



2023
Letter of Award
Chief's Citation



To: Officer Brian Blankenstein
From: Justin Lundgren, Interim Chief of Police
Date: February 7, 2024
Re: Chief's Citation Award

Sgt. Steve Anderson nominated the K-9 Team 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 K-9 Team is most deserving of this award. Sgt. Anderson wrote:

*"Despite having only **three** certified/operational patrol apprehension canines through a large stretch of 2023, the SPD K9 Unit did not miss a single on-duty or call-out patrol request for a K9 across day shift, mid shift, and graveyard.*

*In 2023, the unit had 573 deployments and 221 captures. Nearly one quarter of that number was split between only **three** operational patrol canines through a portion of the year. The handlers take incredible pride in providing a valuable asset to keep both our officers and the community safe. Often times, handlers would finish their shift at 0330 and then respond to a day shift K9 request at 0600 without hesitation or complaint, only to repeat that same process the following evening.*

On top of their normal shift hours and call-outs outside of regular shift hours, the K9 unit averages approximately 50 outreach events per year. The unit finished 2023 with 42 community events. On average, half of these outreach events are internal requests, while the other half come from a wide variety of venues. These outreach events are staffed by our K9 handlers, often times on their days off. The handlers will always make sure a representative of the unit attends any given event. Every requested event in 2023 was staffed.

The SPD K9 Unit also has a long standing reputation of being the model program, which other jurisdictions consistently attempt to work toward. The unit hosts a K9 Advanced Handler course which aims to provide complex training designed to push both the handler and the canine physically and mentally with a non-stop training curriculum for four consecutive days. This course is hosted in May each year and is attended by canine teams across the entire state, and was attended by several Canadian teams in 2023, and received feedback of this course being the best course available on the west side of the United States. This reputation is due to the dedication of our handler's desire to constantly improve their craft."

Lt. Jake Jensen requested Sgt. Anderson be added to this Citation noting "Sgt. Anderson is clearly the driving force behind the unit's ability to perform at such a high level. Sgt. Anderson's leadership has created an environment where the K9 Unit is able to provide ongoing superior service to both the department and community. Sgt. Anderson should be included in receiving the Chief's Citation Award with his team."

Officer Blankenstein, I am honored to present you with the Chief's Citation Award.

A blue ink signature of Justin C. Lundgren.

Justin C. Lundgren, Interim Chief of Police