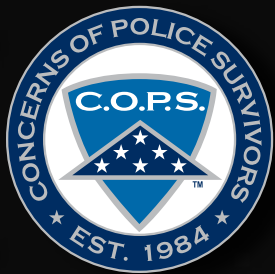


The Official Publication of Concerns of Police Survivors for Survivors, Agencies, and Supporters

H O P E



SPRING 2026



H O P E



SPRING 2026 VOL. 40, NO. 1

The Official Publication of Concerns of Police Survivors for Survivors, Agencies, and Supporters.
P.O. Box 3199 - 846 Old South 5 - Camdenton, MO 65020 - Phone: 573-346-4911 - concernsofpolicesurvivors.org

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Mission Statement

Rebuilding the shattered lives of surviving family members and co-workers affected by a line-of-duty death.

Survivors can seek comfort from C.O.P.S. while awaiting a decision from the following determining agencies: Public Safety Officers' Benefits (PSOB) Program, National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund (NLEOMF), or Fraternal Order of Police (FOP).

Submission Information

Concerns of Police Survivors welcomes the submission of articles, trial updates, survivor news, and memorials. Please know that all submissions will be considered but may not be published. The inclusion of news articles or court documents makes the process much easier for C.O.P.S. When sending photos, please make sure they are high resolution (600KB or higher) or the original files. All submissions can be e-mailed to blake_haynes@nationalcops.org with the subject line "Newsletter Submission."

Information for Our Readers

Throughout C.O.P.S. publications, you will find codes that indicate how a person is related to an officer who has died in the line of duty. Here is a key for you:

W=Spouse; AC=Adult Child; C= Child; S=Sibling; M=Mother; F=Father; CW= Co-Worker; SM= Step-Mother; SF= Step-Father; SC=Step-Child; GM=Grandmother; GF=Grandfather; GC=Grandchild; FS=Former Spouse; FN=Fiancé; SO=Significant Other; F-IL=Father In-Law; M-IL=Mother In-Law; D-IL=Daughter In-Law; SN-IL=Son In-Law; SS-IL=Sister In-Law; B-IL=Brother In-Law; U=Uncle; A=Aunt; NC=Niece; NP=Nephew; CS=Cousin; FR=Friend



My fellow survivors,

As we step into a new year, there is a renewed sense of hope and progress within Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S.). Change is never easy, but it is often necessary for growth. Thanks to the voices and involvement of our fellow survivors, meaningful changes are now taking shape.

With survivor input, the National Board has revised the election process for both the National President and National Trustees. For the first time in our organization's history, all eligible survivors will have the opportunity to vote. This important milestone reflects the strength of our collective voice and our shared commitment to transparency, inclusion, and unity.

Additionally, through the dedication and hard work of an exceptional search committee, the National Board has selected Bryan Hollingsworth as our organization's next Executive Director. With the steady leadership and mentorship of Dianne Bernhard, I am confident that the transition, when the time comes, will be smooth—allowing us to honor our past while preparing for the future.

As we move into early 2026, we enter Chapter election season—welcoming new local leadership while honoring the guidance of those who have served before. Chapter leaders are vital to keeping our mission strong and our support close to home, especially as we approach Police Week, when we will once again come together in remembrance, reflection, and honor.

In closing, I am deeply grateful to be part of an organization with such a dedicated staff who walk alongside survivors as they navigate their grief journeys. Their continued support can never be overstated. The participation, compassion, and resilience of our survivors are the heart of C.O.P.S., and together, we move forward—stronger than ever.

Blessings,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dave Wallace".

Dave Wallace, C.O.P.S. National President



C.O.P.S. new Executive Director, Bryan Hollingsworth, will assume his role within the organization starting in July 2026.

C.O.P.S. NATIONAL OFFICE

Executive

Dianne Bernhard, Executive Director
Barbie Squires, Board Liaison*

Administrative

Amy Hadfield, Administrative Director
Robby Robinson, IT Specialist
Tammy Ray, Financial / HR Specialist
Dave Heimerl, Maintenance

Chapter & Survivor Support

Laurie Putnam, Chapter & Survivor Support Director
Alyssa Starnes, Survivor Support Manager
Felicia Rosa, Chapter Specialist
Pari Moody, Survivor Support Coordinator
Erin Gisselbeck, Survivor Support Assistant
Paula Smith, Receptionist
Amy Morgan, Chapter Success Coach*

Outreach

Sara Slone, Outreach Director
Blake Haynes, Communications Manager
Nicole Dupree, Merchandise Specialist
Nicholas Geiger, Development Specialist
Clint Schaffnit, Multimedia Specialist
Reagan Dame, Development Assistant

Services

Erin Barnett, Services Director
Blair Sien, Programs Manager
Madi Custer, Programs Coordinator
Bri Lizotte, Programs Assistant
Corin Bennett, Programs Assistant

Trainings

Bob Currier, Training Director
Haley Owens, Training Specialist
Melissa Shea, Training Assistant

*Consultant

CONCERNS OF POLICE SURVIVORS NATIONAL BOARD MEMBERS

National President

Dave Wallace S/16
dave_wallace@nationalcops.org

Immediate Past President

Connie Moyer W/17
connie_moyer@nationalcops.org

Atlantic Region Trustee

DE, MD, NC, SC, VA, D.C.
Jeff Hancher F/20
jeff_hancher@nationalcops.org

Central Plains Region Trustee

IA, KS, MO, MN, NE, ND, SD, WI
Jim Giese CW/03
jim_giese@nationalcops.org

Midwest Region Trustee

IL, IN, KY, MI, OH, WV
Andrea Arrington S/02
andrea_arrington@nationalcops.org

Northeast Region Trustee

CT, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT
Patricia Mullen W/18
patricia_mullen@nationalcops.org

Northwest Region Trustee

AK, ID, MT, OR, WA, WY
Nancy DeLaitre M/10
nancy_delaitre@nationalcops.org

South Central Region Trustee

AL, AR, LA, MS, OK, TN
Liz White-Dibb W/95
liz_whitedibb@nationalcops.org

Southeast Region Trustee

FL, GA, Puerto Rico &
US Virgin Islands
Robert Ricks CW/10
robert_ricks@nationalcops.org

Southwest Region Trustee

AZ, CA, HI, NV, UT &
Mariana Islands
Cathy Hobbs W/14
cathy_hobbs@nationalcops.org

Western Region Trustee

CO, NM, TX
Dani Story-Stinson W/10
dani_storystinson@nationalcops.org

Executive Director

Non-Voting Board Member
Dianne Bernhard CW/05
dianne_bernhard@nationalcops.org

Executive Director Emeritus

Non-Voting Board Member
Suzie Sawyer

The upcoming National Board Meeting will be held on July 23-24, 2026 in Louisville, KY.

If you have a topic of discussion to submit for the meeting,
please email Barbie Squires at barbie_squires@nationalcops.org.



Photo taken at the January 2026 National Board meeting held in San Diego, CA.

NOMINEES FOR C.O.P.S. NATIONAL BOARD REGION TRUSTEES

Atlantic Region



Jules Pritchard
Surviving Co-Worker of
Maryland State Police
Trooper First Class Edward Toatley
EOW 10/30/2000

Region: Delaware, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and Washington, D.C.

Southwest Region



Matthew Bloesch
Surviving Adult Child of
San Francisco (CA)
Police Officer James Bloesch
EOW 8/2/1988

Region: Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Utah, and the Mariana Islands.

Midwest Region



Andrea Arrington
Surviving Sibling of
Detroit (MI)
Police Officer Scott T. Stewart
EOW 8/11/2002

Region: Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, and West Virginia.



Pat Evans
Surviving Co-Worker of
Draper City (UT)
Sergeant Derek R. Johnson
EOW 9/1/2013

Region: Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Utah, and the Mariana Islands.



Eric Stacy
Surviving Co-Worker of
Cahokia (IL)
Police Officer Jeremy Chambers
EOW 4/24/2006

Region: Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, and West Virginia.



Jennifer Grant-Blount
Surviving Adult Child of
Tuolumne County (CA)
Deputy Sheriff David Grant
EOW 5/31/2004

Region: Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Utah, and the Mariana Islands.

South Central Region



Liz White-Dibb
Surviving Spouse of
Roseville (CA)
Police Officer Mark A. White
EOW 2/10/1995

Region: Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Tennessee.

National Board Election Information

The following Region Trustee positions up for election for the 2026-2028 term are:

Atlantic Region Trustee
(DE, MD, NC, SC, VA, DC)

Midwest Region Trustee
(IL, IN, KY, MI, OH, WV)

South Central Region Trustee
(AL, AR, LA, MS, OK, TN)

Southwest Region Trustee
(AZ, CA, HI, NV, UT, CNMI)

The following Trustee positions will be up for election in 2027 for a two year term: Central Plains Region, Northeast Region, Northwest Region, Southeast Region, and Western Region.

NOMINEE FOR C.O.P.S. NATIONAL PRESIDENT



Dave Wallace

Surviving Sibling of Stanislaus County (CA) Deputy Sheriff Dennis Wallace, EOW 11/13/2016
Surviving Co-Worker of Modesto (CA) Police Sergeant Steven May, EOW 7/23/2009

Hello, I am Dave Wallace, and I am a candidate running for re-election as your President of Concerns of Police Survivors. I am a Co-Worker and Sibling Survivor. Modesto, California, Police Sergeant Steve May, was my squad Sergeant when he was killed on July 23, 2009. My brother, Stanislaus County Deputy Sheriff Dennis Wallace, was killed on November 13, 2016. Tragically, I lost seven other Co-Workers throughout my 29+ year career.

Throughout my career I have been heavily involved in training as a Field Training Officer, Academy Instructor, and various other roles such as Peer Support and CISM. I first became involved with C.O.P.S. when I attended NPW and a TLE in 2007. I joined the Central CA C.O.P.S. Chapter Board as an Officer Liaison and later served as a Trustee, VP, and President. In 2020 I retired and my wife Kim and I moved to Tennessee, where I joined the Middle & East.TN Chapter Board. In 2022, I was elected as the South Central Region Trustee on the National Board. Last year, I was elected as your National President.

I am truly humbled and honored to serve as your 22nd President. I am especially honored to serve as the first Co-Worker Survivor, and only the second Sibling Survivor to serve in this role. Having said that, it is my continued goal to serve all Survivors no matter where you are on your grief journey. I am proud to say that I serve with a very dedicated National Board and that we are supported by a wonderfully talented and very dedicated Staff who go over and above on our behalf.

We have had many changes and some challenges take place over the last four years since I joined the National Board. It will be my continued goal to seek to provide exceptional training, care, support, and service to Survivors. To provide guidance and help build sustainable chapters that create opportunities for growth and healing, while encouraging service to others. I firmly believe that “in helping, there is healing.”

CONCERNS OF POLICE SURVIVORS CHAPTERS AND CONTACTS

Due to the timing of the creative process for this edition of *HOPE Magazine*, chapters were in the process of holding chapter board elections and finalizing the results that will determine who will serve in elected board positions. All elected members of chapter boards will be finalized by April 1, 2026.

To access information about your local chapter, including key points of contact, please scan the QR code provided below.



FIND YOUR CHAPTER



UPDATED ELECTION PROCEDURE

The updated election process is designed to create a more inclusive and accessible system that ensures all eligible survivors have an opportunity to participate in leadership selection within C.O.P.S. Under this structure, the National President will be elected by a nationwide majority vote of eligible members, while Region Trustees will be elected by a majority vote of eligible members within their respective regions. This approach ensures that the elected leadership is a result of the voices of survivors both nationally and regionally.

To participate, members must meet the eligibility requirements outlined in Article III of the C.O.P.S. Bylaws. Eligible voters must be at least 18 years of age, registered in the C.O.P.S. National Office database at least 30 days prior to the election, and have a valid email address on file. Each eligible member will be allowed one vote for National President and one vote for their respective Region Trustee. Voting will be conducted through a secure, and confidential election system that allows each member to vote via email.

This technology-based approach addresses several long-standing challenges. In the past, some survivors were unable to vote because elections were tied to chapter meetings or board meetings that they could not attend. Additionally, some survivors live in states where there is no local C.O.P.S. chapter, which limits their ability to participate in elections. By moving to a secure online voting system, every eligible survivor can participate regardless of location or schedule.

All votes will be submitted by July 1, 2026. If no nominee receives a majority (more than half) of the votes, the two nominees receiving the highest number of votes will advance to a run-off election. The run-off will be announced no later than July 6, with final votes due by July 11.

Region Trustee terms will remain staggered to maintain continuity and stability within the Board. Trustees from the Central Plains, Northeast, Northwest, Southeast, and Western Regions will conclude their terms in odd-numbered years, while Trustees from the Atlantic, Midwest, South Central, and Southwest Regions will conclude their terms in even-numbered years. This staggered structure ensures experienced leadership remains in place while still allowing for regular opportunities for new representation.



Photo taken at the July 2025 National Board meeting held in Camdenton, MO, of the current board.

C.O.P.S. PRESENTS THE

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LAW ENFORCEMENT WELLNESS & TRAUMA

NOVEMBER 5 - 8, 2026
SHERATON SAN DIEGO RESORT
SAN DIEGO, CA

#COPSWELLNESSCONFERENCE

EMPOWERED BY



TOP PRESENTERS

PICTURED: DR. TRACY HEJMANOWSKI



EXHIBITORS



NETWORKING

C.O.P.S. invites all active and retired law enforcement officers, peer support, counselors, police chaplains, correctional officers, dispatchers, and spouses/significant others, to attend this weekend of education, networking, healing, and entertainment.

This conference focuses on trauma and wellness, proactively addressing the cumulative stressors that can occur throughout an officer's career. When you attend this conference, you not only get three days of over 25 incredible speakers, you also get the peer support and networking with your fellow law enforcement community members and supporters!

CONFERENCE FEE ONLY \$350 PER PERSON!

\$175 for Spouses/Significant Other if attending with paid participant.

Fee includes access to all classes, general sessions, law enforcement appreciation night reception/dinner, and 2 lunches.

Putting the focus on YOU, to bring you home to THEM!



SCAN ME

WWW.CONCERNSOFPOLICESURVIVORS.ORG



SURVIVING TO THRIVING

NOVEMBER 5-8, 2026 // SAN DIEGO, CA

WHO SHOULD / WHY ATTEND?



SCAN THE QR CODE FOR MORE INFORMATION

Open to surviving family members, coworkers, and guests of the C.O.P.S. National Board ages 18 and older, this special weekend offers meaningful breakout sessions, opportunities to connect with others, and time to experience all that San Diego has to offer.

*If a survivor chooses to attend this conference in place of their survivor specific weekend or camp, their registration fee will be waived and they will be eligible to have the cost of their hotel room for up to 3 nights stay reimbursed by National C.O.P.S. In order to be eligible, survivors must submit their hotel receipt to National C.O.P.S. within 30 days of the conference and attend all planned sessions and activities.



2026

PERSONALIZED SHIRT



NOW AVAILABLE

PERSONALIZE A SHIRT HONORING YOUR OFFICER TODAY!



Official Merchandise of Concerns of Police Survivors

NEWS OF NOTE

GRADUATIONS/AWARDS



Congratulations to **Myareoh Martinez** who earned her Doctorate in Physical Therapy from the University of St. Augustine on December 19, 2025.

Myareoh is the surviving daughter of Willacy County (TX) Sergeant Alejandro Martinez, Sr., EOW 11/21/2014.



Congratulations to **Alyssa Belle Yabut** who earned the top Spokesmodel Title at the National American Miss Pageant on June 7, 2025 in Scottsdale (AZ).

Alyssa is the surviving daughter of Nevada Department of Public Safety Trooper Alberto Felix, EOW 11/30/2023.



Mikhail Lee is set to graduate from Dine College (AZ) on May 8, 2026, with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Public Health with a minor in Native American Studies.

Mikhail is the surviving daughter of Navajo (AZ) Police Officer Michael Lee, EOW 6/18/2020.



John Paolillo completed his training and graduated from the Military Police Academy, National Guard, on September 26, 2025.

John is the surviving son of New York (NY) Police Sergeant Joseph Paolillo, EOW 9/9/2019. He is also the nephew of New York (NY) Fire Department Deputy Chief John Paolillo, Last Call 9/11/2001.

GRADUATIONS/AWARDS CONTINUED...



Collin Woods graduated from the University of Cincinnati (OH) on May 2, 2025, with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Digital Media with a certificate in movie/film production.

Collin is the surviving son of Colerain Township (OH) Police Officer Dale Woods, EOW 1/7/2019.



Congratulations to **Michele Abbate** who captured not one, but two checkered flag victories at the Spring Mountain Sports Car Racing Series at the Charleston Peak North Track in December 2025.

Michele is the surviving sibling of Nevada Department of Public Safety Sergeant Michael Abbate, EOW 11/30/2023.

Wyatt Ray Knapp Miller graduated from Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi with a Bachelor's of Geospatial Science Degree on December 13, 2025. He is working in the field of surveying and engineering.

Wyatt is the surviving son of Texas State Trooper Kurt David Knapp, EOW 5/8/2004.



MARRIAGES/ENGAGEMENTS



Collin Woods became engaged to his high school sweetheart, Lacie, on May 30, 2025.

Collin is the surviving son of Colerain Township (OH) Police Officer Dale Woods, EOW 1/7/2019.



Amy Patrick was united in marriage to Travis Thill on October 11, 2025 in Osakis (MN).

Amy is the surviving daughter of Mendota Heights (MN) Police Officer Scott Patrick, EOW 7/30/2014.

MARRIAGES/ENGAGEMENTS CONTINUED...



Congratulations to **Valerie Zamarripa** who was united in marriage to Orlando Gonzales on December 31, 2025.

Valerie is the surviving mother of Dallas (TX) Police Officer Patrick Zamarripa, EOW 7/7/2016.



Congratulations to **Jennifer Williams** who became engaged to Michael Harris in November 2025.

Jennifer is the surviving co-worker of Colorado Department of Corrections Executive Director Thomas Clements, EOW 3/19/2013.

Congratulations to **James Mullen** who became engaged to his love, Nicole Emanuele, on January 31, 2026.

James is the surviving son of Suffolk County (NY) Detective Stephen J. Mullen, EOW 12/7/2018.



DEDICATIONS



Back in the summer of 2024, in Floresville (TX) family, friends, colleagues, and numerous law enforcement officers gathered at the Floresville Event Center to honor Trooper Kurt David Knapp, EOW 05/08/2004, with the dedication of a patrol vessel in his memory.

The watercraft will serve with the Texas Department of Public Safety's Marine Unit, standing as a lasting tribute to Trooper Knapp's service, commitment, and ultimate sacrifice.



DEDICATIONS CONTINUED...

On January 23, 2026, the Grand Glaize Bridge in Osage Beach (MO) was officially renamed to honor and remember Police Officer Phylicia Carson, EOW 8/31/2024. With remarks from Missouri Governor Mike Kehoe,



Missouri State Representative Jeff Vernetti, Osage Beach Police Chief Todd Davis, and Mayor Michael Harmison, the ceremony concluded with a ribbon cutting by the Carson family. A powerful reminder that her service and sacrifice will never be forgotten.



On January 23, 2026, the North Carolina Department of Transportation was joined by local officials, the Rocky Mount Police Department, others in law enforcement, and friends and family members of Rocky Mount Senior Police Officer Christopher J. Driver, EOW 6/23/2018, to rename the Sunset Avenue Bridge, located over Interstate 95, to honor and remember Officer Driver.



On December 11, 2025 the Til Valhalla Project presented a commemorative plaque to Roxy Cooper the surviving spouse of Joplin Police Corporal Benjamin L. Cooper, EOW 3/8/2022.

Ben's courage, commitment, and sacrifice will never be forgotten. His family and friends are grateful for organizations like C.O.P.S. and the Til Valhalla Project that ensure fallen heroes are honored and remembered forever.



This past fall, officers from the Rockwall (TX) Police Department attended the senior night band walk of Greyson Gaines, son of fallen Rockwall Police Officer Tracy Gaines, EOW 8/3/2020, in a show of support for the Gaines family and to honor Officer Gaines' memory.

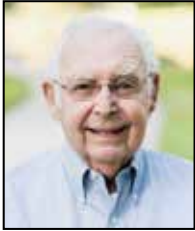


C.O.P.S. Sends Condolences to the Families of:



Joseph Mulay, 64, died November 6, 2025. Joseph was active in the Illinois Chapter of C.O.P.S. and was the Director of the famous Siblings Weekend skit "The News."

Joseph was the surviving sibling of Peoria County (IL) Deputy Sheriff James Mulay, EOW 5/19/2003.



Donald "Jim" Wass, 90, died October 31, 2025. Jim was an advocate in the state of Texas for C.O.P.S. and the programs - attending Parents Weekend 17 times since 2007.

Jim was the surviving father of Washington County (TX) Patrol Deputy Donald E. Wass, EOW 4/23/2006.



Lisa Dalton, 54, died August 18, 2025. Lisa was referred to as a beacon of light to all who knew her.

Lisa was the surviving spouse of Clallam County (WA) Deputy Wallace "Wally" Davis, EOW 8/5/2000.



Patricia Phillips, 76, died November 3, 2025. Patricia was predeceased by Claire Phillips, 75, who died November 22, 2020.

Patricia and Claire were the surviving mother and stepfather of Branch County (MI) Deputy Sheriff Michael Winter, EOW 5/31/2016.



Betty Emerick, 90, died December 5, 2025.

Betty was the surviving mother of Illinois Commerce Commission Police Officer Terry Jay Emerick, EOW 5/25/1994.



Thomas "Hal" Perez, 54, died February 19, 2026.

Hal was the husband of Beth Stauffer-Perez, surviving spouse of Tupelo (MS) Sergeant Kevin Stauffer Jr., EOW 12/23/2013.

Happy Anniversary

On January 15, 2026, DC-COPS Chapter members Theresa and Hector Dittamo, surviving parents of Metropolitan (DC) Police Officer Paul Dittamo, EOW 10/30/2010, celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary.

They marked the special occasion with a romantic meal at their local Burger King, followed by a family celebration at home the next day. Theresa and Hector are a true inspiration of courage, devotion, and enduring love.



CHAPTER CHATTER:

What is going on in your area?

Virginia C.O.P.S. members gathered on October 18, 2025, at Paradise Springs Winery in Clifton, (VA) for their 2nd Annual Social Event, enjoying great fellowship and picnic baskets prepared by the chapter on a beautiful fall day.



On October 29, 2025, Virginia C.O.P.S. participated in the “Standing with Survivors” Domestic Violence Awareness event hosted by the Office of the Attorney General of Virginia, where they shared resources and built meaningful community connections.

In November, the chapter hosted a survivor outing at Kings Dominion, bringing families together for a day of food, fellowship, and fun rides.



CHAPTER MEMBERS AT PARADISE SPRINGS WINERY



CHAPTER MEMBERS AT "STANDING WITH SURVIVORS"



Michigan C.O.P.S. hosted their annual Christmas luncheon on December 7, 2025, at the Crowne Plaza Lansing West in Lansing (MI). They were grateful for the strong attendance and the many surviving family members who joined.



The event began with the color guard, a soloist, and a candle-lighting ceremony honoring first-year survivors and those from past decades. Guests enjoyed a buffet meal, raffles, children’s activities, C.O.P.S. merchandise, and a special visit from Santa, who brought gifts for the children.



During the luncheon, the chapter honored the Warthogs, a Lansing-area motorcycle group of public safety professionals, and Brian Rendon presented the Carole Law Award to Joel Mires for their continued support and community involvement.



Arizona C.O.P.S. attended a local Christmas boutique in December 2025 where Marie Dryer connected with Patricia West, who designed a thoughtful and symbolic luggage tag for the COPS Walk Southwest. Although Pat has no personal ties to law enforcement, she felt a deep connection to the C.O.P.S. mission and poured her heart into creating something meaningful to honor our survivors.





Montana C.O.P.S. was honored to be selected by Bozeman High School senior Annika Swandal as the charity of choice for her senior fundraising project in November 2025. Annika, the daughter of a retired Bozeman Police Sergeant, chose to raise funds and awareness for the organization while also learning more about the C.O.P.S. mission.



Through her dedication, along with the support of the community and Cunningham’s Martial Arts, Annika raised just over \$12,000 for the chapter.

“I am extremely proud of everything we were able to accomplish,” Annika shared. “No one should have to go through those situations, and certainly not alone.”

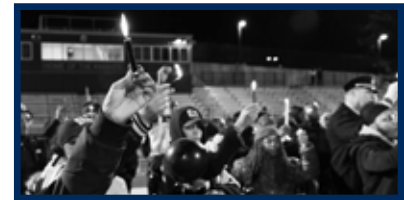


DC C.O.P.S. chapter members participated in a candlelight vigil, held at Ballou Senior High, honoring Metropolitan Police Officer Terry Bennett, EOW 1/7/2026.



Attended by students, faculty, local law enforcement, and Officer Bennett’s family, the ceremony featured a school choir performance, a 21-gun salute by the

Metropolitan Police Department’s Ceremonial Honor Guard, and the dedication of a memorial plaque to be permanently displayed in the main hallway. His former football coach, Mike Reynolds, shared heartfelt memories of his determination, and his younger sister spoke movingly about his humor and protective spirit.



The school also announced the creation of the annual “Officer Terry Bennett Memorial Scholarship,” to be awarded to a graduating senior pursuing a career in public service or law enforcement—continuing his legacy by supporting the next generation of heroes.



Illinois C.O.P.S. held their 19th Annual Blue Appreciation Gala on March 7th in Bloomington, welcoming more than 250 officers, survivors, and supporters. The Eternal Flame Awards recognized outstanding individuals, businesses, and departments supporting the Illinois Chapter.

Upcoming events include the 19th Annual Run to Remember on April 25th in Peoria, founded by surviving sibling Joe and his wife Mary Mulay, which helps send survivors to the State Memorial and National Police Week.

June 5–7, 2026, is the 2nd Annual Chris Oberheim Baseball Tournament, featuring a first responder parade, food trucks, and youth baseball, with proceeds supporting C.O.P.S. Survivor Weekends and Camps.

In July, the 21st Annual Cycle Across Illinois—the chapter’s largest fundraiser—honors fallen officers as riders travel across the state in remembrance.



West Central Florida C.O.P.S. participated in several events during the latter months of 2025. These included a 9/11 series honoring those lost in the terrorist attacks and a dedication at Pasco-Hernando State College, where 200 attendees witnessed the unveiling of a memorial for Lieutenant Bo Harrison, EOW 6/1/2003. The chapter also held its Christmas Party at ZooTampa which was attended by 70 members, and also organized a Project Blue Light event, bringing together 96 chapter members during the challenging holiday season.



Missouri C.O.P.S. attended the 9th Annual Missouri State Highway Patrol Trooper James M. Bava, EOW 8/28/2015, Toy Drive in 2025. This event was inspired from the remembrance of an incident from James and his older sister Katie's childhood. James won a Toys "R" Us gift card and purchased gifts to donate to the Salvation Army to help other kids. The Bava family travels all over the state of Missouri to collect and donate these gifts to uplift the holiday season in honor of their James.



Oregon C.O.P.S. hosted its annual Survivor Christmas Luncheon on December 7, 2025, at the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training. A Christmas tree was decorated, messages to fallen officers were placed on a wreath at the memorial wall, and ornaments were created to hang on the tree or take home. Music filled the room, Mr. and Mrs. Claus made a special visit, and many survivors gathered to share in remembrance.

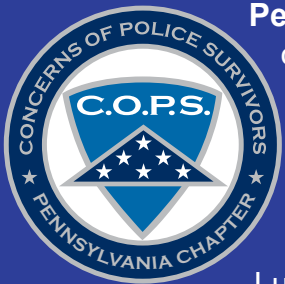


Northern Nevada C.O.P.S. is hosting their 9th Annual Evening In Blue on Saturday, April 25, 2026, at The Grand Sierra Resort in Reno (NV). There will be dinner, dancing, a keynote speaker - Officer Ann Marie Carrizales, and an amazing raffle! Tickets are available now!





Ohio C.O.P.S. held their Annual Holiday Party on November 22, 2025, at the Peace Officer Training Facility in London (OH). More than 100 survivors attended and enjoyed lunch, Santa's Workshop, caricature drawings, a bounce house, cookie decorating, Build-A-Bear activities, storytelling, bingo, and a special visit from Santa Claus.



Pennsylvania C.O.P.S. hosted a Halloween Luncheon on October 31, 2025 at the Hershey Lodge in Hershey, PA. Members in attendance participated in the event by dressing up in a costume! All that attended had a wonderful experience.



In December, the chapter held their Annual Christmas Luncheon in Bedford (PA) with several survivors attending for togetherness during the holiday season.



Metro New York C.O.P.S. members attended the 20th anniversary ceremony honoring NYPD Police Officer Kevin Lee, EOW 1/27/2006, held January 27, 2026, at Holy Name of Jesus, St. Gregory the Great Parish in New York City.



Kevin's 26-year-old son, Adam, who lives and works in South Korea, shared a video message expressing gratitude for those who shaped his life and appreciation for his grandparents. The Mass was attended by Kevin's family, NYPD leadership, members, and retirees of the Manhattan North Grand Larceny Unit, FOP Rocco Laurie Lodge 22, many surviving family members, and supporters.



Kansas C.O.P.S. hosted the Blue Blood Drive on January 7, helping collect 43 pints of blood.



On January 9, members delivered treats to 13 agencies for Law Enforcement Appreciation Day, receiving a warm and heartfelt welcome, reminding them that taking the time to physically reach out to our law enforcement community means more than they sometimes realize.



CONFIRMING HER PATH

LAYDEN HORNSBY, SURVIVING DAUGHTER, SAVES A LIFE



LAYDEN (DARK DRESS) POSES WITH HER FAMILY AFTER RECEIVING HER LIFESAVING AWARD.

On July 12, 2025, at approximately 10:45 a.m., a woman in the deep end of the American Fork Pool in Utah began experiencing a seizure while in the water. Lifeguards immediately recognized the severity of the situation and sprang into action.

They supported her above the surface to prevent submersion, carefully guided her to the side, and safely removed her from the pool onto the deck.

Relying on their training and responding without hesitation, the lifeguards initiated lifesaving measures. One staff member was directed to call 911 while the others began providing immediate care. Working seamlessly as a team, they assessed her condition and started CPR, maintaining calm communication and professionalism throughout the emergency. Their swift response ensured there was no delay in critical intervention.

When American Fork Fire & Rescue and paramedics arrived, they were escorted directly to the patient, who was lying poolside with CPR in progress. First responders determined she was in a life-threatening cardiac arrhythmia and administered a defibrillation shock. After another round of CPR, the patient regained a pulse and began breathing — a powerful testament to the importance of early intervention and coordinated teamwork.

Paramedics later shared that several bystanders commended the lifeguards for their quick and professional response, including a retired paramedic firefighter from California who witnessed the incident. First responders credited the lifeguards' immediate actions as a direct factor in the patient regaining a pulse prior to transport.

Among the lifeguards who helped save the woman's life was Layden Hornsby, whose calm and decisive actions helped make the difference that morning.

Layden is the surviving daughter of Killeen (TX) Police Officer Robert Hornsby, EOW 7/14/2013. Inspired by her father's legacy of service and sacrifice, she is currently studying to become an EMT and hopes to follow in his footsteps as a first responder.

"Being able to assist someone is something truly special," Layden shared. "Especially knowing firsthand what it looks like to lose someone you love due to a traumatic occurrence."

Layden said she is proud to have been part of a team that saved a life, "Taking part in this made it clear that I am making the correct career choice," she added.

She looks forward to continuing to serve others' most critical and vulnerable moments.



LAYDEN AND A GROUP POSE FOR A PHOTO AT YOUNG ADULTS CAMP 2025.

“BECAUSE I WANT TO HELP PEOPLE”



WRITTEN BY BRYAN HOLLINGSWORTH, FUTURE C.O.P.S. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - EFFECTIVE JULY 1, 2026

SURVIVING CO-WORKER OF DETECTIVE KEITH DRESSSEL, EOW 2/21/2007, OFFICER ANTHONY DIA, EOW 7/4/2020, & OFFICER BRANDON STALKER, EOW 1/18/2021



It's the answer nearly every prospective police officer gives when asked, "Why do you want to be a police officer?" during an interview for what many consider the greatest job in the world. My answer was no different, "Because I want to help people."

And so began my 25-year career with the Toledo Police Department in Toledo, Ohio. My answer was sincere, and I have spent most of my adult life striving to honor that commitment.

In high school, I was part of the first "Peer Helper" group at Delta High School. Even then, I felt drawn to supporting others. After graduation, I attended Kentucky Christian College to pursue a degree in ministry. I loved public speaking, but even more than that, I valued being present with people during trauma and tragedy—offering comfort and sharing hope in their darkest moments. While preaching sermons and teaching classes were meaningful experiences, I found the greatest fulfillment sitting with families in hospital rooms walking with them through grief and loss. I later joined the Clyde Police Department as a chaplain and, two years after that, I entered the Toledo Police Academy. I carried my ministry background with me into law enforcement and it shaped the way I approached the profession. Very early in my career, I developed a deep desire to care for officers as they

faced the emotional and psychological challenges of the job.

In 2006, just five years into my career, I attended "Traumas of Law Enforcement" training hosted by an organization I had not yet encountered—

Concerns of Police Survivors (C.O.P.S.). When our department began forming a peer support team, I immediately applied. I also interviewed for the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) officer position. Although I was not selected at that time, I was later promoted to sergeant and assigned to the Personnel Section, which oversaw the EAP officers. In that role, I gained direct access to the officers I felt called to serve, and was able to support many within our department.

In July 2020, I was serving as Commander of the Personnel Section when Officer Anthony Dia was shot and killed in the line of duty. I was responsible for overseeing the funeral arrangements and supporting the Dia family throughout the entire process. Anthony was killed early on a Sunday morning. Later that same day, I sat with his family and told them, "It's your job to ask for what you need; it's my job to make it happen."

With the strong support of Chief George Kral and a dedicated team coordinating every detail, Anthony's family was surrounded by an incredible outpouring of love and respect from fellow officers and the community. Tragically, just six months later, we experienced another devastating loss when Officer Brandon Stalker was shot and killed in the line of duty. Once again, I had the solemn responsibility of walking alongside a grieving family and our department through unimaginable sorrow.

Caring for two fallen officers' families within a single year—including during National Police Week—deepened my connection to C.O.P.S. I witnessed firsthand the extraordinary care, logistical



BRYAN AND HIS HORSE, ROOKIE, POSE FOR A PHOTO WHILE ON DUTY.



BRYAN AND OTHER OFFICERS FROM THE TOLEDO POLICE DEPARTMENT ATTENDING "PIZZA WITH THE POLICE."



BRYAN AND HIS FAMILY POSE FOR A PHOTO ON THE DAY OF HIS PROMOTION TO CAPTAIN.

excellence, and unwavering compassion that define the organization. Inspired by that experience, I became the Law Enforcement Liaison for the Ohio Chapter of C.O.P.S., supporting escort officers from Ohio beginning in 2023.

As I approached eligibility for retirement, Dianne Bernhard announced her retirement. Though I humbly admit I lacked confidence that I would be selected, I applied for what I consider a dream role. There is no organization I would rather serve and no mission closer to my heart than caring for the more than the 87,000 survivors supported by C.O.P.S. I am deeply committed to raising awareness of their needs,

honoring their loved ones, and helping rebuild lives after unimaginable loss.

I am profoundly grateful for the trust placed in me by the Board, and I promise to lead C.O.P.S. with compassion, dedication, and purpose as we enter this next chapter together.



BRYAN IS CONGRATULATED BY C.O.P.S. NATIONAL PRESIDENT, DAVE WALLACE, DURING THE JANUARY BOARD MEETING.

WHAT TO KNOW ABOUT THE C.O.P.S. TLE TRAININGS



Who Should Attend?

Law Enforcement Administrators, Officers and Deputies, Peer Support and Employee Assistance Personnel, Planning and Research, Chaplains, Survivors, and Law Enforcement Spouses.

Curriculum

LODD Preparation, PSOB Benefits, Injured Officer & Disability Issues, Law Enforcement Research Findings, General Orders, Implementing Agency Liaisons, Peer Support, Surviving the Law Enforcement Career, Stress & Trauma Issues, Survivor Support, Police Suicide, Funeral Planning & Protocol, C.O.P.S. Programs & Resources, and Personal Triumphs.

Peer Support

Peer Support will be on site and will be available for anyone who may be impacted by the discussion topics.

UPCOMING TRAINING LOCATIONS

June 15 - 17
Spokane, Washington

June 29 - July 1
Charleston, South Carolina

July 27 - 29
Louisville, Kentucky

August 17 - 19
El Paso, Texas

September 14 - 16
Newark, New Jersey



Register Now

PHOTO RECAP

Enjoy these photos from the final 2025 Survivor Weekends/Camps!

Extended Family Weekend



Suicide Survivors Fall Weekend



Parents Weekend



REMAINING

C.O.P.S. 2026



WEEKENDS AND CAMPS

SUICIDE SURVIVORS SUMMER WEEKEND // JUNE 12 - 15
YMCA TROUT LODGE - POTOSI, MO

ADULT CHILDREN'S WEEKEND // JUNE 19 - 22
YMCA TROUT LODGE - POTOSI, MO

KIDS CAMP // JULY 13 - 18
SALVATION ARMY WONDERLAND CAMP - SALEM, WI

YOUNG ADULTS CAMP // JULY 27 - 31
EPWORTH BY THE SEA - ST. SIMONS ISLAND, GA

FIANCÉS & SIGNIFICANT OTHERS WEEKEND // AUGUST 14 - 17
YMCA TROUT LODGE - POTOSI, MO

SIBLINGS WEEKEND // SEPTEMBER 11 - 14
YMCA OF THE ROCKIES - ESTES PARK, CO

SPOUSES WEEKEND // SEPTEMBER 18 - 21
YMCA OF THE ROCKIES - ESTES PARK, CO

CO-WORKERS WEEKEND // OCTOBER 2 - 5
YMCA OF THE ROCKIES - ESTES PARK, CO

EXTENDED FAMILY WEEKEND // OCTOBER 9 - 12
YMCA TROUT LODGE - POTOSI, MO

SUICIDE SURVIVORS FALL WEEKEND // OCTOBER 16 - 19
YMCA TROUT LODGE - POTOSI, MO

PARENTS WEEKEND // OCTOBER 23 - 26
C.A. VINES ARKANSAS 4-H CENTER - LITTLE ROCK, AR



SURVIVOR SPOTLIGHT

WRITTEN BY DIANNE BLUE, SURVIVING MOTHER OF
DE KALB COUNTY (GA) POLICE OFFICER IVORIE KLUSMANN, EOW 8/10/2013

As I share my journey, my purpose is to let grieving parents know they are not alone. I am a C.O.P.S. survivor and a surviving mother. I lost my son, Officer Ivorie G. Klusmann, who was killed in the line of duty on August 10, 2013, in DeKalb County, Georgia. His loss was devastating to our entire family and me.

When the news came, there was no gentle knock—just blue lights flashing through our windows, shattering our world. The shock and heartbreak were beyond words. Ivorie left behind two sons, six siblings, and his loving parents. He was known for his radiant, million-dollar smile and a personality that lit up every room. People loved him—even those he pulled over. His dedication to his role as a police officer was unwavering and he took great pride in serving his community. Ivorie served alongside his younger brother, Elisha Blue. They were inseparable on the force—brothers in life and in service. Their bond was something special.

After our lives were shattered, I traveled to Washington, D.C., to honor my son among other fallen heroes. I don't remember much from that time because I was still deep in grief, but I remember how

fantastic the experience was—and how C.O.P.S. helped carry me through my pain.

I met Mr. Roger from C.O.P.S., who encouraged me to attend the Parents Weekend. When I first went in 2013, I was overwhelmed with

pain and heartbreak. I didn't know what to expect. I saw other parents grieving—some crying, some laughing—and I honestly did not want to be there. I

felt like no one truly understood my pain.

But by the end of that weekend, I felt surrounded by love from parents who knew exactly what I was feeling. It was powerful to connect with people who understood the unique pain of losing a child in the line of duty—especially when you still have other children and, without realizing it, you've shut them out. C.O.P.S. helped me begin putting my family back together.

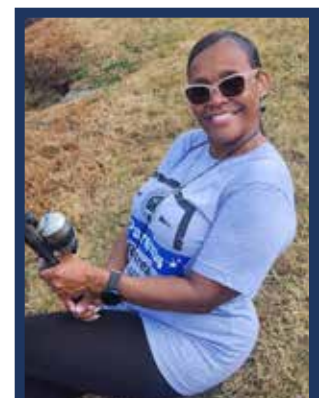
One of the counselors, Reverend Chuck, showed me God's love in such a powerful way during that weekend. One moment that still touches my heart happened when I went into a small store at the weekend center. I saw a little brown puppy in the window and wanted to buy it, but it was already sold. I returned to my room feeling disappointed. When I opened the door, the puppy was sitting on my pillow. That moment reminded me that God was still watching over me, even in my pain. It was as if the surprise gift reassured me that joy could return to my life and that I was still cared for, despite the darkness of grief.

For the past 12 years, I have attended the C.O.P.S. Parents Weekends and participated in the Fort Worth Survivors' Weekend. When C.O.P.S. invited me to share my journey with other parents, I felt deeply honored and whole heartedly agreed.

When I shared my story at Surviving to Thriving, the room



DIANNE AND HER SON, IVORIE.



DIANNE SMILES FOR A PHOTO WHILE FISHING AT PARENTS WEEKEND



DIANNE AND A GROUP OF SURVIVING PARENTS AT PARENTS WEEKEND

was filled with survivors. I didn't realize how many lives I touched—especially adult child survivors. Many shared that they, too, had felt ignored as their parents struggled with grief.

“THROUGH THOSE CONVERSATIONS, I REALIZED I HAD BEEN HURTING MY OWN CHILDREN WITHOUT EVEN KNOWING IT.”

Over 12 years of attending Parents Weekend and other survivor events, I have grown stronger—emotionally, spiritually, and physically. I have learned to lean on God for my strength. Now, each C.O.P.S. Weekend is a blessing: I support first-time parents and reconnect with old friends who have walked this journey alongside me.

C.O.P.S. creates a loving environment for healing through laughter, dancing, movies, fishing, cooking, counseling sessions, and meaningful conversations. One of the most special moments is the night of dancing and honoring parents who have gone home to be with the Lord.



DIANNE SMILES FOR A PHOTO AT PARENTS WEEKEND

C.O.P.S. does so much for surviving parents—many of whom bear unimaginable pain. I find joy in helping others smile again. By the end of each retreat, everyone knows Dianne Blue—by my smile, my dancing, and the heartfelt

conversations I share with other parents.

Our family will always cherish our son's memory—his smile, his love, and his joy. I encourage other surviving parents to reach out and connect with those who are walking the same path. Trust that God will place the right people in your life, bringing comfort and understanding along the way.

We are survivors. Your child's memory will forever live in your heart and in the hearts of all who loved them. I am grateful to C.O.P.S. for allowing me to serve other parents and to God for continually healing my heart.

PROVIDED BY C.O.P.S.

PARENTS WEEKEND

C.A. Vines Arkansas
4-H Center
Little Rock, AR



OCTOBER 23 - 26, 2026



"Since our first time, we have met amazing people and have created lifelong friendships that have helped us to stay connected and grounded."
- 2025 Attendee



REGISTRATION DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 23RD

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK

MAY 11-17, 2026 // WASHINGTON, D.C.



C.O.P.S. EVENT INFORMATION

C.O.P.S. National Police Survivors' Conference May 14th & 16th // Washington Hilton (Host Hotel)

The National Police Survivors' Conference provides surviving family members and co-workers a supportive environment to connect with peers, mental health professionals, inspirational speakers, and educational seminars focused on navigating grief. Assistance is also available for those seeking information about Public Safety Officers' Benefits.

Held during National Police Week, sessions take place May 14 and May 16 at the Washington Hilton. Attendees learn more about the grief process and C.O.P.S. resources. A light breakfast and lunch are included each day, and returning survivors are responsible for the conference meal fee.



C.O.P.S. Kids/Teens Program May 14th & 16th // Various Locations

Surviving children, stepchildren, and siblings in Kindergarten–12th grade may attend the C.O.P.S. Kids/Teens Program, which provides age-appropriate grief counseling and activities. The program is held off-site at local law enforcement academies, with lunch provided on the 14th and 16th. Additional details and required paperwork will be sent to the parent or guardian. Pre-registration is required.



C.O.P.S. Blue Family BBQ May 16th // Washington Hilton (Host Hotel) 6:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.

Join us at the Washington Hilton for the Blue Family BBQ, an evening for survivors to relax, enjoy music, dance, and share a BBQ dinner. Activities for all ages include bounce houses, Critters for C.O.P.S. Kids, temporary tattoos, a photo booth, and more.

This informal event offers a chance to unwind from the week's events while connecting with fellow survivors.



To register or obtain additional NPW information: concernsofpolicesurvivors.org/aboutnpw

Remember, C.O.P.S. is always here for you: 573-346-4911.

BLUE HONOR



Join us for a formal evening of honor and tribute to our fallen heroes during National Police Week.

Thursday, May 14th

6:00 PM

Washington Hilton

\$150/Ticket - \$1,400/Table

Must be purchased by May 1, 2026.

Blue/Black formal attire is expected.
Uniforms are acceptable.

Purchase tickets by scanning
the QR code or visit:

concernsofpolicesurvivors.org

Musical Guests:

**Country Music
Recording Artist**

DREW BALDRIDGE



Followed by

**CHRIS DARLINGTON
& BAND**



SCAN FOR TICKETS

GALA

HOW YOU CAN HELP SUPPORT C.O.P.S.



Over the past five years, the number of C.O.P.S.' members has increased by 35 percent. Throughout this time, C.O.P.S. has worked diligently to maintain, and enhance, the support and programs available to survivors.

With more survivors participating in programs and rising costs at event venues, expenses have increased significantly. Approximately one-third of C.O.P.S. expenses are reimbursed through a federal grant from the Bureau of Justice Assistance, but the organization relies on donors to help cover the remaining costs. While revenue has remained steady thanks to the generosity of our donors, expenses exceeded revenue for the first time in recent history in 2025.

Fortunately, C.O.P.S. was able to cover the shortfall by last year by utilizing reserve funds. While this provided a temporary solution, it is not sustainable as a long-term strategy.

So, how can you help?

SIGN UP FOR A SMALL AUTOMATIC MONTHLY DONATION. A SMALL DONATION FROM MANY CAN ADD UP QUICK!

BUY ONE RAFFLE TICKET OR MORE! THE DEVELOPMENT TEAM IS ALMOST ALWAYS RAFFLING OFF AMAZING ITEMS THAT HAVE BEEN DONATED TO C.O.P.S. THIS COULD BE A WIN FOR YOU AND FOR C.O.P.S.!

SPONSOR A SCHOLARSHIP FOR A CHILD OF A FALLEN OFFICER. INDIVIDUAL SPONSORSHIPS ARE AVAILABLE AND MAKE A HUGE DIFFERENCE!

SCAN TO DONATE



1919 Raffle

PLAN A FUNDRAISING EVENT AND CHOOSE C.O.P.S. AS YOUR BENEFACTOR. EVENTS ARE ANOTHER WAY SURVIVORS CAN MAKE A BIG IMPACT WHILE SPENDING TIME TOGETHER.

PARTICIPATE IN A COPS WALK EACH OCTOBER OR FEBRUARY. HAVE FUN WITH YOUR FRIENDS WHILE ALSO HELPING C.O.P.S.! SCAN THE QR CODE TO LEARN MORE!



SPECIAL EVENTS

NAME C.O.P.S. AS A BENEFACTOR IN YOUR TRUST OR YOUR WILL. OUR STAFF WOULD BE HAPPY TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT YOUR PLANNED GIVING OPTIONS.

PURCHASE A MEMORIAL FLAG IN MEMORY OF YOUR OFFICER. C.O.P.S. LOVES TO MAKE SURE OFFICERS ARE ALWAYS REMEMBERED!



FLAGS

TRANSFER A STOCK OR BOND STRAIGHT INTO C.O.P.S. INVESTMENT ACCOUNT OR CHOOSE C.O.P.S. WHEN YOU ARE REQUIRED TO TAKE DISBURSEMENTS FROM YOUR RETIREMENT ACCOUNTS AND ENJOY THE TAX ADVANTAGES.

DONATE A SILENT AUCTION ITEM TO BE AUCTIONED AT ONE OF THE C.O.P.S. EVENTS. WE LOVE TO SEE ITEMS FROM ALL OF THE REGIONS, AND SURVIVORS LOVE TO BROWSE SILENT AUCTIONS DURING EVENTS!



MAKE A \$100 DONATION TO RECEIVE A PERSONALIZED HOLIDAY ORNAMENT.

ATTEND THE BLUE HONOR GALA DURING NATIONAL POLICE WEEK. THIS EVENT HELPS OFFSET SOME OF THE COSTS OF NATIONAL POLICE WEEK EACH YEAR.



SCAN FOR TICKETS



1919 SAVAGE MODEL 99

RAFFLE TO SUPPORT LAW ENFORCEMENT SURVIVORS

On September 8, 2025, the C.O.P.S. National Office received a special guest who brought an extraordinary gift. Dave VanBoxtaele had driven all the way from Flagstaff, Arizona, to donate a rare 1919 Savage Model 99 rifle he had been restoring since February 2020.

“My initial plan was to re-stock the rifle, get the metal re-finished and blued, and put a nice checkering pattern on the new stock,” said VanBoxtaele. He would soon realize the rifle began to take on a life of its own.

VanBoxtaele purchased a fancy walnut semi-inletted stock from Wenig Custom Stocks, completed hours of shaping and exterior fitting, sanded it down to being “whiskered,” and gave it a “filled” oil finish. Then he began the checkering pattern using a combination point and scalloped pattern on both the front and rear stocks and cut it in at 26 lines per inch. He said, “My intent was never to do an ‘original’ restoration.”

Weeks of work continued, including ensuring the receiver and other metal pieces were polished to a fine luster. VanBoxtaele knew the early Savage 99 Deluxe



models from the early 20th century were beautifully and elaborately engraved, and even though this rifle was never a deluxe model, he was about to make it one.

Enlisting the help of a recent gunsmith program graduate, the decision was made to engrave approximately 70% of the receiver along with a picture of an 8-point whitetail buck on the bottom of the receiver. The engraving process took 8 months and cost over \$4,000. In the months that followed, the rifle was color-case hardened, fully restored, and reassembled. A custom carrying case was also created as “take down” rifles were historically stored in one.





Four appraisals were done for this rifle with the average value being listed at \$17,500. The details, precision, care, and uniqueness of this rifle is simply priceless.

VanBoxtaele is a retired police officer from the Flagstaff Police Department. He lost two friends and co-workers in the line of duty and says restoring rifles became a sense of healing as it not only allowed him time to remember his friends, but he knew this particular rifle had a higher purpose. He said, "My only wish is that it can be of benefit to the C.O.P.S. organization and the families of the men and women who put their life on the line every day."

To acquire your chance at winning this one-of-a-kind rifle, scan the QR code below or visit the special events portion of the C.O.P.S. national website at concernsofpolicesurvivors.org. All proceeds from the raffle will support survivor weekends and camps, as well as law enforcement trainings. The drawing will be held once all raffle tickets are sold.



1919 Raffle

**SCAN THE QR CODE AND ENTER FOR
A CHANCE TO WIN**

COPS WALK SOUTHWEST

COPS Walk Southwest was held in Buckeye (AZ) on February 20–22, as 32 walkers came together to support the mission of C.O.P.S. Over two days, participants completed 25 miles, walking in remembrance of fallen heroes.

Their efforts raised more than \$56,000 towards providing support and hope to the families and co-workers through C.O.P.S. programs and services. Every mile walked and every dollar raised served as a powerful tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

This meaningful event would not have been possible without the generosity of donors and the dedication of volunteers. Their time, energy, and support helped make COPS Walk Southwest a true success.



LAW ENFORCEMENT APPRECIATION DAY

National C.O.P.S. Blue Blood Drive





FINANCIAL RESILIENCE

FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT AND THEIR FAMILIES

“JUSTICE FEDERAL IS DEDICATED TO SUPPORTING THE SURVIVORS OF FALLEN LAW ENFORCEMENT BY OFFERING RESOURCES THAT PROMOTE THEIR FINANCIAL SECURITY.”

JUDY POLLARD, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT MANAGER AND CERTIFIED CREDIT UNION FINANCIAL COUNSELOR FOR JUSTICE FEDERAL CREDIT UNION



Law enforcement officers serve their communities in environments that are often unpredictable, high-pressure, and emotionally demanding. Shift work, critical incidents, public scrutiny, and the responsibility of protecting others can create significant stress. While departments emphasize physical safety and mental health, one critical component of overall well-being is sometimes overlooked: financial wellness. For many families, financial uncertainty is one of the leading causes of stress, and in law enforcement households—where income structures, overtime fluctuations, and early retirement considerations are common—financial stability requires intentional planning.

Financial resilience is the ability to withstand and adapt to life’s unexpected financial challenges. These challenges may include sudden medical expenses, injury, job transitions, changes in overtime income, family emergencies, or major life events such as buying a home, funding education, or preparing for retirement. Building financial resilience does not necessarily require a higher salary; instead, it requires thoughtful money management, preparation, and consistent decision-making aligned with long-term goals.



The foundation of financial resilience begins with a comprehensive financial plan. A written plan serves as a roadmap, outlining clear short- and long-term objectives and identifying the steps required to reach them. This may include establishing an emergency fund, reducing debt, saving for a down payment, investing for retirement, or preparing for a child’s education. A plan also provides structure during uncertain times, helping families make decisions with clarity rather than emotion.

Understanding spending habits is an essential early step. Tracking monthly expenses—both fixed costs such as housing, utilities, and insurance, and variable expenses such as dining, entertainment, or discretionary purchases—offers valuable insight. Many families are surprised to discover small recurring expenses that add up over time. By evaluating these patterns, households can identify opportunities to redirect funds toward savings or debt reduction.

Debt management plays a critical role in strengthening financial stability. High-interest debt, particularly credit card balances, can significantly limit financial progress. Prioritizing repayment of debts with the highest interest rates first can reduce overall costs and accelerate financial freedom. Consolidation strategies or structured repayment plans may also help simplify obligations and reduce stress. As debt decreases, more income becomes available for savings and long-term investments.

Establishing a dedicated emergency fund is one of the most powerful tools for financial resilience. Financial professionals commonly recommend setting aside three to six months of essential living expenses in a readily accessible account. This reserve acts as a financial safety net, allowing families to manage unexpected expenses without relying on credit or disrupting long-term investments. Choosing the right savings account can enhance growth. High-yield savings accounts, such as Justice Federal's Freedom Direct Savings—which offers up to 4.00% APY with qualifying direct deposit—provide competitive returns, no minimum balance requirements, and convenient access to funds when needed.

In addition to planning and saving, financial education is key. Many individuals feel uncomfortable discussing personal finances, yet expanding knowledge reduces fear and builds confidence. Understanding topics such as retirement systems, pension benefits, tax-advantaged accounts, insurance coverage, and investment strategies empowers families to make informed decisions. Law enforcement officers, in particular, may benefit from specialized guidance that accounts for pension structures, shift differentials, and early retirement planning.

Justice Federal, serving those who serve since 1935, demonstrates a longstanding commitment to supporting law enforcement professionals and their families. Through complimentary financial counseling services, certified professionals assist members in creating spending plans, restructuring debt, and aligning financial decisions with long-term goals.



Ultimately, financial wellness strengthens overall resilience—physically, mentally, and emotionally. For law enforcement families, building financial stability is about more than numbers; it is about reducing stress, increasing confidence, and creating a secure foundation for the future. By taking proactive steps today, officers and their loved ones can ensure they are prepared for whatever tomorrow may bring.

C.O.P.S. SINCERELY THANKS JUSTICE FEDERAL CREDIT UNION FOR THEIR UNWAVERING SUPPORT OF SURVIVORS. SINCE 2011, JUSTICE FEDERAL CREDIT UNION HAS DONATED NEARLY \$700,000 IN SUPPORT OF THE C.O.P.S. MISSION.



One Card For Everything. Everywhere.

Every purchase supports Concerns of Police Survivors.

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on ALL purchases

2% APR* 12-Month Introductory Rate
on all cash advances and balance transfers

11.90% Non-Variable APR*
after 12 months on purchases, balance transfers and cash advances

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No Annual Fee

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Apply Now

Visit jfcu.org/COPS or call 800.550.5328



*APR = Annual Percentage Rate. Offer as of February 1, 2026. Subject to credit approval. Membership with Justice Federal must be established via a share account prior to the approval of the C.O.P.S. Credit Card. An introductory rate of 0% on purchases and a 2% introductory rate on balance transfers and cash advances will apply for the twelve-month introductory period immediately following the date your account is established (except for any cardholders who have had a Justice Federal Credit Card within the last 3 years, and all Share Secured VISA accountholders). C.O.P.S. VISA Credit Card subject to the following: Balance transfer fee, cash advance fee or convenience check fee: either 2.00% of the advance or \$10 whichever is greater (\$100 maximum). Foreign transaction fees: 1.00% of each foreign currency transaction in U.S. dollars or 1.00% of each U.S. Dollar transaction that occurs in a foreign country. Credit card has no annual fee. To view the Credit Card Account Agreement and Federal Disclosure Statement visit www.jfcu.org.

Federally Insured by NCUA

C.O.P.S. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. C.O.P.S. programs and services are funded by grants and donations.

C.O.P.S. Scholarships

C.O.P.S. Granted \$147,295.91 in Scholarships for the 2026 Spring Semester.

Several benefactors help C.O.P.S. provide these scholarships. The scholarship fund has provided over \$2.8 million in scholarships to survivors since 1993.

Recipients of the 2026 C.O.P.S. Spring scholarship are:



Natalee Afolayan

The University of Texas at Austin
Child of Nathaniel Afolayan, EOW 5/1/2009

Karen Blann

Ivy Tech Saint Joseph's College
Spouse of Craig Blann, EOW 9/6/2004

Taylor Born

Heidelberg University
Adult Child of Dominic Francis, EOW 3/31/2022

Heather Canavan

Hofstra University
Adult Child of Kevin Canavan, EOW 6/30/2024

Kyle Clerge

Southern New Hampshire University
Adult Child of Sony Clerge, EOW 8/20/2021

Kaitlin Denner

University of Hawaii, Manoa
Child of Kevin Denner, EOW 5/6/2013

Kaitlyn Denney

Pepperdine University Seaver College
Child of Jeremiah MacKay, EOW 2/12/2013

Stephanie Dixon

Purdue Global
Spouse of Nicholas Dixon, EOW 7/8/2019

Tiauna Douglas

Texas A&M International University
Adult Child of Thomas Douglas, EOW 3/10/2004

Jailil Dukes

Xavier College of Pharmacy
Adult Child of Thelonious Dukes, EOW 11/9/2007

Jacob Favela

Chapman University
Child of Steve Favela, EOW 11/26/2006

Amir Ferguson

Gwinnett Technical College
Child of Kahlil Biddle, EOW 8/17/2021

Krystin Ferrara

New York Institute of Technology School of
Osteopathic Medicine
Adult Child of Keith Ferrara, EOW 5/29/2019

Samantha Francom

Grand Valley State University
Child of Jared Francom, EOW 1/5/2012

Grace Gaunt

University of Utah
Child of Brian Gaunt, EOW 10/24/2021

Nicole Gilner

University of Alabama at Birmingham
Adult Child of Stephen Gilner, EOW 7/24/1999

Whitney Grant

Meridian University
Adult Child of David Grant, EOW 5/31/2004

Graham Harris

Belhaven University
Child of Bradley Harris, EOW 12/22/2020

Jennifer Hernandez-Reyes

Universidad Anna G. Mendez
Spouse of Jorge Sanchez-Santiago, EOW 8/15/2009

Adelina Herrera

Bellevue University
Adult Child of Luis Herrera, EOW 9/7/2020

Walter Jenkins III

The University of Tampa
Child of Walter Jenkins, EOW 5/11/2022

Carson Jobe

University of Central Oklahoma
Child of Jerry Jobe, EOW 9/11/2010

Adrian Junco-Seals

Northeastern University
Adult Child of Joseph Seals, EOW 12/10/2019

Joshua Katherman

Simpson University
Child of Michael Katherman, EOW 6/14/2016

Kaitlyn Kennedy

Abilene Christian University
Adult Child of Korby Kennedy, EOW 6/25/2015

Tyler Kilpatrick

Adelphi University
Adult Child of John Kilpatrick, EOW 4/16/2024

Michael Kunovich Jr.

John Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies
Adult Child of Michael Kunovich, EOW 5/19/2023

Julian LaRosa

University of Florida
Adult Child of Julio LaRosa, EOW 1/3/2012

Kendall Lee

Rhode Island School of Design
Child of Nicholas Lee, EOW 3/7/2014

Mikhail Lee

Dine College
Adult Child of Michael Lee, EOW 6/18/2020

Emily Lewis

Syracuse University
Child of Andrew Lewis, EOW 3/5/2017

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Southeastern Nazarene University
Adult Child of William McClendon, EOW 10/1/2006

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University of Tennessee
Child of Christopher McDonnell, EOW 5/6/2020

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Keiser University
Spouse of Gregory Melita, EOW 3/9/2019

Daniel Mendoza IV

California State University of Fullerton
Adult Child of Daniel Mendoza, III, EOW 5/30/2020

Tyler Mosher

University of Kansas
Child of Michael Mosher, EOW 5/3/2020

Jenefer Nelson

Oklahoma State University
Spouse of Christopher Nelson, EOW 7/19/2022

Brandon One Feather

Michigan State University
Adult Child of Kelmar One Feather, EOW 7/1/2000

Ilia Ortiz

Wake Forest School of Medicine
Adult Child of Norberto Ortiz Ocasio, EOW 8/11/1993

Sole Pabon-Velez

University of Puerto Rico in Rio Piedras
Adult Child of Edwin Pabon-Robles, EOW 9/23/2016

Addison Payne

Shenandoah University
Child of Justin Payne, EOW 8/7/2019

Morgan Pollitz

Herzing University
Child of Michael Pollitz, EOW 11/30/2011

Kimberly Redd

Freed-Hardeman University
Spouse of Geoffrey Redd, EOW 2/18/2023

Jaiden Rivera-Crespo

Universidad de Puerto Rico Aguadilla
Child of Carlos Rivera-Vega, EOW 1/21/2014

Diego Rodriguez-Vazquez

University of Puerto Rico, Rio Piedras Campus
Child of Felix Rodriguez-Gomez, EOW 3/23/2010

Sadia Ruiz-Baxter

University of Central Florida
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Dara Runyon

Montclair University
Adult Child of Frederick Baker, EOW 7/30/1997

Ariana Salim-Johnson

UCF College of Medicine
Adult Child of Joseph Johnson, EOW 5/30/2019

Cristina Schiavone

Long Island University Post
Adult Child of James Schiavone, EOW 12/12/2017

Collin Schneider

Grand Canyon University
Child of Shawn Schneider, EOW 12/30/2011

Eric Schroeder

St. Vincent College
Child of Jonathan Schroeder, EOW 8/31/2006

Jordan Silvera

St. Johns University
Adult Child of Shawn Silvera, EOW 9/6/2005

Ethan Slifko

Hamline University
Child of Cory Slifko, EOW 11/5/2019

Maya Slifko

University of St. Thomas
Child of Cory Slifko, EOW 11/5/2019

Benjamin Sloan

Grand Canyon University
Adult Child of Patrick Sloan, EOW 10/31/2020

Zander Smith

University of New Haven
Adult Child of James Smith, EOW 4/9/2021

Jazlyn Smith

Campbellsville University
Adult Child of James Smith, EOW 4/9/2021

Kaylin Snook

Cornerstone University
Child of Patrick Snook, EOW 12/27/2020

Monica Surian

Providence College
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Tamaira Tokley

Lasalle University
Adult Child of Erin Tokley, EOW 3/3/2021

Joslyn Tome

Harrisburg Area Community College
Child of David Tome, EOW 10/21/2008

John VanDenberg

Kent State University
Adult Child of Sean VanDenberg, EOW 12/25/2021

Margaret Vera

Long Island University
Adult Child of Nemesio Vera, EOW 12/3/2020

Aubrey Wall

PACE University
Child of Michael Wall, EOW 4/30/2021

Emalie Wall

Amberton University
Adult Child of Ronnie Lerma, EOW 9/21/1998

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Adult Child of Douglas Wendel, EOW 7/30/2003

Harrison White

Liberty University
Adult Child of Robert White, EOW 11/1/2014

Annette-Rene White

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Adult Child of Caleb Rule, EOW 5/29/2020

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Wyoming College of Law
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Adult Child of Hubert Yancey, EOW 11/28/2003

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Spouse of Jose Barraza, EOW 4/18/2016

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Sacred Heart University
Child of Robert Zane, Jr., EOW 5/12/2009

Deadline dates for scholarship applications are as follows:

Summer Semester - April 1 // Fall Semester - June 1 // Winter/Spring Semesters - October 1

C.O.P.S. scholarships are awarded to surviving children and spouses of law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty, who are enrolled in under-graduate and post-graduate studies at an accredited college or university, or an accredited trade/vocational school. An independent Scholarship Committee determines recipients.

Scholarships are not awarded to survivors who are entitled to a tuition-free education as a state death benefit. APPLY ONLINE at concernsofpolicesurvivors.org



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Thank you to our generous donors who contributed \$250 or higher between October 2, 2025 and February 1, 2026. Your continuous support is greatly appreciated!

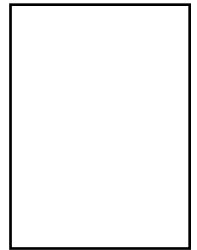
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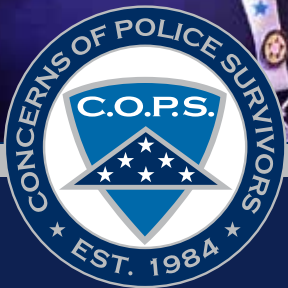
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