



# SPOKANE POLICE DEPARTMENT

CHIEF OF POLICE  
FRANK STRAUB, Ph.D.

## LETTER OF AWARD

TO: Det. John Willard  
FROM: Frank G. Straub, Chief of Police  
DATE: July 14, 2014  
RE: Distinguished Service Medal

Detective John Willard was recently nominated for the Distinguished Service Medal by Sergeant Steve Braun. The Distinguished Service Medal is awarded to employees who have demonstrated outstanding sustained and exemplary performance, along with diligence and devotion to duty. The performance should exceed normal demands required or expected over an extended period of time. When the Special Awards Committee reviewed this nomination, it was clear that Detective Willard is most deserving of this award.

Sergeant Braun wrote:

*"I would like to nominate Detective John Willard for the Spokane Police Department's Distinguished Service Medal because of his commitment to ensuring that patrol is safely and adequately staffed on a regular basis, above and beyond his normal duties in Tactical Operations.*

*In 2012, Detective Willard worked 23 patrol shifts, 51 shifts in 2013, and 15 thus far in 2014 on top of his assigned duties in SIU/Tactical Operations. These number in and of themselves are impressive, but what I find to be even more impressive and of value to the department is who John is as a person and what assets he brings to patrol.*

*As a patrol sergeant I often found the need to find officers willing to come in on their days off to ensure that patrol was safely and adequately staffed. This task was extremely difficult at times and would often require patrol supervisors to hold over personnel from a previous shift because people on the overtime call-in list would either turn down the overtime opportunity or would not answer their phones. Detective Willard would not only answer his phone on a regular basis but often times change his personal plans so that he could come in and assist patrol. Detective Willard frequently would stop into the Sergeant's office toward the end of his work week and enquire about weekend staffing levels. He would pass along his availability for the weekend or volunteer to pick up a shift. His willingness to work patrol shifts often times made the task of staffing patrol, which often times felt like an impossible task, much easier.*

*On the patrol shifts that Detective Willard worked, his work ethic and knowledge base proved to be a huge asset. He always took far more than his fair share of calls and reports. This proved to be to a benefit not only because it shared the workload but also because it set an excellent example for younger officers on how to be a part of a team and what a strong work ethic should look like. When I would hear radio dispatch other officers to take a call, John would regularly come over the air*





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*saying that he would take the call so that those officers could catch up on paperwork. His quality of work remained high, matching the quantity of work that he completed.*

*In the summer of 2012, Detective Willard was working with the patrol team that I had the pleasure of being a part of. Several of us responded to a DV call at a long-standing problem house in the Indian Trail neighborhood. Over the course of our investigation it was determined that a search warrant was required to properly complete the investigation. Detective Willard quickly volunteered to help write the search warrant, which not only sped up the process, but allowed him to teach a younger officer how to properly go through the search warrant process.*

*I have always felt that Detective Willard's willingness to work so many extra patrol shifts was due to his desire to be out on patrol, helping out, and had very little to do with the overtime pay. This attitude has always helped to remind me how much fun and rewarding this job can be.*

*I would also like to share a story about John and his extraordinary character from my days as an Explorer and how much of an impact he had on me. During the summer of 1993 I was an impressionable 18 -year -old wanting nothing more than to be a Spokane Police Officer. Earlier in the summer I had my first ride-a-long with an officer (whose name I don't remember). What I do remember is that I did not feel very welcomed in his patrol car and that I was a burden. I almost made the decision to not go on another ride-a-long, but thankfully decided to give it another try. As I sat in the roll call room Detective, then Officer, Willard walked in and immediately walked up to me and introduced himself. When roll call started John asked the Sergeant if he could take me out with him for the shift. During the shift John explained what he did as a patrol officer, talked to me about each call we took, let me use the radar a little, and most importantly showed me what a police officer should be. During that shift I told John that I was riding with his team again the next day and he quickly said, "Cool, we can partner up again tomorrow". Those two shifts riding with John left a lasting impression on me and today I try to set that same example for our current Explorers and Co-ops and always try to thank them for their time and efforts.*

*I not only think of John as a friend and peer but also as a role model, both from the past and in the present."*

Detective Willard, I am proud to present you with the Distinguished Service Award. A copy of this letter will be placed in your personnel file. You will be recognized at the Annual Employee Award Ceremony.

Frank G. Straub, Jr.  
Chief of Police

