



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Middlesex Sheriff's Office

Peter J. Koutoujian
Sheriff

*400 Mystic Avenue
Medford, Massachusetts 02155*

*Phone (781) 960 2800
Fax (781) 960 2902*

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For more information:
Kevin Maccioli
Public Information Officer
781-960-2805

Middlesex Sheriff's Officers recognized during the Massachusetts Correctional Employee of the Year Award Ceremony

Five members of the Middlesex Sheriff's Office (MSO) were honored Monday, November 17, during the 2014 Correctional Employee of the Year Ceremony.

The five were among 23 people recognized during the State House ceremony. The recipients represented the Massachusetts Department of Correction and four Sheriff's Offices.

The Medal of Honor, "for actions above and beyond the call of duty, in the face of certain and imminent danger to life and limb," was presented to Middlesex Sheriff's Officers Sean Lee and Jonathan Persson. Officers Lee and Persson were presented with the Medal of Honor for preventing a pre-trial detainee from escaping during a medical trip to the Mass. Eye & Ear Infirmary on July 31, 2013. During the course of a violent struggle initiated by the detainee, Officer Persson sustained a gunshot wound to the leg. Officer Lee - acting in defense of his partner and others in the hospital - then discharged his firearm, wounding the suspect and thwarting the escape.

"The actions of these highly trained, veteran officers prevented a dangerous individual from escaping into the hospital and potentially injuring others," said Sheriff Koutoujian. "They are a true credit to the profession and the Middlesex Sheriff's Office."

The second group award presented to members of the Middlesex Sheriff's Office for actions while on duty last year, was to MSO Sergeant Dan Crowley and Officer David Kane. They were presented with the Meritorious Recognition Award.

On August 15, 2013 while en route to a juvenile facility, Sgt. Crowley and Officer Kane spotted heavy, black smoke coming from the rear of an occupied Chelmsford home. Upon arriving at the scene, Officer Kane notified fire officials and alerted the elderly resident of the home to the situation, while Sgt. Crowley immediately utilized the fire extinguisher from their transportation van to put out the flames which were emanating from the area around a pool filter and beginning to climb the rear of the home.

“Were it not for the quick actions of Sgt. Crowley and Officer Kane, the fire would likely have spread to the interior of the home, trapping the elderly resident,” said Sheriff Koutoujian. “I commend them for their outstanding acts.”

Also recognized Monday were Officer Kevin McWatters and his wife, Karen McWatters. Officer and Mrs. McWatters were presented with the Community Service Award for their efforts to assist a young El Salvadorian teen travel to the United States to be fitted for new prostheses. The young woman – Melissa Estafania Salinas – lost her right leg after being struck by a drag racer. Mrs. McWatters had learned of Melissa’s situation shortly after herself losing a leg in the Boston Marathon bombing.

“The efforts of Kevin and Karen McWatters to assist this young lady are truly inspirational,” said Sheriff Koutoujian. “I cannot imagine two people more deserving of this recognition.”

In addition to the annual awards presented to officers, Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) Secretary Andrea Cabral recognized each of the seven Sheriff’s Office that responded in the wake of 2013’s Boston Marathon bombing. Over the course of five days, 28 members of the Middlesex Sheriff’s Office participated in security operations and the manhunt for the suspects.

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