

PADUCAH POLICE DEPARTMENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: Feb. 3, 2015

TO: Brandon L. Barnhill, Chief of Police

FROM: Robin Newberry

SUBJECT: 2014 Employee of the Year Nomination

In the years I've worked at the Paducah Police Department, I've worked with more than 100 police officers - different likes, different dislikes, different strengths, different weaknesses.

The past year, I've had the pleasure and the honor of working more closely with one of you, seeing her excitement about new projects and her pride about projects concluded.

Two years ago, Officer Gretchen Morgan teamed with now-retired Capt. Don Hodgson and her long-time friend, Hillary Coltharp, to create a new and emotionally charged way of reaching out to drivers, young drivers in particular, about distracted driving. The three of them, along with Hillary's mother, Shawn, built the program from the ground up. Small presentations led to bigger presentations, which have led to national attention for the Paducah Police Department.

The program has been presented at high schools, large and small, and each time brings many of these teen-agers to tears. Gretchen knows when the tears fall, these young drivers have heard the message.

Gretchen is all about the children. She has maintained DARE classes at two Paducah elementary schools, touching young lives in a positive manner while teaching the DARE lessons. She lets these kids know that they are cared about and that they matter; that they can become whatever they can dream.

Gretchen organized the Christmas Cops program in 2014, the largest ever with 27 families and 59 children.

Gretchen is an organizer and is very comfortable talking with people, so it was only appropriate that she was named the police department's first Community Resource Officer last year. As such, she takes on organization of any number of community

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events – Coffee With a Cop, National Night Out, the Neighborhood Watch program, to name a few.

She also maintains the police department’s Facebook page, generating positive publicity with informational posts, along with “Throw-Back Thursday” photos of the PPD in the “olden days” and daily Elf on the Shelf photos that were hugely popular back before Christmas.

Many would say that this is not “police” work, but I submit that every person that Gretchen makes see your job in a positive light may be one less person calling to complain; every child whose life she touches who chooses a positive path instead of a negative path is one less adult you’ll arrest down the road; and every driver she helps convince not to text and drive may be one less fatality, the memory of which you have to live with.

For all of these reasons, and for many, many more, I am honored to nominate Officer Gretchen Morgan for the Paducah Police Department’s 2014 Employee of the Year.

/rln