

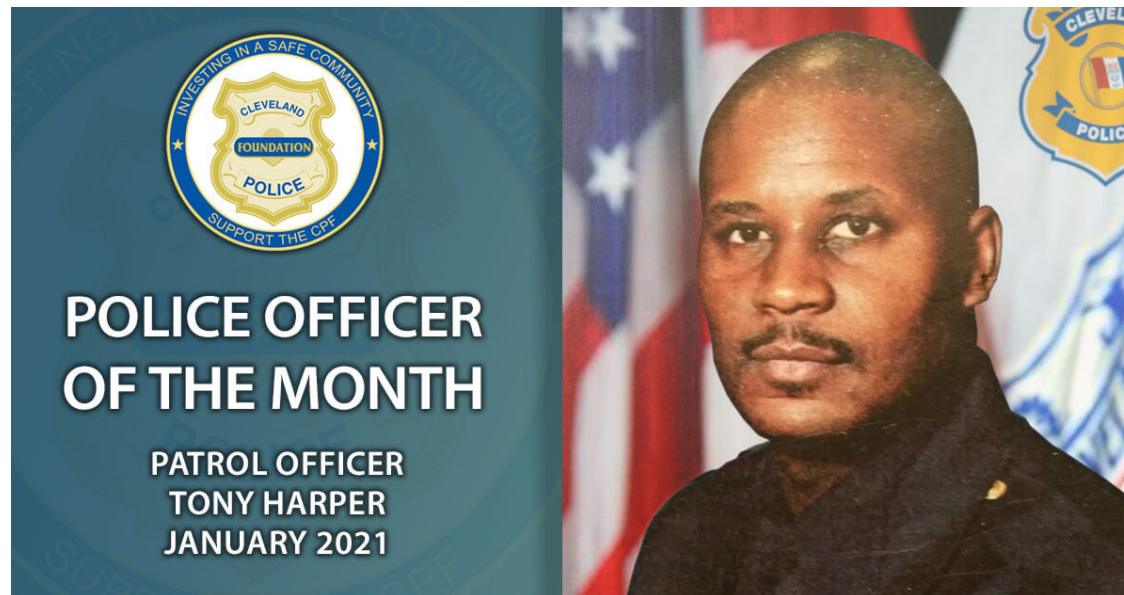
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FEBRUARY 2021

THE PARTNER

The Partner is the official newsletter of the Cleveland Police Foundation



The Cleveland Police Foundation is honored to recognize Patrol Officer Tony Harper as the January 2021 Police Officer of the Month.

For over 24 years, **Patrol Officer Tony Harper** has been with the Cleveland Division of Police and has served in the Community Policing Unit. During that time, PO Harper was involved in many community and child-related programs. They include D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education), G.R.E.A.T. (Gang Resistance Education and Training), R.A.D.

(Rape Aggression Defense), the Law Enforcement Explorers Program, and the Cleveland Police Athletic League (P.A.L.).

Officer Harper has been a big part of the Cleveland P.A.L. program for over 18 years, volunteering hundreds of hours of his own time in addition to his regular work hours. Much to the enjoyment of the youngsters, the officer could also be found playing music as a professional DJ, appearing around town throughout the year and at Camp George Forbes in Highland Hills (a recreational activity site run by the City of Cleveland).

When asked about Officer Harper's involvement in the P.A.L. program, Executive Director Bob Kumazec stated "Tony epitomizes what it means to be a police officer dedicated to his community. He has helped countless families and youngsters during his career in many different ways and in many different roles."

It is because of his dedication to the community he serves that the Cleveland Police Foundation is proud to name Patrol Officer Tony Harper its **Police Officer of the Month for January 2021**.

[More about the Police Officer of the Month Program . . .](#)



JANUARY 2021 COMMUNITY PARTNER Jim Craciun

Jim Craciun (center) with CPF Staff Bob Guttu and Keith Sulzer

January 2021 Community Partner of the Month

As a young adult in 1974, **Jim Craciun** was asked by a Catholic priest to help smuggle Bibles and catechism books into Communist-ruled Romania. Jim agreed and successfully completed the mission. That experience not only solidified his lifetime advocacy for religious freedom but also his love for his fellow man.

At the present time, Jim serves proudly as the Vice President of the Cleveland Police Foundation and is a true supporter of the men and women of the Cleveland Division of Police. Before the COVID-19 pandemic took over our way of life, Jim could always be found at CPF events.

When the CPD lost two of its Heroes in Blue in September 2020, Jim found out that Officer Nick Sabo's family was having financial issues. Through his [Craciun-Berry Funeral home](#), all arrangements for the funeral service of PO Sabo were handled at no cost to the family. Jim also made it his personal mission to ensure a flag was placed on the officer's casket and eventually presented to the officer's wife.

It is because of his compassion and devotion to his community and his fellow man that the Cleveland Police Foundation is honored to name Jim Craciun as its **Community Partner of the Month for January 2021**.

Editor's Note: "Craciun" means "Christmas" in the Romanian language...a spirit that Jim certainly embraces!

[More about the Community Partner of the Month Program . . .](#)

In the News Around Town

Little Free Library Thrives

Congrats to Cleveland Kids' Book Bank and the Little Free Library program! In 2020, 51% of their books came from donations, up from 30% the year before.

Little Free Libraries are now located in all five Neighborhood Police District Headquarters throughout the City, in the Sex Crimes and Child Abuse Unit, and the lobby of CPD headquarters. [Find a book collection bin near you!](#)



Kudos to Sergeant Jamusca Britten!

Sergeant Jamusca Britten has served as an OPOTA guest instructor, Fourth District school resource officer, and served in the Fourth District Det. Bureau, Vice Unit, and CSU. After being promoted to Sergeant in 2020, Sgt. Britten now serves in the Fifth District.

Sgt. Jamusca Britten is recognized as the Black Shield Police Association's Officer of the Month for January 2021. [The Black Shield](#) aims to increase the awareness of Black and minority police officers in our community.



Joining Together to Provide Necessities

Since 2014, the Second District Police have conducted an annual sock and underwear drive to help people who are experiencing homelessness. Donations were delivered to area organizations and shelter sites that serve people who are homeless.



Shown in the photo above are Patrol Officer Jen Dziuba, Lieutenant Tim Maffo-Judd, and Patrol Officer Chris Lozinak, who worked together coordinating logistics. A special thanks goes out to the Waterfront District Block Club and the Cuyahoga County Prosecutor's Office for the bulk of these donations.

And of course a huge shout-out to everyone in the community who supported this effort... another great example of the Division of Cleveland Police joining together with the community to help people in need!

Appreciation Day in Action for Law Enforcement

On January 9, Police Wives of Ohio delivered a basket to each of the five Cleveland Division of Police districts, the Motorcycle Unit, the Airport Unit, the Domestic Violence Unit, and one for the NICE Unit (Neighborhood Impact Community Engagement). Thanks to the Police Wives of Ohio and all who thanked an officer on Law Enforcement Appreciation Day!



Remembering Patrol Officer Wilson F. Velazquez

New London Patrol Officer Wilson F. Velazquez died from an unconfirmed medical emergency while on duty on January 17. Velazquez was truly a gentle man and had served our community proudly since 2006. He also worked full time with the Cleveland Fire Department, a testament to the man he was and the character he possessed – a public servant through and through.

"Our thoughts and prayers. He always had a smile and will be missed. He was an officer who served with integrity." ~ Jane Carroll

"Wilson was an awesome man to work with. We shared many laughs the times we worked together. I met him at the beginning of my career where he gave me advice and guidance. Forever I will remember you." ~ David Thomas

Remembering Patrol Officer Brandon Stalker

Toledo Patrol Officer Brandon Stalker was shot and killed in a standoff on Batavia near Columbia on January 18, 2021. He leaves behind his fiancé, a 7-year-old daughter and 3-month-old son. [A GoFundMe account is available to help his family here.](#) Stalker was just 24 years old.



"The entire Toledo Police family is in shock. Another hero has paid the ultimate sacrifice protecting the residents of Toledo. Our hearts are heavy tonight." ~ Chief George Kral, Toledo



Local Businessman and DJ Surprise Officers

Once again, local businessman Dave Mortach and WTAM disc jockey Mike Trivisonno showed their support for our CPD Heroes in Blue. Over the holidays, the duo provided Third District Officers with five large sheet cakes to be distributed to the officers on each shift.



We're Going to Miss Him

Congratulations to Sergeant Elias "Bo" Diaz on his retirement from the Division of Police! Best of luck with all your future endeavors. Enjoy your new weekends which will now last seven days!



**2021 DOG & PONY CALENDARS
NOW AVAILABLE!**

Calendars still available!

We invite you to support the mission of the Cleveland Police Foundation with a purchase of the 2021 "Dog & Pony" calendar featuring our beloved K-9's and Mounted Unit! Thanks to photographer Greg Murray and sponsor All Metal Sales.

[Buy Now](#)

We get mail

Thanks to our Officers from the community

"🙏❤️💗❤️"" ~ Kathy Richards

"Thank you to those in law enforcement and their families. Both sacrifice a lot to keep us safe ❤️" ~ Cathleen Walsh

RE January Police Officer of the Month Tony Harper

"Excellent work, Officer Harper. Another example that heroes really do walk among us. Keep it up. God bless you and stay safe out there. 🇺🇸🙏🚓🇺🇸" ~ Leo Tully

RE January Community Partner of the Month Jim Craciun

"As a social worker at WSEM ministry many years ago Jim Craciun was a generous and active member of the near westside... and heartening to see that he continues. Blessings."
~ Marie Lipka

CPF and Police Officers in the Community



Safety and Crime Prevention Tips

The Cleveland Police Foundation in partnership with the Cleveland Division of Police and the Ohio Crime Prevention Association presents these tips so residents can help to make our community safer.

HOW DO I TALK TO MY CHILD ABOUT GUNS?

While there is no specific age to talk to a child about gun safety, a good time to introduce the subject is when he or she shows an interest in firearms. This interest can come from family members, friends, toy guns, video games, or television shows or movies. Talking openly and honestly about gun safety with your child is usually more effective than just ordering him or her to “Stay out of the gun closet” and

leaving it at that. Such a statement may just stimulate a child's natural curiosity to investigate further.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO DISCUSS PRETEND VS. REAL LIFE WITH MY CHILD?

Children often see characters shot and "killed" with well-documented frequency on TV and in the movies. When that child sees the same actor appear in next week's episode, or another movie or TV show, confusion between entertainment and real-life may result. In many video games, players actively shoot other characters with no personal consequences. The player can simply hit the reset button to bring themselves and other characters back to life.

Do not assume that your child knows the difference between being "killed" on TV or in a video game and the reality of gun violence. Having toy guns in the house is a decision each parent should make. If your child has toy guns, you may want to use them to explain how they differ from genuine firearms. Make sure you tell them to never assume a gun they see or find is a toy.

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Safety is everyone's business. Practice good safety measures. Stay alert; if you see something, say something.

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CPF on Facebook 

The February 2021 Partner

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The Cleveland Police Foundation is the official charity for the Cleveland Division of Police and the only organization authorized to solicit charitable contributions on its behalf.

In addition to providing funding for youth and community outreach programs, community policing and engagement initiatives, safety & crime prevention programs, and supporting the members of the Cleveland Division of Police to help them better perform their duties, the CPF proudly supports the following charities in accomplishing their mission.



Contributions to the CPF are tax deductible under section 501 (c)(3) of the IRS Code.



Thank you for supporting the mission of the CPF.

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