



Letter of Award Medal of Merit



To: Marie White
From: Craig N. Meidl, Chief of Police
Date: November 27, 2018
Re: Medal of Merit Award

Marie,

Lt. Kendall recently nominated you and Mandi Ackerman for the Medal of Merit Award. The Medal of Merit is awarded to members of the Spokane Police Department who distinguish themselves by meritorious achievement or meritorious service. The meritorious actions must clearly surpass that which is normally required or expected. This service or achievement need not be unique but must be exceptional and superior. When the Special Awards Committee reviewed this nomination, it was clear that you are most deserving of this recognition. Lt. Kendall wrote:

"I am writing this memorandum to highlight the superior performance displayed by Marie White and Mandi Ackerman.

During my assignment with the Spokane Police Dispatch Unit it was brought to my attention that our dispatch training program was in need of a major revamp. The teaching material was dated, the structure of the program was archaic and the overall culture did not support a positive learning environment for our trainees.

Historically, since 1988, the SPD Dispatch Unit has experienced an approximate 80% failure rate during the hiring and training of our dispatchers (well above the national averages). Of this 80%, some failed the program, some resigned from the program, some requested transfers and some were terminated. As I become more and more familiar with the demands of becoming a dispatcher for our agency, I know that this job is not for everyone. However, when I look at the history of failure for the past 30 years it became apparent that our training program needed to be re-evaluated and redesigned. Marie and Mandi have been pivotal in this mission.

Marie has conducted coordination and development in her training staff relying on Mandi, our lead trainer, to take on the bulk of this revamp. Mandi completely restructured and re-wrote very dated teaching material bringing our Phase 1 program up to date. She had put in a tremendous amount of work and preparation as we prepared for two new hires to begin their training. As training began, Marie and Mandi remained diligent in tweaking and adjusting the new program with very little impact on their students. Mandi's teaching style is extremely supportive while holding herself, her students and the program accountable. I have observed a very supportive and flexible learning environment for our trainees. The training unit's overall goal is to provide every opportunity for our trainees to succeed and flourish as they strive to become SPD Dispatchers.

Our recent trainees are currently experiencing this revitalized training program. Due to the quality of these new employees and the success of our restructured training program, I anticipate that they will flourish as SPD Dispatchers.

For decades we have wasted a tremendous amount of time and resources with a failing training and hiring program for our dispatch center. With Marie and Mandi leading this culture change, I am optimistic that we will see more success, proficiency and efficiency displayed by our future Dispatchers."

Marie, you have certainly distinguished yourself in the area of meritorious achievement and I am proud to recognize you with the Medal of Merit Award. You will be awarded the Medal of Merit during the annual Employee Awards Ceremony in March 2019 and a copy of this letter will be placed in your personnel file.

Handwritten signature of Craig N. Meidl in black ink.

Craig Meidl, Chief of Police