



# 2024

## CITY OF CHARLESTON POLICE DEPARTMENT ANNUAL REPORT



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# Chief's Message

Looking back on 2024, I am filled with pride and gratitude for the men and women of the Charleston Police Department. This past year has been one of perseverance, purpose, and renewed energy, and I have seen firsthand how this agency continues to rise to the occasion.

Every day, our officers and professional staff exemplify what it means to serve this city — not just by doing the job, but by embracing the responsibility that comes with it. Whether responding to critical incidents, building relationships with our community, or tackling complex investigations, this department stands as a consistent example of professionalism and dedication. We have stabilized, strengthened, and redefined what it means to be public safety leaders. And our community has taken notice.

Of course, 2024 was not without its challenges. Leadership transitions, evolving demands, and the ever-present complexities of modern policing tested us. But instead of hesitating, we adapted. Instead of retreating, we stepped forward. We embraced change with intentionality to make sure that Charleston remains one of the safest and most sought-after places to live, work, and visit. Public safety does not happen by chance. It is built through trust, strategy, and focus. That is the role of the Charleston Police Department. We are here, always — on the best days and the worst — to stand alongside this community and protect what makes Charleston great.

I am pleased to present this 2024 Annual Report as a snapshot of the work done by the Charleston Police Department to uphold our mission and serve this city. As we look ahead, we will continue working together — officers, residents, businesses, visitors, and community leaders — to support each other and build upon Charleston's successes. Our strength lies in our unity, and together, we will make this city even better.

Chief Chito T. Walker



# Mission, Values and Vision

At the Charleston Police Department (CPD), our mission is to serve all people within our jurisdiction with respect, fairness, and compassion. We are dedicated to protecting life and property, preserving peace and order, and enforcing local, state, and federal laws while upholding the Constitution of South Carolina and the United States in a fair and impartial manner.

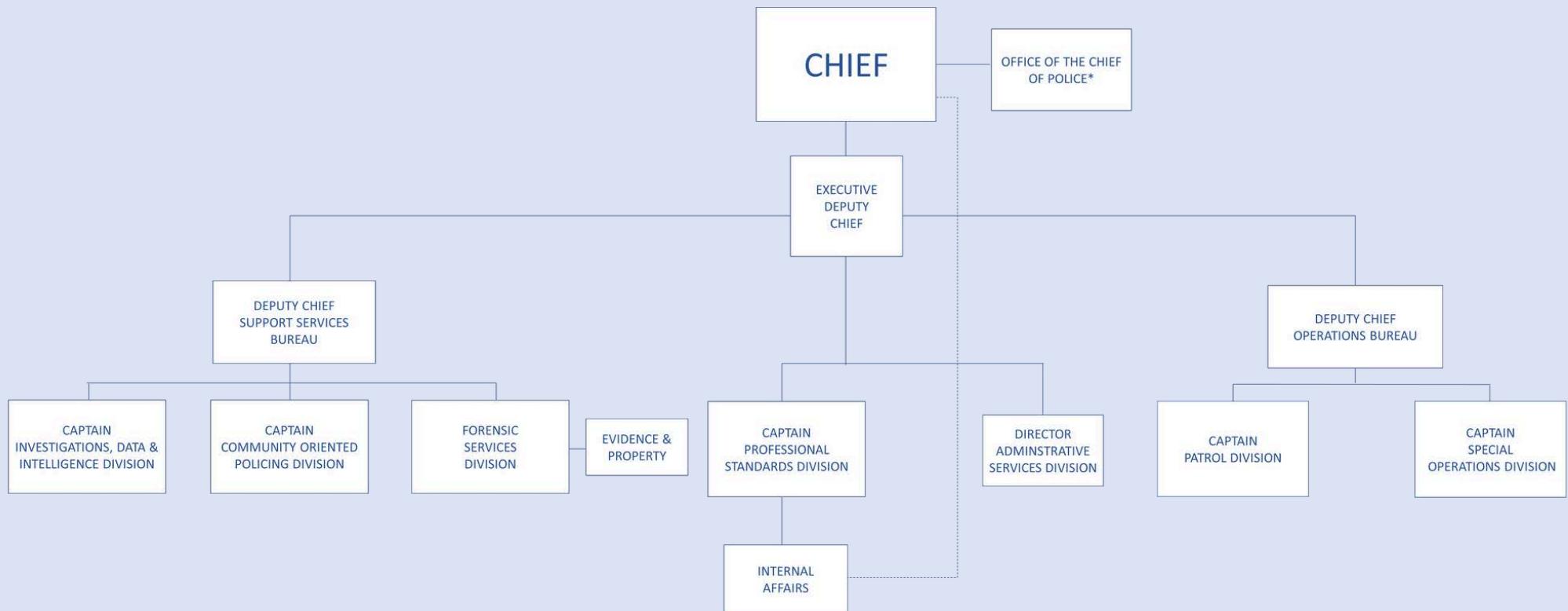
Guided by our core values — Honor, Excellence, Accountability, Respect, and Teamwork (H.E.A.R.T.) — we hold ourselves to the highest standards of integrity and professionalism. We serve with honor, seek excellence in all we do, take accountability for our actions, treat all individuals with respect, and embrace teamwork to strengthen our organization and community.

Our vision is to be a world-class law enforcement agency that continually evolves to meet the needs of our community. We are committed to innovation, problem-solving, and lifelong learning to ensure we provide the highest level of service while building trust and collaboration.

Through dedication and professionalism, we strive to make Charleston a safer, more inclusive, and thriving community for all.



# Organizational Chart



\*OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF POLICE

OFFICE MANAGER

DIRECTOR PROCEDURAL JUSTICE AND RESEARCH

LEGAL

DIRECTOR FLEET OPERATIONS

CPAC

CAPTAIN CHIEF OF STAFF

LIEUTENANT PUBLIC AFFAIRS

GRANTS COORDINATOR

PUBLIC INFORMATION TEAM

RECRUITING

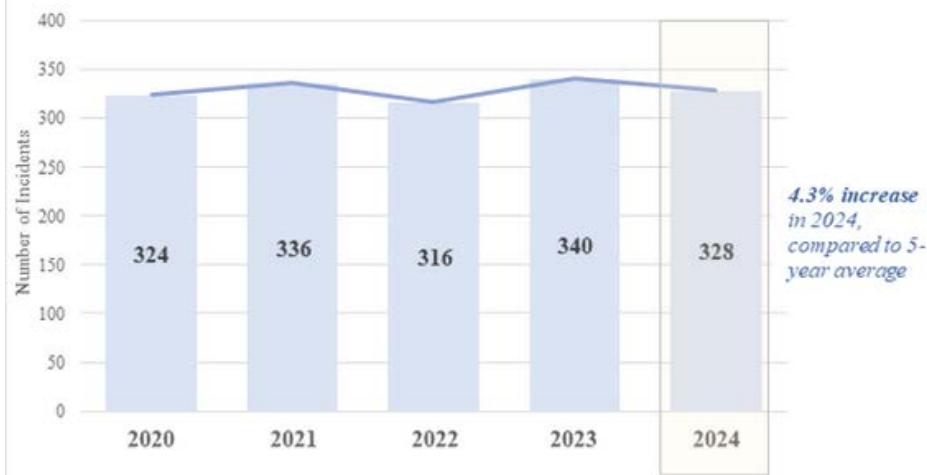
POLYGRAPH

BACKGROUND

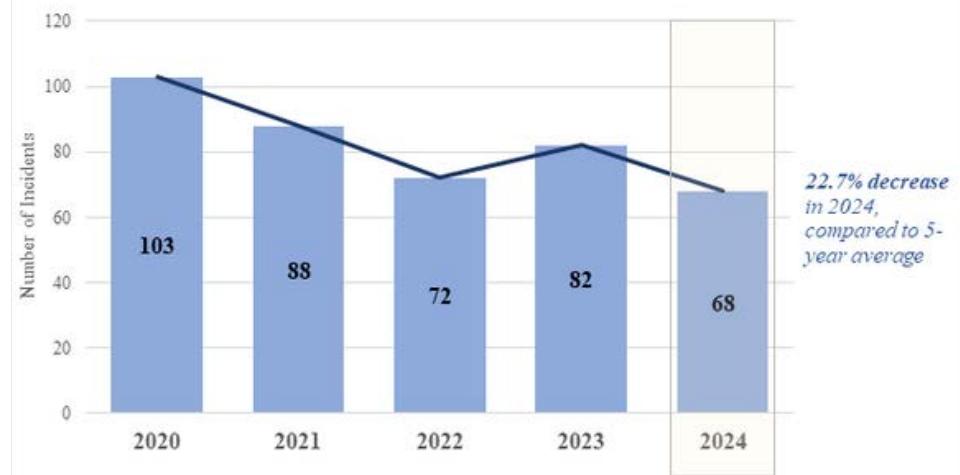
CONSOLIDATED DISPATCH

# Crime Trends

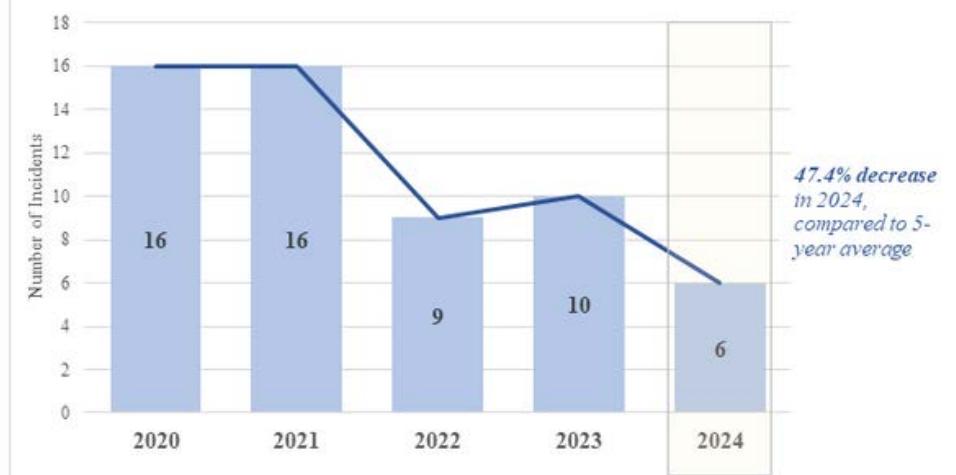
## Aggravated Assault Trends



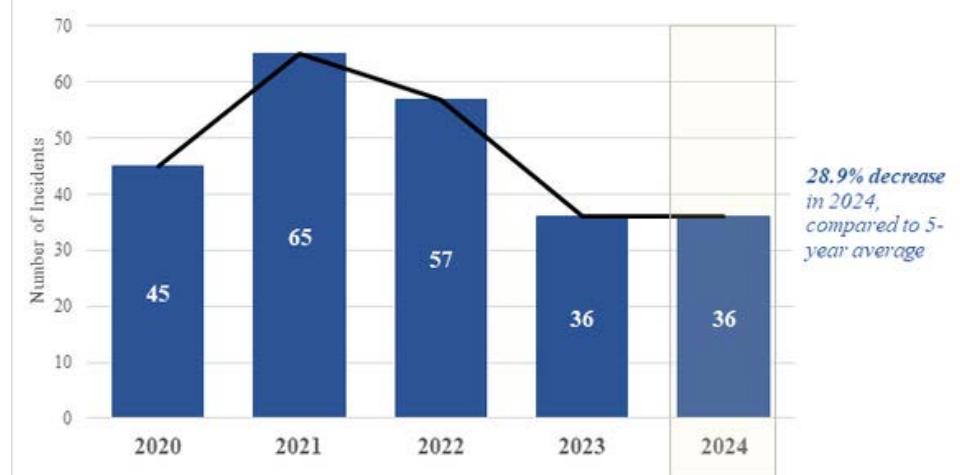
## Robbery Trends



## Homicide Trends

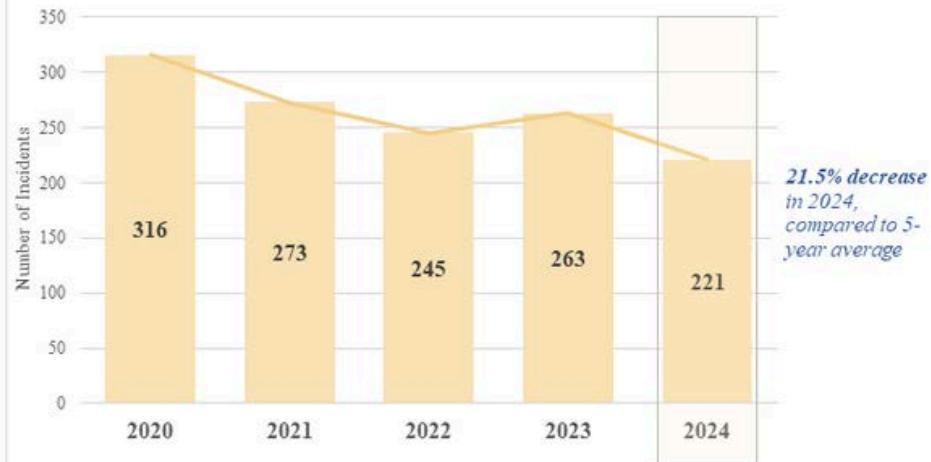


## Sex Offense Trends

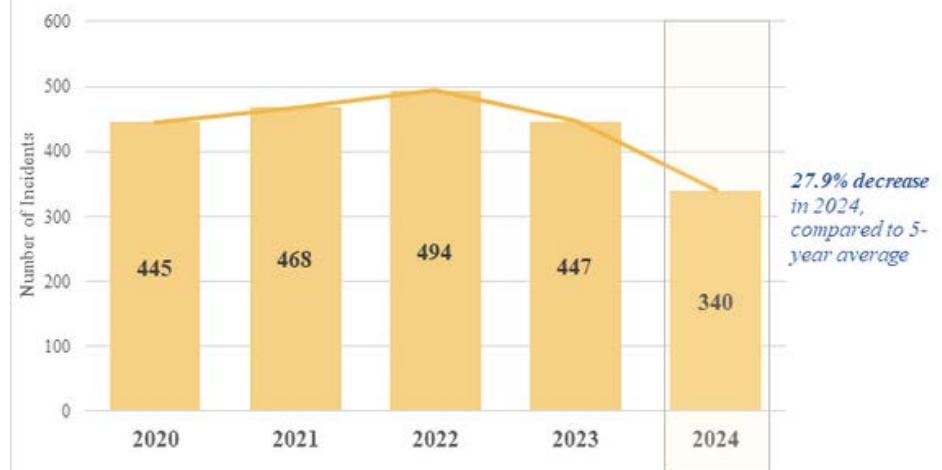


# Crime Trends (continued)

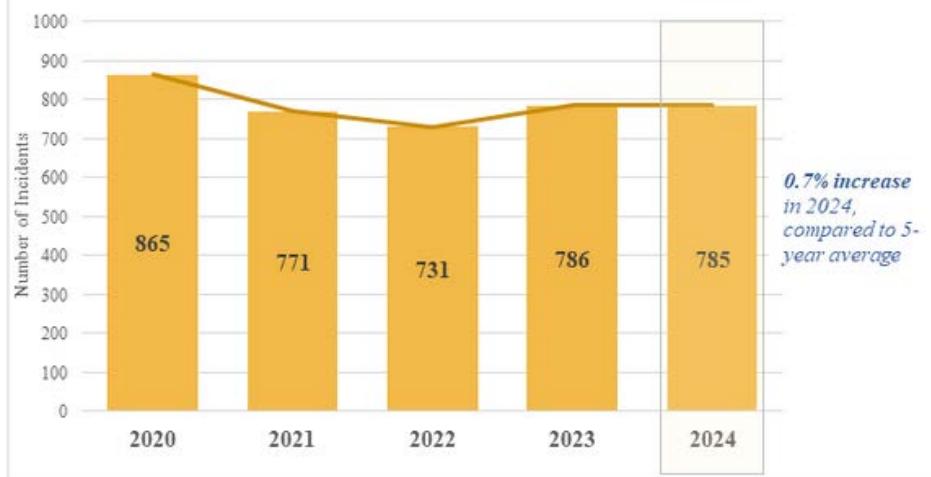
Burglary / Breaking & Entering Trends



Motor Vehicle Theft Trends



Theft from Motor Vehicle Trends



This report presents finalized crime data following further investigation and classification adjustments to meet South Carolina Incident-Based Reporting System (SCIBRS) requirements. A preliminary report, released on January 13, 2025, provided an initial look at crime trends ([Charleston Police Release Preliminary Crime Trends for 2024](#)). As incident reports undergo review and reclassification, some fluctuations may occur.

**Overall, crime decreased 10.7% across the city.**

For more information on crime data and open datasets, visit the [Public Data Initiative](#) website.

# Recruitment, Selection and Retention Unit

In 2024, the CPD Recruitment, Selection, and Retention Unit focused on outreach, engagement, and evidence-based hiring practices to attract top talent. The team connected with the community through career events, guest lectures, and initiatives like the Women in Law Enforcement Symposium to strengthen relationships and expand selection efforts. Partnerships with colleges and universities reinforced CPD's commitment to education and long-term talent development, while ride-alongs and internship programs provided firsthand insight into careers in law enforcement. These efforts reflect CPD's focus on building a highly qualified, diverse, and professional police force to serve Charleston with integrity and excellence.

 **25**  
Testing Sessions

 **110**  
Applicants

 **47**  
New Officers Hired

 **118**  
Background Investigations  
(sworn & professional staff)

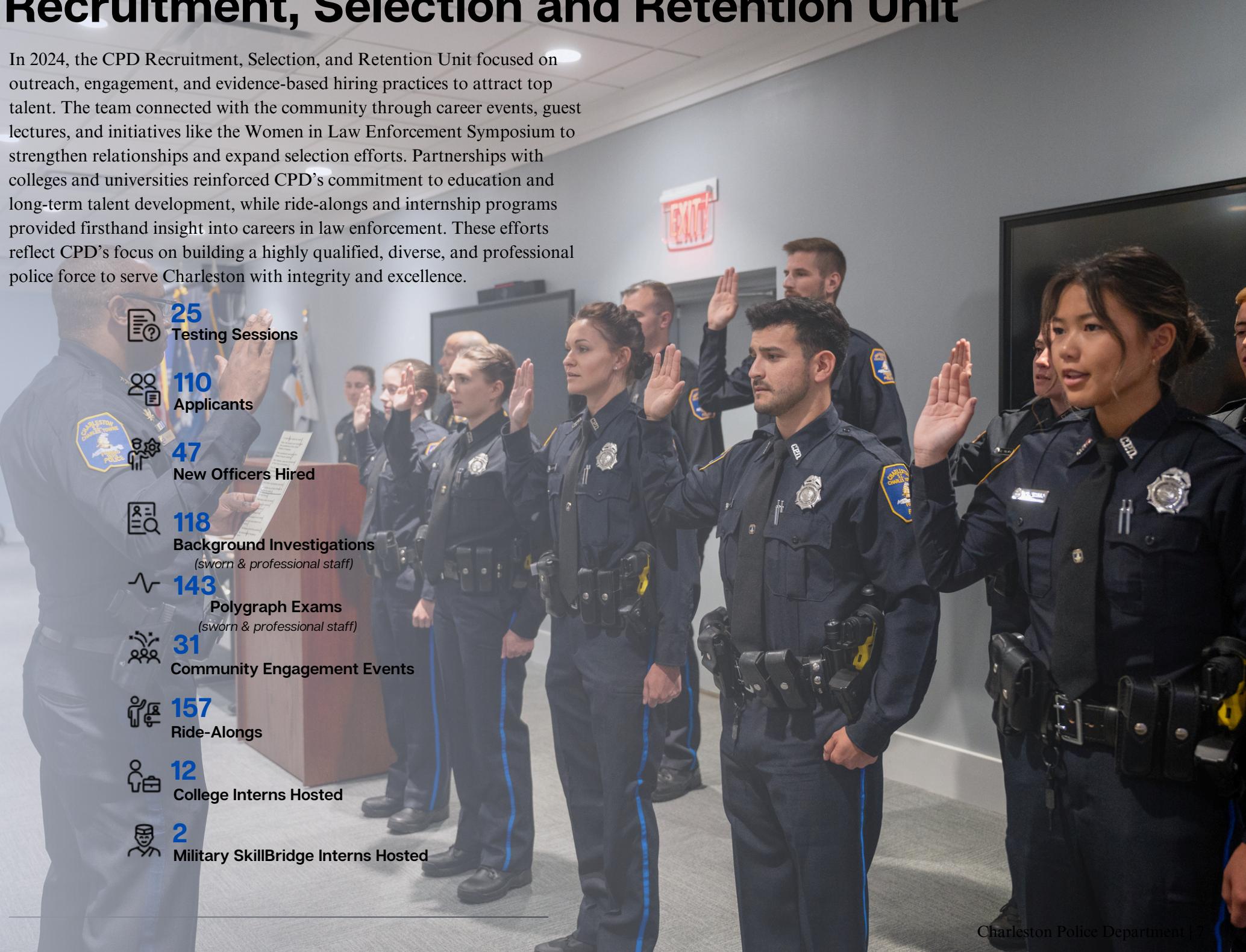
 **143**  
Polygraph Exams  
(sworn & professional staff)

 **31**  
Community Engagement Events

 **157**  
Ride-Alongs

 **12**  
College Interns Hosted

 **2**  
Military SkillBridge Interns Hosted



# Police Corps 2024

In 2024, CPD held three Police Corps classes and trained 40 new law enforcement candidates. By partnering with local agencies, CPD was able to offer training opportunities to officers from other departments, helping them prepare for the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy (SCCJA) and strengthening law enforcement across the region.

Over 12 weeks, each Police Corps cadet completed at least 480 hours of training, with a strong focus on ethics, leadership, and accountability from day one. This year, CPD added two key experiences to the curriculum. Cadets took part in a curated tour of the International African American Museum to give them a deeper understanding of Charleston's history and the communities they will serve. They also attended a wellness-focused presentation by Retired Deputy Mike Costanzo, which covered PTSD, officer mindset, and family support. Both additions were well received and are now permanent parts of the program.

After graduating from Police Corps, cadets attend a swearing-in ceremony prior to attending the SCCJA for eight weeks of academy training. Upon graduation, the newly certified officers return to CPD for 16 weeks of field training with a Patrol Training Officer. Their initial training culminates in a final assessment to confirm they are fully prepared for independent duty — completing more than eight months of preparation before officially stepping into their roles as Charleston police officers.



## Block Training

CPD exceeded state training standards in 2024, providing every officer with 52 hours of training within the year — surpassing the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy's (SCCJA) requirement of 40 total hours over a three-year period.

### Training Highlights:

- *Use of Force & Tactics* – Defensive tactics, response to aggression, intermediate weapons, firearms proficiency, vehicle operations, and low-light strategies.
- *Specialized Training* – Officer wellness, active shooter response, K9 tracking, breaching techniques, and crash investigations.
- *Policy and Legal Updates* – Policy reviews and competency testing to align with SCCJA's latest certification requirements.

To continuously refine training, CPD introduced a department-wide survey in 2024, allowing officers to provide direct input on future training priorities. Based on this feedback, 2025 Block Training will expand to include incident command, civil disturbance tactics, CPR/Narcan administration, Spanish language basics, and legal updates. Additional mandatory training in active shooter response, emergency vehicle operations, and mental health will bring total annual training hours to 54.

# Charleston Police Executive Leadership Summit



*This is by far the most in depth training I have been through. All the speakers were top notch and the course was put on very well. It made me self reflect and re-dedicate my commitment to being a better leader.*

CPD, with funding and support from the [Charleston Historic Rotary Club](#) and the [Law Enforcement Neighborhood Support \(LENS\)](#), launched the Charleston Police Executive Leadership Summit, a 96-hour program designed for law enforcement leaders and executives. Focused on personal growth, leadership, and community partnerships, this program spans four months, bringing leaders together for in-person, immersive training.

In 2024, CPD received a \$153,704 Community Policing Development Microgrant from the COPS Office to expand the program. Class 2, held from April to July 2024, included 16 law enforcement leaders from 12 agencies across South Carolina. A special recognition and thank you is extended to Anna T. Laszlo for her role in curriculum development, scheduling, and grant coordination.

## Feedback and insights from summit attendees:

*"The Charleston Executive Leadership program taught commanders more than leadership. They provided credible guest speakers with real life experiences who showed what leadership is in the time turmoil. These speakers endured major events such as mass shootings and personal attacks. They demonstrated the ability to overcome these tragic events not just for themselves but for their communities."*

*"This summit is a prime example of how law enforcement executives can continue to grow as leaders both professionally and personally. The instructors taught practical leadership theories based on life experience and were extremely open and authentic."*

*"CPD Leadership Summit was rejuvenating. The curriculum provided was thoughtful and pertinent to today's law enforcement leadership."*

# Patrol

The Patrol Division is the largest and most visible division within CPD, providing public safety services across the city every hour and every day of the year. While the following information represent citywide data and may include contributions from other divisions, patrol officers handle the vast majority of this activity with 224 sworn officers assigned to patrol teams in 2024.

As the backbone of CPD's mission, the patrol division maintains a constant presence in the community, responding to calls, engaging with hundreds of individuals each day, and ensuring public safety around the clock.



**112,791**

Calls for Service



**109,851**

Officer-Initiated Activities



**5535**

Arrests



**14,539**

Incident Reports Completed

# Patrol Unit Spotlight - Mounted Patrol

The Mounted Patrol Unit had a busy and impactful 2024 becoming an important, full-time component of CPD's patrol division. With Watson and Holmes leading the way, the team — comprised of four dedicated and highly skilled officers in 2024 — became a familiar and welcome presence at many of the city's biggest events, including the MLK Day Parade, Veterans Parade, Halloween Howl, Wagoween, and the Holiday Parade.

Over the year, the unit logged more than 2,100 hours of mounted patrol duties, contributing to crime deterrence and community engagement during the day and night. Officers also completed over 600 hours of specialized training to sharpen their skills in mounted policing. Beyond their patrol duties, the team played a key role in events like "Walk Like MADD" and "Paws in the Park" to increase the community's familiarization with the unit.

Looking ahead, the Mounted Patrol Unit is set to expand in 2025, increasing its presence across Charleston. Watson and Holmes will continue leading the way as the unit grows, strengthening connections with the community and improving CPD's operations in a way that only mounted patrol can provide.



# Traffic

In 2024, CPD intensified impaired driving enforcement efforts through a series of strategic initiatives including monthly checkpoints with neighboring agencies, joint enforcement efforts during both day and evening shifts, and the addition of a dedicated impaired driving squad.

These proactive measures helped contribute to a significant drop in traffic-related fatalities and serious collisions since 2023, with **fatal crashes down 52%** and **Major Accident Investigation Team - investigated serious collisions down by 54%**. CPD remains committed to keeping roads safe and will continue enforcement efforts to reduce impaired driving and protect the community.

**+31%**

**Impaired Driving Arrests**  
452 in 2023 to 592 in 2024

CPD received the **2024 Luther Reynolds DUI Enforcement Hero Agency of the Year Award** by MADD South Carolina in recognition of the efforts to combat impaired driving.

Also, Officer Azari was recognized as the **2024 DUI Enforcement Hero of the Year** for his exceptional skill in detecting and apprehending impaired drivers.



# Forensic Services

The Forensic Services Division provides expert forensic analysis and evidence processing to support CPD. It is accredited by the ANSI National Accreditation Board, a recognition that requires annual external audits to ensure the highest standards in management, personnel qualifications, technical procedures, and quality assurance.

The Division specializes in forensic biology, drug analysis, fire debris examination, digital forensics, video analysis, and fingerprint identification. It also handles crime scene investigations, firearms analysis, photography, and serial number restoration. **In 2024, the division responded to 1,133 crime scenes and analyzed 8,047 pieces of evidence in the lab.**

This year, major advancements were made in forensic biology and fingerprint analysis. The Division took key steps toward adding DNA testing capabilities by acquiring, installing, and validating new equipment, and developing procedures for testing and reporting. Mock casework was completed in preparation for an expanded ANAB accreditation and an FBI audit in early 2025.

A Justice Assistance grant also funded an argon laser which significantly improves the ability to lift fingerprints from firearms and other nonporous surfaces. The Division will continue focusing on advancing forensic services and evolving to support investigations with cutting-edge science, including the official launch of the accredited DNA lab in 2025.



# Community Outreach

The Developer of Youth Outreach, Jerome Smalls, leads CPD's youth engagement efforts, focusing on expanding programs for ages 8-24, improving agency-wide youth interactions, contributing to regional juvenile justice initiatives, and supporting CPD's community outreach efforts.

## 2024 Highlights

- *Youth Citizen Academy* – Launched CPD's first weeklong summer camp to help build trust with high school students.
- *Juvenile Justice Initiatives* – Helped develop a model for a Charleston County Juvenile Justice Coordinating Council through the NACo Juvenile Justice Innovation Network; led CPD's Youth Violence Assessment with the Center for Justice Research and Innovation.
- *Community Partnerships* – Led a design series with The Redirect Collective on collaboration between law enforcement, schools, and Credible Messengers.
- *Professional Development & Thought Leadership* – Participated in Boston's Public Safety Partnership peer exchange, attended the National Youth Advocacy and Resilience Conference, and published an IACP magazine article on Credible Messenger partnerships in juvenile justice reform ([Read here](#)).



The Hispanic Community Coordinator, a position established in 2024, builds trust, expands partnerships, and improves communication between CPD and the Hispanic community to ensure members feel heard, supported, and connected.

In 2024, coordinated efforts made a lasting impact. Partnerships with local organizations provided over 900 school supplies to help students start the year prepared. Hispanic Heritage Month events engaged 1,000+ community members and celebrated culture while raising funds for hurricane relief in North Carolina.

Mentorship programs launched in multiple schools guided Hispanic students in academic and personal growth. A community movie night created a welcoming space for families, while ongoing collaboration with Hispanic leaders strengthened relationships and expanded support opportunities.

*“Espero fortalecer nuestras alianzas comunitarias y crear nuevas oportunidades de participación que empoderen y eleven a la comunidad hispana en 2025.*  
- Peter Guizar, Hispanic Community Coordinator

# Professional Staff

With 117 dedicated professional staff positions, CPD relies on a skilled team that keeps the department running efficiently. These professionals handle essential functions such as records management, NCIC and front desk operations, fleet and radio management, evidence security, executive scheduling, facility maintenance, and budget and personnel administration.

In 2024, 17 new team members joined CPD, bringing fresh expertise to these critically important roles. Their work behind the scenes is essential to the department's success and guarantees CPD has the support, resources, and infrastructure needed to serve the community effectively.



# Special Operations

The Special Operations Division (SOD) supports CPD's public safety capacity through specialized tactical, crisis, marine, and aerial operations. SOD consists of the following units:

## **Harbor Patrol**

- Operates full-time with a sergeant, three officers, and seven collateral officers.
- Conducted 250+ hours of joint training and several hundred hours of joint enforcement.
- Participated in three statewide operations and a national boating safety initiative.
- Assisted in developing an anchoring ordinance and removed multiple derelict boats and three large sunken barges.



## **Honor Guard**

- 17-member team participated in major events, including the Mayoral Inauguration and Law Enforcement Memorial Services.
- Collaborated with Charleston Fire Department and regional agencies for joint color guards.

## **Civil Disturbance Unit**

- Conducted first joint training with SWAT and expanded inter-agency collaboration.
- Focused on fire hazard response, less-lethal munitions, and tactical extrication drills.
- Attended NTOA Public Order Basic Command Certification course.

## **Crisis Negotiation Team**

- 15 members responded to nine crisis situations, including two suicidal subjects and four warrant services.
- Conducted 12 training sessions, including joint training with SWAT and Charleston Mental Health.
- Supported department-wide Crisis Intervention Team training.



# Special Operations

## Explosive Devices Team

- Four bomb technicians, eight additional members, and three explosive detection K9s.
- Deployed for 34 special events, including Presidential and dignitary visits.
- Conducted 58 explosive detection K9 deployments and recovered one military ordnance.

## K9 Unit

- Consists of four dual-purpose patrol K9s and three explosive detection K9s.
- Completed 695 deployments, including 82 alarm responses, 240 handler protection cases, and 14 suspect apprehensions.
- K9 Bruin retired and is living with his handler.

The team welcomed K9 Luther to the unit.



## Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT)

- 30-member team conducted 25 high-risk warrant apprehensions, responded to three barricaded subjects, and assisted in a manhunt.
- Conducted 53 training days and hosted a Basic SWAT School for officers from five agencies.

## Quick Response Squad

- Five officers provided tactical response and intelligence-driven support for Patrol and Investigations.

## Underwater Response Team

- 12-member team conducted six dive operations, including multiple vehicle recoveries.
- Welcomed four new members and participated in several community outreach events.



## Air Operations

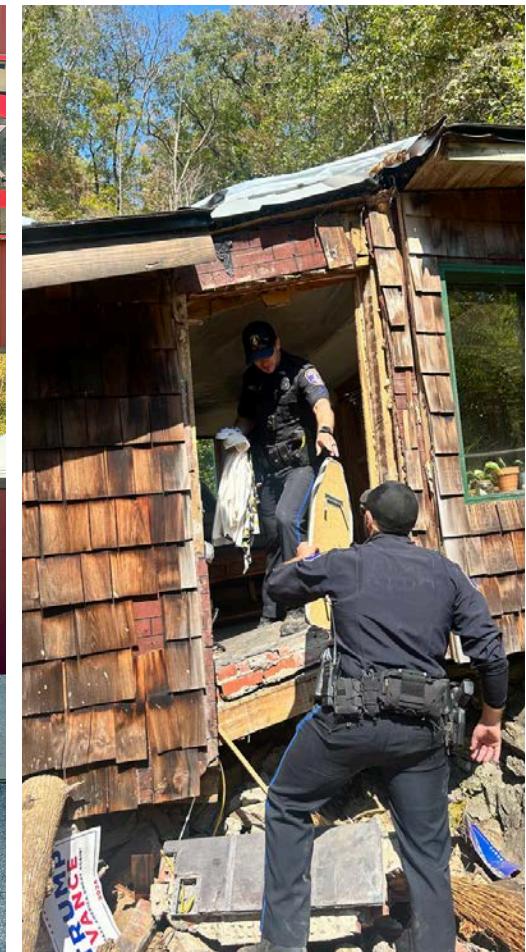
- Six FAA-certified pilots flew 123 missions, logging 40 flight hours.
- Provided aerial support for SWAT, crime scene documentation, and major events like the Cooper River Bridge Run.

# Hurricane Relief Efforts

In October 2024, 25 CPD officers volunteered to assist relief efforts in Henderson County, North Carolina, after Hurricane Helene devastated the region. Deployed for two weeks near the hard-hit areas of Chimney Rock and Bat Cave, officers provided essential public safety and law enforcement support, allowing local first responders to rest and regroup.

Beyond on-the-ground assistance, CPD's Community Outreach Team coordinated the 'Pack the Trailer' initiative, collecting and delivering **three 26-foot box trucks** filled with donations from the Charleston community. These supplies were distributed through the Henderson County Distribution Center and Pardee Hospital to get much-needed resources to those affected.

The community's generosity and officers' willingness to step up in times of need reflect CPD's shared mission to serving not just Charleston, but any community facing hardship.



# 2024 Award Recipients

Officer of the Year



Anthony Vazquez

PPO of the Year



Joshua Masterson

Detective of the Year



Brandon Windham

Sergeant of the Year



Philip Dunford

Chief's Award



Brianna Simmons

Professional Staff Employee of the Year



Dariana Coggins



Griffin Bunch



James Culp



Jeremy Fiedler



Douglas Kelley

Forensic Services Employee of the Year



Maria Heffron

Citizen of the Year



Michael Constanzo

Life Saving Award



Terrence Renk



Life Saving Award



Jacob Crotser



Ryan Cherrier



Matthew Dahlen



Chaska Ford

Life Saving Award



Samuel Wendt



Michael White



Clint Davis



Jae Muller



LT Taylor



Quintin Collins



Jonathan Caraballo



Cody Daniels



Taylor Ward



John Montaniz



Jeremy Fiedler



Matthew Greenleaf



William Campbell



Raymond Fryar



Jeremy Hollingsworth



Creighton McDermott



Jason Frederick



Darren Schlegel

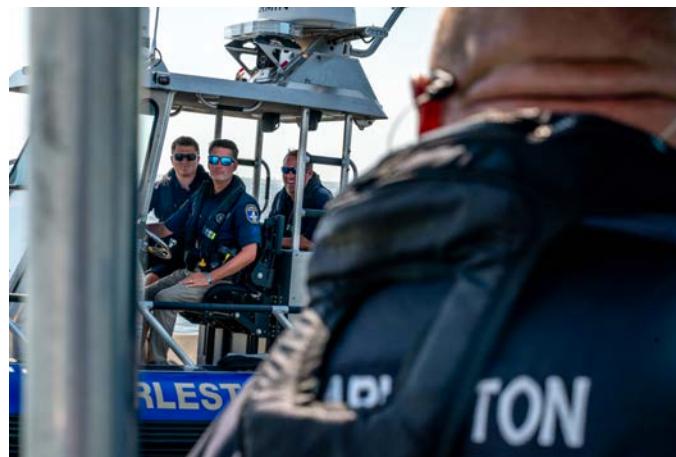
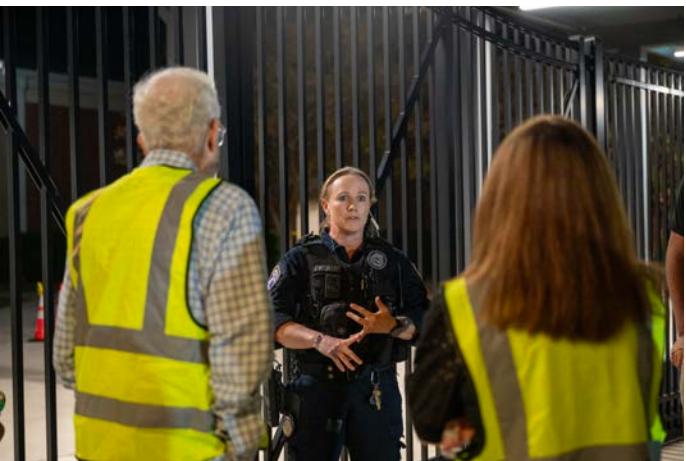


Anthony Vazquez



Taylor Schwartz







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