Middlesex Sheriff’s Office Hosts
2014 Employee Recognition & Awards Ceremony

Middlesex Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian recognized members of the Office for outstanding work over the past year during the 2014 Employee Recognition and Awards Ceremony held May 7, in Billerica.

This ceremony is held each May during National Correctional Officers Week. The first full week in May has been recognized as National Correctional Officers Week since 1984 when President Ronald Reagan signed Proclamation 5187.

“Each and every day the Corrections Officers and Deputy Sheriffs of the Middlesex Sheriff’s Office — supported by a dedicated staff of nurses, teachers, substance abuse counselors and other professionals — work to keep us safe,” said Sheriff Koutoujian. “While they seek no credit for the vital role they play in ensuring public safety, they deserve our thanks.”

This year’s Officer of the Year for the Middlesex Jail was presented to Sergeant Eric Costello, while the Officer of the Year for the Middlesex House of Correction was presented to Sergeant Christopher Foley. The Superior Officer of the Year for the Middlesex Jail was presented to Captain Gary Freker, while Captain John Cormier was named the Superior Officer of the Year for the Middlesex House of Correction. Deputy Laurie Aufiero of the Civil Enforcement Unit was honored with the Deputy Sheriff Award.

Among the others honored Wednesday by the Middlesex Sheriff’s Office were Officer Kevin McWatters and his wife Karen McWatters who presented with one of four Humanitarian Awards. Officer and Mrs. McWatters were recognized for their efforts to help a teenage girl from El Salvador come to the United States to receive medical care and be fitted for a prosthetic after losing a leg when she was struck by a drag racer.

Also recognized Wednesday were Officers Sean Lee and Jonathan Persson who were presented with the National Sheriffs’ Association Medal of Valor for their actions in preventing a pre-trial detainee from escaping during a medical trip to the Mass. Eye & Ear Infirmary last July. Officer Persson, who was wounded in the escape attempt, was also presented with the Purple Heart. Officers Lee and Persson were previously presented with the Middlesex Sheriff’s Office Medal of Valor.
“Today, we recognized numerous individual Officers and staff members, as well as several large groups for tremendous acts over the course of the last year,” said Sheriff Koutoujian. “But today was also a time to acknowledge the work done every day by the men and women of the Middlesex Sheriff’s Office who strive to make certain our mission of ensuring the care, custody and control of those in our facilities is carried out with incredible professionalism.”

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