



NJ's MADD chapter honors life-saving law enforcement officers

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Union City's Jorge Porres was among dozens of law enforcement officers statewide honored this morning by the New Jersey chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

Porres joined West New York's Timothy Letavish, Fairview's John Pierotti, and the Port Authority's Edwin Berdecia, all patrolmen, as well as River Vale Sgt. Robert Ryan, as the local officers receiving honors for their work in saving and protecting lives by removing drunk drivers from the roadways.

Survivors of drunk--driving crashes that killed loved ones presented the citations.

"People are never going to know about the lives that you saved," State Police Superintendent Col. Rick Fuentes told the gathering of uniformed officers -- including 30 of his own troopers -- at the ceremony in South Brunswick's Monmouth Junction.

Those troopers alone, several from Troop A, accounted for nearly 900 arrests last year, said the the colonel, pictured here with Porres.

Amid the survivors who joined the officers for the tribute breakfast at Pierre's Restaurant was Pam Fisher, director of the N.J. Division of Highway Traffic Safety, whose car was struck by a drunk-driver's years ago.



What made the situation more frustrating, she said, is that "the man that his me is still on the road -- and just last year, he did it again."

The positive side, Fisher told the officers is that "the work you are doing is driving down the numbers."

Traffic fatalities in New Jersey last year fell to 590, the lowest figure in decades, she said. Of those, Fisher noted, 152 people were killed as a result of alcohol-related crashes -- more than 25 percent.

More than a third of them were during the summer, she said.

Frightening as the one-in-four figure is, it's actually a decrease.

"We've been below 30 percent for the last three years," Fisher said.

"(But) zero is the bottom line," she said. "We don't want anybody to crash. We certainly don't want them to die because they made the decision to get behind the wheel after they've been drinking."

The officers assembled for the 2nd Annual Law Enforcement Recognition ceremony have dedicated their livelihoods to it. They included Little Falls Patrolman James Briggs, pictured right.



Lt. Col. Juan Mattos Jr., in a nod to his boss, said that a major reason for last year's decrease is that, for the first time, "traffic safety received the level of recognition as the efforts to control crime in our state."

The officers assembled, the officials from MADD, and others attending the event understand that importance, Matos said.

"Every uniformed police officer in this room today -- the work you've done is awesome," the lieutenant colonel said. "You definitely get it."

(Photos by Jerry DeMarco. All rights reserved.)

Thanks to NJSP Sgt. Stephen Jones for the program below, which I abbreviated to include the names of the top cops from around New Jersey when it comes to locking up drunk drivers.

Scroll down to find the officers or troopers who patrol your area.

There were 74 recipients covering all 21 counties.

"Pasted below are the program agenda and the names of the recipients, so find your cops and give them their due respect," Jones said. "They put it on the line to keep you safe."

Mothers Against Drunk Driving New Jersey

2nd Annual Law Enforcement Recognition

Colonel Joseph Fuentes	New Jersey State Police
Lt. Frank McVey	New Jersey State Police
Major Matt Walker	New Jersey State Police
NJ State Police Color Guard	
NJ State Police Pipes and Drum	
Ms. Pam Fischer	NJ Division of Highway Traffic Safety
Chief Raymond Hayducka	South Brunswick Police Department / President-Middlesex County Chiefs Assoc.
Mr. Pat Aramini	New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority / MADD NJ State Operating Council
Mr. Steven Benvenisti	Davis, Saperstein & Salomon, PC / MADD NJ State Operating Council
Ms. Patricia Carroll	Sovereign Bank / MADD NJ State Operating Council
Mr. Kevin Coleman	Commercial Property Network / MADD NJ State Operating Council
MSG Karin Dates	New Jersey National Guard / MADD NJ State Operating Council
Ms. Maureen DeCicco, CPA	Withum, Smith & Brown / MADD NJ State Operating Council
Lt. Colonel Juan Mattos, Jr.	New Jersey State Police / MADD NJ State Operating Council
Chief William Moore	Sea Bright Police Department / MADD NJ State Operating Council
Mr. Mitch Sklar, Esq.	New Jersey State Assoc. of Chiefs of Police / MADD NJ State Operating Council
Dr. Barbara Allen Walker	D.A.R.E. New Jersey / MADD NJ State Operating Council

Dr. Harvey Weingarten, MD	Family Practice Physician / MADD NJ State Operating Council
Mr. George White, Esq.	Law Office of George S. White, LLC / MADD NJ State Operating Council
Mr. Steven Zaffarese	Zaffarese Physical Therapy / MADD NJ State Operating Council
Pierre Hage Boutros	Pierre's Restaurant / MADD NJ State Operating Council
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Branca, Sr.	MADD NJ Volunteers
Ms. Maria Esteves	MADD NJ Volunteer
Ms. Jill Morrison	MADD NJ Volunteer
Mr. Robert Nulman	MADD NJ Volunteer
Mr. George Pizzo	MADD NJ Volunteer
Ms. Fran Reiss	MADD NJ Volunteer
Ms. Patricia Russo	MADD NJ Volunteer

2009 Honorees

Municipal Police

Ptl. Michael O'Hola	Atlantic City Police Department
Ptl. Steve Meyers	Beverly City Police Department
Ptl. Daniel Dewald	Byram Township Police Department
Sgt. Dale Fahr	Carneys Point Police Department
Ptl Matthew Thompson	Clinton Police Department
Sgt. William Marshall	Delran Police Department
Ptl. John Gigante	Deptford Township Police Department
Ptl. Christopher Nicholas	Fairfield Police Department
Ptl. John Pierotti	Fairview Police Department
Ptl. Matthew DeCesari	Township of Franklin Police Department
Ptl. Mathew Koc	Glen Ridge Police Department
Ptl. David McNulty	Hamburg Police Department
Ptl. Christopher DiMeglio	Lawrence Township Police Department
Ptl. James Briggs	Little Falls Police Department
Ptl. Steven Solari	Little Silver Police Department
Ptl. Michael Kornblau	Longport Police Department

Ptl. Jennifer Anzelone	Lower Township Police Department
Ptl. Peter Manco	Manchester Township Police Department
Sgt. Patrick McNichol	Mendham Borough Police Department
Ptl. Eric Jacobsen	North Brunswick Police Department
Ptl. Michael Cedar	North Haledon Police Department
MPO I-Keith McGee	North Wildwood Police Department
Ptl. Christopher Malcolm	Oxford Township Police Department
Ptl. Raymond Kern	Pennsauken Township Police Department
Lt. John Conway	Perth Amboy Police Department
Ptl. Jason York	Pine Beach Police Department
Ptl. Joseph Canonica	Raritan Township Police Department
Capt. Darren McConnell	Red Bank Police Department
Sgt. Robert Ryan	River Vale Police Department
Ptl. Michael Hatzmihalis	Rockaway Township Police Department
Ptl. Joshua Medrano	Roselle Park Police Department
Ptl. Robert Brown	City of Salem Police Department
Ptl. Frederick Fitten	South Bound Brook Police Department
Sgt. Robert Kelly	Stratford Police Department
Ptl. Jorge Porres	Union City Police Department
Ptl. William Newman	Vineland Police Department
Ptl. Mark Hasenpat	Wenonah Police Department
Ptl. Timothy Letavish	West New York Police Department

Port Authority Police

Ptl. James Hartnett	Delaware River Port Authority Police
Ptl. Matthew Weachter	Delaware River Port Authority Police
Ptl. Edwin Berdecia	The Port Authority Police

College/University Police

Ptl. John Turner	The College of New Jersey Police Dept.
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Ptl. Christopher Graham Richard Stockton College Police Dept.

Ptl. Nicholas Cevasco Rutgers College Police Dept.

New Jersey State Police

Trooper Aaron Abbate	Troop A	AC Expressway
Trooper Paul Applegate	Troop A	Bellmawr Station
Trooper Jason Bobo	Troop A	Woodstown Station
Trooper Garrett Cullen	Troop A	Bellmawr Station
Trooper Ricardo Diaz	Troop A	Bellmawr Station
Trooper Michael Doble	Troop A	AC Expressway
Trooper David Engelhard	Troop A	Bellmawr Station
Trooper I- Joseph Farina	Troop A	Bellmawr Station
Trooper Rodrick Jones	Troop A	Bellmawr Station
Trooper Kenneth Langefeld	Troop A	Bellmawr Station
Trooper Ronald Lawrence	Troop A	Bellmawr Station
Trooper Colin McNulty	Troop A	AC Expressway
Trooper Dale Pearce	Troop A	AC Expressway
Trooper Christopher Roche	Troop A	Bellmawr Station
Trooper Andrew Saul	Troop A	AC Expressway
Trooper Ryan Stec	Troop A	Tactical Patrol
Trooper Matthew Walz	Troop A	Bellmawr Station
Trooper Fausto Zapata	Troop A	Bellmawr Station
Trooper Edward Schmalz	Troop B	Netcong Station
Sgt. Frank Moore	Troop C	Bordentown Station
Trooper I- Joseph Nitti	Troop C	

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