



## **Georgia Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators**

### **Officer of the Year Award 2008**

GACLEA Officer of the Year Award was presented to Georgia State University Police Sergeant Willie Johnson by University of Georgia Chief of Police Jimmy Williamson, president of the association, during the fall business meeting on November 7, 2008.

Also nominated were Georgia Tech Patrol Officer Jason Adams, Georgia Tech Police Sergeant Marcus Walton, University of Georgia Corporal Michael Chavez, and Valdosta State University Police Sergeant Cindy Cobb. The GACLEA would like to recognize all of these officers for their contributions to the security and safety of their respective campuses and to the profession of campus law enforcement.

The Officer of the Year Award recognizes an officer employed by an institutional member of GACLEA for their outstanding contributions to campus safety. The criteria are:

- A strong work ethic and commitment to professionalism in law enforcement.
- A significant contribution resulting in increased safety and/or customer service for the campus community.
- Creative suggestions or initiatives resulting in a new successful program or service for a department or for the academic institution.
- Innovation resulting in increased efficiency or decreased costs in a department or for the academic institution.
- Commitment to improving cross-cultural understanding and/or philanthropic activities.
- Great courage in the course of their duties.

To be eligible for this award the person nominated must be a full time employee of an institutional member whose primary job responsibilities include the protection of life and property and providing for the safety and security of the community.

The awards committee reviewed the nominations and forwarded those meeting the criteria to the review committee. The review committee, a sub-committee consisting of the Executive Committee members and the chair of each association committee, reviewed the nominations and selected the recipient.

This year the committee received five nominations from four institutions:



Georgia State University Chief of Police Connie B. Sampson nominated Sergeant Willie Johnson:

Sergeant Willie Johnson is the supervisor the Georgia State University Police Directed Patrol Team. During the summer of 2007, in preparation for the opening of the University Commons, a 2,000 student housing complex, Sergeant Johnson spearheaded "Operation Clean Sweep" in the surrounding area. In cooperation with the Atlanta Police, neighborhood residents and business, Sergeant Johnson and his team conducted intensive patrol and aggressive enforcement along Auburn Avenue, Piedmont Avenue, and other nearby streets, including a city park. During the ninety day effort, the team made over 40 arrests for felony and misdemeanor charges, including 21 charges for drug possession. There was an 18% reduction in crime from the previous year and this drop continued through December and January. Vehicle thefts went from 4 in a 6 month period in 2006 to 0 in the same 6 months in 2007. Theft during the same period in 2006-2007 went down by 53%. In May of 2008, following an increase in criminal activity emanating from vagrants living along the CSX railroad corridor long Marietta/Decatur Street, Sergeant Johnson lead the GSU Police portion of a multi-agency interdiction effort that included Atlanta, MARTA, Capitol, Georgia World Congress Center, and Federal Protective Services Police departments and involved approximately 50 police officers. Officers arrested 13 individuals – 10 for criminal trespass and 3 on outstanding warrants. Sergeant Johnson is also a POST certified instructor. He is the lead defensive tactics instructor for the department and regularly conducts training classes for current officers and new recruits. He also assists with firearms training and qualifications. Sergeant Johnson is a highly dependable and very effective supervisor and is the "go-to guy" anytime there is a problem that needs action.



Georgia Tech Chief of Police Teresa Crocker nominated Patrol Officer Jason Adams:

The Institute was experiencing a rise in person-on-person crime. There is a pedestrian tunnel that leads off campus into an obscure area of Atlanta where a street dead ends and an alley passes behind buildings where the homeless tend to take up residency. The area is surrounded by night clubs that have a history of attracting lawless elements. The tunnel was closed nightly at midnight and reopened in the morning. Patrol Officer Jason Adams conducted a study of the area and suggested that the tunnel be closed earlier. Officer Adams' suggestion was accepted by the Institute which later led to the tunnel being closed permanently. Officer Adams has since made other suggestions that have had a positive impact. Officer Adams received the departmental Life Saving award for his quick and immediate action when responding to a non responsive person and deploying an A.E.D. Officer Adams has made several arrests including a felony arrest while on his way to work. He has received numerous "Thank you" letters from members of the community. Officer Adams is a member of the department's S.W.A.T. team and is currently assigned to our GTPD Strike team.



Georgia Tech Chief of Police Teresa Crocker nominated Sergeant Marcus Walton:

Sergeant Walton is the type of employee a supervisor wants to have working for him, He Is very conscientious with his Job duties and performance. He always has the best interest of the unit

and the department in mind when making decisions. He has displayed strong leadership qualities In that he strives to do what is best for the department and yet listens to the concerns of his subordinates. He has been Instrumental in working With the JTIF and other agencies concerning a potential threat to the Georgia Tech community. The threat involved a former student and current employee that had made statements of being the next "Virginia Tech," Sergeant Walton worked diligently an the Case with other surrounding agencies in Identifying the threat and putting sanctions in place that minimized the threat to the community. He was given the Chief's Award for 2007, is a member of the SWAT team and regularly attends meetings with other agencies and community oriented panels to stay abreast of activity in the metropolitan area. With the recent crunch on gas, he has improved work schedules for his subordinates to decrease expenses and assure sufficient coverage for assigned duties.



University of Georgia Chief of Police Jimmy Williamson nominated Corporal Michael Chavez:

Corporal Chavez, employed with The University of Georgia Police Department since January 8, 2001 and assigned to the Patrol Division, serves as a Field Training Officer and is a member of the department's Accident Reconstruction Team. He has accrued nearly 1500 hours of advanced training including completion of the accident investigation and reconstruction classes offered through the GPSTC. In Corporal Chavez's continuing effort to improve the safety of pedestrians and the motoring public he has diligently and professionally enforced pedestrian traffic laws, Driving under the Influence, and other moving traffic violations. During 2007 Corporal Chavez made 147 arrests (including 6 felonies) and issued 413 citations for moving violations along with numerous written warnings. His work ethic has served as a role model for other officers to follow, and he has been an asset to any shift to which he has been assigned. Through Corporal Chavez's work ethic and leadership he has made the university community and environment a safer place. Corporal Chavez also volunteers for the Girl Scouts of America, the International Little League of Athens-Clarke County, and served as a tutor for a blind student at the Oglethorpe County High School. He is a mentor for the Youth Challenge Program, sponsored by the National Guard, and a member of the Temple Baptist Church.



Valdosta State University Chief of Police Scott Doner nominated Sergeant Cindy Cobb:

Sergeant Cindy Cobb began her work in this department in April of 1997. She began as a patrol officer and then came into the Investigative Unit. When she began in that unit there was no pay increase nor was there a promotion of rank for investigative duties. Sgt. Cobb committed herself to the position and worked to standardize the structure of the unit when dealing with the evidence that was collected and with investigative techniques and technology to assist in the unit. She worked to learn about surveillance technology and was able to obtain surveillance equipment for the investigative unit. She worked to change the evidence storage area into a catalogued and secured area including the addition of an alarm system for that area. Sgt. Cobb also worked with her supervisor to set up a stand alone in car video system and worked with not only Motorola on that system but also worked with PELCO on the camera system used across the campus. Her tireless efforts in this area have resulted in her having a knowledge base with which she can trouble shoot both systems for the department to our benefit financially and technically.