

AWLE 2009 CONFERENCE REPORT

November 17, 2009

Atlantic Women in Law Enforcement (AWLE) 17th Annual Conference, Stellarton, NS, October 20-23, 2009 End of Conference Report:

Once again the Atlantic Women in Law Enforcement (AWLE) had another successful training conference, which this year was hosted by the Pictou County RCMP, New Glasgow Police Service, Trenton Police, Stellarton Police, and Westville Police Department! There were 58 delegates at this year's conference and a great line up of guest speakers presenting on some very interesting topics. Dr. Dorothy Shultz, Professor of Law, Police Studies & Criminal Justice Administration at John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York, USA was our keynote speaker and is the author of "Breaking the Brass Ceiling". The presentation was a reflection of our conference theme, "Breaking the Boundaries". Dr. Shultz discussed the emergence of women as more than token leaders of law enforcement as well as some obstacles women face being leaders in policing. Subsequently, all delegates found this topic interesting and the presentation led the group to have a very interactive discussion after the presentation.

Sgt. Kevin Scott from the New Glasgow Police Service discussed Critical Incident Stress in relation to our occupations, which all delegates could relate to from their own experiences. This is always an integral part of our conferences and Sgt. Scott did an excellent job on presenting this difficult topic. Sgt. Pamela Bryan-Lahaise from the International Peace Operations Branch spoke to the group about the importance of the contributions by women in international missions, how female police officers provide a positive role model for women living in unstable countries, and what serving on a mission means. There were a few officers in the conference who had been seconded on peace keeping missions and could offer some good experiences for delegate discussions during the presentation. Great topic!

Dr. Marnie Wood, Forensic Pathologist, spoke about Excited Delirium, the medical diagnosis behind this, and how we as police officers can recognize and treat these cases and how these incidents cross reference a medical call and a police emergency call. This was another good topic for the delegates.

Dr. Ed Strok, PhD Psychology, Valley Regional Hospital, spoke about hypnosis as an investigative tool and how we can use it in our active investigations and noted the benefits of using hypnosis for police. This was an interesting presentation to say the least.

Cpl. Annie Neilson, Sgt. Scott Sawyer, and Cst. Yves Allain of Bathurst RCMP conducted a case study on the Bathurst High School Basketball Team Motor Vehicle Fatality. It was a heart felt presentation with many tears shed at the end of the day. However, it was a good learning tool for police investigators as well as for noting post traumatic stress related issues developed by the officers following an investigation such as this.

Cpl. Scott MacMillan from RCMP presented a case study on the Karissa Boudreau murder investigation in Bridgewater, NS, which captured the interest of most media and the public at the time of the investigation. The audience was very captivated during his presentation!

Each year at the annual training conference we recognize the contributions of women through the presentation of awards for Officer of the Year, Community Service, Excellence in Performance, Mentoring, Leadership, and Team Endeavours, which are given to a female officer (and in some cases her male counterparts) who meet the criteria of each category. AWLE Vice President Sgt. Sue Bill and Chairperson for the AWLE Awards Committee, Detective Cst. Carol Campbell-Waugh, presented the following awards to the recipients:

Cst. Sharon Warren from the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary was named Officer of the Year. She has served diligently and conscientiously for 21 years. She is an excellent investigator and possesses knowledge of investigative procedures and law and demonstrates sound judgment and strong leadership qualities. Sharon

is recognized for her dedication and professionalism and is known for her high degree of integrity and compassion. Cst. Warren's career has been an example in leadership, community service and excellence in performance!

The Community Service Award was awarded to Cst. Jeannie Rankin from Halifax Regional

Police. Jeannie is involved in many programs but it is the organization and commitment with the "COPS N KIDS" that is noteworthy. The time Jeannie puts in far outweighs her job requirements. Her caring ensures that every child has the opportunity to spend time with police and build a relationship. Cst. Rankin does her job with passion, empathy, respect, and the utmost in professionalism!

Cst. Andree-France Page from RCMP J Division received the Excellence in Performance

Award. A member for almost three years, Andree-France has demonstrated a particular interest in investigating complex and high profile matters where her level of her performance is impressive. She has distinguished herself among others by her professionalism and the success she achieves with her investigations. An example of her exceptional talents was observed when she initiated a sexual assault investigation that occurred four decades ago. Cst. Page's abilities to perform her duties are at a high level, despite her young age and years of service!

Cpl. Kelly Moore-Reid from Truro Police Service was awarded the Mentoring Award. Kelly has distinguished herself by breaking down many barriers, stereotypes, and obstacles for women, as she was the first female to work in her policing agency. Kelly consistently displays superior work ethic, strong organizational skills and a passion for helping others. Kelly sets very high standards and strives to always represent women in law enforcement in a professional way!

The Leadership Award went to Sgt. Tammy Ward of RCMP "J" Division. Tammy's work with "J" Division Traffic Services overseeing the establishment and expansion of the Provincial Teens Against Drinking and Driving Program (TADD) was very professional and she worked diligently to improve the awareness about the dangers of impaired driving!

The conference was an overwhelming success, with excellent training provided in a unique forum for networking. This leaves an avenue each year for women in law enforcement to "Break the Boundaries" and become great leaders in their respective departments as well as bring back some great training to their co workers!

Next years Conference is in Fredericton, NB, hosted by the Fredericton Police Force, at the Crowne Plaza Hotel October 19-22, 2010! Get your AWLE membership registration before December 31 for conference discounts and other benefits online at www.awle.org!

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