

The Police Officers Journal



VOLUME 27, NUMBER 4 • FALL 2017



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Conference speaker educates members on key Union issues

— By Robert Figurski, Director

Following a change of venue, the 2017 Annual Police Officers Labor/Governmental Employees Labor Council (POLC/GELC) conference drew an expanded group of members.

The two-day conference was held at Great Wolf Lodge in Traverse City on Thursday, Sept. 21, and Friday, Sept. 22. In addition to the Annual POLC/GELC Golf Outing, the increasingly popular Libation Tour and two hospitality receptions, the highlight of the conference was guest speaker Will Aitchison.

Aitchison, a nationally known author and attorney, has worked with over 150 law enforcement and firefighter labor organizations across the country. He is a veteran of hundreds of collective bargaining negotiations and arbitration hearings, and has handled Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) litigation involving tens of thousands of public safety employees. His books are widely used as references by public safety employees throughout the country.

Aitchison traveled from Portland, Oregon to speak about numerous topics including: Supreme Court national developments; Congress and labor issues; employer regulations of cell phones and other employee equipment; body camera programs; police and fire wage increases; the evolution of key procedural rules of discipline; mandatory and permissive subjects of bargaining; and social media. His informative and interesting three-hour presentation captivated audience members who left far more educated on key labor issues.

Lisa Duncan from U.S. Health & Life discussed several new healthcare plans available through COPS Trust, emphasizing their commitment to providing the best coverage for active members.

Our favorite financial advisor, Leon LaBrecque, CPA, CFA, JD, addressed stock market issues and told members they should stay the course by putting as much of their hard-earned dollars into a 457 employer-sponsored plan. LaBrecque also discussed national issues being addressed in Washington D.C., including national healthcare and possible tax cuts. LaBrecque and his staff can be contacted at (248) 641-7400 or visit www.ljpr.com.

The first day of the conference concluded with a golf outing held at The Crown Golf Course in Traverse City and the Libation Bus Tour was offered again this year with stops at Terra Firma Brewery, Bonobo Winery and TC Whiskey Distillery.

The second day of the conference included Labor Council business, the presentation of Outstanding Service Awards to Sgt. Karly Wingart and Sgt. Blake Huff; LEEP Dream Scholarships Awards; Retirement Awards to former Executive Committee President Rick Bleich, Longtime Board Member Tom Wilk, and Labor Rep. Mike Woronko. The Executive Committee election was also held.

Research Analyst Nancy Ciccone honored retired Director Richard Weiler with a special presentation.

The POLC also recognized the ultimate sacrifice made by two members killed in the line of duty during the past year. Wooden tribute flags were presented to Wayne State University Police Department in honor of fallen Sgt. Collin Rose and to Norton Shores Police Department in honor of fallen Officer Jonathan Ginka. (See page 9) ♥

Please remember to save the dates — The 2018 annual conference returns to Great Wolf Lodge Sept. 20-21, 2018.

Line-of-duty deaths up 30 percent

— Excerpted from National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund (NLEOMF)

Law enforcement line-of-duty deaths rose by 30 percent during the first half of 2017 compared to the same time period last year, according to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund (NLEOMF).

NLEOMF officials issued the 2017 Mid-Year Law Enforcement Officer Fatalities Report based on preliminary data through June 30, 2017, revealing that 65 law enforcement officers were killed in the line of duty in the first half of 2017. Fifty officers were killed in the line of duty in the first half of 2016.

Of these 65 officers, 26 were killed in traffic-related incidents, 23 were killed by gunfire and 16 died due to other causes, such as job-related illnesses. "When our law enforcement officers put their badges on at the start of their shifts, they do so with the intention of protecting the citizens of their communities and this country," said NLEOMF President and CEO Craig W. Floyd. "They risk their lives each day and it is outrageous that 65 officers have died in the line of duty in the first half of this year. Officers have been targeted for the job that they do, shot and killed or hit with vehicles. I ask all of our citizens to do their part to protect our law enforcement heroes, as they continue to protect us."

KEY FACTS

- Traffic-related incidents were the leading cause of officer fatalities in the first half of 2017, increasing 24 percent — 26 deaths compared to 21 over the same period in 2016. Ten of the incidents were single-vehicle crashes, where an officer crashed without making impact with another vehicle. This represents an alarming 233 percent increase from the first half of last year (3). Additional circumstances are included in the report. Police Officers Labor Council member Jonathan Ginka, a Norton Shores, Mich. Officer, was one of those fatalities. Ginka, 34, died after

his police vehicle crossed over the yellow line on the roadway and crashed into a tree during the early morning hours of May 10, 2017. The cause of the crash was listed as undetermined by Michigan State Police.

- Firearms-related fatalities (23) rose slightly from 21 during the same period in 2016. Domestic-related incidents remain the leading cause of officers being shot and killed in the line of duty, with five in the first half of this year. Three officers were killed in ambush-style attacks as of June 30 and six were shot and killed in May, the most of any other month.
- Sixteen officers died of other causes as of June 30, compared to eight in the first half of 2016. Deaths resulted from job-related illnesses. Five died from heart attacks; three from illnesses contracted during 9/11 rescue and recovery operations; two died in boating-related incidents; two were beaten to death; one drowned; one was stabbed to death; and one officer was poisoned.
- The states with the most fatalities were Georgia and New York with five officer's lives lost in the line of duty followed by California, Florida and Texas which each have had four officers killed. Three were killed in Louisiana as of June 30.

The National Law Enforcement Museum at the Motorola Solutions Foundation Building, a project of the Memorial Fund, is under construction in Washington, DC. The Museum hosts free programs and workshops designed to educate the public about law enforcement policies and tactics. Expected to open in the fall of 2018, the Museum will feature exhibits and programs that address tough issues our country faces with open dialog amongst law enforcement, civic leaders and U.S. citizens. ♥

A copy of the full report, "2017 Mid-Year Law Enforcement Officer Fatalities Report," is available at www.LawMemorial.org/FatalitiesReport.

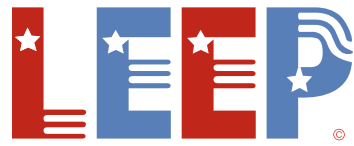
COMMITTEE RETIREES

POLC/GELC Executive Committee Chairman Steve McInchak presented longtime Executive Committee member Tom Wilk (left) and former Chairman Rick Bleich (right) plaques for their service during the annual conference in September.



Photos by Dave Millar, Photographic Impressions North

This is the final printed edition of the Police Officers Journal. Beginning with the Winter 2018 edition, the Journal will be available online only at www.polc.org and www.leepusa.com.



awards Michigan, national 'Dream' scholars

— By Jennifer Gomori, POJ Editor

Law Enforcement Education Program (LEEP) Dream Scholarships doubled to \$2,000 each this year. Top students interested in public safety careers will receive the college scholarships to encourage their pursuit of law enforcement/public safety careers. The professional public safety officers of LEEP awarded 27 scholars, including repeat winners: Mason Deible, Bradley Duck, Jr., Meleigha Herington and Austin Lynema of Michigan; Kentucky resident Tyler Madden; Evan Guin of Tennessee; and Michaela McDonald of Wisconsin. Eight Michigan students and 15 students from other states received 2017 LEEP Dream Scholarships totaling \$54,000:

MICHIGAN

Christian Campbell,

of Saint Joseph, MI, is a Southwestern Michigan College student, Berrien County Sheriff's Department Explorer Captain and 2010 Explorer of the Year. He volunteers at Blue Roof Church and Street Outreach Team. He worked for Medic One Ambulance and in loss prevention at JCPenney. In the top 10 percent for crisis negotiation at National Law Enforcement Exploring Conference, he completed three St. Louis Law Enforcement Explorer Association Training Academies. He is pursuing a Criminal Justice degree and plans to attend Kellogg Community College Police Academy.



Mason Deible,

of Grant, MI is a Muskegon Community College student. He was a Metro Law Enforcement Explorer and completed: Criminal Justice Program at Muskegon Area Career Tech Center; Muskegon Citizen's Police Academy; and Michigan State Trooper Academy. He received All Academic Soccer, Football and Track honors. The Varsity



By Dave Millar, Photographic Impressions North
2017 LEEP Dream Scholars Mason Deible, Austin Lynema, Caleb Fort and Meleigha Herington of Michigan were awarded at the POLC/GELC conference in Traverse City Sept. 22.

Soccer Team Captain was awarded MVP, All District, All Region and All Conference. He is using his second LEEP grant to pursue an associate's degree in Criminal Justice and plans to attend Michigan State Trooper Academy to become a Police Officer.

Bradley Duck, Jr.,

of Battle Creek, MI. A Grand Valley State University student, he was awarded his third LEEP Dream Scholarship. He is a member of Grand Valley State Men's Lacrosse Club. He was dual-enrolled in college while in high school. A Ski Club member, he was on the football, lacrosse, wrestling, and baseball teams and received an Academic Letter. He volunteers with the Det. Lavern Brann Memorial Golf Outing and Pennfield Rocket Football Association. He is pursuing a Criminal Justice degree and plans to become a police officer like his father, a Battle Creek Police Department veteran.



Caleb Fort, of Vicksburg, MI, graduated Vicksburg High School with a 3.8

GPA. He was Platoon Leader, Sheriff, Top 5 Percent Academically, and set a class record for MCOLES shuttle run in his law enforcement class. A Kalamazoo Department of Public Safety intern and Student Senator, he received an Outstanding Senior Award; Academic and Scholar-Athlete Awards; and volunteered 150 hours. Captain of the JV and Varsity Lacrosse teams and Varsity Tennis team, he received Honorable Mention All Conference in tennis and a Cross Country Varsity Letter. He is pursuing a bachelor's degree in Psychology at Grand Valley State University and plans to seek a master's degree in Forensic Psychology.



Meleigha Herington,

of St. Charles, Mich., is a Ferris State University student with a 3.85 GPA who graduated Delta College with an associate's degree in Corrections. She received her third LEEP Dream Scholarship. She job shadowed at



Saginaw County Jail, Juvenile Detention Center and Probation Office and works as an Emergency Service and Security Officer at Dow Chemical. A Criminal Justice Program Top Scholar, she was Law Enforcement Advisory Committee Junior Member at Saginaw Career Complex, attended Michigan State Police Youth Leadership Academy and Career Academy. She is pursuing a bachelor's in Criminal Justice and plans to work as a Parole or Probation Officer.

Austin Lynema, of Zeeland, MI, who is studying Criminal Justice at Grand Valley State University, was awarded his third LEEP grant. A certified EMT, he is Commander of Grand Rapids Police Explorers, earning 2016 Explorer of the Year, State Team Award and Firearms Expert Award. The Holland Public Safety Cadet and undercover decoy for Michigan Liquor Control Commission, was a Walker Police Explorer; completed Michigan State Police Student Trooper Academy; received Holland Junior Police Academy Instructor's Award; President's Award for Educational Excellence; and Excellence in Achievement for Careerline Tech Center EMS program. He plans to become a Police Officer.



Erik Rittenger, of Alto, MI, plans to follow in his father, Wyoming Police Detective Scott Rittenger's footsteps. The Caledonia High School graduate was on Freshman, JV and Varsity Football, an All-State Wrestler and a four-year Future Farmers of America (FFA) member with a State Farmer degree. He was Kent County 4-H Club Vice President, responsible for mentoring younger members. He plans to use his LEEP grant at Grand Rapids Community College to obtain an associate's



degree in Criminal Justice and will seek his bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice at Grand Valley State University.

Marybeth Gormley, of Attica, MI, graduated North Branch High School with a 4.01 GPA. She was Class President, Student Council Corresponding Secretary, Women's Cross Country Captain, Band Letter Club President and Marching Band Section Leader. She was active in Jazz Band, Drama Club, Quiz Bowl, and National Honor Society. She earned a Cross Country Varsity Award and hosted dinners and fundraisers for the homeless through Trinity United Methodist Church Youth Group. She plans to pursue a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice at Oakland University. She wants to work for the FBI.



ARIZONA

Caitlin Cardenas, of Peoria, AZ, is a Glendale Community College student. The Peoria High School graduate was a Peoria Police Explorer for over two years until school, work, and rehab from an ACL tear limited her ability to participate. She was Varsity Soccer Captain, Yearbook Editor, Yearbook Sports Editor, and Sereno Soccer Club Coach. She's described as a leader who motivates people to accomplish tasks by Peoria Police Officer Bryan Rauzan, the School Resource Officer. She is using her LEEP grant to pursue a Political Science degree and plans to work as a Detective or in the Intelligence field.



ARKANSAS

Nautika Harris, of Texarkana, AR, graduated Arkansas Senior High School, taking Criminal Justice classes. She was Skills USA Vice President, Distributive Education Club of America Secretary, on the women's basketball team and Future Business

Leaders of America. She volunteered with Special Olympics and Randy Sams Homeless Shelter. Her high school Criminal Justice Instructor LaRhonda Hamilton noticed her leadership skills, integrity, independence and perseverance. She plans to pursue a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Southern Arkansas University and wants to become a Homicide Detective.



CALIFORNIA

Jennifer Hong of San Gabriel, CA, is a University of Florida student and U.S. Navy veteran. At Sunny Hills High School, she was French Club Prime Minister and on the volleyball and cross country teams. She was Make-A-Wish Foundation Vice President, Grace Ministries Assistant Youth Pastor and Navy Junior Enlisted President. She received a Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal for 500 hours of service; Naval Hospital Patient Safety Program Award; Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal; Joint Service Achievement Medal; and Flag Letter of Commendation for instructing personnel and organizing 17 Navy Hospital command events. She is pursuing a bachelor's degree in Fire and Emergency Services.

Jose Ruiz of Mendota, CA, is a Mendota High School graduate. He was Mendota Police Explorers Sergeant, participating in ride-alongs, National Night Out Event Staff, Warm Hearts, Warm Hands Winter Clothing Drive Organizer and Parade Traffic Director. A Cross Country team member, he was in Math Engineering Science Achievement program; Adventure Club; Future Farmers of America; Servant Leadership Academy; and Lend-A-Hand Community Service Club Event Organizer. He plans to pursue a Criminology degree at California State University – Fresno and become a

Continued on page 6

LEEP Scholars

Continued from page 5

Police Officer and a Sheriff.

ILLINOIS

Yeraldi Morales, of Elgin, IL, graduated Larkin High School and was Elgin Police Department Law Enforcement Explorer Post Secretary, with 800 hours of community service. She competed at Illinois State Law Enforcement Explorer Conference and National Law Enforcement Explorer Conference. She was on the JV soccer team, Yearbook Club and Editor-in-Chief for the Yearbook; and a Royal Ambassador, helping with Freshmen Orientation and distributing school paperwork. She plans to pursue a bachelor's in Forensic Psychology with a minor in Criminal Justice at Harper College and become a Police Officer.

Graciela Popoca, of Chicago, IL, graduated with a 3.3 GPA from Thomas Kelly High School. She completed Chicago Police and Firefighter Training Academy and was an Englewood Police Department intern. She participated in College Possible, a college prep program; Key Club; Spanish National Honors Society; Spanish Club; and Yearbook Club. She volunteered with Casa Catalina Toy Drive, Hot Chocolate Run, Trick or Treat for UNICEF, and a donation drive for underprivileged children. She plans to pursue a Criminology degree at University of Illinois, become a Police Officer and later a Detective.



KENTUCKY

Tyler Madden of Louisville, KY, is an Eastern Kentucky University student with a 3.6 GPA, where he's been on the Dean's List and President's List. A graduate of Pleasure Ridge Park High School, he was Varsity Football Team Captain and received awards for: Defensive Player of the Year, Defensive Lineman of the Year, and Greater Louisville Football Coaches Association



All-District Teams. He helped collect clothing and held yard sales to raise money for the needy and delivered items to the families. He is using his second LEEP grant to pursue a bachelor's degree in Occupational Safety minoring in Criminal Justice.

MAINE

Brennan Blackstone, of Presque Isle, ME, is a graduate of Presque Isle High School, Caribou Technology Center Criminal Justice Program and participated in ride-alongs. The Junior Class Vice President volunteered with: Camp Nomacca doing grounds work and The Fuel Assistance Program cutting, stacking and delivering wood. He was a Maine GOP Field Intern and Deputy Field Organizer. He plans to obtain a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice with a certificate in Counter Terrorism at Husson University, become a Maine State Police Officer and work for Maine Drug Enforcement Agency.



MONTANA

Laura Rognerud, of Columbia Falls, MT, is a Concordia University student with a 4.0 GPA. She has an associate's degree in Wildland Wildlife Law Enforcement, was a volunteer Montana State Parks Ranger and AmeriCorps Volunteer; and a Glacier-Waterton Hiking Club representative. She's certified in Emergency Medical Responder, American Red Cross Basic Life Support CPR, and National Incident Management. She's trained in: Self-Defense Tactical, Wilderness Act, Hazardous Chemicals and Mapping and Forest Field Skills. She was a 4-H member and on high school gymnastics, swimming & diving teams. She is pursuing a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice and Police Science and plans to be a Park Ranger.



NEBRASKA

Michaela Lawrence, of Nehawka, NE, graduated Weeping Water High School with a 4.0 GPA. She was Nebraska

Cass County Sheriff's intern; Eastern Nebraska 4-H Senior Camp Counselor; and member of Law Enforcement Explorer Post #336, Leadership Experience Opportunity Club and American Legion Auxiliary #237. She was National Honor Society Vice President; Future Business Leaders of America President, Vice President and Treasurer; 4-H Weeping Water Treasurer, Vice President and Junior Leader; Student Council President; Skills USA President, Vice President; and Academic All State with two Varsity Letters. She plans to pursue a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice at University of Nebraska – Omaha.



NEVADA

Joseph Hill, of Fallon, NV, graduated Churchill County High School with a 3.86 GPA. He was a National Honor Society Officer; Babe Ruth Baseball League Umpire; and member of National Society of High School Scholars and Pep Club. He received awards for Honor Roll, Academic Excellence and Perfect Attendance in high school. He was a Student to Student mentor and volunteered with Out of Egypt food pantry and Fallon Animal Shelter. He plans to pursue an associate's degree in EMT/Paramedics at Western Nevada Community College while seasonal woodland firefighting. Then he plans to seek an associate's in Fire Protection at Truckee Meadows Community College and become a Firefighter.



NEW YORK

Brooke Pi, of Mount Vernon, NY, graduated with a 3.3 GPA from Kellenberg Memorial High School. She was involved in cheerleading, Drama Club, Speech & Debate Team, and yearbook. She is a member of Christians Reaching Out Spreading Spirituality, a YMCA Senior Counselor, and volunteered at Siena House, a single moth-



ers' shelter. Glen Cove Police Chief William Whitton described her as conscientious, level headed and extremely intelligent. She is pursuing a bachelor's degree in Criminology and Forensic Psychology at John Jay College of Criminal Justice, plans to go to law school and apply for the FBI.

Cali Martinez, of Patchogue, NY, graduated Patchogue-Medford High School with a 3.4 GPA. An EMT in Training at North Patchogue Fire Department, she was an Air Force Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (AFJROTC) Officer, Cadet Captain and Unarmed Drill Team Commander. She was a member of three honor societies; received JROTC Achievement Award and Outstanding Service Award for 189 hours of volunteering. She is pursuing a bachelor's degree in Paramedicine at University of New Haven.



Kyle McCarthy, of West Babylon, NY, graduated West Babylon High School with a 4.0 GPA. He's a Suffolk County Police Explorer and West Babylon Probationary Firefighter. He was with Civil Air Patrol for a year and West Babylon Fire Brigade in grades 6-12. He was an Eagle Scout, Boy Scouts Community Service coordinator, Junior Assistant Scoutmaster, Leave No Trace Trainer, Senior Patrol Leader and Cub Scout Den Chief. He was in five honor societies and volunteered 120 hours. An intern for Suffolk County Legislator Kevin J. McCaffrey, he's pursuing a degree in Homeland Security at St. John's University.



OHIO

Jazmin Tucker, of Cleveland, OH, graduated Saint Joseph Academy with a 3.43 GPA. A first generation college student, she interned at Cuyahoga County Juvenile Justice Center. A Cleveland Foundation Sullivan Scholar from 2013-17, she was a North Coast All-Star Cheerleader.



She was on Rock City Dance competitive hip hop team; in school plays; Ultimate Fan Club Spirit Member; and Unity Club Secretary, promoting diversity and human trafficking awareness. At St. Paul AME Church, she was a camp counselor, youth service worker and volunteered to help the needy and disabled. A classroom tutor, she plans to pursue a Criminal Justice degree at Miami University, go onto law school, and become a Judge.

TENNESSEE

Evan Guin of Mt. Juliet, TN, was awarded his third LEEP grant. Guin is an EMT in the St. Thomas Midtown Hospital ER in Nashville. The former Mt. Juliet Fire Explorer and Advanced EMT at Lifecare EMS is a Mt. Juliet Volunteer Firefighter. Guin, whose brother is a Mississippi firefighter, is certified in Basic Firefighting, Firefighting I Live Burn, Introduction to Fire and Emergency Services, CPR, AED and Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support. He completed a 32-hour radiological monitoring class. He is pursuing a Fire Science associate's degree at Volunteer State Community College. His plans to be an EMT and Firefighter and pursue a bachelor's degree in Fire Science or Emergency Management.



TEXAS

Amanda Condon of Texarkana, TX, has a 4.0 GPA at Arkansas Tech University and an associate's degree in General Studies. She has American Red Cross certifications in: CPR, Basic Life Skills, Shelter Fundamentals and Disaster Responder; and studied at FEMA Independent Study Institute. A Red Cross and Domestic Violence, Inc. volunteer, she interned at Miller County, Arkansas Office of Emergency Management. The Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society Vice President and Texarkana Ambassadors Student Council President founded a Nontraditional Student Alliance to help students find scholarship funding. She is pursuing an Emergency Administration



Management degree and plans to work with FEMA.

WASHINGTON

Alexander Braatz of Anacortes, WA, graduated Skagit Valley College with a 3.76 GPA in General Studies focused on Criminal Justice. He was Vice President and Treasurer of Criminal Justice Club in college and an Eagle Scout, Boy Scouts Senior Patrol Leader and Assistant Senior Patrol Leader. The Anacortes High School (AHS) graduate earned Washington State Honors Award. He received a Varsity Letter in AHS Men's Swim Team and was in Teen of the Month Club, AHS Men's Golf Team, school plays and AHS Jazz Band Clarinet Section Leader. He volunteered with Boys & Girls Club and AHS Sports Food Drives. He plans to obtain a Criminal Justice degree in the Honors Program at Eastern Washington University.



WISCONSIN

Michaela MacDonald of Watertown, WI, has been given her second LEEP grant. The Maranatha Baptist University student has a 3.91 GPA. She's a Watertown Police Explorer, National Merit Scholarship Program finalist, Tae Kwon Do orange belt; and Watertown Municipal Band flutist. She participated in piano ensemble and archery. She volunteered at Bethesda Thrift Store and in choir, orchestra and children's ministries at Fellowship Baptist Church. She is pursuing a Business Management bachelor's with a minor in Criminal Justice and Spanish. She plans to be a Police or Parole Officer.



In its 13th year, LEEP has awarded some \$216,000 in Dream scholarships to students showing a demonstrated interest in public service/law enforcement careers. The non-profit public safety group's scholarship program is made possible by a growing list of national supporters. ❤️

Visit www.leepusa.com for more information about LEEP programs.

POLC Sergeants honored for lifesaving efforts



— By Jennifer Gomori, POJ Editor, with excerpts from news media

A Royal Oak Police Sergeant and Kalkaska Public Safety Sergeant were recognized for bravery and dedication to their profession for putting their lives at risk entering a burning car and a burning home to rescue others.

The Sergeants were presented 2017 Law Enforcement Education Program (LEEP) Outstanding Service Awards Sept. 22, 2017 during the POLC/GELC Conference at Great Wolf Lodge in Traverse City. They were among a group of officers nominated for the annual awards by their peers. “For them it’s just day-to-day. They just do their job the best they can. It’s not about the recognition,” said POLC/GELC Labor Rep. John Stidham, who nominated the Kalkaska Sergeant for the award.

ROYAL OAK SGT. KARLY WINGART

Royal Oak Sgt. Karly Wingart was driving along Woodward Avenue just after midnight Jan. 15, 2017 when she saw smoke on the opposite side of the road. Her quick response made her the first emergency responder on the scene of a crash between a Ford Fusion and a SMART bus near 12 Mile Road.

She found a 36-year-old woman covered in blood inside the burning Fusion, her legs pinned under the dashboard where the impact occurred. Although conscious, the victim wasn’t able to get out on her own and Wingart could not get the crushed passenger side door or window open. Worried about the woman burning or the car exploding, she ran to the driver’s side door, which was open. The driver had gotten out of the car and was lying in the road. Wingart told the woman she had to get out and reached inside the burning vehicle and pulled her to safety.

“I was mostly worried about her being burned. I can see the flames growing on the other side of the windshield,” Sgt. Wingart said. “The SMART bus driver had a little fire extinguisher. He did attempt to put it out and it didn’t work.”



With the help of a retired EMT standing nearby, Wingart was able to carry the passenger away from the burning car. “A Berkley Public Safety Officer, who arrived while I was trying to get her out, got his fire extinguisher. As I’m pulling her down the road, I can see the car is reigniting,” Sgt. Wingart said.

The Royal Oak Fire Department arrived and finished putting out the blaze. The driver, passenger and one bus rider with minor injuries were taken to Beaumont Hospital. While the driver and bus rider were treated and released, the Fusion passenger underwent reconstructive surgery and remained hospitalized until mid-February. The Fusion driver was later charged with operating a vehicle while intoxicated causing serious injury.

“I am very proud, but not surprised with Sgt. Wingart’s quick thinking and bravery,” said Royal Oak Police Chief Corrigan O’Donohue in a statement. “With complete disregard for her own personal safety, she entered a burning vehicle to assist an injured passenger.”

The investigation found the driver rear-ended the bus, which had just dropped off passengers. Andrew Aman James, a 29-year-old Macomb Township resident, plead no contest to one count of operating while intoxicated causing serious injury. James, who has a prior conviction for operating while impaired, is scheduled for sentencing Nov. 6. He faces up to five years in prison.

“We like to recognize our officers for the outstanding work that they do,” said Royal Oak Police Lt. Keith Spencer. “The biggest thing . . . is the sheer bravery that night.”

KALKASKA PUBLIC SAFETY SGT. BLAKE HUFF

Kalkaska Public Safety Sgt. Blake Huff found himself in a similar situation, arriving before firefighters, at the scene of a house fire involving a woman trapped inside.

When Huff and Kalkaska County Deputy Ben Hawkins responded around 12:30 a.m. Feb. 22, 2017, they saw smoke and flames coming from the living room area of the home on Division Street in the Village of Kalkaska.

Grace Tester, the 63-year-old homeowner, had gotten outside on her own, according to 9 & 10 News online. However, she told the officers her paraplegic daughter-in-law, Mary Jo Tester, was still inside the living room. The officers decided they couldn’t wait for firefighters to arrive.

“I went in and started army crawling to her. Once I gained access to her, we started pulling her back out,” Sgt. Huff told 9&10 News online. “Then Deputy Hawkins grabbed a hold of my legs and helped guide me back out to the door we came in originally . . . due to the smoke and the flames.”

POLC Director Robert Figurski, right, congratulates Sgt. Huff on his award.

They rescued the 50-year-old woman, along with two dogs that were trapped inside.

“They’re heroes. They put their own lives on the line and went into a situation that was very dangerous,” Kalkaska Township Fire Chief Derek Hogerheide told 9 & 10 News.

All were transported to Munson Medical Center in Traverse City where Grace Tester and the officers were treated and released for smoke inhalation. But Mary Jo was flown to a Grand Rapids hospital to be treated for life-threatening injuries, including severe burns.

Unfortunately, despite their heroic efforts, Mary Jo Tester died Feb. 27 at the Grand Rapids hospital. Despite their tragic loss, her daughter, Danielle Bowen, wanted to let Sgt. Huff know how much she appreciated what they did for her mother. “I called Sergeant Huff and I thanked him personally for pulling my mom out,” Bowen told 9 & 10 News. “I cried, I actually really did because that just meant so much that they’re willing to go so far above and beyond what they are paid to do to help somebody in need.”

“I’m glad we could help and try to possibly save a life,” Huff told 9&10 News online. “We try to do our best to help prevent anything from happening like this and do the jobs we signed up to do.” ❤️



Photos by Dave Millar, Photographic Impressions North

Royal Oak Sgt. Karly Wingart and Kalkaska Public Safety Sgt. Blake Huff were honored with LEEP Outstanding Service Awards at the POLC/GELC conference in Traverse City Sept. 22.



Photos by Dave Millar, Photographic Impressions North

POLC HONORS FALLEN OFFICERS

The POLC paid tribute to two member Officers killed in the line of duty over the past year at the annual POLC/GELC conference in Traverse City Sept. 22, 2017. Pictured at left, POLC Labor Rep. John Stidham (left) and Director Robert Figurski (right) share a wooden flag tribute with Norton Shores Police Det. Todd Swanker (left center) and Lt. Michael Kasher on behalf of Norton Shores Officer Jonathan Ginka, who died in a car accident (EOW 5-10-17). At right, Wayne State University Investigator Chris Powell (left to right) accepts a wooden flag in honor of Wayne State Officer Collin Rose, who was shot in the line of duty (EOW 11-23-16), presented by Labor Rep. Duane Smith and Figurski.

Longtime union labor representative, attorney on call for west side members

— By Jennifer Gomori, POJ Editor

Former POLC/GELC Labor Rep. Mike Woronko may be retired, but he's on-call for the Union when his legal expertise is needed.

Woronko retired this spring after serving the POLC/GELC for a decade as a rep and legal counsel for members on the west side of the state. With POLC's legal staff located in Troy, Woronko is much closer to units on the west side since he lives in the Rockford area. This allows him to respond quickly to legal matters until full-time legal staff can take over the cases.

"When I first came on, it was a great selling point for the POLC to say we have legal counsel on the west side of the state ready to serve the membership," he said. "I will stay on to assist with emergency situations where an attorney is needed – such as an officer involved shooting or Garrity situation. (The full-time attorneys) have enough to do with all the arbitrations and 312's they're handling. Plus they are fielding questions from other labor reps."

Woronko's background is impressive. He served as a Grand Rapids Police Officer for 24 years, but not before obtaining his law degree and putting it to good use as a Local POLC Steward and Secretary-Treasurer for 10 years. He also worked for Walker Police Department for three years and was a Kent County FOC Investigator. Woronko obtained a Criminal Justice bachelor's degree at Ferris State University in 1976, while serving as a Kent County Sheriff's Department Deputy Cadet. He graduated with a Juris Doctor in 1988 from Cooley Law School, while serving as a full-time Grand Rapids Police Officer. ♥



Former Union attorney Tom Zulch becomes State Mediator

— By Jennifer Gomori, POJ Editor

As a Labor Attorney Tom Zulch made a career of helping officers through the worst times in their careers. Now he's using his extensive labor relations experience as a State of Michigan Mediator.

Zulch left the POLC to begin working as a State Mediator July 3, replacing Thomas Kreis of Alpena, who retired. Michael Akins, a former POLC Law Clerk, has been hired to replace Zulch. (See related article page 11)

Zulch was with the POLC 30 years, serving as a Berkley Public Safety Officer for the first 11 years. "I started in Berkley in 1987 and then I was President of the Berkley (Officers' Association) from 1990-96."

He graduated Cum Laude from Michigan State University Detroit College of Law while working full-time at Berkley. He earned Officer of the Year honors and several commendations including two lifesaving awards. He left Berkley to work as an attorney for the Detroit Police Officers Association (DPOA) for nearly five years before joining the POLC staff as a Labor Attorney in 2004.

"I hate going, but I take pride in helping officers when they're involved in a shooting," Zulch said. "I hated the 2 a.m. phone calls,

but understood the need to help them get through that."

Zulch has plenty of mediation experience advocating for POLC/GELC bargaining members with their Employers. He was an appointed Commissioner of the Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards (MCOLES). With his vast PA 312 Arbitration experience, MCOLES sought Zulch's input into creating new Act 312 rules.

"A mediators' job is to get people to settle," Zulch said. "I do that a lot in my position as an attorney. The difference is that, whoever I'm representing, I've got to advocate what that person or bargaining unit wants. As a mediator, I'm more open to be able to express a negative position or try to get them to alter their position instead of advocating for it."



Continued on page 11

New POLC/GELC attorney says he is 'fortunate' to come back to union

— By Jennifer Gomori, POJ Editor

Michael Akins was the logical choice to replace longtime POLC/GELC Attorney Tom Zulch after he accepted a State Mediator position this summer.

Akins, who began working for the POLC/GELC Aug. 1, brings a wealth of union labor law knowledge with him. He worked as a law clerk for the POLC/GELC and then Labor Attorney John A. Lyons from 2007-2011 while in law school. He was a contract attorney toward the end of his clerkship when he obtained his law license. Since that time, he has been partner in a Detroit law firm which represents several police unions.

"I stayed in contact with (POLC/GELC Labor Attorney) Brendan (Canfield) and Tom and others at the POLC in my time away and when Tom announced he was leaving, I was contacted by POLC about coming back and it just worked out," Akins said. "I always hoped I could come back to the POLC. I think it's a great organization."

As a POLC/GELC law clerk, Akins conducted extensive research for labor and employment law matters, assisting with the review of grievances, and writing arbitration briefs, including those presented during Act 312 compulsory arbitration hearings. He also drafted briefs for various Michigan Employment Relations Commission (MERC) proceedings and prepared pleadings and motions in state court cases.

"I did an internship at Sugar Law, and they do labor work, and then I got this clerkship," Akins said. "That started me on this path. Because of my background, I was able to get the job doing labor

"I always hoped I could come back to the POLC. I think it's a great organization."

and employment law at the (Detroit) firm."

Akins has a bachelor's degree in Labor Studies, graduating cum laude from Wayne State University. He earned his Juris Doctor degree from Wayne State and was a partner at Gregory, Moore, Jeakle, and Brooks, P.C. in Detroit, serving as a union-side labor and employment attorney. The firm represents Detroit Police Officers Association and Oakland County Deputy Sheriffs Association among other police unions and private security guards covered by the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA).

At the practice, he was responsible for presenting labor arbitration cases involving discipline, discharge and contract interpretation disputes. He also reviewed grievances and collective bargaining agreements; represented clients in labor-related lawsuits in Federal and State courts; assisted in the presentation of Act 312 arbitration hearings; and was involved in National Labor Relations Board proceedings. Akins handled various employment law matters encompassing: the Fair Labor Standards Act; Family Medical Leave Act; Title VII (workplace discrimination); Americans with Disabilities Act; Age Discrimination in Employment Act; and Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act.

He is excited about putting his labor experience to work for POLC/GELC members. "I feel very fortunate to have the chance to come back and work with everybody again," Akins said. ♥



Former POLC/GELC attorney *Continued from page 10*

Zulch sees two major hurdles on the legal front for unions — municipal funding and right to work. "I think funding for cities and counties is always going to be an issue and that's all done through the state budget so there's not a lot of control ... but it affects everything we do," Zulch said. "A bigger concern is the potential for the U.S. Supreme Court to make a ruling creating right to work across the country and we'd lose our exemption for police and fire if that occurs. We're ready to deal with that potential but it's going to create some extra work for us to maintain membership."

Zulch's advice for Akins: "Just listen to the membership and the grievants and do what's best for POLC and the membership."

Zulch will miss the friendships he's developed with coworkers and members over the past three decades, but will be in touch with POLC/GELC members when he's assigned to mediate their cases.

"It's more of a friendship working here," Zulch said. "Thanks to everybody that works here and all the members, I appreciate everything." ♥

Flat Rock Patrol pleased with contract

— By Jennifer Gomori, POJ Editor

Flat Rock Patrol joined the POLC this summer because they were looking to improve their retirement benefits and step increases. Not only did they get both, the POLC negotiated other contract enhancements and settled quickly.

“I had four meetings — I already settled their contract,” said POLC Labor Rep. Chet Kulesza.

The former Michigan Association of Police (MAP) represented 12-member group received improved step increases and wage increases of 2 percent per year in their new agreement. Kulesza said the way the steps were set up previously, Employees received most of their step increases in the fourth year of employment.

“It used to be a little bit of money (in the first year) and after four years they got the total amount,” Kulesza said. “We got them to do steps and that was a big deal for them. Now, they get half the money on year two and the rest of the money on year four.”

Retirement benefits improved, although not the way they had

planned. “They were looking to change their pension, but it couldn’t be done,” Kulesza said. “The retirees’ (pension) plan was only 49 percent funded and they’re at a 1.3 multiplier and nobody is at a 1.3 multiplier.”

“MERS said they can’t make changes because they’re only 49 percent funded. I argued that guys would leave to find another department with a better pension,” Kulesza said.

So to retain Employees, the City agreed to give them 457 savings accounts, in which the City matches up to 3 percent of what each Employee saves. “They’re giving them this to supplement (their pensions),” Kulesza said. “They also got an increase in the City’s contribution to the 401K. They raised it to 1.5 percent of their pay.”

One more fringe benefit for Flat Rock Patrol in their first POLC settled contract is better compensation for higher education. The City will provide up to \$1,200 per year for tuition reimbursement, an increase of \$200 per year. ❤️

Greenville Patrol moves to POLC for better support, pay, benefits

— By Jennifer Gomori, POJ Editor

After being kept out of the loop the last several years, Greenville Patrol found not only support by switching their union representation to the POLC — they discovered how fast a new contract can be negotiated on their behalf.

“We were very unhappy with our services that we were getting, or lack thereof. It was steadily declining the last seven years,” said local union president Chad Aniszko about the Police Officers Association of Michigan (POAM). “We were not consulted for the contract negotiations or union representation. Even getting a hold of our business agent for POAM was extremely difficult.”

Greenville Patrol was represented by POAM nearly 20 years. Aniszko noticed a big change with the service provided by POLC Labor Rep. Will Keizer.

“I praise Will. He came on board July 1 and we already had a contract within six weeks,” Aniszko said. “The negotiations couldn’t have gone any smoother. It really solidified why we know we made the right move.”

The POLC successfully negotiated a three-year agreement for the 13-member group with increases in pay and benefits and Employees maintaining zero cost for their health care premiums. “One of the big benefits we do have is free healthcare,” Aniszko said. “(Employees) pay their normal deductible, but we don’t have a monthly paycheck cost to healthcare. We are extremely fortunate the City still does that.”

The group also received two percent wage increases in year one and the ability to negotiate wages the remaining two years. Their sick time increased 80 hours a year and Employees with 20 plus years of service received two extra paid vacation days.

“The highlight of the contract was we had one shift without a supervisor all the time. We were able to make sure the Acting Shift Supervisor is being paid accordingly, where they weren’t in the past,” Aniszko said. “They were put in charge, but not paid to be in charge and now they are being appropriately compensated.”

Previously, when an Employee filled in for a Shift Supervisor they were not given any pay increase. Under their new contract, Acting Shift Supervisors receive the Sergeants’ pay rate.

Aniszko said contract language is a lot clearer now too. “We cleaned up the language. Our contract was very old and very vague,” he said. “A lot of different areas really benefited us.”

Even more reassuring for Greenville Patrol is the feeling of being able to reach their union rep. when needed. “Seven years and my partner had never met the POAM representative,” Aniszko said. “Already Will has been to the department three to four times plus. He’s easy to get a hold of.”

“The Greenville DPS is a top-notch Unit,” Keizer said. “The POLC looks forward to many years of positive, productive representation of the Greenville PSO’s.” ❤️



Gilda’s Run continues to gain over \$20,000 for charity

— By Jennifer Gomori, POJ Editor

In his inaugural year heading up Gilda’s Run, which is sponsored by the Law Enforcement Education Program and Police Officers Labor Council, POLC Labor Rep. Jason Owen was impressed with the number of riders attending the event and sheer amount of items donated for auction.

Gilda’s Run is a motorcycle poker run for charity which supports Gilda’s Club Grand Rapids, an organization that provides social and emotional support for children, adults, families and friends on a cancer or grief journey due to the death of a loved one due to any cause. LEEP kicked off the campaign with a \$5,000 donation.

The official amount of funds raised for the July 2017 event is \$20,189. “Anytime we’re up into those types of numbers, that was an excellent year,” Owen said. “We had a great turnout for riders, about 89 riders, which was huge . . . plus their passengers. I think most of it is a word of mouth event.”

Gilda’s Club Vice President of Development Daryl Vogel could not agree more. “The effects of Gilda’s Run on those whom we serve are huge,” he said. “We could not be more grateful to LEEP and POLC for their compassion and commitment to our mission in such a unique way.”

The number of people who contributed to the success of the



Photos courtesy of Gilda’s Club Grand Rapids

Gilda’s Run brought in over \$20,000 for Gilda’s Club Grand Rapids.

17th Annual event in total is likely well over 100 with the motorcycle passengers and the Pig Roast that followed the ride, Owen said. The amount taken in from separate donations that can’t be tracked as well as the actual value of donated auction items boosts the amount raised as well, Owen said.

“When it comes to auctions, there was overwhelming amount of items to be auctioned,” Owen said, “I could easily say we raised over \$25,000. There are people who have donated for the dinner etc.” ❤️



WELCOME ABOARD



The Police Officers Labor Council welcomes the following new units

Unit
Flatrock Patrol
Greenville Patrol

Former Affiliation
MAP
POAM

Contract Settlements

— As reported by POLC/GELC Labor Representatives

Flat Rock Patrol

- **New two-year agreement** expires June 30, 2019.
- **Wages:**
 - 2% effective July 1, 2017.
 - 2% effective July 1, 2018.
- * Step increases changed from a small increase in year one and rest of increase in year four to half of the step increase in year two and the remainder in year four.
- **Fringe Benefits:** Tuition reimbursement increased from \$1,000 to \$1,200 per year.
- **Retirement:** In addition to their existing pension plan, Employees will receive a 457 savings account and the City will match up to 3 percent of Employee 457 contributions. The City also increased their contribution to Employee's 401Ks to 1.5 percent of the Employee's pay.
- **Bargaining Team:** Brian Tetreau, Joseph Warner and Matthew Wilcynski aided by POLC Rep. Chester Kulesza.

Greenville Patrol

- **New three-year agreement** expires June 30, 2020.
- **Wages:**
 - 2% effective July 1, 2017.
 - Wage and health care reopens July 1, 2018.
 - Wage and health care reopens July 1, 2019.
- * The Acting Shift Supervisor, who was previously paid nothing additional for supervision duties, will now be paid the Sergeants pay rate.
- **Fringe Benefits:** Sick Time increased from a maximum accrual of 960 hours to 1,040 hours. Employees with 20 or more years of service will receive two extra paid Vacation days.
- **Health Care:** Employees maintain zero cost for health care premiums. Employees only pay deductibles and copays.
- **Bargaining Team:** Local President Chad Aniszko, Local Vice President Sean Parsons and Officer Wayne Dillon aided by POLC Rep. Will Keizer.



5 POLC board members re-elected by union membership at conference

Five of the nine POLC Executive Committee members were re-elected by the union membership during the 20th Annual POLC/GELC Meeting & Labor Seminar Sept. 22, 2017. They ran unopposed.

Re-elected for two-year terms were Collin Birnie, Flint Police Department, Scott Eager, Battle Creek Police Department, Jeff Gormley, Bloomfield Hills Public Safety Department, and Steve McInchak, Gibraltar Police Department. John Huizdos, Bloomfield Township Police Department, was elected to his first two-year

term. Due to a vacancy on the board, Huizdos was appointed to the Executive Committee earlier this year.

The remaining four board members terms will expire at next year's conference.

Executive Committee members then re-elected McInchak as Chairperson, and elected Brian McNair, Chesterfield Township Police Department, as Vice Chairperson, both one-year terms. ♥

For more details on the POLC/GELC conference, see the conference column on Page 2.



Photo courtesy of Dave Millar, Photographic Impressions North
POLC/GELC Executive Committee members (from left) John Huizdos, Steve McInchak (Chairperson), Jeff Gormley, Scott Eager and Collin Birnie were re-elected for two-year terms.

Arbitration

— As reported by the POLC/GELC Legal Staff

DEWITT OFFICER RETURNED TO WORK

A DeWitt Township Police Officer, who was fired for an off duty incident, was returned to work after the POLC fought on his behalf and won. An Arbitrator ruled there was insufficient evidence to support the Employer's claim.

During the course of the investigation, the Employer found the Officer was in possession of a service weapon he failed to return immediately after departing a special investigations unit. The Officer was terminated for the alleged Sept. 29, 2016 incident involving another person and possession of the weapon.

During the arbitration hearing, the individual who originally claimed the Officer was at fault, testified the incident was unintentional in nature. The Arbitrator reversed the termination, concluding there was insufficient evidence to support the off duty incident, and reduced the penalty against the Officer for possessing the weapon. She reduced the discipline to a verbal or written reprimand since the Officer failed to return the weapon in a timely manner and ordered the Officer returned to work.

"This is (POLC/GELC Attorney) Tom Zulch's final case and is obviously an excellent outcome," said POLC/GELC Attorney Brendan Canfield.

CORRECTIONS SUPERVISOR REINSTATED

An Allegan County Corrections Supervisor was returned to work after being dismissed for allegedly ordering an inmate into an Emergency Restraint Chair (ERC) for punishment.

The POLC fought the discipline and an Arbitrator ruled the Supervisor did not intend to punish the inmate, but rather was trying to stop the inmate from attempting suicide again.

On Sept. 30, 2016, the inmate dove head first off his bunk. The County transported him to the hospital, and he returned to the jail later in the evening. The Supervisor had already left work by the time he returned, but had ordered Corrections Personnel to place the inmate into the ERC if he was returned to the jail within one or two hours from the time he was taken to the hospital.

The inmate had a lengthy history of threatening suicide, including at least one past suicide attempt prior to diving off the bunk that day. The Supervisor reasoned that if he returned in such a short amount of time, he would not have had a mental health evaluation at the hospital, still posed a threat of suicide, and required observation.

Although the Arbitrator found the Supervisor committed several errors, he held the Supervisor did not intend to punish the inmate. Referencing his extensive suicidal history, the Arbitrator concluded the Supervisor intended to prevent the inmate from harming himself.

Because the County failed to show the Supervisor intended to punish the inmate, the Arbitrator ordered the Employee returned to work.

EMPLOYER APPEAL OF RULING FAILS

An Arbitrator's decision to return a Kentwood Officer to work was appealed by the Employer, but that appeal failed and the POLC Officer will remain on the job.

The Kentwood Officer was fired for allegedly striking a city gate causing damage Dec. 29, 2016. The POLC filed a grievance on the Officer's behalf. The Arbitrator concluded the City failed to show the Officer struck the gate and ordered the Officer returned to work.

The Employer appealed the decision, stating the Arbitrator exceeded her jurisdiction by finding the grievance timely. Kent County Circuit Judge Rae Lee Chabot enforced the award, finding the Employer waived its timeliness objection during the grievance steps. The City has not appealed to the Court of Appeals and the Officer is back to work.

The City originally alleged the Officer lied when he denied striking the gate after leaving the station minutes after two other officers departed. The two other officers found the police department's mechanical gate wide open when they drove through. When the accused Officer noticed the gate remained open, he reported the gate malfunction to his on duty sergeant, who helped him manually shut it. They assumed it malfunctioned due to the large amount of snow on the ground from a winter snowstorm.

The gate, which was slightly bent, was fixed the next day by DPW and the City began investigating the cause of the damage. The City found an imprint of the gate's chain on the push bumper of the vehicle the Officer drove that night.

POLC attorneys theorized that the patrol car, which is driven by multiple officers, may have struck the gate in the past creating a slight bend in the gate and the gate continued to function. The gate then malfunctioned Dec. 29 due to significant snow and ice accumulation as it had done many times in the past and still continues to do.

The Arbitrator concluded the City failed to show the Officer struck the gate. She also found that while the gate imprint matched the height of the damage to the push bumper, the snow and ice accumulation would've caused the gate chain height and the bumper impression to be at different heights. ♥



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2017 POLC/GELC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



2017 POLC/GELC Executive Committee members at the annual conference are: (from left) Vice Chairman Brian McNair, Chesterfield Township Police; John Huizdos, Bloomfield Township Police; Mike DeKam, Grand Rapids Communications; Chairman Steve McInchak, Gibraltar Police; Jeff Gormley, Bloomfield Hills Public Safety; Jennifer Flick, Jackson Police; Scott Eager, Battle Creek Police; Collin Birnie, Flint Police; and Kyle Culbertson, Berrien County Sheriffs.

Photo courtesy of Dave Millar, Photographic Impressions North