



## Letter of Award Chief's Citation Award



To: Sergeant Michael Huffman  
From: Craig N. Meidl - Chief of Police  
Date: December 28, 2021  
Re: Chief's Citation Award— DRE Team

You have been nominated to receive the Chief's Citation Award. This award is intended to recognize members of a team or unit for participating in an incident, event, or series of events, or project which has a substantial, positive impact on the community or police department. It must be superior in nature and further the department's mission and overall effectiveness. When the Special Awards Committee reviewed this nomination, it was clear that the DRE Team is most deserving of this award.

Sergeant Michael Huffman, Officer John Yen, Officer Matt Breese and Officer Mike Thomas have all been DRE's for the Spokane Police Department for over 5 years. These Officers have taken a program that was nearly non-existent and made it into a program that is respected throughout our department, around our community, our state and even around our nation.

The DRE program took off in 2017 with the creation of the Police Department's DUI Enforcement Team. Since then, the team has made over 725 DUI arrests, 23 Vehicular Assault arrests and 8 vehicular homicide arrests.

Also in 2017, they were part of developing and maintaining a DUI court for the City of Spokane. This court is a therapeutic court in which the ultimate goal is to take the higher risk and higher need participants and help them into living a life of being clean and sober. In 2020, our DRE Officers were asked to present at the National Drug Court Conference to speak on the benefits of having officers involved in therapeutic courts.

City Prosecutor Joni Morse said, *"The participation of DRE officers in DUI Court has strengthened law enforcement's relationship with the individual entities on the team and has allowed for expanded training in other areas of the department regarding DUI investigation. Overall, DRE participation in our program is a huge asset and has set our court above others in the state and nationwide."*

*"Having officers present during this court has helped make our court a huge success,"* said Probation Officer Hans Horstketter. He also stated that they *"have not had any graduates from the court get another DUI since they graduated"*.

The State Coordinator looks at all the work the DRE's in the State of Washington put into this program and selects the top five for the year out of over 150 DRE's that are currently certified in the State of Washington; the criteria is based on DRE evaluations, teaching hours and training hours. At our yearly in-service here in Spokane, the State Coordinator announced the top 5 DRE's in the State of Washington:

- Number 1 DRE for the State of Washington was Officer Yen. (Because Officer Yen was selected as the #1 DRE for the State of Washington, he was chosen to attend the National DRE conference in Orlando, Florida.)
- Number 3 DRE for the State of Washington was Officer Breese
- Number 4 DRE for the State of Washington was Officer Thomas.

Officer Yen, Officer Breese, Officer Thomas and Sgt. Huffman have been a huge asset for the Spokane Police Department as well as the entire State of Washington and our Country. They worked extremely hard over these last few years and have created a successful program that other agencies want to model.

Sergeant Huffman, I am honored to present you with the Chief's Citation Award. A copy of this document will be placed in your personnel file.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C N Meidl".

Craig N. Meidl,  
Chief of Police