imaging of the police patrol districts which provides efficiency during the bidding process and results formulation process. Jered’s diligent efforts for the patrol bid processing were a significant contribution which simplified a very complex process. Jered also implemented the procedures and organization of integrating a collection agency on outstanding Photo Red Light fines for the Aurora Police Department Traffic Section. He coordinated with the Traffic Section and the Photo Red Light system vendor to initiate the Aurora Police Department’s responses required for disputes, as well as managing cases where the identity information was extracted from citizen’s credit reports. His efforts also included systems training, personnel certification, and research of guidelines, laws and evidence packages which streamlined and organized the management of the Photo Red Light system program implementation.

The creative work and diligent efforts of Management Analyst Jered Elmore provided exceptional contributions to the overall mission of the Aurora Police Department. Jered Elmore is hereby awarded the Aurora Police Department Chief’s Commendation Certificate.

Police Agent Charles A. Mehl
On October 29, 1996, Citizen Kimberly Medina was reported as a Missing Person. The initial investigation revealed the circumstances of her disappearance were more than suspicious. Detective Charles A. Mehl was assigned to the case. Over the next 16 years, Detective Mehl worked tirelessly on the case. His investigative efforts took him all across the State of Colorado, collaborating with numerous law enforcement agencies. During the investigation, Kimberly’s husband, Michael Medina became the primary suspect. Through extensive efforts and exhaustive investigative work, Detective Mehl was able
to formulate a solid circumstantial case against the husband. In fact, the case was so comprehensive that the District Attorney’s Office accepted the case for prosecution despite the fact the body of Kimberly Medina was never located. The case rested entirely on the testimony of Detective Mehl. Through a thoroughly prepared investigation and complementary prosecution and the credibility of Detective Mehl on the witness stand, Kimberly’s husband, Michael Medina, was found guilty of First Degree Murder. The Arapahoe County District Attorney George Brauchler and his prosecution team highly praised Detective Mehl for what had just become the second “No-Body” Homicide Conviction in the history of the State of Colorado.

Detective Chuck Mehl’s display of tireless professionalism to investigate this homicide case over a period of 16 years, and to bring resolution to the family of Kimberly Medina, goes far beyond what is expected of members. His actions brought great credit upon himself, the Aurora Police Department and the City of Aurora. Police Agent Charles A. Mehl is hereby awarded the Chief’s Commendation Certificate.

**Senior Management Analyst Christine A. Waters**

Senior Management Analyst Christine A. Waters has performed her budget, finance and accounting duties in an exceptional manner over the past several years. In 2013 she maintained 53 grants and designated fund budgets which can call for applications, allocations, reimbursements, reporting and audits. Chris is called upon to find funding during the year, as well as assuring the Department is within approved budget guidelines. The requests for funding can often make her work tough when being asked to just make it happen. She keeps track of opportunities and exceptions to meet the highest priorities identified for the team. In 2012 Chris assisted the organization by managing an $82 million General Fund budget within $21,113 of that allocation. It didn’t seem like that could get any better until the results of 2013, where an $86 million General Fund expenditure budget was within $1,241 of authorized allocation. Christine certainly gives the Aurora Police Department the most opportunity she can within the financial constraints.

For her dedication to duty and tireless efforts, Senior Management Analyst Christine A. Waters is hereby awarded the Chief’s Commendation Certificate.

**Sergeant Cassidee Carlson**

Sgt. Cassidee Carlson has been assigned to command the Media Relations Unit in the Office of the Chief of Police since November 27, 2010. In the three-plus years of her tenure, the Department has experienced numerous incidents that have garnered extraordinary media focus at the state, national and international level. She has performed exceptionally well in her lead role of managing the image of the Department and its information flow to the media. She is worthy of this special recognition as she leaves the unit for another assignment.

In the immediate aftermath of the July 20, 2012, Century 16 Theater Shooting, Sgt. Carlson managed the Department’s response to an international media event of remarkable magnitude. She did so with a grace, calm, and quiet efficiency that reassured all around her and the entire Aurora community during a period of great tragedy. It is a testament to her skills that the feedback from media professionals around the
world was that the Aurora Police Department handled the information flow as well as any organization could possibly have done under the pressure of such a horrific event. In addition, the special program Sgt. Carlson developed to provide individual media assistance to the families of victims – relying on the expertise of law enforcement PIOs from the region whom she mobilized – has become a national model and standard response by police departments for such mass-casualty events. The exceptional level of professionalism exhibited by the Media Relations Unit has resulted in requests for Sgt. Carlson to provide training or conduct presentations for numerous law enforcement agencies across the country.

Sgt. Carlson has deftly managed all the demands of the Media Relations Unit for three years, skillfully defending the Department from unfair attacks and being exceptionally responsive to individuals and units with the Department who had to go about their important work while under the difficult scrutiny of the media.

For all she has done in her assignment and in recognition of her dedication, professionalism and creativity, Sgt. Carlson is worthy of and hereby recognized with this Chief’s Commendation.
Chief’s Unit Citation

The Chief’s Unit Citation may be awarded by the Chief of Police to an entire unit whose members perform their assigned duties in an unusually effective manner. The Chief of Police may recognize units comprised of officers from the Aurora Police Department as well as other organizations, or multi-jurisdictional task forces, for this award.

The department presented nine (9) Chief’s Unit Citations in 2014.

Aurora Public Schools – Security Team

During the winter of 2012, Director of Security for the Aurora Public School System, Tudy Wicks, identified a serious problem which affected the school children in the City of Aurora. Numerous young Aurora Public School students did not own or have access to proper winter coats and apparel, and they were often forced to walk to their schools in sub-zero temperatures. Children were arriving at their schools “in tears” because they were so cold. The majority of these children often came from homeless or low income single parent families who were also refugees from foreign countries. Many of these families were simply not prepared for the sometimes inhospitable climate that Colorado can present in the wintertime. Tudy and her team of security officers took it upon themselves to seek out partners to assist these children in need. Tudy met with APD Community Resource Sergeant Vaz to express her concerns and provide a solution to this serious problem. She assisted Sergeant Vaz in initiating the “Cops, Coats and Kids Campaign” in December of 2012. In the next several months, this campaign produced over 342 coats and numerous winter hats and gloves which were distributed to the school children in need of these vital resources. The “Cops, Coats and Kids Campaign” continues to grow and facilitate the spirit of giving for the children who need it the most.

The Aurora Public Schools Security Team is recognized for their charity, good will, and commitment to the children of our community. They are commended for fostering a partnership with members of the Aurora Police Department for the purpose of helping those who need help the most. Aurora Public Schools Security Team is hereby awarded the Chief’s Unit Citation.

Arapahoe County Sheriff’s Department (Bomb Squad Unit), Denver Police Department, Greenwood Village Police Department, and Special Weapons and Tactics Team (SWAT)

On January 5, 2013, at 0300hrs, members of APD patrol and SWAT responded to the 16000 block of East Ithaca Place on a report of a barricaded suspect that may have shot and killed three people inside. The suspect was aggressive and combative, threatening to fire at officers if they attempted to come inside the townhome. Mutual aid assistance was requested for the operation by SWAT leadership. Without hesitation, three agencies stepped up and delivered resources needed; members of the Arapahoe County Bomb Squad, Denver Police Department, and Greenwood Village Police Department, all responded and made significant contributions of personnel and equipment to this dangerous situation. A decision was made to attempt a breach of the front windows of the townhome in order for insertion of a robot. This exposure would impair the suspect’s movements throughout the townhome, and isolate him to a particular area. SWAT officers used the Denver PD Bearcat armored vehicle to accomplish this plan due
to its’ maneuverability. During the breach, the suspect opened fire on SWAT officers, striking the Bearcat with a barrage of .223 rounds. The task was accomplished and it did in fact force the suspect to isolate himself to the second floor area. If not for the protection of the Bearcat armored vehicle, this course of action would not have been possible and serveral officers may have been seriously injured or killed. Negotiations continued to fail and the order was given by the Command Post to go into a “offensive posture” meaning to engage the suspect upon visual contact. SWAT Officers were accompanied to the second floor of the neighboring townhome by members of the Arapahoe County Bomb Squad. Body length ballistic shields, provided by the Greenwood Village Police Department, were used to give the Bomb Squad and SWAT officers some protection from the suspect while creating gunport positions. These gunport positions were created by igniting explosive charges into specific locations on the walls. These charges created large enough observation ports for SWAT officers to see into the suspect’s unit, as well as the ability to engage the suspect with deadly force if needed. A short time later chemical agents were introduced into the townhome and the suspect exposed himself. APD SWAT used deadly force at that time to neutralize the suspect and bring the situaiton to a close.

If not for the expediant assistance of personnel and equipment by these partnering agencies, the outcome of this deadly situation could have resulted in additional loss of life. Their actions reflect great credit upon themselves and to the law enforcement profession as a whole.

**APD Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT)**

On January 5, 2013, at 0400hrs, APD SWAT responded to the 16000 block of East Ithaca Place on a report of a barricaded suspect that may have shot and killed three people inside. Members of the Crisis Negotiation Team arrived on scene and established telephone contact with the suspect, in which the suspect was quickly determined to be delusional and uncooperative. CNT Officers Cynthia Lengyel and Tracy Rogers, worked as a team to communicate with the suspect, from 0430 until 0847hrs. The suspect continued to be aggressive and combative, threatening to fire at officers if they attempted to come inside. At times the suspect would scream some unintelligible words and then hang up the phone. Numerous requests were made for the suspect to surrender and come out of the home. The suspect’s mental /physical state made it difficult to carry on any meaningful conversation with him. At one point the suspect claimed to be “Jesus,” and he wanted to be referred to as “The Son.” All during these conversations with CNT, members of the SWAT Command Staff, along with Incident Commander Chief Dan Oates, were making decisions based on the suspects demeanor and behavior with CNT. All throughout the negotiations, when the suspect was on the phone, SWAT was put in a “defensive posture.” When the suspect was off the phone, SWAT was placed in a “offensive posture,” meaning to engage the suspect upon visual contact. If not for the stressful and dilegent work of the CNT during this incident, these plans and tactics would not have been possible, and valuable information would not have been gained in order to end this horrific event.

The Crisis Negotiation Team is commended for their performance during this incident and are hereby awarded the Chief’s Unit Citation.
APD Emergency Response Team

During the middle part of September (10th-16th) 2013, the City of Aurora along with several other Colorado municipalities and counties experienced a very severe and tragic series of weather events in the form of large quantities of rain which fell in a short period of time. These rain events and the amount of precipitation that fell were described as being comparable to "biblical proportions." The City of Aurora received a total of 15.43 inches of rain over a 7 day period, the result of which was flash flooding which brought the City to a near standstill. In hindsight, this unique weather event was described as "a thousand year flood." Many City streets and intersections became impassable due to either standing or fast-moving water. Neighborhoods began to receive flood damage and virtually every division of City government began fielding requests for assistance and responded to emergency calls for service in order to preserve both life and property. The Aurora Police Department Emergency Response Team was mobilized at 1103 hours on September 12, 2013 and remained "on-the-job" around the clock for the next four days working 12-hour shifts. The leadership of the Emergency Response Team was tasked with deploying ERT resources to various locations within the City in order to accomplish a host of tasks: reduce the amount of people driving into dangerous situations, supplement patrol officers by responding to calls for service directly and indirectly related to the flood waters, manning fixed-post locations at traffic roadblocks, conducted damage-assessments of streets and both public and private property, went door to door in flooded neighborhoods and contacted homeowners as well as conducted welfare checks, deployed high-profile vehicles in flooded neighborhoods and rescued several stranded motorists, directly assisted in the orderly and safe evacuation of a full Cherry Creek Public Schools Elementary School that had been surrounded and cut-off by rising flood waters, handled "size-up" concerns at local water storage areas (reservoirs, as well as retention and "over-flow" ponds, canals, dams, etc...) amongst other tasks. Each member of the Emergency Response Team, many without regard for their own comfort and welfare, graciously came forward and volunteered to assist the citizens and visitors of Aurora when they were needed the most and acted in a very caring and professional manner.

Based upon their actions during the flooding event of 2013, the Emergency Response Team and its members are hereby awarded the Chief's Unit Citation.

Gang Intervention Unit

On April 3, 2013, a gang motivated shooting occurred in the area of E Iliff Ave and S. Buckley Rd. in which two victims were located with serious gunshot wounds. Members of the Aurora Police Department Gang Intervention Unit (GIU) to include Sergeant Michael Gaskill, Agent Larry Martinez, Officer Kevin Rossi, Former Officer Kristopher Johnson, Officer Jeffrey Longnecker, Former Officer Adam Neumeyer, Officer Beau Jacobsen, and Officer Phil Rathbun, responded and initiated an investigation. It was quickly determined that this shooting incident was related to a previous gang related altercation at a different location. Also, through this investigative effort, GIU was able to develop probable cause for the arrest of a known Bloods gang member as the primary suspect for this shooting incident. GIU members then initiated exhaustive investigative and surveillance efforts to locate this suspect over a two day period of time. As a result, the suspect was located and safely placed into custody without incident. Additionally, GIU developed critical intelligence which implicated a second dangerous gang member who had also been
involved in the shooting incident. This suspect was also taken into custody three days later after a second
tireless investigation.

Due to the outstanding professionalism and dedication to duty by the members of the Aurora Police
Department Gang Intervention Unit, two violent and dangerous gang members were identified, located
and apprehended in a timely fashion which made the City of Aurora a safer place. The members of the
Aurora Police Department Gang Intervention Unit are hereby awarded the Chief’s Unit Citation.

**Aurora Police Honor Guard Team**
The Aurora Police Honor Guard Team has distinguished itself as a symbol of honor, dignity, and
professionalism for the Aurora Police Department for many years. The unit, composed of men and women
volunteers, demands the highest standards and discipline from it’s members. Due to these high standards
the unit has received numerous praises and accolades throughout it’s history. When called upon, the
Honor Guard team serves as a tribute to sworn personnel who have devoted their lives with honorable
service, or to those who have made the ultimate sacrifice. Tributes include; firing volleys, playing
ceremonial bagpipes, folding and presenting the American flag to the families, rendering the honor of
Taps, serving as pallbearers, rifle bearers, and presenting State, City, and APD colors.

The Honor Guard participates in local conferences, graduations, local and national police memorials, and
local sporting events for the Colorado Rockies, Colorado Avalanche, and the Denver Broncos
organizations. Members of the team are physically fit, possess impeccable uniform standards, are in good
standing with the Department, have a willingness to perform close quarter drill and ceremony, and
appreciate the meaning of Integrity, Service and Pride.

The APD Honor Guard has worked with diligence and professionalism to bring to the public’s attention
the human side of policing, including the abject pain and sense of loss that is an inevitable part of the
public safety profession. They have committed themselves to be an integral part of the department’s
support mechanism for the families of officers killed or injured in the line of duty.

The Aurora Police Honor Guard Unit is hereby awarded the Chief’s Unit Citation.
Community Commitment Certificate

The Community Commitment Certificate may be awarded by the Chief of Police to members who, through their own efforts, display an unusually effective manner of employing the Aurora Police Department’s community commitment philosophy by providing the public police services which embody the concepts of:

- Police employee/community identification, ownership, and trust or;
- A two-way dialogue between the police organization and the community or;
- A problem-solving approach to the delivery of police services or;
- An attention to those factors that contribute to improving deteriorating conditions in neighborhoods and community or;
- An official recognition of an action-oriented approach to those issues which give rise to fear of crime in the community or of crime in the community or;
- A skilled utilization of the network of governmental and community resources through the use of specific referrals and coordination or;
- An orientation toward the facilitation of community self-help through involvement, knowledge, and organization.

Officer Craig Collins, John Hamam (Aurora Fire Department), Justin Julian (Aurora Fire Department), Terry Malone (Aurora Fire Department), Sergeant Walt Obrecht, and Lieutenant Robert Ott (Aurora Fire Department)

On March 2, 2014, Aurora Fire Department Truck 2 responded on a medical call at the 900 block of Troy Street. The victim, a 90-year-old Alzheimer’s patient, Dorothy Wilkes, was transported by ambulance to University Hospital, where she passed away. AFD contacted APD to standby at the residence with her 90 year old husband, Mr. Jim Wilkes, while the hospital notified him by phone of his wife’s death. Sgt. Walt Obrecht and Officer Craig Collins responded, along with an APD victim advocate, and transported Mr. Wilkes to the hospital to see his wife one last time. The members of AFD Truck 2 volunteered to make the death notification to Mr. Wilkes, as they had responded on previous medical calls for Mrs. Wilkes, and had even shoveled snow off the Wilkes’ driveway and sidewalk on one call. Upon notification, Mr. Wilkes was understandably distraught and told them that he didn’t feel he had much longer to live either as he had suffered a stroke in the past. Upon hearing this, the police officers and firefighters took it upon themselves to visit Mr. Wilkes on numerous occasions in the following days and weeks to check on his welfare, making sure he was caring for himself and keeping his spirits up. Mr. Wilkes was very appreciative of the visits, which no doubt helped his recovery from the loss of his wife of 69 years. Mr. Wilkes contacted the Public Safety Communications Dispatch Center to express his appreciation for the actions of the police officers and firefighters, stating, “The world needs more people like them.” The Lead Tele-communicator who took the call stated she sensed that the officers and firefighters had “saved his life” by offering such compassion.
Certificate of Appreciation – Citizen’s Award

The Certificate of Appreciation, Citizen’s Award may be awarded by the Chief of Police to any citizen who renders valuable, courageous, or heroic assistance to members of the Aurora Police Department.

The department presented two (2) Certificates of Appreciation in 2014.

Jose Cebollos
On September 12, 2013, Aurora Police Officer Michael Moore was working in an off duty capacity at 10190 E. Colfax Ave, US Bank, when he witnessed a vehicle being pushed sideways by a heavy current of flood waters which were a result of a torrential down-pour of rain. Officer Moore noticed that the vehicle being flooded was occupied by two elderly people who were helpless to evacuate themselves from the situation. Mike attempted to rescue the elderly couple but the fast moving current of flood water was too strong to maneuver through alone. Aurora Citizen Jose Cebollos observed Officer Moore’s efforts and immediately proceeded to his location to assist. Officer Moore and Jose Cebollos moved through the flooded roadway, working together as a team to open the doors of the flooded vehicle. With great effort, they extracted the elderly couple one at a time, making two trips through the flooded roadway, and moving the couple to a safe area where they received medical attention. The elderly couple was later released from the scene without any significant injuries related to the incident. Due to the courageous and cooperative teamwork of Officer Moore and Jose Cebollos, the victims were able to escape this dangerous, life threatening situation without harm.

Jose Cebollos displayed great courage and bravery with his willingness to assist his fellow citizens and the Aurora Police Department without regard for his own personal safety. Jose Cebollos is hereby awarded the Certificate of Appreciation – Citizen’s Award.

Tasha M. Ewing (USPS)
On April 15, 2014 at 1115 hours, United States Postal Service Letter Carrier Tasha M. Ewing was in the area of 15374 E. 7th Circle delivering mail. Tasha observed a garage door to the residence open and a red in color Ford Taurus pull out. A young male walked out the front door of the home and got into the back seat of the vehicle and it drove away. When she approached the front door area she observed the glass by the door was broken out. She immediately called APD and advised what she had just observed, giving detailed descriptions of the suspects and the vehicle. A short time later, APD Officers spotted the suspect vehicle and attempted to stop it. The vehicle fled at a high rate of speed into an apartment complex but ran out of roadway and the three occupants fled on foot. Other officers in the area arrived and a perimeter was established. A short time later, two of the suspects had been detained and taken into custody. Tasha was transported to the scene and positively identified the vehicle as the one that left the house earlier. Items inventoried from the Ford Taurus, which was a reported steal as well, were determined to be stolen from the home. The items recovered were valued at over $7,000 dollars. Due to Tasha’s keen observations, two dangerous criminals were arrested and the stolen property returned to its rightful owners. Tasha M. Ewing is commended for her actions which contributed to the betterment of the City of Aurora, making it a safer place to live for its citizens.
Informal Commander’s Commendations

Commander’s Commendation Certificate

The Commander’s Commendation Certificate may be awarded by Section and Bureau Command Officers to those members who, through their own efforts, perform their jobs in such a manner as to reflect high quality and professionalism in performance of their duties.

The department issued one-hundred thirty-three (133) Commander’s Commendations in 2014.

**Officer Bryan Bergstrom, Officer William Collom, Officer David Wilson, Officer Jeremy J. Jenkins, Officer Thomas Muldoon, and Officer Adam Roberts**

On April 2, 2014, District 1 officers responded to a reported strong arm robbery which occurred in the 1200 block of S Havana Street. Responding officers checked the area for the two suspects. Officer Jenkins located a subject walking behind a buisness who vaguely matched the suspect description. Upon investigating further, Officer Jenkins observed the subject place something in a bush and flee on foot. Officer Jenkins recovered the victim’s $525.00 cash from the bush and located video surveillance capturing the subject’s actions.

Officer Wilson located the subject two blocks away who was detained with the assistance of Officer Roberts and Officer Bergstrom. Officer Collom contacted the victim and led the investigation. Officer Johnson assisted with searching for evidence and recovered video surveillance from the Sprint store. Officer Muldoon contacted witnesses and conducted the field identification show-ups. A witness positively identified the detained subject as the suspect in the robbery. Officer Wilson, recognizing the victim’s wallet was still missing, started a thorough search for the evidence.

Officer Wilson began checking trash cans inside King Soopers and located the victim’s wallet in the men’s restroom. Officer Jenkins was instrumental in returning the money and wallet to the victim. After consultation with a detective and the DA it was determined that the evidence/property could be thoroughly documented and returned to the victim.

Based on the hardwork and determination of these officers, all of the victim’s property was recovered and the main suspect was located and arrested. The successful resolution to this call was the result of the outstanding teamwork displayed by every officer on this call. The initative, hard-work, determination, and teamwork displayed by these officers is to be commended. They exemplify the key values of the Aurora Police Department and they provided a great service to the citizens of Aurora.

**Officer Paul Davis, Officer Chad Elliott, Officer Darryll Huntsman, and Officer Matthew Neely**

On April 15, 2014, at about 1600 hours, Officers Chad Elliott and Paul Davis were investigating a traffic violation near the 14100 block of E. Colfax Avenue, while doing so they observed a physical disturbance about 150-feet east of the traffic investigation. Officer Elliott ran to the location as Officer Davis followed in his police vehicle. Officer Elliott quickly determined that the disturbance was actually a robbery in progress. The victim of the robbery was beaten and pushed face first into a brick wall.
A foot pursuit ensued with the suspects eventually taken into custody with the assistance of other responding officers. A thorough investigation conducted by Officers Elliott, Davis, Neely, and Huntsman concluded in the arrest and jailing of three robbery suspects.

The quick recognition and intervention by Officers Davis and Elliott spared the victim further injury and the eventual recovery of his stolen cellular phone. The subsequent investigation by Officers Elliott, Davis, Neely, and Huntsman resulted in violent criminals incarcerated and a solid criminal case entered into the court system.

**Officer Bret Iske, Officer Jeremiah Miles, and Officer Richard Romero**

On June 30, 2014, at approximately 1830 hours, Officers Bret Iske, Jeremiah Miles, and Richard Romero responded to investigate a theft in progress which was later determined to be a robbery of a 7-11 store patron at 10201 E Montview Blvd. The suspect forcibly took about $100 cash from the victim inside the store as he attempted to buy items at the counter. A witness and friend of the victim followed the suspect demanding that the suspect return the money. The suspect then brandished a small black handgun to stop the witness from following him.

Officer Iske reviewed the surveillance video and developed suspect and suspect vehicle descriptions and aired this information to other officers. Later, while Officers Miles and Romero were completing this offense report, they observed the suspect travel by in the suspect vehicle. They conducted a high-risk stop on the vehicle, and the suspect, a known Crip gang member with a lengthy criminal history, was taken into custody without incident at 23rd and Emporia. Victim and witness both positively identified the suspect. The officers are commended for their teamwork, investigative skills, and observational skills, which led to the arrest of a violent felon.

**Officer Lisa Calcamuggio, Officer Jason Capper, Sergeant Cassidee Carlson, Officer Gerald Medina, Officer John Moreland, and Officer Donald Wilcox**

On August 22, 2014, at approximately 1945 hours, officers responded to the 1400 block of Ursula Street on a report of a male subject that was on top of a 7-story parking structure. The male reportedly stated to someone on the ground below, “do you want to see me fly?” Sgt. Carlson arrived on scene first and made the initial contact with the male. The male was sitting on the edge of the wall with his body facing toward the outside of the garage and he had one leg hanging off the wall and the other tucked in. A short time later Officer Medina, who is CIT certified, arrived and took over talking to the male and developing a rapport with him. Officers Calcamuggio, Capper, Wilcox, and Moreland soon arrived on the roof and started assisting.

The male stated that he wanted to commit suicide because he was depressed and nobody cared about him. He continued to tell officers not to move closer or he would jump. Officers Calcamuggio and Wilcox, who are CIT certified, also started talking to the male. Officer Medina and Sgt. Carlson worked on building trust with the male so that they could move closer to him. After about 30 minutes of talking to the male, Officer Calcamuggio was able to obtain a phone number for an out of state relative from him. She was able to establish phone contact with his sister and asked him to please get off the ledge so that he could
talk to his sister. This was eventually successful. After talking on the phone with his family, he was transported to the hospital for a mental health hold.

All officers on scene did an excellent job working together. Each officer displayed patience and discipline throughout this incident which resulted in a successful resolution.

**Officer Tony Cancino and Officer Mark Lowisz**

Officers Tony Cancino and Mark Lowisz, while assigned to the District One B.I.G. Unit, were able to determine a pattern of business burglaries. The surveillance videos of about 6 burglaries were reviewed and all contained one party consistently wearing a distinctive rugby striped hoodie. Through the gathering of intelligence of known burglars in the area and searching through several Facebook pages, these officers believed they had identified the owner of this striped hoodie. Officer Cancino authored a search warrant for the party’s address and led the efforts in a tactical operation with PAR, DART, and SWAT teams.

The results of this operation yielded, not only the seizure of the striped hoodie, but also the arrest of the striped hoodie owner/wearer, an extensive confession of burglaries involving 12 businesses (including information of 3 co-defendants) and the confiscation of several items of stolen property not listed in the original search warrant, after gaining written permission from the juvenile and his mother. This was a fantastic job with well over and above normal results.

**Officer Randall Carroll**

On July 9, 2012, at approximately 0215 hours, Officer Carroll responded to a call for a CIT officer needed in regards to a suicidal party that was on the phone with the suicide hotline, had a knife in her hand and was hanging out a third story window threatening to jump. An emergency entry team was assembled as Officer Carroll began speaking with the subject at the doorway.

The suicidal party was yelling and acting irrationally and was obviously experiencing significant emotional trauma. Using his CIT skills Officer Carroll took the time necessary to talk with the distressed party and was able to develop a rapport with her.

Officer Carroll did an outstanding job using his listening skills, which in turn resulted in the suicidal party developing a trust with Officer Carroll. Officer Carroll convinced the suicidal party that suicide was not the answer and that he could assist her in obtaining resources which could help to alleviate the temporary trauma that she was experiencing. Through his patience, diligence, and training Officer Carroll ensured that a very volatile situation did not get worse. The suicidal party was eventually taken into protective custody and received the help that she needed. Officer Carroll is recognized for his service to the community on that day.

**Officer Jeffrey Olson and Officer Delbert Tisdale**

During the early morning hours of June 14, 2014, Officer Jeffrey Olson and Officer DJ Tisdale were in the area of E. Montview Blvd. and Clinton St. searching for suspects who had been involved in an armed robbery in the area. Officer Olson observed an individual who matched the suspect description near the area of E. Montview Blvd. and Chester St. Officer Olson approached the suspect, later identified as Antwyon Pierce and initiated contact. Officer Tisdale arrived on scene to assist and cover Officer Olson.
During the contact, Pierce provided a false name but Officer Olson discovered that this name and mug shot did not match Pierce’s description. Officer Olson performed a pat down search for weapons on Pierce but this male began to act in an agitated manner. At one point Pierce turned his body and pulled his hands down as if he was trying to escape from the officers. The officers were able to take Pierce to the ground and during this process, Officer Olson heard a heavy metal object fall from Pierce’s body. Both officers then realized it was a handgun that had become dislodged from Pierce’s midsection during the struggle.

Officers Olson and Tisdale were able to hold Pierce on the ground while requesting additional officers to assist in completing the arrest. Other personnel soon arrived and Pierce was placed into custody without further incident. Officers Olson and Tisdale not only displayed alert and proactive policing techniques, but successfully seized a loaded firearm from a known gang member, thus preventing this individual from victimizing other citizens of Aurora.

**Officer Richard Ray**

On February 22, 2014, Officer Ray responded to 9350 E. Colfax Avenue on the report of a burglary. Officer Ray had found the business to be burglarized by entering a window to the business and learned from the owner that numerous lottery tickets were taken. Officer Ray was in contact with state lottery investigators and learned some of the tickets had been cashed at the 7-11 located at 4805 E. Mississippi in Denver. Officer Ray responded there and observed the suspect on video to be wearing a Finish Line Car Wash shirt. Officer Ray responded to the car wash at 1160 S. Colorado Blvd and was advised that the party in the video did work there and was identified by the manager. Officer Ray continued to follow up the case the next week and found lottery tickets from the burglary in the suspect’s residence. Additionally, Officer Ray located the suspect and arrested him reference the burglary. Officer Ray’s tenacity and follow up in this case is to be commended.

**Officer Paul Seiwald**

On February 25, 2014, officers responded to 9742 E. Colfax Avenue on the report of a verified alarm. Upon arrival, officers observed a party inside the restaurant who then went to the rear of the business. Upon getting to the rear of the business, the suspect was observed running from the business to the south. Officer Paul Seiwald pursued the suspect on foot and eventually tackled him in the 1400 block of Dayton Street. It was later learned that the suspect broke out the rear door and entered the business. Items from the burglary were recovered and a full confession was obtained from the suspect. Officer Seiwald is to be commended for his work on this case.

**Officer Stephenson Cary, Officer Timothy Eha, Officer William Hummel, Officer Richard Romero, and Officer Robert Wong**

On the evening of September 9, 2014, Officers Tim Eha, William Hummel, Stephenson Cary, Robert Wong, and Richard Romero responded to consecutive reports of in progress burglaries at 2848 S. Kenton Ct., 11185 E. Linvale Dr. and 2759 S. Lansing St. Information was aired that the suspect was armed with a knife or other simulated weapon, and he had assaulted and menaced victims in their homes. The suspect was known to be violent and was actively forcing his way into victims’ homes while Officers were in the area conducting investigations. Additional officers assisted in setting up a perimeter to try and contain and locate the suspect.
Officer Eha located the suspect, and with the assistance of Officer Romero, engaged in a foot pursuit that culminated in a physical struggle while taking the violent suspect into custody. The above Officers took the lead on the complex investigation and demonstrated effective teamwork by working together to conduct thorough investigations at multiple crime scenes with multiple victims. The investigations revealed that the suspect had committed the crimes of Attempted Sex Assault, 2nd Degree Kidnapping, 1st Degree Burglary and Felony Menacing in a short period of time. The officers’ quick response to the crime scenes, thorough investigations, effective communication and teamwork enabled them to quickly stop the suspect’s violent rampage through the community before any citizens were seriously injured.

**Officer Richard Martinez and Officer Carlos Wilkendorf**
On the evening of September 9, 2014, District One Officers Richard Martinez and Carlos Wilkendorf responded to the 1500 Block of Nome Street regarding an in-progress sex assault on a child. The mother of a 12-year-old girl was reporting that the mother’s boyfriend had just sexually assaulted her daughter. Information was also learned that the suspect had wrecked into another vehicle in the parking lot near the apartment complex as he was fleeing the scene.

Officer Martinez observed the suspect vehicle, stopped him before he could make his escape and subsequently took him into custody. Officer Martinez continued to focus on the investigation by using his knowledge and experience to gain a recorded confession from the suspect under Miranda. Officer Martinez also collected essential items of evidence from the suspect to build a solid case.

Simultaneously with Officer Martinez’s actions, Officer Wilkendorf responded to the scene, located the victim/ witness and immediately began the investigation. Officer Wilkendorf responded to the hospital with the mother and her daughter where he was able to build a rapport with them under stressful and highly emotional circumstances. This relationship allowed Officer Wilkendorf to document essential facts, and collect important evidence needed to establish the elements of the sexual assault.

Officer Martinez’s quick response to the scene enabled him to capture a fleeing suspect that posed a great risk to the safety of children in the community if not immediately apprehended. The efforts of Officer Martinez and Officer Wilkendorf during this complex investigation are a credit to their work ethic and their commitment to the safety of the community.

**Officer Michael Moore, Officer Clark Orchard, Officer Patricia Perea, and Officer Paul Seiwald**
On September 16, 2014, Officer Patricia Perea was notified by a citizen that suspicious items were located in the alley east of the 2300 block of N Florence. Officer Perea later located two individuals who were believed to have been in the possession of the items. One of the males ran from Officer Perea. Officers Clark Orchard, Paul Seiwald, and Mike Moore responded to assist. Officer Seiwald located the male running towards him and ordered him to stop. The male kept running, climbing fences, and entering backyards. Officer Orchard observed the male running through the backyards and attempted to head him off. The male saw Officer Orchard in an alley and changed direction again until he was stopped by Officer Moore and the officers were able to take the male into custody. Both males eventually admitted to detectives that they had burglarized a house in the neighborhood. Officer Seiwald went to the house and made contact with the homeowner. Multiple items were discovered to be missing from the home, many
of which were found in the possession of the suspects. The males both later confessed to detectives to committing the burglary.

Officers Clark Orchard, Mike Moore, and Paul Seiwald worked well as a team to catch the suspect that ran. Officer Seiwald investigated the burglary and was able to link key pieces of evidence to the suspects, which ultimately was used against them in interviews, resulting in confessions.

**Officer Roland Albert, Sergeant David Cernich, Officer Jeremy Cooley, Officer Brad Graham, Officer Nick Muldoon, Officer Daniel Pell, and Officer Scott Wicklund**

On January 30, 2014, District 1 Officers responded to Ed Bozarth Chevrolet on a report of a stolen MDC from a District Two marked patrol car. It was learned that a male identified as Jesse Garis, had dropped off his personal vehicle to have it repaired at the same dealership. Jesse and his associate were captured on surveillance video, taking the keys from the parked patrol vehicle. They were later recorded climbing the fence to the closed business and breaking into the patrol car, stealing the MDC and other miscellaneous items. District 2 DART was tasked with locating the stolen MDC before the end of their shift. Officers were given the name of Jesse, who they learned was gang member and currently on Federal Probation for weapons related offenses. Officers began investigating his whereabouts and located a possible address. The DART officers began conducting surveillance in the area and later contacted a 2008 Chevy Trailblazer that was believed to be occupied by Jesse. They contacted Jesse and found him to be in possession of a “Norinco” SKS (7.62) Assualt Rifle with a fully loaded 24-round magazine. A search of the vehicle also gleaned 7.3ggw of methamphetamine in the back seat. After a thorough interview of Jesse, the location of the computer was learned along with the identity of the second suspect. Jesse showed the officers the address in Denver where the computer was last seen. After a pre-text phone call to his associate, officers were able to locate the MDC in the bushes in the complex. Jesse then arranged a pre-text meeting with the second suspect who was also arrested. He was found to be in possession of 3.8 ggw of heroin. Jesse was charged with POWPO and Possession of Methamphetamine. The initiative, hard-work, and investigative prowess displayed by all members involved, is to be commended. They exemplify the key values of the Aurora Police Department and provided a great service to the citizens of Aurora.

**Officer Alex Diz and Officer Craig Hess**

On November 15, 2013, Officer Craig Hess and Alex Diz, working a two-officer car, observed a vehicle northbound on S. Buckley Road traveling towards them at an unusually slow speed. The observed vehicle was also swerving in its lane repeatedly striking the east curb. As the vehicle approached the officers, they observed the driver slumped over in the seat and appeared to be unconscious.

Officer Hess immediately activated the emergency equipment on his car and positioned his patrol car in front of the runaway vehicle as it approached the driveway into a strip mall. Officer Hess slowed his vehicle and allowed the two vehicles to make a controlled contact, bringing the runaway car to a stop merely yards away from a rock-lined drainage ditch. Due to the path the runaway vehicle was on, if Officer Hess had not responded so quickly and brought the car to a stop, the vehicle would have undoubtedly ended up in the drainage ditch, causing significant damage to the car as well as injury to the unconscious driver.
Fire/Rescue was requested for an undetermined medical problem the female driver was experiencing. Drugs and alcohol were late ruled out and she was released to a family member. Due to the quick response of Officers Craig Hess and Alex Diz, a potentially dangerous situation was thwarted.

**Officer Mel Cobb**

On April 17, 2014, Officer Mel Cobb responded to a bank robbery that had just occurred. While enroute, a description was aired over the radio to the responding officers of a suspect, who was running on foot towards the K-Mart store. Officer Cobb advised dispatch that he would be inside the K-Mart store checking for the suspect. Officer Cobb went inside the restroom and observed the suspect standing by the sink counter. Officer Cobb watched the suspect lay a camouflage shirt on the counter and change into street clothes. Officer Cobb also observed a large amount of money lying on the counter next to the suspect. Officer Cobb drew his weapon and ordered the suspect to put his hands behind his head. The suspect then made a spontaneous statement about how he should not have robbed that bank. The suspect was taken into custody with the assistance of cover officers. It was later determined that the suspect was wanted for parole violation and bank robbery out of Milwaukee. The suspect also later confessed to a bank robbery in Vail, Colorado.

Officer Cobb should be commended for his investigative skills, the professional manner in locating the suspect, and recovering the needed evidence. Officer Cobb’s experience led him to where he believed the bank robber would hide. It should be noted that because of Officer Cobb’s demeanor with the suspect, and after advisement, the suspect openly admitted to other bank robberies.

**Detective Brandon Rinnan**

In December 2013, there were a string of business robberies which spanned all three districts. Two cases from District 2, one case from District 1, and the last case in District 3. All had similarities. Through the investigative prowess of Det. Rinnan, he determined that these violent armed robberies appeared to be a pattern, possibly committed by the same individuals. All of the robberies included a male who was armed with a black semi-automatic handgun, wearing white latex gloves, and who would carry in his own bag. The suspect was coined the name “Bring Your Own Bag Bandit” (BYOB).

Det. Rinnan completed a flyer containing photos of the suspect which were submitted to Crime Stoppers and were also aired on the local news channels. The flyers resulted in numerous leads through Crime Stoppers, which Det. Rinnan diligently followed up on. He was able to determine the suspect in those cases was Bobby Givens and his female accomplice was Irene Contreras. District 2 DART was tasked with locating both Bobby and Irene, which they did. Det. Rinnan interviewed Irene, who confessed to assisting Bobby in three of the four robberies. Bobby invoked his right to an attorney and refused to talk to Detectives. They were both arrested and held for the four outstanding aggravated robberies.

The initiative, hard word, and investigative prowess displayed by Det. Rinnan is to be commended. He exemplifies the key values of the Aurora Police Department and provided a great service to the citizens of Aurora.
Officer Roland Albert, Sergeant David Cernich, Officer Jeremiah Cooley, Officer Darryll Huntsman, Officer Daniel Pell, Officer Jack Valentine, and Officer Scott Wicklund

On October 4, 2013, Sergeant Mike Gaskill from Aurora GIU advised the members of the District 2 DART Team of a male party wanted on a felony warrant living in District 2. He advised them that Wesley Pappas is a known gang member with an extensive violent criminal history and was wanted for threatening to kill a Denver Police Gang Officer after the officer testified in District Court. The Officer testified in the Attempted 1st Degree Murder and 1st Degree Assault case of Westminster Police Officer Derek Rogers. The Jefferson County District Attorney’s Office filed charges and had a warrant issued on Pappas for Intimidation of a Witness and set the bond at $100,000.

On October 5, 2012, the District 2 DART Team conducted surveillance at Pappas’ address in District 2. They spent the entire day conducting surveillance and research on Pappas in an attempt to locate him. As a result of their investigative skills they learned of an associated address at 1366 Garfield Street in Denver. While maintaining surveillance at his residence in Aurora other members of the team went to the address in Denver. As they were driving by the residence in Denver they observed Pappas in the driver’s seat of a work van. It appeared as though Pappas was going to leave and an impromptu plan was developed and implemented to assault the vehicle before he could leave. Pappas was taken into custody without incident and turned over to the Denver Police Department.

The initiative, hard-work, and investigative prowess displayed by the members of the Team is to be commended. They exemplify the key values of the Aurora Police Department and provided a great service to the citizens of Aurora.

Officer Jordan Odneal, Officer Randall Ricks, Officer Gene Vandyk, and Officer Matt Wyche

Officers Matt Wyche, Gene Vandyk, Randall Ricks, and Jordon Odneal responded to a stabbing at the Baron Rojo Bar on March 16, 2014. After conducting their investigation at the scene, the officers were able to locate witnesses and evidence. The suspect and his vehicle had previously fled the scene. Through great observation and investigation, the officers obtained a full confession from the suspect. He was subsequently charged with 2nd Degree Assault. This was excellent teamwork on the part of the officers to quickly apprehend a dangerous suspect and assist filing detectives by conducting a thorough preliminary investigation.

Officer Craig Hess and Officer Robert Little

On October 27, 2014, Aurora Police District 2 Officers Robert Little and Craig Hess were dispatched to the Target store on E. Ellsworth Avenue. A thief had just stolen the purse of a citizen shopping in the store.

Officers Little and Hess found that an 86-year-old Aurora resident had been shopping while a young adult male had shadowed her actions. When the opportunity presented itself, the brazen thief stole her purse and fled the store. The victim lost her identification, credit card, and keys for her vehicle and home. She was shopping for her blind 90-year-old husband and was shaken by this crime.

Officers Little and Hess immediately obtained the investigative information and surveillance images of the crime. But, they went much further than standard police protocol.
The officers immediately cancelled all of the woman’s stolen cards and identification. They completed the victim’s shopping and paid for the goods out of their own pocket. Officers Little and Hess drove her home and obtained an alternate set of keys. They then returned to the store to retrieve her vehicle and bring it to her residence.

During the process, Officers Little and Hess also bought new deadbolts for the elderly couple’s home and then installed them. This combination of acts reflected a deep sense of duty, honor, and integrity. By their unusual attention to duty and through their own efforts, Officers Little and Hess displayed the highest standards of professionalism.

**Officer Antony Green and Officer Candice Iovine**

Officer Candice Iovine responded to a routine harassment call between a tenant and the apartment staff. This routine call turned into a two-day struggle to help a violent and potentially dangerous military veteran who was in severe crisis. The veteran was making homicidal threats towards Officer Iovine’s partner during their initial contact. Officer Iovine was able to use her CIT skills and training, along with her life skills and military background to build a rapport with veteran to get him stabilized so she could work on a type of placement for him. Officer Iovine could not obtain a mental health professional to commit the veteran. She feared for the veteran’s safety and the safety of fellow officers who would likely have to respond to his address over the weekend, almost certainly encountering a violent and combative situation. When the veteran was told she could not get him into a facility he began making threats that he would assault anyone who came to his door. While on the phone with the veteran she coordinated with dispatch, responding officers, and family members until he was safely secured for transport to the hospital. Officer Antony Green was one of the responding officers to the veteran’s residence. Officer Green was able to get the veteran to go to the hospital via a patrol car, avoiding an ambulance trip. Officer Green thoroughly informed the hospital staff of the veteran’s potentially violent and dangerous behavior. The responding officers’ commitment, dedication, and teamwork in helping a member of our community who was in severe crisis, while avoiding a potentially dangerous encounter/confrontation with other citizens and officers is recognized and appreciated.

**Officer Kevin Chester and Officer Ryan Sweeney**

On June 15, 2014, District 2 Patrol Officer Kevin Chester stopped a vehicle for speeding and other traffic violations. Officer Chester determined that the driver was possibly DUI. Officer Sweeney arrived to assist with the traffic stop. After conducting subsequent roadside sobriety tests, they arrested the driver for DUI and outstanding warrants. Officer Sweeney conducted a vehicle inventory and located a scoped hunting rifle in the trunk. He recognized that rifle by description as potentially stolen from a District 3 burglary bulletin. Both officers diligently continued the burglary investigation and obtained incriminating statements from the driver of the vehicle regarding the burglary. Through their own initiative and professionalism, and attention to detail, Officers Chester and Sweeney assisted in resolving this burglary case and recovering stolen firearms.
Officer Diana Cooley, Officer Alex Diz, Officer Michael Dziurgot, Officer Candice Iovine, Officer Tim Jeffrey, Officer Jason McIrvin, and Officer Jay Van Kam

An observant postal employee noticed a suspicious vehicle pull out of a garage. The front door was left open and the window next to the door was broken. She called 911 on her cell and advised a partial plate. Officers McIrvin and Van Kam located the vehicle southbound on Chambers Road. When the officers attempted to stop the car, the driver pulled into an apartment complex, stopped the car, and fled on foot. Officers Diz and Iovine quickly captured one occupant. Another ran across the Highline Canal and into the neighborhood near Exposition and Jasper. Officer Jeffrey located one of the suspects in the backyard bordering the canal. The vehicle the suspects were operating turned out to be stolen out of Aurora two days prior. Both arrestees were juvenile males. Agent Jamie Krieger responded to the scene and had the following to say about all the officers involved in the apprehension and investigation of this incident: “I’ve worked with Van Kam, McIrvin, Cooley, Iovine, Diz, Dziurgot, and Jeffrey before, and I know they are good at what they do.” Officer Jim Gentry was also instrumental in his efforts and they all went above and beyond for this case. We have been experiencing a significant rise in residential burglaries, primarily committed by juveniles who aren’t attending school. The two juveniles arrested had a lengthy history and the case against the both of them is solid. Everything the team did helped make sure a solid case was submitted to the District Attorney’s office. These officers are to be commended for their professionalism, spirit of cooperation, and dedication to making District 2.a safer place for our citizens.

Officer Jonathan Carelock, Officer Melvin Cobb, Sergeant Michael Hanifin, Officer Tim Jeffrey, Officer Jason McIrvin, Officer Jay Van Kam, and Sergeant Steven White

On January 28, 2014, Officers were dispatched to a call of burglary in progress where the suspects were armed with guns and injured victims inside the home. Officer Carelock was first to arrive on scene and had observed four possible suspects leaving the residence carrying electronics. Officer Carelock was able to give descriptions of the suspects and direction of travel before they fled on foot. He gave them orders to stop. He then chased the suspects and was able to detain and arrest one suspect. Sgt. White was in the area setting up a perimeter, he observed one of the suspects walking along a street. He immediately gave chase in an attempt to detain the suspect. The suspect had jumped over fences and was now in an apartment complex. Sergeants White and Hanifin and Officer Jeffrey immediately searched on foot for the suspect. Sgt. Hanifin received information that the suspect had run into an apartment. With the information given and noticeable foot prints leading into the apartment, Sergeant Hanifin and White, Officer Jeffrey and Cobb gained consent to enter the apartment where two suspects were detained and arrested. The fourth suspect was still at large. Officer McIrvin and Van Kam followed foot tracks that led to a pile of clothing matching the description of the clothing that the suspects were wearing. The foot tracks led to a drainage aqueduct that was divided into two tunnels. They continued to search the area and Officer Van Kam found other drainage pipes. Officers Van Kam and McIrvin were able to locate the fourth suspect in one of those drainage pipes. When they found the last suspect, he was suffering from hypothermia due to the cold weather and water in the drainage pipes. He was provided medical attention and was transported to the hospital. As a result of the diligent and persistent work tracking down these violent criminals, stolen items were recovered and all four of the suspect were safely taken into custody.
Officer Amber Buck, Officer Edward Clements, Officer Jordan Odneal, Officer Jason Weber, and Officer Matthew Wyche

On May 4, 2014, Officers Amber Buck, Jason Weber, Ed Clements, Matt Wyche, and Jordan Odneal responded to the 18000 block of Arizona Avenue on the report of a structure fire. Upon arrival, Officers Buck and Weber observed that the unit was engulfed in flames. Officers Buck and Weber quickly began evacuating the adjoining units in case the fire spread. Officer Odneal, Wyche, and Clements blocked the streets coming into the condominiums and directed arriving fire personnel to the location of the structure fire. Officers Odneal and Clements kept the roads free and clear so that all of the fire engines, trucks, and ambulances had quick access to the area of the structure fire. On separate occasions, these officers’ supervisors were contacted by two AFD Battalion Chiefs, One AFD Captain, and two AFD Lieutenants, who commended the officers on an excellent job. They advised the officers who cleared the streets provided them with quick access to the fire, and they were able to get water on the fire immediately upon their arrival. They advised Officers Buck and Weber did an excellent job evacuating residents in the building. The collaborative efforts of these officers likely saved the lives of the residents and allowed the fire department to quickly put out the fire before it could spread to additional units. These officers are commended for their dedication and professionalism.

Officer Jay Van Kam and Officer Jason Mclrvin

On November 14, 2013, Officer Jason Mclrvin and Jay Van Kam were working a special enforcement operation in the Mississippi Ave/Sable Blvd area of District 2. They decided to spend some time patrolling some of the surrounding neighborhoods near the target enforcement operation area as they were recently hit hard by burglaries. They observed a male walking the neighborhood who was previously known to them as being incarcerated for larceny from motor vehicles. They made a consensual contact with Micaiah Roberts and started having a casual conversation with him. They began to get suspicious feelings that something with him just wasn’t quite right. They subsequently found numerous items on his person, which were later confirmed to be recently stolen, including a financial transaction device. Upon further investigation, their suspicions were heightened. As a result of this seemingly routine street contact, Mr. Roberts later confessed to multiple burglaries and larceny from motor vehicles. A search warrant was executed by detectives, which resulted in the recovery of many stolen items. Because these officers were familiar with their area and who does and does not belong, they made a contact which ended up clearing up multiple unresolved burglary cases within the District.

Officer Diana Cooley and Officer Michael Dziurgot

On February 20, 2014, Officers Michael Dziurgot and Diana Cooley were working a special enforcement operation in the area of Mexico Avenue and Buckley Road due to recent burglaries in both Districts 2 and 3. There were approaching S. Buckley Road and S. Pagosa Way when they observed three parties crossing the landscaped median, failing to use the crosswalk. The parties also changed their direction after observing the patrol car. The two officers contacted the parties and one was recognized from a recent BOLO as Damian Castle White, who was wanted in reference to multiple burglaries in District 1. They also contacted a juvenile female who had liquor in her purse, and recognized that this could be evidence from a recent burglary at the Bottle Barn in District 2. After further investigation, both parties were arrested at the scene. As a result of this seemingly routine street contact, Castle White subsequently confessed to multiple burglaries across all three Districts, including one at Bottle Barn. Because these officers were
familiar with what was occurring in the area and paying attention to resources supplied by detectives, their work assisted in clearing multiple unresolved burglaries.

**Officer John Cassell and Agent Michael Gerbino**

On March 18, 2014, while working off duty at Wal-Mart, Officer Cassell was informed of a potential fraud. The electronics department had suffered losses in excess of $100,000 and Officer Cassell began an in-depth investigation. During his investigation, Officer Cassell learned that a Wal-Mart employee was involved in selling cell phones fraudulently. During the transactions, the employee used the personal identifying information of dozens of victims to sell the cell phones to his friends. The suspects would profit by later selling these cells phones through various outlets and splitting the profits with the employee. Officer Cassell investigated this case for two weeks, culminating in the interview of the Wal-Mart employee. Once the store investigators fired the employee, Officer Cassell was prepared for the interrogation and brought Detective Gerbino. At the conclusion of their interrogation, the accomplices of the employee were set up and all three were arrested on potentially hundreds of felony charges. Officer Cassell worked quickly and efficiently to set up the sting of the accomplices and never compromised officer safety. He coordinated outside assistance with PAR and other Patrol units. Detective Gerbino responded and conducted a thorough interview, which led to a full confession and the information regarding the accomplices. Officer Cassell and Detective Gerbino worked together in an efficient and extremely effective manner. Their efforts to fully comprehend and investigate this case are an example of the highest standards of law enforcement.

**Officer Edward Acuti, Officer James Benedict, Officer Todd Chanos, Officer Andy Crowley, and Sergeant Dana Hatfield**

On February 8, 2014 at approximately 1545 hours, officers responded to 22934 East Smoky Hill Road on a hit-and-run crash where an off duty Aurora police officer was struck and injured. Sergeant Dana Hatfield researched the suspect vehicle information and contacted the owner. Sergeant Hatfield was able to obtain the likely location of the suspect due to his quick use of the computer. Officer Benedict responded to the home of the suspect, Lucas Pekas, and located the suspect vehicle in the driveway. Officers Crowley, Acuti, and Chanos responded to assist Officer Benedict.

Officer Benedict observed the suspect get out of the white Toyota 4-Runner and run into the house. Officers Benedict and Crowley followed Pekas into the residence and ordered him to stop. Officer Benedict heard the sound of a rifle bolt cycling, then saw Pekas coming up the stairs. Pekas charged the officers and a three to four minute struggle ensued. Officers Acuti and Chanos arrived and assisted with use of a taser and other arrest control techniques. Pekas was taken into custody without injury to Pekas or the officers.

Sergeant Dana Hatfield, Officer James Benedict, Officer Andy Crowley, Officer Edward Acuti and Officer Todd Chanos are to be commended for their quick action by placing this dangerous suspect into custody, while taking precautions to keep themselves safe and not injure the suspect.
Officer Chad Berger, Officer Andy Eways, Officer Jeremy Fink, Officer Tony Ortiz, Detective Dave Perry, Detective Tom Sobieski, and Crime Analyst Dawn Tollakson

On March 20, 2014, at about 1850 hours, a woman was threatened with a weapon as she was carjacked near W. 26th Ave. and Federal Blvd. in Denver. Hours later the suspect entered the 7-11 store at E. Quincy Ave. and S. Parker Rd. and threatened to kill the clerk, saying he had a gun as he robbed the store. The crime spree continued into the early morning of March 21, when the suspect again robbed a second 7-11 store at S. Gartrell Rd. and E-470. The suspect told the clerk he had a gun. District 3 Detectives Dave Perry, Tom Sobieski and Crime Analyst Dawn Tollakson began pulling data, witness statements, and store video to further the investigation. The suspect struck again in Arapahoe County where he pulled into the Bradley gas station near Arapahoe Rd. and S. Peoria St. and told a woman who was pumping gas that he had a gun and to get into his car. The woman challenged the suspect, resulting in the suspect driving off and leaving the victim unharmed. On March 22, 2014, the Denver County Chief Marshal saw the suspect vehicle and called the Aurora Police Department.

Officers Chad Berger and Andy Eways observed the vehicle southbound on E-470 as it passed Smoky Hill Rd. A potentially dangerous high risk traffic stop was initiated on E-470 at Gartrell Rd. by Officers Chad Berger, Andy Eways, Jeremy Fink and Tony Ortiz. They safely and successfully arrested the male suspect without incident. The male suspect was transported to the Aurora Detention Facility where he was interrogated by District 3 detectives who were successful in gaining a full confession from the suspect regarding the violent crime spree.

Officer Barb Asmussen, Detective Michael Cahenzli, Officer Shane Ellison, Officer Darren Lantz, Officer Thomas Lord, Officer Travis Lore, Officer Jason Moore, Officer James Salazar, Officer David Sutherland, Detective Thomas Wilson, Officer Eric White, and Administrative Specialist Tina Crux

During the weekend of February 22, 2014, several businesses were burglarized in the South Aurora area. One location was the Metro Gang Task Force. Several electronic data storage devices with very sensitive information on them were taken. There was a heightened degree of attention to find these items due to the lost data. Video surveillance of the suspect was obtained. Officer Eric White recognized the suspect from an earlier burglary investigation and disseminated the information. Officer Shane Ellison located the stolen vehicle from another burglary and spotted the suspect who was then arrested. During this arrest, DART officers found the other suspect in possession of stolen items from MGTF. Critical high priority evidence was still missing. District 3 PAR and DART continued to work the area and were instrumental in identifying additional suspects. Officer Barbara Asmussen processed the crime scene. District 3 Detectives furthered the investigation and filed the case. Approximately three weeks later, one of the stolen items was sold to a second-hand store which was tracked by Mrs. Tina Crux in the Pawn Unit. Detective Cahenzli recovered the stolen items and the remaining storage device taken from MGTF.

Due to the determination, professionalism, and teamwork of Officers Ellison, White, Lord, Sutherland, Salazar, Moore, Asmussen, Lantz, Lore and Detectives Cahenzli and Wilson, along with Ms. Crux, suspects were identified and arrested, and highly sensitive evidence was recovered without any exposure or release of damaging information.
Officer Darrin Degon, Officer Gary Rivale, and Officer James Waselkow
On November 23, 2013, at approximately 0150 hours, District 3 Patrol Officers Darrin Degon and Gary Rivale responded to the area of 3173 S. Uravan Way on an unknown problem. Officer Degon aired that a vehicle had attempted to run him over and Officer Rivale aired that the vehicle had struck him. The suspect made two separate and deliberate attempts to run over Officers Degon and Rivale. He successfully struck Officer Rivale, causing a lower leg injury. Additional officers arrived in the area and located the suspect vehicle. They conducted a felony traffic stop during which the suspect made furtive movements consistent with drawing a weapon. Officer James Waselkow observed the behavior and concluded that the suspect was intending to produce a weapon. Officer Waselkow began taking up slack on his trigger in preparation to eliminate a potentially deadly threat. The suspect only partially complied with orders forcing officers to utilize physical force to arrest him. Officers diligently obtained medical attention for the suspect and for Officer Rivale. The officers did an excellent job in the investigation of the crime scenes, obtaining additional assets necessary to complete a thorough investigation.

Officer Dave Sutherland
On June 19, 2014, Detective Randy Hansen with the FBI Innocence Lost Task Force sent out a bulletin on a missing endangered juvenile who was being recruited for prostitution by a couple that was staying at the Motel 6. Detective Hansen checked the location and found that a second female had rented the room. Officer Dave Sutherland checked his email at end of watch on June 19, and he recognized the picture of the endangered juvenile as a girl he had seen earlier in the day while driving by the Crestwood Suites at approximately 2000 hours. Officer Sutherland noted the girl seen had the same hair and glasses and was standing on the sidewalk by the parking lot. Officer Sutherland notified Detective Hansen of these facts via email prior to going home. The next morning, Detective Hansen went to the Crestwood Suites in response to this email, finding the same girl from the Motel 6 registered at this location. The occupants of the room were contacted and the endangered juvenile was located along with another juvenile being prostituted at this location. Two individuals who were suspected of pimping these juveniles were arrested on felony charges.

Officer Erik Van Cleave
On December 14, 2013, Officer Erik Van Cleave was off duty and in the area of South Broadway and Dry Creek Road, when he observed several police cars from multiple agencies with emergency equipment operating. Officer Van Cleave learned there was an active shooter at nearby Arapahoe High School. Officer Van Cleave drove to the area near the high school, grabbed his active shooter bag, rifle, and an APD ID vest and ran to the police command post where he offered his assistance. Officer Van Cleave was deployed with three other officers that had just arrived and headed for the school. Once inside the school, Officer Van Cleave was briefed by on scene deputy sheriffs on the current status of the shooter and the efforts to safely evacuate the students. Deputies advised that the shooter was in the library and there were students trapped in the science pod that needed to be cleared. The officers cleared multiple rooms finding students and teachers. The science pod was completely searched and secured. Officer Van Cleave continued to provide assistance with evacuating all the students from the area. Once all the students were evacuated and placed on buses, Officer Van Cleave was relieved of his duty.
Officer Van Cleave is commended for his commitment to duty and honor. As a police officer, regardless of his off duty status, he responded to a very serious situation involving an active shooter in a high school in another city. He courageously placed himself in danger, exemplifying all Aurora police officers.

**Officer James Waselkow**

While assigned to District 3 Patrol, Officer James Waselkow attained knowledge of drug interdiction which was very beneficial in a high concentration of motels known for drug trafficking. Detective Alan Shank of the Vice and Narcotics Unit stated, "James has devoted a lot of time and effort to finding drugs within Aurora and making arrests for these crimes. James has shown great effort in educating himself on case law, statutory changes, narcotics trafficking trends, and is continually trying to improve his ability and skill in this area...On several occasions James has contacted persons who are armed, and/or been in possession of substantial amounts of drugs...James, by my estimate, is responsible for more on-view drug arrests than any other patrol officer that I am aware of."

Officer Waselkow's supervisor, Sergeant John Tollakson added, "In the time that I have been working in District 3, Watch 3, I have been on scene of multiple arrests made by Officer Waselkow. I have recently been involved in two significant cases where Officer Waselkow not only made a good investigatory stop, but he also used great restraint. In the first case, Officer Waselkow recovered a sizeable amount of methamphetamine while dealing with a wildly out of control suspect. Throughout the encounter Officer Waselkow maintained his professionalism and ultimately was forced to use soft restraints to gain control of the combative suspect. In the second case, Officer Waselkow once again exercised great restraint while arresting a suspect who was in possession of a very large amount of methamphetamine, who had a large knife by his right hand. This matter could have easily become an Officer involved shooting had it not been for the calmness, communication and coordination between Officer Waselkow and other assisting units."

Officer Waselkow strives to learn and evolve in his professional capacity as a patrol officer. His reports are typically exceptional, very well-articulated and rarely require corrections. Officer Waselkow's dedication, professionalism and investigatory skills, relative to drug trafficking and interdiction in particular, are to be commended.

**Officer Kenneth Forrest, Officer Gary Rivale, and Sergeant John Tollakson**

On November 28, 2013, at approximately 0155 hours, Officer Kenneth Forrest made a traffic stop on a suspected DUI driver traveling southbound at 3500 South Parker Road. The suspect vehicle stopped in the #1 lane at which time Officer Forrest requested a cover car to assist. Officer Gary Rivale responded and parked his marked patrol unit directly behind Officer Forrest's marked patrol unit. Sergeant Tollakson responded and proceeded to tactically park his marked patrol unit at an angle behind Officer Rivale's unit in order to create a safer working environment for the ensuing investigation. Sergeant Tollakson observed a vehicle rapidly approaching their position in the #1 traffic lane. Realizing that a collision was imminent, Sergeant Tollakson yelled loudly to Officers Forrest and Rivale to get out of the way. Officer Forrest, without hesitation or regard for his own personal safety, grabbed his DUI suspect and placed her on the other side of the nearby jersey barrier, out of harm's way. As Sergeant Tollakson, Officer Forrest, and Officer Rivale were scrambling to avoid being injured by the imminent collision, a second DUI suspect
slammed into the rear of Sergeant Tollakson’s marked patrol car, catapulting it into traffic where it struck another motorist before coming to rest.

Sergeant Tollakson, Officer Forrest, and Officer Rivale immediately went to check on injuries of the parties involved as the vehicles in the collision. Due to their teamwork, communication and swift action, without regard for their own safety, only one individual sustained a minor injury.

**Acting Sergeant John Wilton**
On the morning of March 27, 2014, officers from all three districts became engaged in a manhunt for an armed and dangerous parolee who had brutally beaten and sexually assaulted his ex-girlfriend. A passerby witnessed the suspect dragging the female victim and both parties were reportedly covered in blood. The suspect contacted an acquaintance via his cell phone and stated that he would not go back to prison if confronted by the police. Acting Sergeant John Wilton, accompanied by several officers, converged on the suspect after successfully pinging his cell phone and locating him in the vicinity of the 13500 Block of Fitzsimons Drive. A foot pursuit ensued and the suspect, who was still believed to be armed with a knife or a firearm, was subsequently cornered in a greenbelt in Side Creek Park. In his desperation, the suspect appeared to place a cutting instrument to his neck and threatened to harm himself. Acting Sergeant Wilton, who is a trained hostage negotiator, immediately engaged the suspect in extensive dialogue while tactically providing a safe environment for responding officers to be deployed. Acting Sergeant Wilton’s composed and professional interaction with the despondent suspect was instrumental in gaining control and perspective of the situation, which allowed officers and Aurora Fire Department personnel to effectively prepare for numerous contingencies as the suspect’s behavior fluctuated. Less lethal force was ultimately deployed resulting in the suspect being safely taken into custody without further incident.

**Officer Myshell Bolton, Officer Steven Evans, Officer Juan Gonzalez, Sergeant Mike Hawkins, and Officer Machelle Williby**
On October 3, 2014, at approximately 2300 hours, Officers Steven Evans, Machelle Williby, Juan Gonzalez and Myshell Bolton responded to 4691 South Fraser Circle on a call of an elderly woman whose son had destroyed household objects and then fled on foot. The subject, Bret Doyle, had been diagnosed with Schizophrenic Effective Disorder with Bi-Polar tendencies. Officers attempted to locate Mr. Doyle and initiated a BOLO for the remainder of the watch.

A few hours later, Mr. Doyle returned to the location brandishing a knife and threatened to harm himself with the knife. Officers had tactically staged paramedics and deployed less lethal as well as lethal options before initiating a dialogue with Mr. Doyle. Officer Evans was lethal cover with his pistol and Officer Williby was less lethal cover with her Taser. CIT Officer Juan Gonzalez was in dialogue with Doyle and was able to get him to take the knife from his neck, place it at his stomach and sit down on the porch thereby reducing his mobility and improving the safety margin for all present. Officer Bolton ensured that neighbors remained inside their residences and then went into the subject’s residence from the rear and located the front door, preventing Mr. Doyle from going back into the residence. Officer Gonzalez did an excellent job of interacting with Mr. Doyle; however, when Mr. Doyle began making statements regarding suicide by cop, he was subdued via a Taser strike by Sergeant Hawkins. He was taken into custody, charged with disorderly conduct and placed on a mental health hold.
Through the officers’ calm demeanors, teamwork, communication and superb tactics, a potential officer involved shooting incident was safely avoided.

**Officer Patrick Youngquist**

On April 10, 2014, Officer Patrick Youngquist was dispatched to a healthcare facility on a report of a sex assault. He determined that the 15-year-old victim’s allegations involved multiple jurisdictions and incidents spanning over a period of eleven years with the alleged perpetrator being her older step brother.

Although none of the alleged incidents occurred within the city of Aurora, Officer Youngquist initiated a thorough preliminary interview, completed a detailed report, and made appropriate notifications in support of eventual investigations by other agencies having jurisdiction.

Officer Youngquist is commended for his investigative efforts which went far above and beyond what would be expected. Officer Youngquist took a victim centered approach, focusing on the needs and concerns of the victim in a nonjudgmental way that ensured a compassionate and sensitive delivery of service.

Officer Youngquist is awarded a Commander’s Commendation for performance of his duties in such a manner as to reflect high quality and professionalism on behalf of the Aurora Police Department.

**Officer Grant Heyneman and Officer Rob Pavletic**

From April 14 to May 30, 2014, Officers Grant Heyneman and Rob Pavletic were detailed to the Training Academy as instructors to assist with staffing shortages. Both Heyneman and Pavletic made adjustments to their own schedules to meet the demands of the Academy staffing needs. During this time period there was both a basic and a lateral recruit academy in session, as well as a demanding 2nd quarter in-service, EVOC, and PT. The Academy staff were impressed on how they both jumped in and naturally took to the assignment. Furthermore, countless in-service attendees commented on the clarity and professionalism of their instruction. On behalf the Training Section, thank you both for your hard work and the exemplary attitude you displayed. Both recruit and in-service training benefitted from your quality instruction, including some training that would not have been possible without your help. Your contributions in assisting the Training Academy with accomplishing its mission are extremely appreciated.
Automated Complaint and Commendation Report

The Automated Complaint and Commendation System accepts and records all submissions. The Department designed the system to manage the complaints and commendations reported on sworn personnel.

During 2014, there were 249 complaints received online or entered by a Police Department member that involved 322 sworn members and 7 non-sworn members.

Additionally, fifty-nine (59) commendations were received for sworn officers. There were zero (0) commendations submitted for non-sworn members of the Department.

2014 Automated Complaints and Commendations

- Sworn Complaints (322) - 83%
- Non-Sworn Complaints (7) - 15%
- Sworn Commendations (59) - 2%
Automated Complaints by Type

The Automated Complaint System categorizes the submissions for the Department to analyze, determine trends and provide instruction if needed.

The system categorized the complaints received during 2014, as follows: One (1) alleging an illegal search. One (1) reported neglect of duty. Three (3) reported violations of Constitutional rights. Seven (7) allegations of unsatisfactory performance. Fifteen (15) allegations of racial profiling. Twenty-four (24) reports of excessive use of force. Thirty-two (32) complaints of improper or incomplete investigations. Forty-three (43) for other directives or SOPs not captured under the other types. One-hundred-ten (110) complaints of rudeness or professionalism issues.

Complaints by Type

- Illegal Search (1)
- Neglect of Duty (1)
- Constitutional Requirements (3)
- Unstatisfactory Performance (7)
- Bias-based Profiling (15)
- Use of Force (24)
- Improper/Incomplete Investigation (32)
- Other Dept. Directive or SOP (43)
- Officer Professionalism (110)
Automated Complaints by Validity

In each of the complaint submissions received, the officer’s supervisor has investigated the complaint. The officer’s chain of command has reviewed the investigations before closing them.

The Department has reviewed each of the complaints and analyzed the validity of the complaint. From these, there were Forty-four (44) sustained, forty (40) not sustained, One-hundred-thirty-three (133) unfounded, fifty-six (56) within policy, eleven (11) misunderstandings, and nineteen (19) unknown due to unresponsive complainants.

Complaints by Validity
Automated Complaints, Results

The Automated Complaint System records any corrective action taken by the Department as a result of the investigation. The results range from “none justified” to an order by the Chief to the Internal Affairs Section to formally investigate the complaint. Careful study and comparison of this information will reveal that more incidents result in some form of correction than incidents that we found to be valid. This is because the complaint may not be valid in light of the Department Directives, but the supervisor may determine the officer needs some degree of instruction to help him/her do a better job.

The results of the complaints submitted are as follows in descending order of severity. The Chief of Police ordered the Internal Affairs Section to formally investigate thirty-two (32) members. The Department issued seven (7) Written Reprimands for violations of Department Directives. A Written Reprimand is permanent discipline that remains in the officer’s file for his/her entire career. The Department issued ten (10) Corrective Action Reports instructing the officers to change their behavior. The Corrective Action Report is not discipline but a notice or warning to modify behavior. The Corrective Action Report remains in the officer’s file for one to two years, depending on his/her evaluation date and cycle. It is documentation of past problems and corrective measures taken if the officer repeats the behavior. The officer’s supervisors issued twenty-two (22) Performance Appraisal Entry (PAE) reports documenting negative performance. The supervisors use the PAE reports as documentation and are included in the officers’ annual evaluations. On four (4) occasions the supervisors verbally counseled the officers. Nine complaints were referred to mediation. The supervisors completed nineteen (19) Performance Appraisal Entry reports that were to document the investigation only (nothing negative toward the officer). The Department concluded in one-hundred-ninety (190) of the complaints that the complaint was not valid and that no documentation was needed.

![Automated Complaints - Results](image)

- Referred to IAS (32)
- Written Reprimand (7)
- Corrective Action Report (10)
- PAE for Correction (22)
- PAE Documentation (19)
- No Documentation Needed (190)
- Mediation (9)
- Counseling Only (4)
**Automated Complaints, Follow Up Contact Method**

At the conclusion of the investigation the supervisor is required, if possible, to contact the complainant and explain the findings. The Automated Complaint System records show the supervisor contacted that person.

The supervisors contacted the complainant by telephone in one hundred twenty-five (125) of the cases. The supervisors used e-mail nine (9) times. In twenty-eight (28) cases, the supervisor could not contact the complainant (anonymous complaint or attempted but unable to contact). The supervisor met the complainant in person twenty-four (24) times.

**Automated Complaints Follow Up Contact Method**

- **Phone (125)**: 67%
- **E-mail (9)**: 15%
- **Unable to Contact (28)**: 13%
- **In Person (24)**: 5%
Automated Commendations by Type

The system categorized the fifty-nine (59) commendations received during 2014 as follows:

Twelve (12) citizen submissions expressed appreciation for the officer. Ten (10) others reported a job well done. Four (4) submissions stated the officer was professional. Three (3) reported the officer went above and beyond expectations and Thirty (30) expressed a thank you.
Automated Complaint and Commendation System, Miscellaneous Information on People Reporting

The automated complaint and commendation system allows the submitting person the opportunity to provide information about himself/herself. The system has a drop-down menu giving the person a choice of options to describe himself/herself. One hundred fifty-one (151) of the people submitting a complaint or commendation indicated they were a citizen of Aurora. Fifty-four (54) indicated they were a non-resident. Twenty (20) said they were an employee member of the Department, and three (3) indicated they were a government official.

Type of People Submitting Commendation and Complaints

- Resident (151)
- Non-Resident (54)
- Member (20)
- City Official (3)
Gender of People
Submitting Commendations and Complaints

- Male (119): 49%
- Female (100): 41%
- Unknown Gender (23): 10%

Reported Ethnicity of People
Submitting Commendations and Complaints

- White (79): 36%
- African American (41): 32%
- Latino (19): 21%
- Asian (7): 8%
- American Indian (1): >1%
- Arab (1): >1%
- Unknown (89): 3%
District and Bureau Discipline Report

During 2014, the Department completed and finalized twenty-five (25) District / Bureau investigations. Each resulted in the Chief of Police ordering a Written Reprimand as discipline for the violation of one or more Department Directives. A Written Reprimand is permanent discipline that remains in the employee’s file for his/her career. The following is a summary of these cases for 2014.

Chief Metz and the Aurora Police Department recognize the individual members of the Aurora Police Department have a right to privacy in the contents of their personnel files and expect the contents of these files will be held in confidence by their employer. This expectation and right to privacy flows from the United States Constitution, the Colorado Constitution, the Colorado Open Records Act, Colorado Revised Statutes § 24-72-201, et. seq., the Colorado Criminal Justice Records Act, Colorado Revised Statutes, § 24-72-301, et. seq., the City of Aurora Personnel Policies and Procedures, and the Aurora Police Department Directives. While there is little, if any, public interest in investigations stemming from allegations relating to purely administrative matters such as the use of equipment, abuse of leave and the like, these matters are nonetheless provided below.

Further, the City of Aurora also maintains the right to withhold its deliberative process as confidential. The following summaries are included below with these privileges of confidentiality in mind. The following summaries do not constitute a waiver of either the individual employee’s expectation of privacy in the contents of his/her personnel file, nor waiver of the City of Aurora’s right to withhold its deliberative process as confidential.

The Department has categorized these twenty-five (25) cases as follows: Seven (7) cases involved members not following Department policies for vehicle operations and/or the Department’s emergency response policy. Four (4) cases were for unsatisfactory performance. Four (4) cases involved issues of professional conduct. Three (3) cases involved the handling of evidence. Three (3) cases involved department equipment. One (1) case involved the negligent discharge of a weapon. One (1) case involved secondary employment. One (1) case involved the release of information.

The twenty-five (25) District/Bureau written reprimands involved twenty-six (26) members and were issued to two (2) civilians, twenty (20) officers, three (3) sergeants, and one (1) lieutenant.

These matters that resulted in written reprimands are summarized with more detail below.
1) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 14.3.5 Neglect of Duty.

At 1323 hours, two officers were dispatched to a call of a burglary in progress. The primary officer indicated he was enroute at 1324 hours, but did not leave his location until 1334 hours. The officer did not relay his location or the reason for the delay. The cover officer arrived and contacted the suspect believing the primary officer was responding and would be there very soon. The primary officer was called off at 1341 hours, still about 15 minutes from the scene.

2) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 4.2.8 Authorized Use of Police Pursuits.

Officers attempted a traffic stop on a party wanted on misdemeanor domestic violence charges. Each officer had emergency lights activated while behind the suspect’s vehicle. The suspect abruptly stopped the vehicle, causing both officers to have to immediately stop. The suspect made evasive maneuvers, which caused his vehicle to strike the rear bumper of one of the patrol cars and quickly accelerated away. Officers briefly pursued the suspect, which violated the above directive. The policy does not allow for pursuit of a vehicle for traffic charges and/or the underlying misdemeanor domestic violence charges for which the suspect was initially sought.

3) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 5.8.18 Accidental Discharge of a Less Lethal Weapon.

The officer conducted a spark test of his department issued taser. Prior to testing, he did not remove his taser cartridge resulting in the attached cartridge being discharged.

4) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 8.9.2 Responsibility for Handling or Depositing Evidence and Other Property.

The officer investigated a criminal offense involving two people who were found to be in possession of suspected marijuana. During the investigation, the officer recovered a small bag containing a “green leafy substance”. When the officer was done with the two people, she walked back to her assigned vehicle. Once at the vehicle she realized she was no longer in possession of the evidence. The officer attempted to locate the evidence but was unsuccessful.

5) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directives 14.3.1 Unsatisfactory Performance and 14.3.5 Neglect of Duty.

The officer missed an “on-call” call for an auto-pedestrian crash. He did not answer the 3 phone calls or two texts. This is the officer’s second time missing an “on-call” telephone call.
6) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 4.1.3 Vehicle Operations.

The sergeant was on routine patrol, driving a marked patrol vehicle, when he drifted into a turn lane and struck a curb. He was traveling approximately 35-40 MPH at impact. The front tire blew out and the rim bent, as a result of the impact. The sergeant offered no explanation as to why he was not aware he drifted into the other lane.

7) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 14.3.8 Police – Community Relations.

The officer, and his recruit officer in training, responded to the Anschutz Emergency Room to take a report of an assault. The officers had contacted the reporting party earlier that day during a family dispute and minor physical altercation. No charges were filed for the dispute and the parties separated. Before leaving the area, the reporting party yelled obscenities at the officer and the recruit. After making contact with the reporting party at the hospital, she called to complain that the officer had cursed at her and gave her the middle finger. The nurse on duty was able to confirm this did happen. The officer admitted to this behavior and also admitted to being frustrated and being under some stress while training the recruit.

8) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 8.9.2 Responsibility for Handling or Depositing Evidence and Other Property.

The officer conducted a traffic stop and located an illegal gun. The suspect was arrested and driven to jail when the officer realized the suspect’s wallet and cell phone were left on the trunk of the patrol car. The cell phone was located in the roadway but was destroyed. The wallet was not located.

9) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 4.6.5 Use of Departmental Equipment.

The officer misplaced his wallet, which contained several personal items and his Police Department issued identification card. The officer was unable to locate the wallet.

10) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 8.12 Secondary and Additional Employment.

The officer worked an off-duty job without prior authorization and also did not have a current work permit submitted to the Secondary Employment office.
11) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directives 8.2 Leave Procedures and 14.3 Professional Conduct and Responsibility.

The officer went into leave without pay status without prior approval from the Chief’s office.

12) The Department sustained a civilian member for violating Department Directives 14.3 Professional Conduct and Responsibility and 14.3.2 Conduct Towards Superior and Subordinate Officers and Associates.

The member received complaints regarding her training style. The member was counseled on the subject and was told to be professional and respectful in her demeanor. The complaints continued leading to further discipline.

13) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 8.9 Processing, Storage and Disposition of Evidence and other Property.

During an investigation the officer found a student in possession of suspected marijuana. The officer placed the evidence bag containing the confiscated suspected marijuana on a scale in the property room located at the Police Department Headquarters. The officer neglected to properly submit the suspected marijuana into Property and left the item on the scale. The items were located later by another sworn officer and placed into Property.

14) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 4.6.5 Use of Departmental Equipment.

The sergeant misplaced her building pass and ID card. After searching recent places visited and her home, she was unable to locate them.

15) The Department sustained a civilian member for violating Department Directive 14.3 Professional Conduct and Responsibility.

The Crime Scene Investigator made a statement while testifying in court that made the jurors gasp in disbelief. It also appeared she was inconvenienced or upset by the process.

16) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 4.1.3 Vehicle Operation.

The officer was responding to a suspicious party call without emergency equipment. As the officer was traveling toward an intersection, he observed the light was green. The officer looked down briefly at the MDC notes reference the call. The officer didn’t notice the vehicle directly in front of him had stopped when the light turned yellow. As a result, the officer collided into the rear of that vehicle causing minor damage to both vehicles.
17) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 8.6 Public Information.

The Lieutenant spoke to a reporter on two occasions and released information about a shooting.

18) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 4.2.3 Requirements and Restrictions of Emergency Responses.

The officer was responding to assist other officers involved in a physical struggle with a combative party at a bar. Another vehicle veered into the officer’s lane of travel. The officer took evasive action to avoid a collision and in doing so, lost control when he veered back into the lane, causing the patrol car to slide and rotate into on-coming lanes of traffic, going over a curb, and colliding with a brick wall. The patrol car and wall were damaged. It was determined the officer was traveling approximately 80 MPH in a posted 35 MPH zone.

19) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 4.2.2 Adherence to Law During Emergency Response.

The officer was responding to a roll-over accident with his emergency lights and siren activated. The officer attempted to make a U-turn in front of another vehicle, causing a collision. The administrative accident review determined the accident could have been prevented.

20) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 14.3.1 Unsatisfactory Performance.

The recruit received 4 failing grades on the geography portion of the Police Academy testing.

21) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directives 14.1.6 Conformance to Directives and 14.3.1 Unsatisfactory Performance.

The Sergeant was the custodian of the Property Unit at the time the Unit became involved in the destruction of evidence in several cases. It was this Sergeant’s responsibility to ensure that all section Standard Operating Procedures are followed by all the members of the unit. His lapse in supervision caused the department embarrassment and hours of investigation in order to right the wrongs caused by the destruction of DNA evidence.

22) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 4.2.6 Police Vehicle Pursuits.

The officer made a traffic stop and determined the driver was possibly intoxicated. A DUI officer responded to the stop and asked the driver to step out of the vehicle. The driver, instead drove away in an obvious attempt to flee. The original officer got in his car, activated the patrol car’s
emergency lights and siren and pursued the car to the driver’s house where the driver tried to park the car in the garage and close the door. The pursuit was not justified by Department Directives standards.

23) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 4.6.5 Use of Departmental Equipment.

The officer lost his wallet, which contained his police building pass, police ID, and his undercover driver’s license. The wallet was recovered in the road by another City employee. The police ID was recovered but the building pass and undercover driver’s license was still missing.

24) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 4.2.2 Adherence to Law During Emergency Response.

The officer was responding emergent in his unmarked low-profile vehicle to a report of an armed party. The officer did not have the siren activated. The officer came to an intersection and slowed while looking for traffic. A vehicle traveling the other direction collided with the unmarked unit, causing minor damage. The review process deemed this accident as preventable. Also, this was the officer’s second accident in two years.

25) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 14.3.1 Unsatisfactory Performance.

The officer was on duty with her K-9 partner when they responded to assist other officers who were attempting to apprehend a shoplifting suspect who was fleeing on foot. The officer got out of the patrol car, leaving the car door open and the K-9 exited the vehicle through the open partition and engaged the suspect, biting him on the buttocks area, causing minor injuries.
Formal Internal Investigations and Discipline Report

During 2014, the Department completed and finalized twenty-five (25) formal internal investigations. The following is a summary of the cases resolved in 2014.

Chief Metz and the Aurora Police Department recognize the individual members of the Aurora Police Department have a right to privacy in the contents of their personnel files, including the results of formal investigations and incidents of discipline, and expect the contents of these files will be held in confidence by their employer. This expectation and right to privacy flows from the United States Constitution, the Colorado Constitution, the Colorado Open Records Act, Colorado Revised Statute, § 24-72-201, et. Seq., the Colorado Criminal Justice Records Act, Colorado Revised Statutes § 24-72-301. et. Seq., the City of Aurora Personnel Policies and Procedures, and the Aurora Police Department Directives.

Further, the City of Aurora also maintains the right to withhold its deliberative process as confidential. The following summaries are included below with these privileges of confidentiality in mind. The inclusion of the following summaries does not constitute a waiver of either the individual employee’s expectation of privacy in the contents of his/her personnel files, nor waiver of the City of Aurora’s right to withhold its deliberative process as confidential. In an effort to balance the privacy and confidentiality rights of the individual officers, retaining the deliberative process privilege associated with the decision making detailed below, while at the same time providing our citizens with sufficient information to evaluate the adequacy, thoroughness and impartiality of the Aurora Police Department’s internal investigation and disciplinary process, the following information is provided:

Summary

The Department conducted and resolved twenty-five (25) formal Internal Affairs investigations in 2014 involving forty (40) department members. These members consisted of one (1) civilian, thirty-one (31) officers, one (1) agent, and seven (7) sergeants. The discipline included thirteen (13) suspensions without pay, and nine (9) written reprimands. Two (2) members resigned or retired before discipline was issued. The Department cleared fourteen (14) members of any wrongdoing; either by findings of compliance, exoneration, or they were not sustained. Two (2) investigations were ended before completion when the Chief concluded that was a more appropriate disposition of the cases.
1) The Department investigated two sworn members involved in a shooting. This is standard practice in any officer-involved shooting. Directives reviewed for compliance were Directives 5.1.2 Authorized Use of Deadly or Potentially Deadly Force, 5.5.15 Ammunition, 5.5.16 Weapon Inspection and Registration, 7.3.2 Firearms Qualification, 7.3.4 Semi-Automatic Weapons Training, and 14.5.5 Applicability and Basis for Conducting Tests. The officers were found to be in compliance with these Directives. Further investigation involved the review of Directives 5.1.3 Justification for the Use of Deadly or Potentially Deadly Force and 5.1.6 Shooting at or From a Moving Vehicle. One officer was sustained for both and the other officer was exonerated on 5.1.3 but sustained on 5.1.6. The first officer was suspended without pay for 320 hours and required to attend 24 hours of specialized training. The second officer received a written reprimand. The first officer appealed the discipline to the Civil Service Commission. Although the Civil Service found the officer was not sustained on Directive 5.1.3, they affirmed the discipline.

Officers responded to a report of larceny from vehicles in progress at a vehicle storage lot. The officers approached the suspects on foot then addressed the suspects by giving them verbal commands. The suspects ignored the commands and got into their vehicle and the driver accelerated in the officer’s direction. Fearing they were going to be struck by the vehicle, both officers discharged their duty weapons, striking the driver and rear passenger. The driver was killed and the rear passenger received severe injuries but did survive.

2) The Department investigated a sworn member for possibly violating Department Directives 14.1.5 Conformance to Law, 14.3 Professional Conduct and Responsibility and City of Aurora Policy 4-2 (C)(4) Disciplinary Action – Just Cause. The Member was sustained for violating 14.3 Professional Conduct and Responsibility and City of Aurora Policy 4-2 (C)(4) Disciplinary Action – Just Cause. The member was suspended for 100 hours and was ordered to attend training.

The sergeant was arrested for Domestic Violence.

3) The Department investigated three sworn members involved in a shooting. This is standard practice in any officer-involved shooting. Directives that were included in the investigation were 5.1.2 Authorized Use of Deadly or Potentially Deadly Force, 5.5.5 Rifle Specifications, 5.5.15 Ammunition, 5.5.16 Weapon Inspection and Qualification, 7.3.2 Firearms Qualification, 7.3.4 Semi-Automatic Weapons Training, 7.3.5 Automatic-Semi-Automatic Rifle Training, 14.5.8 Critical Incident Drug/Alcohol Testing. One officer was sustained on 5.5.5 Rifle Specifications and 7.3.5 Automatic-Semi-Automatic Rifle Training. This officer received a written reprimand.

Officers responded to a SWAT call in which a suspect had barricaded himself inside the residence after killing three people. A fourth person was able to escape and told police that he would shoot them if he saw them. There was an extended standoff in which the suspect shot at vehicles and officers. Officers returned fire and fatally wounded the suspect, ending the standoff. During the review of shooting, it was discovered that one of the officers had not properly loaded two rifle
magazines and was unable to locate his rifle qualification card. The officer involved shooting was deemed justified by the District Attorney’s Office.

4) The Department investigated a sworn member for possible violations of Department Directives 4.3.8 Traffic Accidents, 8.10.11 Traffic Accident Reports, 14.1.5 Conformance to Law, 14.3 Professional Conduct and Responsibility, 14.3.1 Unsatisfactory Performance, 14.3.3 Making a False or Untruthful Declaration, and 14.3.10 Reporting Responsibility. The member tendered his resignation before discipline was ordered.

The officer was dispatched to a traffic accident with injury. When he arrived, he found two people had been injured and there was damage to one vehicle. The officer did not conduct a thorough investigation, did not take a report or issue a summons to the at-fault driver.

5) The Department investigated a sworn member for violating Department Directive 4.1.3 Vehicle Operation. The member received a Written Reprimand.

The officer was driving, approaching an intersection. He was looking at the MDC in his car as he approached the intersection. When he looked up from his computer, he noticed that the light for westbound traffic had turned yellow. Thinking the light had just turned yellow, and that he had enough time, he continued through the intersection. Prior to him crossing into the intersection, the light turned red. He was captured on the photo red light cameras as he passed into the intersection on a red light. This was his third photo red light violation in a two year period.

6) The Department investigated two sworn members for possible directive violations. An officer was investigated for violating Directive 14.3 Professional Conduct and Responsibility and 14.3.2 Conduct Towards Superior and Subordinate Officers and Associates. The officer was not sustained on both Directives. A sergeant was investigated, and sustained, for violating Directive 14.3 Professional Conduct and Responsibility. The sergeant received a Written Reprimand.

It was learned the sergeant, a first line supervisor, spoke with several patrol members during a briefing in which they were voicing concerns pertaining to another officer. The sergeant allowed the individuals to voice their opinions and concerns. Immediately after this briefing, the sergeant continued a conversation with an officer who voiced concerns that she was still upset with the demeanor and past issues involving this other officer. The sergeant made a comment that the other employee she was concerned about also made a statement in the past about another female officer. The conversation was wholly inappropriate and reflected poorly on the sergeant and on other members of the department.

7) The Department sustained a civilian member for violating Department Directives 14.1.5 Conformance to Law, 14.1.7 Conduct Involving Moral Turpitude, and 14.3 Professional Conduct and Responsibility. The member received 40-hours suspension.
The civilian member was the subject of a traffic stop in Denver while driving her personal vehicle. It was discovered she was driving with expired license plates and had no proof of insurance. The member received a summons for the violations. The member failed to appear to court for the summons and a warrant was issued. The member was the subject of a traffic stop five months later in Aurora. The license plate appeared to have been altered and was still expired, and her driver’s license was canceled/denied.

8) The Department investigated four officers for an allegation of excessive force. Three officers were investigated for possibly violating Department Directive 5.3 Use of Physical Force. All three were exonerated. The fourth officer was investigated for possibly violating Department Directives 5.3 Use of Physical Force and 6.5.8 Conduct During Transport. The officer was not sustained on 5.3 and was sustained on 6.5.8. The officer received a written reprimand.

A traffic stop was conducted by several officers and the driver was subsequently arrested for DUl. After she was cuffed, she was placed in the front passenger seat of an un-caged marked vehicle. The arrestee was left alone and she escaped from the vehicle. As she ran away from the scene, she fell to the ground. Her hands were still in the cuffs so the fall caused her minor injuries.

9) The Department investigated a sworn member involved in a shooting. This is standard practice in any officer-involved shooting. Directives reviewed for compliance were Directives 5.1.2 Authorized Use of Deadly or Potentially Deadly Force, 5.5.15 Ammunition, 5.5.16 Weapon Inspection and Registration, 7.3.2 Firearms Qualification, 7.3.4 Semi-Automatic Weapons Training, and 14.5.5 Applicability and Basis for Conducting Tests. The officer was found to be in compliance with all of the above Directives. Included in the review was Directive 5.1.6 Shooting at or From a Moving Vehicle. The officer was not sustained.

Officers were dispatched to a theft in progress. The call notes indicated the suspect fled the area. Officers conducted a traffic stop on the subject’s vehicle. The suspect ignored orders to turn off his vehicle and made a motion toward the center console, shifting the car in gear. The officer told the suspect to “stop” but the vehicle moved rapidly, causing the door to hit the officer, jostling forward and backward. The officer fired his weapon when struck by the door. The force from the moving vehicle knocked the officer backwards, causing him to fall to the ground and strike his head on the street. The suspect fled the area but was apprehended a short time later. It was found at that time that the suspect sustained a non-fatal gunshot wound to the leg.

10) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directives 4.2.2 Adherence to Law During Emergency Responses and 4.2.3 Requirements and Restrictions of Emergency Responses. The member received 20-hours suspension.

The officer was responding to an armed robbery. Other officers called over the radio that they were following a vehicle matching the description of the suspect vehicle. The officer activated his lights and siren, to assist the other officers in stopping the suspect vehicle. The officer entered an
intersection while the lights for his direction were red. The officer collided with another vehicle. The data from the vehicle showed the officer was traveling 98 MPH 2.5 seconds prior to entering the intersection. The estimated speed at the time of collision was between 50 and 55 MPH.

11) The Department investigated a sworn member involved in a shooting. This is standard practice in any officer-involved shooting. Directives reviewed for compliance were 5.1.2 Authorized Use of Deadly or Potentially Deadly Force, 5.5.5 Rifle Specifications, 5.5.15 Ammunition, 5.5.16 Weapon Inspection and Registration, 7.3.2 Firearms Qualification, 7.3.4 Semi-Automatic Weapons Training, 7.3.5 Automatic/Semi-Automatic Rifle Training, and 14.5.8 Critical Incident Drug/Alcohol Testing. One of the officers was non-compliant/sustained for Directives 7.3.2 and 14.5.8 and received a Written Reprimand.

Officer responded to a call of an armed party involving an altercation between a man and a woman. The suspect male left the scene in a vehicle while reportedly armed. Officers located the vehicle and pulled the suspect over and a stand-off ensued. The suspect repeatedly brandished a shortened shotgun, at times even putting it in his own mouth. The suspect did not comply with the officers’ orders so when he pointed the shotgun in the direction of the officers, they fired striking him once in the knee, ending the stand-off. During the review of shooting, it was discovered that one of the officers had not properly notified and filed a prescription form as required and no a record of 3rd Quarter qualification could be found. The officer involved shooting was deemed justified by the District Attorney’s Office.

12) The Department initiated an internal investigation for possible violation of 2.8.7 Fitness for Duty. The investigation was closed per the direction of the Chief’s office after the proper paperwork was received from the officer’s doctors, releasing the officer back to full duty.

13) The Department investigated a sworn member for violating Department Directive 14.1.5 Conformance to Law. The member received a 160-hour suspension.

The Agent was arrested for DUI.

14) The Department investigated an officer for violating Department Directives 6.1.3 Release of Juveniles Arrested Without a Warrant, 6.5.2 Handcuffing Detainees, 6.7 Prisoner Escapes, 11.2.8 Guidelines to be Followed when Referring Juveniles to Legal Proceedings and Taking Them into Temporary Custody, and 14.3 Professional Conduct and Responsibility. The officer’s sergeant was also investigated and sustained on violating 1.4.11 Supervisor Responsibility: Accountability for Performance of Subordinates and 14.3.1 Unsatisfactory Performance. The officer and sergeant each received a written reprimand.

The officer assisted school security on the contact of a student who was found to be in possession of a handgun. The student was arrested and detained at the school. A second suspect was identified and arrested and was also detained at the school. The officer contacted his sergeant,
requesting additional officers to assist but was told there were none available. School security guards were assigned to watch the two prisoners. One of the suspects was un-cuffed to write a statement. After approximately 5 hours of being detained in the school office, one of the suspects escaped. The suspect was arrested the next day by the FAST Unit.

15) The Department initiated an internal investigation for possible violation of 2.8.7 Fitness for Duty. The investigation was stopped per the direction of the Chief’s office after the proper paperwork was received, releasing the sergeant back to full duty.

16) The Department initiated an internal investigation of a sworn member for possible violations of Department Directive 2.8.7 Fitness for Duty and City of Aurora Policy 3-27 Medical Leave. The member retired before the investigation was concluded.

17) The Department started investigating a sworn member for possible violations of Department Directive 2.8.7 Fitness for Duty and Aurora Policy 3-27 Employee Medical Leave. The officer retired medically so the investigation was stopped.

18) The Department initiated an internal investigation of 2 Officer and 2 Sergeants for the possible violation of directives 14.3 Professional Conduct and Responsibility, 14.3.1 Unsatisfactory Performance, 6.11.2 Responsibility for Preliminary Investigations, and 1.4.11 Supervisor Responsibility: Accountability for Performance of Subordinates. One Officer and both Sergeants were sustained on 1 or more of the Directives listed above. The officer received a Written Reprimand. The two Sergeants each received a 10-hour suspension.

Two sergeants and two officers responded to a reported physical and verbal altercation. Once on scene the sergeants and officers learned that four people were involved included two off-duty Denver Police officers. The investigation revealed all four of the parties had been drinking, a fight ensued, one of the DPD officers threatened the other with a handgun, and one of the parties left on foot while the other drove home. One drove back to the scene after APD personnel were on scene. An APD member drove the subject home where they discovered two young children sleeping and that they had been left home alone. It was decided no charges would be filed at the time of the initial investigation.

19) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directive 5.1.7 Other Unauthorized Firing of a Weapon Situations. The member received a 20-hour suspension.

The sergeant was at the APD Range qualifying with his pistol. After the qualification he went to the shed to clean the pistol and needed to dry-fire the weapon to do so. He pointed the gun in a safe direction towards the back of the cleaning bench and pulled the trigger and the gun discharged one time. The officer had removed the magazine but did not clear the chamber.
20) The Department investigated a sworn member involved in a shooting. This is standard practice in any officer-involved shooting. Directives reviewed for compliance were 5.1.2 Authorized Use of Deadly or Potentially Deadly Force, 5.5.15 Ammunition, 5.5.16 Weapon Inspection and Registration, 5.5.5 Rifle Specifications, 7.3.2 Firearms Qualification, 7.3.5 Automatic/Semi-Automatic Rifle Training, and 14.5.8 Critical Incident Drug/Alcohol Testing. The officer was found to be in compliance with all directives.

On June 6, 2014, Officers responded to a report of an intoxicated, armed suicidal person. During a standoff with officers the subject pointed a rifle at APD officers. An officer fired one round fatally wounding the subjecting and ending the standoff.

21) The Department investigated a sworn member for possible violations of Department Directives 6.11.2 Responsibility for Preliminary Investigations, 8.10.3 General Offense Reports, and 14.3.1 Unsatisfactory Performance. The member was sustained on all directives and received a 20-hour suspension.

An officer was dispatched to a call of a teacher that had been assaulted at an Elementary school by a special needs student. During the encounter the teacher had fallen and lost consciousness. The teacher was transported to the hospital. After learning the status of the suspect child and speaking with the school staff, the officer decided to have the school administration handle the complaint. The officer did not complete an Offense Report and only made CAD note entries on the call. The officer’s sergeant learned of the incident and the lack of a report, and ordered the officer back to the school to complete the preliminary investigation and Offense Report.

22) The Department investigated a sworn member involved in a shooting. This is standard practice in any officer-involved shooting. Directives reviewed for compliance were Directives 5.1.2 Authorized Use of Deadly or Potentially Deadly Force, 5.5.15 Ammunition, 5.5.16 Weapon Inspection and Registration, 7.3.2 Firearms Qualification, 7.3.4 Semi-Automatic Weapons Training, and 14.5.8 Critical Incident Drug/Alcohol Testing. The officer was found to be in compliance with all directives listed.

Officers responded to a report of a suspicious occurrence. The officer’s met the reporting party at his apartment where he lived alone. The apartment was locked from the inside, preventing his entry. The officer kicked the door in, which was almost immediately pushed back by someone inside. Officers pushed the door open again and they saw a person standing inside just a few feet from the threshold holding an object in her hand about shoulder height. The officer ordered the subject to “drop it” and the subject did not comply. The officer fired one round toward the subject but did not strike the suspect. The subject was taken into custody without further incident.
23) The Department investigated two sworn members for violating Department Directives 14.3 Professional Conduct and Responsibility, 14.3.1 Unsatisfactory Performance, and 8.9.2 Responsibility for Handling or Depositing Evidence and Other Property. Each officer received a 10-hour suspension.

The two officers were on a missing person call. Upon arrival they contacted the reported missing person and his mother. The mother complained the officers were unprofessional in their contact, made unprofessional statements, and gave wrong information as to lawful procedures. Officers recovered a small amount of suspected marijuana from the juveniles pocket and discarded it on the ground, stating he could not charge the juvenile with a crime. The mother wanted her son arrested but officers did not arrest him.

24) The Department sustained a sworn member for violating Department Directives 5.1.7 Other Unauthorized Firing of Weapon Situations. The member received a 10-hour suspension.

An officer was checking his patrol equipment at the beginning of his shift when he accidentally discharged a department shotgun. There were no injuries and no property damage.

25) The Department investigated a sworn member for possible violations of Department Directive 14.3.3 Making a False or Untruthful Declaration and Standard Operating Procedure PAT 4.2.10 Cleanliness. The member was sustained on the SOP and received a 10-hour suspension.

An officer checked out a marked patrol unit at the start of his shift and found what appeared to be vomit inside the vehicle. The mess was reported to a supervisor and a preliminary investigation was conducted. The last officer who occupied the vehicle offered an explanation for the mess, that it could have been from a bottle of food he discarded out the passenger window but missed and it fell to the floor causing the contents to spill out.