



BUFFALO GROVE POLICE DEPARTMENT
STEVEN R. CASSTEVENS, CHIEF OF POLICE
46 Raupp Boulevard, Buffalo Grove, IL 60089
Non-Emergency: 847.459.2560



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Deputy Chief Michael Szos

847-459-2560

pdpio@vbg.org

NEWS RELEASE

Buffalo Grove Police Department Awards Officer of the Year and Special Commendation Award

Buffalo Grove, IL. – Two Buffalo Grove Police Officers were recognized with awards for their dedication to the department at the April 19, 2021 Village Board meeting. The Officer of the Year award was given to Officer Michael Carlson, and the Special Commendation award, which is runner up to Officer of the Year, was given to Officer Matthew Mills.

Officer Carlson was sworn in as a Buffalo Grove Police Officer in March of 2012 and worked as a patrol officer until moving to the Traffic Unit in July of 2014. A year later he became a member of the Major Crash Assistance Team (MCAT). In 2019, he became an Illinois Crash Reconstruction Specialist through the State of Illinois and was internationally recognized as an ACTAR Accredited Collision Reconstructionist.

Peers recognize Officer Carlson as someone who consistently gives his all in the areas of traffic enforcement, traffic safety education and crash investigations. Throughout 2020, he responded to numerous MCAT crash investigations and investigated five major crashes in Buffalo Grove, including three fatal crashes. These investigations are time-consuming and require extensive expertise and knowledge. Officer Carlson also routinely managed day-to-day activities in addition to these investigations, including deploying traffic message boards to educate the public on traffic issues, as well as messages related to COVID-19. He also assisted with small equipment repairs and oversaw projects that required outside technician assistance.

The same night, Officer Mills was awarded with a Special Commendation. Officer Mills was hired as a Buffalo Grove Police Officer in 2001 and became part of the Community Relations Unit (CRU) in 2017. He was recognized in part for his work with the community over the last year through the challenges that arose due to the pandemic. Officer Mills recognized the need to revamp how the department provided services to the community. His creativity allowed the virtual continuation of programs such as the SAFER group meetings for senior citizens, as well as the High School Internship program. In addition to



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participating in other community events, he worked with a local charity in 2020 to deliver donated food to area families in need.

Officer Mills is also conscientious of his fellow employees' health and wellness and created an Employee Wellness Station in the department with healthy snack options, fitness education and an informational bulletin board. He has also worked with fellow officers to set up a physical fitness facilitator proposal and revamp the department's mentoring program.

"I'm incredibly proud of both Officer Carlson and Officer Mills," said Police Chief Steven Casstevens. "They are both hard-working and dedicated officers and are more than deserving of this recognition."

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