

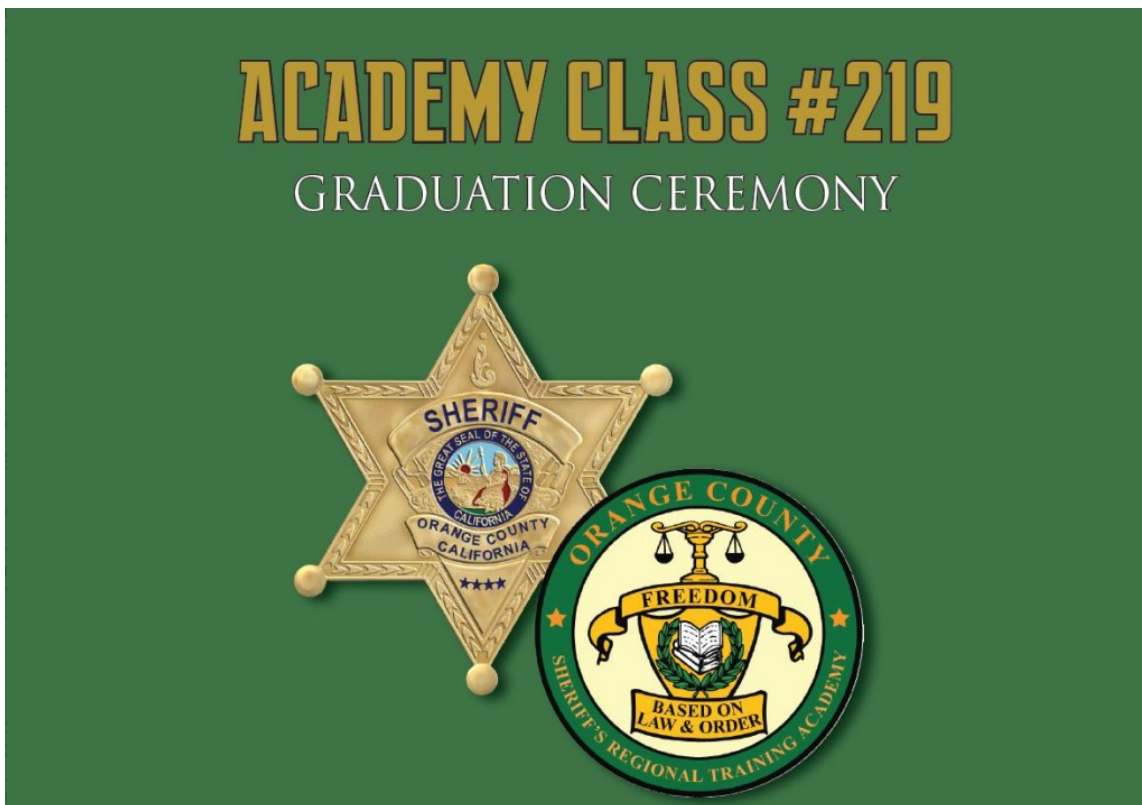
# Two more recruits join CMPD

On Monday April 4, Costa Mesa Police Department leadership attended the Class No. 219 graduation ceremonies at the Orange County Sheriff's Regional Training Academy to welcome two new officers to the department.

"We want to extend a big welcome to new officers Candyce McMorris and Jason Santos," Police Chief Rob Sharpnack said. "We are thrilled to have them join our team, and we look forward to these individuals making big contributions to the department and the community for years to come."

Graduates McMorris and Santos both received awards for their academy achievements.

McMorris was presented with the Outstanding Practical Application Skills Award and Santos received the Outstanding Physical Training Award.



The officers are part of a major recruitment effort led by the

department that has seen approximately 40 new officers hired over the course of two years and more on the way.

“This is further proof that we are a department on the rise,” Chief Sharpnack said. “Costa Mesa is a prime destination for the best and brightest officers in the county and we are proud of that hard-earned reputation.”

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## **CMPD employee awards breakfast honors the difference makers**

There was plenty of praise and awards to go around as several members of the Costa Mesa Police Department received top honors in the company of their family, colleagues and top city leaders at the annual Employee Recognition Breakfast held Tuesday morning March 22 at The Crossing Church.

“Today’s award recipients all share a common thread,” Chief Rob Sharpnack said. “They are servant leaders, passionately driven toward their duty and responsibility to improve the community. They are driven by a sense of what is right and good. They are the difference makers in our organization and the community.”

The event, emceed by Sgt. Clint Dieball, recognized Volunteer of the Year George Villazuela; Explorers of the Year Celia Quijivix and Kimberly Velasquez; Civilian of the Year Community Service Specialist Jessica Peters; Civilian Supervisor of the Year Administrator Sandra Lozano; Sworn Supervisor of the Year Sgt. Stephanie Selinske and Officer of the Year Lance Healey.

After winning the award, Officer Healey took to the stage and gave a rousing speech to his fellow police department colleagues.

“My entire adult life I’ve been part of an organization that is bigger than myself,” said Officer Healey, who is a military veteran and a key trainer in the department’s pre-academy program. “We are a department that is on the way up. I can see it. And I’m proud to have been a part of that.”

To read more about the award winners [click here](#).



In addition to the staff members honored, the department named Mika Community Development Corp. as the Community Partner of the Year and paid tribute to all the newly hired and promoted personnel.

Dieball commended others who didn’t receive awards but deserved special recognition, including Officer Kha Bao, who made 108 DUI arrests while on patrol, Tony Reitz, who recovered 88 stolen vehicles at a value of \$866,000, Officer Blake Clements was nominated for the Trauma Intervention

Program award in 2015 for compassionate handling of an elder abuse case and veteran Lt. Keith Davis, who recently stepped down from the SWAT team after 24 years.

Also, in a new twist, Chief Sharpnack singled out the Wozniak murder trial as the Case of the Year and honored the detectives and investigators who went “above and beyond” on what he called “one of the most complex cases in the history of the Costa Mesa Police Department.”



Sharpnack said while the police department is in a rebuilding phase today, the recruitment efforts are strong and he is working hard on a new five-year strategic plan that will outline the mission, vision and goals of the department.

“We have been galvanized as a team,” the chief said. “The future for the Costa Mesa Police Department is bright. We will solidify our position as the top of Orange County law enforcement agencies. I am truly honored to serve alongside members of the CMPD and the city organization as a whole.”

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# **Chief Sharpnack names Jennifer Ruffalo as new Communications Supervisor**

The Costa Mesa Police Department continued a trend of new hires and promotions this Wednesday Feb. 17 as Chief Rob Sharpnack announced the promotion of Jennifer Ruffalo to Communications Supervisor at a swearing-in and badge-pinning ceremony outside his office.

“These promotions are so uplifting for our department,” Chief Sharpnack said.

Sharpnack noted that the department’s communication staff answered more than 120,000 calls for service last year. And he had high praise for Ruffalo, who began her career with Costa Mesa police in 2004. Two years later, she was already a training officer and shift lead.



“You gain such an appreciation for what these folks do day in and day out,” Sharpnack said. “Jennifer is a team player who always puts the organization first.”

In 2009, Ruffalo was working with a trainee who had taken a call from a person in distress who was unable to speak. Working closely with the trainee, they were able to assist the caller with their emergency situation.

Later that year, the trainee was given an Award of Recognition at the State 911 level for exemplary performance, and that 911 call is still used in the department’s communication’s training program.

Ruffalo had her badge pinned on her by her sister Courtney as several high-ranking officers, city staffer and members of the communications team looked on.

“I thank you all for your support,” she said.

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# Le and Brown are named new sergeants for CMPD

The Costa Mesa Police Department has two new sergeants today as veteran officers Bang Le and Jimmy Brown were sworn in Thursday outside Chief Rob Sharpnack's office.

"We couldn't be prouder of these two individuals," Chief Sharpnack told the crowd, which included Mayor Steve Mensinger, several top ranking officers and police staff and family members who had gathered in support.



Le is a Garden Grove native who joined the department in 2000 and was the first in his family to pursue a career in law enforcement, Sharpnack said.

Brown was born and raised in Orange and also started his law enforcement career in the year 2000, first joining the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. He became a Costa Mesa

officer in 2005.

[http://cityofcostamesanews.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/MVI\\_5210.mp4](http://cityofcostamesanews.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/MVI_5210.mp4)

Le thanked the chief and his fellow officers for entrusting him and Brown with these leadership roles.

“It’s something we take seriously and we promise we won’t let you down,” Le said. “It’s a privilege and honor to carry on the great traditions of this department.”



Brown also welcomed the challenge.

“I look forward to leading the next generation and moving forward with the department,” he said.





During the badge pinning, both men had their children do the honors, with Brown having his daughter pin his badge and Le had both his son and daughter take part in the ceremony.

Sharpnack pointed out how important the families are to these officers and others in the department and he thanked them for their support. And he reiterated that these promotions are symbolic of where the Costa Mesa Police Department is headed in the future.

“Our department is on the rise,” he said. “And we are going to seek excellence in all we do.”