



2024 Letter of Award Medal of Merit



To: Officer Michael Thomas
From: Kevin Hall, Chief of Police
Date: October 28, 2024
Re: Medal of Merit Award

Sergeant Teresa Fuller nominated you for the Medal of Merit Award. The Medal of Merit is awarded to members of the 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. Sgt. Fuller's nomination included:

"Ofc. Thomas started his career in law enforcement in Idaho in 1998. In 2003, he lateralled to Liberty Lake Police Department. It was at this time Ofc. Thomas became a certified Drug Recognition Expert (DRE). He lateralled to the Spokane Police Department in 2019.

Since joining SPD, Ofc. Thomas has taken 234 impaired drivers off our roadways likely saving countless lives in the process. This does not include all of the vehicular assault and vehicular homicide investigations he's been involved in. In July of 2020, he moved to SPD's Impaired Driving Unit as a full time DUI enforcement officer. He is also the regional DRE coordinator. Along with that, Ofc. Thomas plays an integral part in training not only new recruits at the Basic Law Enforcement Academy and during FTO, but training new DRE's and providing our officers with continuing education in classes such as ARIDE, SFST and BAC recertifications.

This year, Ofc. Thomas worked alongside me to attain grant funding for not only a full time DUI officer, but for the new position of Impaired Driving Education and Training Coordinator which he now holds and will be fully funded for the next three years by the Washington State Traffic Safety Commission. Ofc. Thomas moved into that position on October 1st and has already hit the ground running, meeting with local medical staff and educators to provide impairment recognition training in a variety of locals. Each year, he assists with coordinating a large regional impaired driving emphasis for the Hoopfest Basketball Tournament utilizing such assets as the Washington State Patrol Mobile DUI Unit and air support.

In a recent letter from the International Association of Chiefs of Police, Ofc. Thomas was recognized for a recent milestone which stated, 'On behalf of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Drug Evaluation and Classification (DEC) Program, I want to acknowledge and congratulate you on over 20 years of service as a Drug Recognition Expert (DRE). This is an outstanding career milestone, and we honor you for your service and contribution to your state's DEC Program, as well as the international program. Your commitment and dedication serve as an example for all other DREs.....'. Sgt. Califano, Washington State Patrol's State DRE coordinator added, 'You are the longest-serving DRE in the state of Washington, which is a tremendous milestone. Nearly 22 years as a certified DRE is an incredible achievement.'

I have lost count of the letters I have received from our community lauding Ofc. Thomas' teaching skills and efforts to reduce impaired driving and overdose deaths. I believe Ofc. Thomas' commitment to all things impaired driving easily qualifies him for this award."

Ofc. Thomas, I am proud to present you with the Medal of Merit Award. You will be awarded the Medal of Merit during the annual Employee Awards Ceremony in March 2025 and a copy of this letter will be placed in your personnel file.

Kevin Hall, Chief of Police