



## NEWS

Contact:  
John Pastuovic  
312-372-0101 X 240

### **Chicago Crime Commission honors outstanding crime fighters *U.S Attorney Fitzgerald to discuss law enforcement's new reality 10 years after 9/11***

#### **For Immediate Release**

**Chicago, IL – Wednesday, November 2, 2011** –The Chicago Crime Commission will hold its *Stars of Distinction, 2011 Awards Dinner* tonight to recognize outstanding individual and organizational contributions in fighting crime. U.S. Attorney for the Northern District Patrick J. Fitzgerald will be the keynote speaker at the event. Fitzgerald will provide his unique perspective on how law enforcement has addressed keeping America safe since the September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001 terrorist attack.

The program will feature seven awards presented to individuals and the organizations they serve in recognition of their outstanding work in law enforcement. Additionally, the Chicago Crime Commission will present the fourth annual Mitch Mars Prosecutorial Excellence Award as well as the Paws of Distinction K-9 Unit Award.

“The recipients of the *Stars of Distinction* awards stand out among the ranks because of their commitment and dedication to the fight against crime. While the criminal element wages an ongoing war in our communities, it is important to recognize the battles we have won along the way,” according to Jody Weis, Deputy Director of the Chicago Crime Commission.

(more)

“The *Stars of Distinction, 2011 Awards Dinner* is a chance to honor those whose efforts have been instrumental in the successful pursuit of justice. It is an opportunity for us to thank them and celebrate their outstanding achievements with their family, friends, and colleagues,” Weis added.

Awards presented and recipients of the *Stars of Distinction Awards* will include:

**Law Enforcement Excellence Award:** The Chicago Crime Commission Stars of Distinction Law Enforcement Excellence Award will be presented to Wheaton Police Department Detectives Edward Fanning and Andrew Uhlir, and DuPage County State’s Attorney, Assistant State’s Attorney Robert Guerrieri for their forward thinking that, in an interesting twist, looked backward for its implementation.

As time marches on, advancements in investigative technologies march along with it. Thanks to these advancements, law enforcement are able to solve cases that would have been deemed too difficult in the past. Many of these cases will forever be mysteries in the annals of crime; but, in 2005, Detectives Edward Fanning, Andrew Uhlir, and Assistant State’s Attorney Robert Guerrieri reopened a case from 1976 and used current technology to keep a murderer from re-entering society.

After a horrible case of violent rape and murder, the suspect was dismissed based on an alibi given by his girlfriend who claimed to be with him the night of the crime. The Wheaton Police Department followed many leads and investigated this case until it went cold in the late 70s.

In 2005 the three detectives who are our award recipients tonight re-opened the case, re-interviewed witnesses, and re-submitted physical evidence to the crime lab for DNA testing. In conjunction with the DuPage County Crime Lab, they were able to develop a DNA profile from a sample on the victim’s bed and match it to Michael Whitney, the original suspect, and a current prisoner. He was serving a 60-year sentence for another home invasion murder, and the former case against him was re-opened and solved just in the nick of time—Whitney was due to be released only a year later.

After 35 years, Whitney’s girlfriend broke down, unable to deny the veracity of DNA testing, and confessed that her alibi was a lie. Michael Whitney, too, pled guilty and was sentenced to natural life in prison.

This case and the work of these law enforcement professionals show that progress may, at times, require a look into the past, and that the newest application of technology may best serve the present by relying on times gone by.

**Law Enforcement Excellence by a Task Force in the Area of Violent Street Gangs Award:** The Chicago Crime Commission Stars of Distinction Law Enforcement Excellence by a Task Force in the Area of Violent Street Gangs Award will be presented to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Chicago High Intensity Drug Traffic Area Program, the Chicago Police Department and the United States Attorney’s Office.

(more)

After a double-murder near Garfield Park that killed a Chicago Police Detective, the FBI, the Chicago Police's Gang Investigations and Narcotics Squads, and the Office of the United States Attorney had no doubt who was responsible. They were spurred on to launch a two-year investigation into the operations of the Traveling Vice Lords street gang, members of which were responsible for the tragic killings.

Operation Blue Knight targeted the drug trafficking and violent criminal activity of the Traveling Vice Lords through the use of wiretaps, concealed video cameras, confidential sources, undercover officers, and one hundred controlled purchases of narcotics and firearms. Investigators wanted not only to curtail the gang's operations, but also to take down its leaders.

The hard work of the law enforcement team had tremendous results: over one hundred Traveling Vice Lords members and associates were arrested, including leader "J-Rock" Austin. Six months after the arrests, gang-related violent crime decreased 71% in the Garfield Park and North Lawndale communities.

The case is still progressing through the justice system, and its trajectory is hopeful. Investigators expect that additional charges will be filed and that the information gathered will instigate more investigations against violent gangs.

**Law Enforcement Excellence by a Task Force in the Area of Illegal Narcotics Award:** The Chicago Crime Commission Stars of Distinction Law Enforcement Excellence by a Task Force in the Area of Illegal Narcotics will be presented to the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Chicago Police Department and the United States Attorney's Office.

When the Drug Enforcement Administration and the Chicago Police Department realized that they were both after the same drug trafficking organization, they decided to join forces to take down the offenders in what became a phenomenal and highly successful operation.

Operation Killer Beez started after members of DEA Group 36 observed a hand-to-hand heroin transaction on the south side. By obtaining cooperation from one of the men involved in the transaction, the DEA and the Police Department began a joint, long-term wire investigation into the drug trafficking of Domingo Blount, a Black Disciple gang member.

Over the 11-month course of Operation Killer Beez, DEA Group 36 and the Chicago Police Department used pen and pole cameras, vehicle trackers, multiple search warrants, and 35 wire affidavits on 16 target telephones. The team's diligence resulted in bringing 38 targets up on Federal drug charges and the seizing 15.5 kilograms of heroin, 7.5 kilograms of cocaine, and over one million dollars in cash. The recipients of this award saw a multi-national operation through its completion and shined light on the complex, intra-gang activity that was putting 10-15 kilograms of heroin onto the streets of our city every month.

**Law Enforcement Excellence by a Task Force in the Area of Illegal Weapons Award:** The Chicago Crime Commission Stars of Distinction Law Enforcement Excellence by a Task Force in the Area of Illegal Weapons Awards will be presented to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Chicago High Intensity Drug Traffic Area Program (HIDTA), the Chicago Police Department, the United States Attorney's Office and the Cook County State's Attorney's Office.

(more)

In 2008 the Chicago Police Department, the FBI, and HIDTA merged in order to address the illegal activities of the Gangster Two-Six Nation. The course of the investigation turned toward the gang's illegal gun trafficking activities and in 2009 undercover agents (UCA) used consensual telephone calls, and controlled weapon purchases to remove 51 firearms from the street. This total included nine assault rifles and two sawed-off shotguns were taken off the streets. An additional 13 firearms were seized in a state search warrant.

The UCAs repeatedly put themselves in harm's way to make this case. Working in an environment of gangs, guns, and drugs, there was no room for error. On 7/10/10, this case was taken down, resulting in the arrest of 25 individuals, 21 of whom have been convicted, and the recovery of 64 illegal weapons, 190 grams of crack cocaine, 70 grams of powder cocaine, and one vehicle. This case illustrates the long-standing commitment by Chicago law enforcement agencies to pursue gun crimes, especially when they intersect with drug trafficking. The life of a gun is very long, and the tragedy it can inflict is infinite. Taking these criminals and their illegal guns off the street will have a significant impact upon the safety of all of Chicago.

**Outstanding Innovation in Law Enforcement:** The Chicago Crime Commission Stars of Distinction Outstanding Innovation in Law Enforcement Award will be presented to the Chicago Police Department, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Chicago High Intensity Drug Traffic Area Program (HIDTA), and the Cook County Sheriff's Police.

The horrors of human trafficking demand that law enforcement find and use the best technology available. With this award, the Chicago Crime Commission honors a team of agents from the Chicago Police Department, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, HIDTA, the Cook County Sheriff's Police, and the Cook County State's Attorney's Office who, in the beginning of 2010, launched Operation Little Girl Lost and went *beyond* what was previously considered top investigative technology. The law enforcement team used state wiretaps to document the trafficking of woman and young children for the purpose of prostitution. It was the first time state wiretaps had been used in America.

These wiretaps, along with undercover operations, subpoenas, pen registers, confidential informants, and eleven search warrants all provided the evidence needed to charge these criminals. The law enforcement team knew that they had to bring down the offenders, and they also knew that they had lives in danger that they needed to rescue.

Operation Little Girl Lost was successful in all of this. On August 22, 2011, nine victims were identified, and nine arrest warrants were secured. The very next day, after a sting conducted at a mock bachelor party, five more victims were recovered, and all identified targets were in custody.

The results of this case and the new precedent set by its use of technology will have long-reaching effects in the eradication of human trafficking crimes and the provision of social services for those trapped by it.

(more)

**Excellence in Community Outreach:** The Chicago Crime Commission Stars of Distinction Excellence in Community Outreach Award will be presented to Chicago Police Department Deputy Chief Eddie T. Johnson, Sergeant Dwayne Betts and Officer Yasmia Dunn.

In 2010 after two shootings that occurred in the otherwise safe Chatham area of southeast Chicago, fear took over its residents. In a unique and innovative plan for community outreach, 6<sup>th</sup> District CAPS officers worked to re-instill the sense of security that the neighborhood had lost. Peace in the Park after Dark is an overnight camping experience for children ages 11-18 that seeks to enhance the relationship between the police and the community, and to assure the children living nearby that they have nothing to fear.

Since its inception, two camping trips have been held, during which the children listen to a panel of speakers and interact or play sports with law enforcement officers, many of whom stay the night.

The trips are considered a success and have received national television coverage for their ingenuity.

**Lifetime Achievement Award:** The Chicago Crime Commission Stars of Distinction Excellence Lifetime Achievement Award will be presented to Lieutenant Joseph Schober.

Lieutenant Joseph Schober's career is marked by events that reveal pieces of Chicago's history. As a cadet in 1968, Lieutenant Schober assisted police with arrests at the massive riots that occurred during the Democratic National Convention. After being sworn in to the Police Department in 1970, he was first assigned to the Wood Street District as a beat officer in the now demolished Henry Horner and Rockwell Garden Homes, and in the Humboldt Park and Ukrainian Village communities.

Officer Schober was soon moved to Rogers Park, where he took on the Assyrian Kings street gang and the new Russian Mafia. He became an expert on their operations and built a strong relationship with their members. One relationship was so strong that an Assyrian King in Federal custody would only be interrogated in Officer Schober's presence.

By 1996, Officer Schober became Gang Specialist Schober and continued to assist with arrests, including several murder arrests, and investigations into the Assyrian Kings and the Russian Mafia. His commitment to their takedown was relentless; he refused to back down even when gang members threatened the lives of both him and his family.

He continued to rise through the ranks, from Detective to Sergeant, and led a Gang Unit in the 17<sup>th</sup> District through many multi-jurisdictional investigations, including the takedown of a Romanian crime laundering ring. He also led the Area 3 Detective Division through a successful street corner conspiracy operation.

(more)

In 2004 Schober was promoted to Lieutenant and began serving the dual roles of CAPS and Tactical Lieutenant in the 16<sup>th</sup> District where, in the 6 years that followed, index crimes dropped by an impressive 27%.

When video technology was introduced to the Police Department, Lieutenant Schober fully embraced the program and implemented technology within his district that increased efficiency. He introduced in-district streaming video that allows watch commanders to show footage of the latest crimes only hours after their completion. He continues to work with the Information Services Division to expand this program for which he received the Superintendent's Award of Merit.

The number of roles that Lieutenant Schober has served during his illustrious 43 years with the Chicago Police Department is truly remarkable. He continues to this day with an unwavering energy and a forward thinking attitude that aid in safeguarding his fellow officers and his fellow citizens.

**Mitch Mars Prosecutor Excellence Award:** The Chicago Crime Commission Stars of Distinction Mitch Mars Prosecutor Excellence Award is named after the late assistant U.S. Attorney who is credited with convicting some of Chicago's most notorious organized crime figures in the Operation Family Secrets trial. This award will be presented to Federal Bureau of Investigation Assistant State's Attorney Andrew Bryant, Special Agent Courtenae A. Trautmann Special Agent Mary C. Harris and Special Agent Douglas S. DePodesta; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives Special Agent Tina Sherrow; Internal Revenue Service Special Agent Thomas Coleman and Special Agent Vincent Zehmen; United States Attorney's Office Assistant United States Attorney Amarjeet Bhachu, Assistant United States Attorney Michael Donovan, and Assistant United States Attorney Tinos Diamantatos.

In February 2003, a video gambling business in Berwyn, IL was bombed by the Chicago Outfit because they viewed the business as competition to their own illegal video gambling operation that profited over \$1 million dollars a year and put money on the street in the form of juice loans.

The head of the Outfit teamed with the Chicago Outlaws Motorcycle Club, because the treasurer of the Outlaws ran a pawn shop that was used as a front for a large stolen merchandise operation. The two criminal groups met there to plan their illicit activities, including the actions of a crew of thieves who were responsible for 40 armed robberies, during which victims were shot, stabbed, and terrorized.

The law enforcement team used tapped cell phones, audio and video surveillance, sneak and peak search warrants, and vehicle tracking devices in the uncovering of the case. After surveillance of one of their meetings at a distance, agents entered the pawn shop after hours and found, within the paper shredder, pieces of the press release regarding the cooperating witness in the bombing investigation.

On December 22, 2010, after a six-week trial with 88 witnesses and 320 exhibits, five men were found guilty of all charges including RICO, Illegal Gambling, Arson, Trafficking in Stolen Merchandise, and numerous Tax Counts. The collaboration involved in this operation should serve as an example to all law enforcement agencies engaged in a pursuit.

(more)

**The Chicago Crime Commission Stars of Distinction Paws of Distinction Award:** The Chicago Crime Commission Stars of Distinction Paws of Distinction Award will be presented to Cook County Sheriff's Officer David Stanly and his canine partner, Rocky, for the successful completion of a mission that saved the lives of many citizens and officers. Officer Stanly and Rocky proved once again that dogs are, indeed, man's best friend, even in fighting crime.

This exceptional officer-canine team used their united force to locate and disarm a bomb outside of an Evanston Police Sub Station. K9 Rocky gave a positive indication to his handler, Officer Stanly, that the bomb that had been planted with the intent to kill Evanston Police Officers was in a nearby garbage can. K9 Handler Stanly was then able to disarm the bomb and gather evidence that was used to charge the offender.

###