



VILLAGE OF FOREST VIEW ANNUAL REPORT

2022

DEPARTMENT OF POLICE
Chief Steven Stelter



LETTER FROM THE CHIEF

This 2022 Forest View Police Department (FVPD) Annual Report is herein presented for your review. The report highlights our department's efforts to engage and support the community and summarizes our overall commitment to make Forest View a very safe place to live. The report documents the department's challenges, accomplishments and key activities. In 2022 we continued to focus our training on State mandated topics such as: Crisis Intervention, Human Rights, Cultural Competency and Procedural Justice to name a few. The Forest View Police Department believes strongly in aggressively patrolling our neighborhoods. We believe this connects our officers with the citizens they serve and strengthening the relationships already in place. We have found that we can increase our effectiveness and the public's trust by building relationships, before crisis, one contact at a time. These contacts and the relationships we build are the key to solving problems in our Village.

Our work continues to become more challenging and often requires us to serve as a facilitator when dealing with our community partners. It is vitally important that officers not just answer calls for service, but also have the time to interact with the public and engage in local crime fighting and real problem solving with the people who live and work in our neighborhoods. As officers and citizens work together to solve problems, a mutual respect can be developed as well as a mutual understanding that creating safe communities is a shared responsibility. This report includes information about how we are continuing our mission to prevent and solve crime and provides details about various initiatives and services that are important to the department and the community.

We take pride in giving the community members of Forest View a sense of safety, a feeling of belonging, and a voice that is heard. We continued to engage in the building of community trust and transparency. As your police department, we are committed to continually assessing the needs of those we serve by evaluating policies, procedures, and FVPD's transparency to better serve our community. In 2022, FVPD continued to work collaboratively with other law enforcement agencies and task forces. We can provide these valuable services to our community because of our city leadership's ongoing support and resources.

On behalf of the Forest View Police Department, it is truly our honor to protect the residents, businesses, and visitors of Forest View with courage, compassion, and integrity as we navigate into the next year.

While we have accomplished much, we have much more to do. I look forward to continue working with all the employees of the Forest View Police Department and our many partners in 2023. I am confident that we are up to the task and look forward to working with each of you.

Steven Stelter
CHIEF OF POLICE

2022 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

On February 23, 2022 I was given the opportunity to become the "new" Chief of Police for the Village of Forest View. After meeting with each officer individually and assessing the department as a whole, I discovered the department had been seriously neglected for years by the previous administration. One of the first priorities I took on was writing a current and relevant policy and procedures manual replacing the version the department was using from as early as 2008. No one had ensured the department remained current with changing laws and State mandates all officers statewide were expected to follow. The police department had signed an agreement with an outside vendor in 2019 to bring in a new policy and procedures manual, paid that vendor \$15,000.00 over the three years and as of 2022 had nothing to show for it. The department now has a completely new and updated manual.

In-car video and audio cameras have been in law enforcement for over 20 years. These cameras are vitally important to officer safety and provide crucial evidence during traffic stops, arrests, citizen complaints and other interactions with the general public. None of the Forest View police vehicles had any working cameras among the fleet. Years previous they were equipped, but as they aged and needed replacement, the past administration did not take the proper steps to get them replaced. During 2022 we were able to equip all working patrol vehicles with a brand new, state of the art camera system thereby providing the best officer safety practices.

According to Illinois State law, when an officer interrogates a suspected criminal for designated offenses, the interrogation must be recorded and placed into evidence for trial. The interview room in the Forest View Police Department had a recording system in it which had not been working properly for several years. During 2022, we were able to purchase a brand-new system in order to be compliant with State law which is also available for outside agencies such as the Illinois State Police to utilize.

As police chief, it is vitally important that any crime committed is properly investigated using the best means possible. Task Forces are one of the ways departments maintain best practices in solving crimes and keeping the residents in their communities as safe as possible. They do so by bringing officers in with various expertise, competencies and knowledge to assist in solving major crimes which is vital for smaller departments such as Forest View. Forest View PD only had one officer assigned to an outside task force called the Major Crimes Assistance Team (MCAT) which investigated crimes such as burglary, robbery, shootings (no death), warrant service and others. During 2022, four (4) officers have been placed onto various task forces ensuring all serious crimes within the Village will be investigated with the best possible investigators. The Forest View officers are assigned to the following:

- One officer on the West Suburban Major Crimes Task Force (WESTAF) – they investigate all homicides, home invasions and crimes involving serious personal injury.
- One officer is assigned to the Accident Reconstruction Team for WESTAF. These investigators reconstruct traffic crashes involving death or great bodily harm.
- One officer on the Major Crimes Assistance Team (MCAT) as described above.
- One officer is assigned to the Mobile Forces Field Unit for the Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System (ILEAS). This officer is trained in operations involving large demonstrations where departments may need assistance in civil protests.

Task Forces are an extremely effective tool in the fight against crime. Allowing officers from Forest View to be assigned to these task forces, allows them to gain experience and knowledge which they would never receive otherwise.

When a police officer runs a license plate or drivers license, this is done through the State computer system called LEADS / NCIC (Law Enforcement Agency Data System & National Crime Information Center). Every year our long-time records clerk was responsible for maintain compliance with this system by keeping all personnel's licensing and certifications current. Upon auditing the clerk's performance in this area, it was discovered that our officers and the department were not current and compliant and had not been for over two years and the department was in risk of losing their license. This would mean officers would have no way of running licensed plates, individual's driver's licenses, check to see if property was stolen or if a person was indicated as a missing or runaway, etc. Upon discovering this, along with other incidents of dereliction of duties, changes in personnel were made in the records office and the department. It took many long hours by department members to correct the situation and now the department is currently compliant with the State.

The working schedule for the officers was being maintained by the patrol Sergeant the old fashion way of paper and pencil. We were able to streamline this practice by purchasing a modern computer program which eliminated hours of labor for the Sergeant and offers a far more favorable and fair way of assigning work days, overtime and days off.

Last May, the department participated in the annual "Cop on Top" at Dunkin Donuts to raise money for the Illinois Law Enforcement Torch Run program benefiting Special Olympics. The department raised over \$3,000.00 in their effort. The officers were very excited to participate in this event which also helps in building a cohesive working relationship with all involved.

In speaking with the officers, they have advised that there has never been an awards recognition program here at the police department for when an officer goes above and beyond in the course of their duties. In the past year, the Chief has handed out 5 commendations to various officers for their outstanding work in apprehending criminal and in life saving situations. The commendations were given to the officer(s) at a regular meeting of the Board of Trustees. These special awards help the employee to see that the department values them and their contributions to the success of the department and its mission. It also helps the officers build of sense of security in their value and motivates them to continue to perform at a high level.

As I entered into my duties as chief, there were some serious issues with the emergency dispatch center in which the officers felt unsafe on patrol with the current dispatching center. Myself, Fire Chief Jones and Administrator Mike Dropka began the journey to change centers. As we visited several dispatch centers and observed their operations, weighed in costs and services that would be provided, we decided to acquire services from the Cicero Consolidated Dispatch Center. After working for nearly all of 2022, the new center went live on December 5, 2022. The officers are very pleased with the switch to Cicero.

Other items that were neglected for many years, and no one took the initiative and take responsibility to take action was all the surplus equipment / vehicles that has laid around the premises. We had two vehicles that have been parked in the parking lot for years that never moved, one of the vehicles was inoperable. Boxes and boxes of old antiquated equipment, old softball trophies, non-functioning computer and radio equipment laid around the police garage and upstairs storage room. Once these items were gone through and sorted out, the Village Board passed a surplus ordinance and the items were either destroyed or sold at auction.

Many of the files from the police department along with a vast amount of police pension files were in disarray, they were not maintained properly or purged when necessary according to the Secretary of State's records management laws. Village Clerk Laura McGuffey, Administrator Dropka and Chief Stelter spent numerous hours going through boxes of old files. Once completed, the files were organized in a way that access to them has been simplified and easy to locate.

As we progress throughout 2023 and beyond, the department will be continuing to acquire needed items and repairs within the police department building. The building has a firing range in it, but it is inoperable, and has been for years due to a non-functioning ventilation system. The previous administration did not take up the initiative to get it repaired. I have brought this needed repair forward, but the Village Board has placed a one year hold on this project. Having a firing range is a luxury in a police department, not all departments have one. The officers enjoy shooting on their own time in order to remain proficient in their skill and they also take pride in how well they can shoot. Shooting is a diminishing skill, and the officers will suffer in this area without the ability to fire pretty regularly.

Body Cameras for the officers will be purchased in the 2023 -2024 budget year. Body Cameras help protect police officers and citizens against false accusations, claims of misconduct or abuse. Body Cameras increase transparency and accountability of officers. They also help prevent and de-escalate confrontational situations between officers and citizens. The State of Illinois has also mandated all police officers must be equipped with body cameras by January 1, 2025.

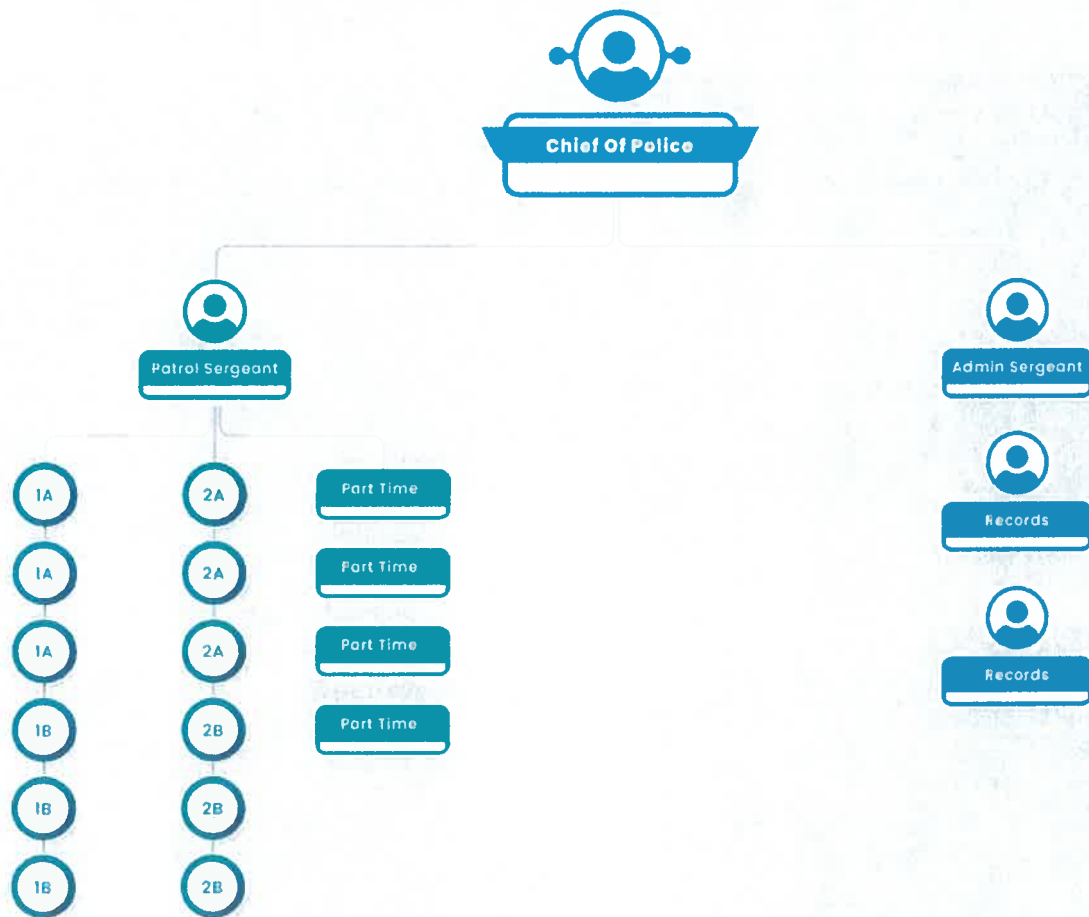
We will continue as a department to bring in quality and relevant training for all officers, especially those assigned to the various task forces. With enhanced training and gaining experience while on their call-outs, the department is providing quality policing to the Village of Forest View and the citizens can rest well at night knowing they have a competent police department at their disposal.

The department recently hired a part-time police officer who is a certified truck enforcement officer. We will be training other officers in the department to monitor the major routes in the Village where truck traffic is heavy and enforce the state laws in regards to overweight trucks

Lastly, I would like to say "Thank You" to President Miller, the Village Board and Village Administrator Mike Dropka who have granted me the funds needed to accomplish all that we did in 2022 and I look forward to working with all of them in 2023.

DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE

The Forest View Police Department consists of 14 full-time and 4 part-time sworn Officers under the Chief of Police. The department has a good working relationship with sworn and civilian personnel. The Illinois Fraternal Order of Police (IFOP) represents sergeants and 11 officers.



TOTAL EMPLOYEES:	20	FULL TIME OFFICERS:	14	FULL TIME CIVILIAN:	1
SWORN OFFICERS:	18	PART TIME OFFICERS:	4	PART TIME CIVILIAN:	1
CIVILIAN:	2				
LANGUAGES SPOKEN					
ENGLISH		POLISH		SPANISH	

Village Information

The geographical limits of the village are as follows:

Eastern Border: Laramie Ave-(5200 W)

Western Border: Harlem Ave-(7200 W)

Northern Border: 45th St

Southern Border: 51st st

Bordering Towns: Stickney (north), Chicago (East and South), Lyons (West) and Summit (Southwest)

Police Agencies Forest View mostly interacts with: Burlington Northern-Santa Fe Railroad, Canadian National Railroad, Chicago, Cook County Forest Preserve Police, Cook County Sheriff's Police, Illinois State Police, Lyons and Stickney Police Departments

PATROL OPERATIONS

Patrol is one of the most visible functions of the department. Patrol officers are the ones the community sees responding to calls for service. Our patrol division is divided into 2 groups, (A & B) with a day and night shift within each group. The patrol division works 12 hour shifts, 6am-6pm or 6pm-6am. All shifts are staffed 24 hours a day seven days a week.

Each shift has a supervisor, Sergeant, Corporal or Officer in charge. The supervisors are responsible for ensuring departmental goals are met, the supervision of on-duty personnel and enforces laws and village ordinances.

INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION

The Investigations Unit consists of detectives who investigate some of our most demanding and challenging cases. Sometimes crimes can take months or even years to solve to successfully prosecute the offender(s). Detectives regularly provide testimony in court due to their specialized training and experience.

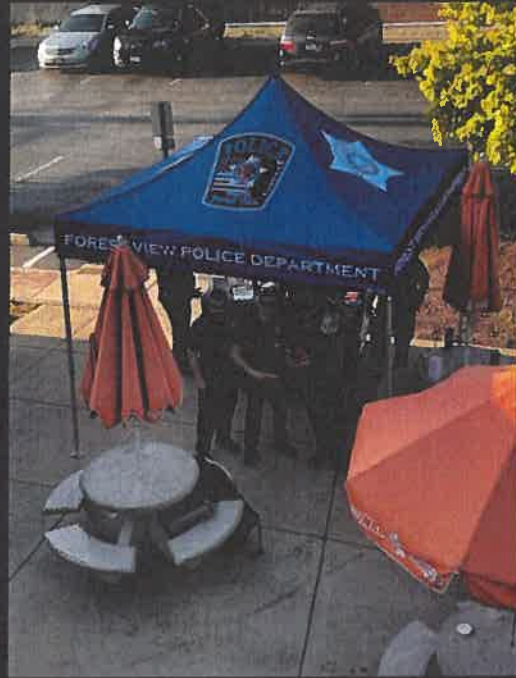
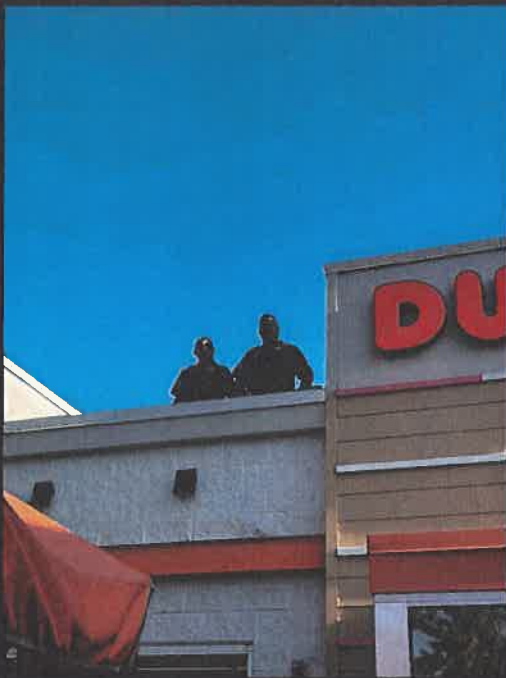
The investigations unit was assigned approximately 67 cases for 2022. A successful investigation requires collaboration from local, regional, county, state and federal jurisdictions. To enhance this collaboration, detectives are assigned to task forces with the following:

**Major Case Assistance Team-(MCAT),
West Suburban Major Crimes Task Force-(WES TAF),
Northern Illinois Police Alarm System-(NIPAS) and
Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System-(ILEAS)**

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

On August 19 2022 the Forest View Police Department participated in the Illinois Torch Run for Special Olympics along with agencies across the state by raising funds with the "COP ON TOP" at the local Dunkin Donuts.

Officers along with the generous donations from the public raised more than \$3000 for special olympics



The Forest View Police Department's training mission is to develop and enhance the skills and knowledge of sworn and civilian employees. Sworn officers participate in firearm qualification semi-annually and attend class in person as well as on the computer. In 2022 Forest View Police Department employees: sworn and civilian completed approximately 4000 hours of in-person and online training. Training classes were held at the Forest View Police Department, as well as attended through North East Multi Regional Training-(NEMRT), Tri-River Police Training and South West Illinois College Police Academy-(SWICPA). The officers and civilian staff also completed training on the computer through Police Law Institute-(PLI) and Online Learning Network-(PTB) . Topics covered by these outlets includes: Use of force, Criminal law, Search and seizure, Pursuit, Cultural diversity just to name a few

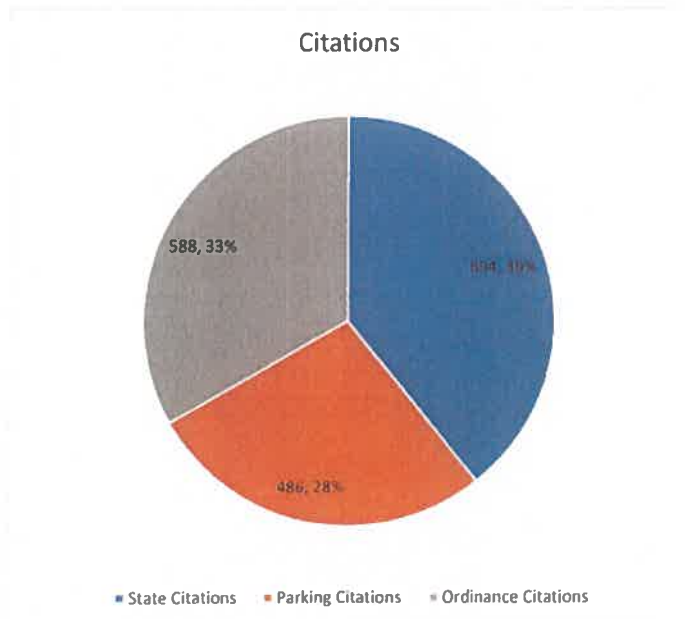
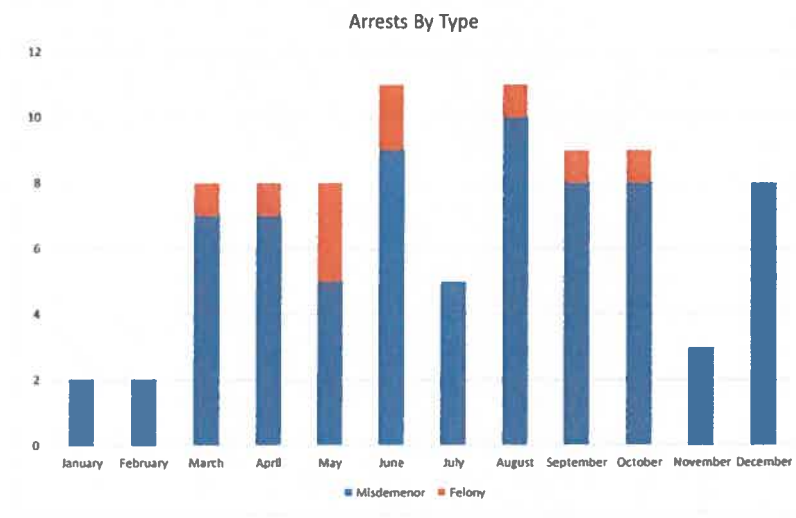
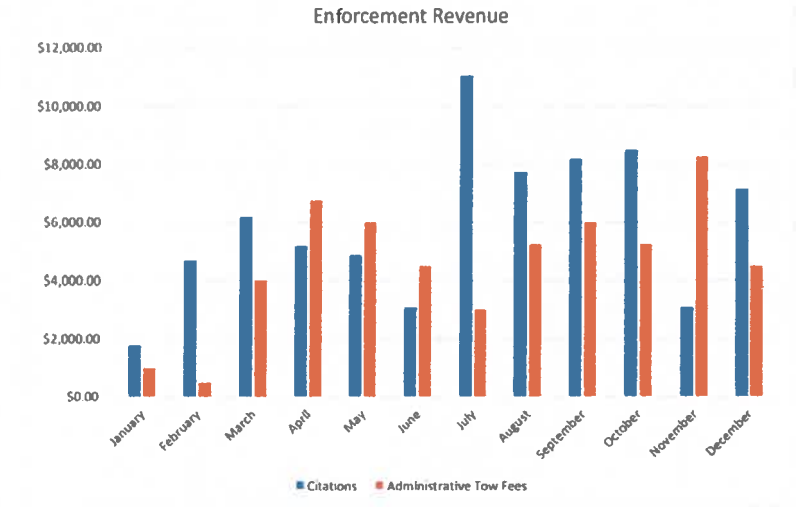
CRISIS INTERVENTION

Approximately 17 officers have been certified Crisis Intervention Team members-(CIT). CIT officers receive their certification from the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board-(ILESTB) upon completing a 40-hour training course and then receive an 8 hour refresher class. The Forest View Police Department will be sending additional officers as they are hired.

The Crisis Intervention Team training gives officers tools needed to deal with members of the public experiencing a mental health crisis. These tools include verbal de-escalation techniques as well as other communication techniques tailored to specific mental illnesses. Using these techniques, CIT trained officers are able to create a positive outcome while reducing any use of force. Additional focus is also placed on getting the individual the necessary help while trying to keep them out of the criminal justice system when possible.

EVIDENCE TECHNICIANS

The Forest View Police Department has two officers trained as evidence technicians. An evidence technician is responsible for crime scene management, photography, sketching and diagramming. Other important responsibilities include identifying, handling, packaging, and submitting evidence.



NEW OFFICERS

- Chief Steven Stelter
- Ofc. Barry Adler

- Ofc. Kevin Spatz
- Ofc. Jorge Garcia

- Ofc. Salomon Guzman
- Ofc. Jorge Sanchez

Chief Stelter

Worked 28 years with the DuPage County Sheriff's Office, retired in 2007 and has been a Chief of Police with the Villages of Brookfield, Westchester, Indian Head Park and finally Forest View from 2007 until today. Currently the Past President of the West Suburban Chiefs of Police Association (2012-2014) and the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police (2019-2020). Adjunct Professor at Elmhurst University (2013 - 2019) and instructor at the Suburban Law Enforcement Academy at College of DuPage for 10 years.

Salomon Guzman

Started his law enforcement career in 2017 where he was a police officer for the AG Valley Railroad where he protected railroad property, personnel and assets. He did 4 years there. He worked for one year with the Palos Park Police Department before coming to Forest View where he worked part-time until he was appointed a full time officer in July 2022.

Jorge Garcia

Began his law enforcement career in 2017 working for the Stone Park Police Department as a patrolman and shift supervisor. He came to Forest View as a part-time police officer in May 2022 and then was sworn in as a full time officer in September 2022.

Kevin Spatz

Over three years in law enforcement, last department Robbins, from south suburbs, no children "My name is Kevin Spatz and I'm proud to be a member of the Forest View Police Department I enjoy working for a smaller community focused department. When I'm not at work I enjoy spending time with my friends and family."

Barry Adler

With over 12 years of law enforcement experience, Officer Adler served the village of Burr Ridge, Collinsville, Indian Head Park and Archuleta County, Colorado. Officer Adler brings various skillsets including but not limited to drug interdiction and truck enforcement.

Jorge Sanchez

Marine veteran served in Operation Iraqi Freedom as a team leader. Law enforcement for 15 yrs working for NIU, Broadview and Wheaton PD. Numerous commendations, and serving as an FTO coordinator. Certified as a DUI instructor, FTO, Peer Support, Lead Homicide Investigator, Acting watch commander, truck enforcement. Presently in a career change and just trying to share his knowledge with whoever wants it.



AWARDS

Ofc. William Margalus received a life saving award on March 15 2022 for saving a subject who overdosed on narcotics by using Narcan, The subject was later transported to a local hospital.

Sgt. Marcelo Perez received a service award on March 31 2022 for his work as interim Chief of the Forest View. Sgt Perez continues to serve as the Administrative Sgt.

Ofc. Mark Goddard received an award for lead investigator on March 31 2022 for his work on an investigation of a missing/murder of a Forest View resident. Ofc Goddard is assigned to the MCAT investigative group.

Ofc Ahmad Collins received a meritorious award on April 27 2022 for his actions resulting in the pursuit and apprehension of subjects that were involved in an armed vehicle carjacking

