



News for Immediate Release

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PCCD Presents Governor's Awards for Outstanding Citizen Crime Prevention

Lancaster – The Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency today recognized nine individuals for their work to keep their communities safe and crime-free.

Seven of the individuals were recognized with the Governor's Citizen Crime Prevention Award. Two special awards were also given to law enforcement officers who have demonstrated outstanding dedication to crime-prevention efforts.

"One of the best and most effective ways to combat crime is to forge partnerships with law enforcement and the community – including schools, businesses and community members. These partnerships help to reduce and eliminate crime, enforce the law and restore safety, security and community pride," said PCCD Chairman Mark Zimmer.

"Crime-prevention programs encourage people from all walks of life and backgrounds to work together, with the common goal of creating and maintaining a safe and viable community for all of its residents," Zimmer said.

The 2011 Governor's citizen award recipients are:

- Dennis Biancuzzo, Harrisburg, serves as president of the Susquehanna Township's First Ward Crime Watch. Biancuzzo was honored for his crime prevention efforts, including hosting and organizing the annual Children's Flashlight Walk, the National Night Out Program and a "Crime Watch Welcome Wagon" for new residents, supplying them with information on the crime watch program and crime prevention safety tips.
- Paul Costello, Philadelphia, has been involved in crime watch programs since 2007, working closely with businesses and residents in the Tacony and the Holmesburg/Upper Mayfair areas to develop strategies and solutions to crime issues. He has also worked with the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office and the Philadelphia Police Department to close problem/nuisance bars.
- Denise Freeman, Lancaster, created "Neighbors United," organizing residents to reduce crime in their neighborhood. The group, under her leadership, has worked with the Lancaster Community Safety Coalition to install additional security cameras in the city and educate residents about crime prevention.
- Christa McConaghy, Yardley, has been an active member of the Lower Makefield Township Neighborhood Watch Association for 10 years. She helped launch a new Neighborhood Watch website last year, which includes a detailed "crime mapping" system to help police track crime trends.

- Danyiell Newman, York, serves on the city's Community Police Partnership and organizes monthly clean-up projects to help revitalize city streets and alleyways. She also volunteers with the city's Kid ID Program, the Summer Bowling Program and has donated supplies to the city's youth outreach program.
- Jack Ritter, Mechanicsburg, has served as the coordinator of the Mechanicsburg Crime Watch since 1998 and keeps residents informed on various topics, including cyber-bullying and social services for seniors, as well working on ways to curb nuisance crimes in the community.
- Benjamin Wilson, Harrisburg, organized Lower Paxton Township's Neighborhood Watch Program last year. After working closely with police to inform residents of crime trends and prevention methods, the number of property crimes in Wilson's neighborhood decreased significantly.

Police Chief Robert Palmer from the Alburtis Police Department, Lehigh County, was awarded PCCD's Chief of Police Crime Prevention Award.

Police Officer John Stoner from the Lower Paxton Township Police Department, Dauphin County, received the Crime Prevention Officer of the Year award.

The awards were given during the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association's Annual Education and Training Conference in Lancaster.

PCCD is the state's leading agency for criminal justice policy issues, distributing state and federal funding to programs designed to prevent crime and strengthen communities. PCCD also provides essential support services to law enforcement agencies and offers financial support to victims of crime.

For more information, visit www.pccd.state.pa.us or call 717-705-0888.

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Editor's Note: For additional information on the citizen award winners, visit http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/document/1091789/2011_gov%27s_awards_final_pdf

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