

**CONTACT:** Kurt Gregory Erickson  
President

**PHONE:** W. 703-893-0461  
**CELL.** 703-625-2303

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **GREATER WASHINGTON LAW ENFORCEMENT LAUDED FOR FIGHT AGAINST DRUNK DRIVING**

### ***19<sup>TH</sup>-ANNUAL EVENT HONORS LOCAL POLICE IN FIGHT AGAINST DUI***

Washington, DC, Dec. 16 – Fourteen (14) Washington-metropolitan area police officers were cited today for their “outstanding commitment in the fight against drunk driving in Greater Washington” and presented with the area’s 19<sup>th</sup>-annual “Law Enforcement Awards of Excellence for Impaired Driving Prevention.”

Bestowed this morning at a regional ceremony held in McLean, Virginia, the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) presented its 2016 Law Enforcement Awards to:

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| ▪ <b>Officer Wesley Vitale</b>               | City of Alexandria Police Department   |
| ▪ <b>Officer John Clark</b>                  | Arlington County Police Department     |
| ▪ <b>Officer Kevin Hedden</b>                | City of Falls Church Police Department |
| ▪ <b>Second Lieutenant Jason Long</b>        | Fairfax County Police Department       |
| ▪ <b>Private First Class Eliezer Calo</b>    | Town of Herndon Police Department      |
| ▪ <b>Deputy Jason Totaro</b>                 | Loudoun County Sheriff’s Office        |
| ▪ <b>Trooper First Class Anthony Wallace</b> | Maryland State Police                  |
| ▪ <b>Officer David Naples</b>                | Metropolitan Police Department         |
| ▪ <b>Police Officer III Alec Latifov</b>     | Montgomery County Dept. of Police      |
| ▪ <b>Police Officer III John P. Romack</b>   | Montgomery County Dept. of Police      |
| ▪ <b>Corporal Sage Saliba</b>                | Prince George’s County Police Dept.    |
| ▪ <b>Police Officer II Jeremy A. Schenck</b> | Prince William County Police Dept.     |
| ▪ <b>Officer Benjamin Tomasiello</b>         | United States Park Police              |
| ▪ <b>Trooper Zachary Koon</b>                | Virginia State Police                  |

The annual awards, presented at a ceremony this morning at Maggiano’s Little Italy in the Tysons Galleria, were bestowed by WRAP in memory of Metropolitan Police Department’s Motor Patrol Officer Anthony W. Simms. Officer Simms, as a result of injuries sustained while on duty, lost his life to an impaired driver during Memorial Day weekend in 1996. WRAP’s 2016 Law Enforcement Awards were presented by Officer Simms’ widow, Lieutenant Pamela Simms, also formerly with the Metropolitan Police Department, along with *News4’s* (NBC) Traffic Reporter Melissa Mollet. Today’s event speakers included Congressman Gerry Connolly (D-VA), Prince William County Police Chief Colonel Barry M. Barnard (the Prince William County Police Department co-

hosted this morning's event with WRAP) and Richard Leotta, father of late Montgomery County Police Officer Noah Leotta.

***“Today’s awardees represent the front lines in the fight against drunk driving in Greater Washington,”*** said Kurt Gregory Erickson, WRAP’s President. ***“They’re collective effort to annually arrest and remove nearly 17,000 drunk drivers from Washington-metropolitan area roadways has undoubtedly saved lives.”***

In addition to receiving the Law Enforcement Awards, each of the 2016 WRAP honorees also received a pair of complementary Washington Nationals tickets (courtesy of the Washington Nationals) and a \$ 25 gift card to Glory Days Grill (courtesy of Glory Days Grill).

Sponsors of WRAP’s 2016 Law Enforcement Awards & Holiday Campaign Kick-Off included The Beer Institute, BREAKTHRU BEVERAGE – Washington, D.C., Cardinal Bank, GEICO, Foundation for Advancing Alcohol Responsibility, Glory Days Grill, Interstate Worldwide, Red Top Cab and the Volkswagen Group of America.

Founded in 1982, the nonprofit [501(c)(3)] Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) is a coalition of diverse interests using effective education, innovative programs and targeted advocacy to end alcohol-impaired driving and underage drinking in the Washington, DC metro area. Through public education, innovative health education programs and advocacy, WRAP is credited with historically keeping the metro-Washington area’s alcohol-related traffic deaths lower than the national average. WRAP, however, may best be known to area residents via the organization’s popular free cab ride service for would-be drunk drivers, SoberRide®.

For more information, visit WRAP’s web site at **[www.wrap.org](http://www.wrap.org)**.

*(WRAP’s holiday free cab ride service for would-be drunk drivers, SoberRide, will operate between 10:00 pm and 6:00 am each evening between tonight and January 1, 2017. During these evening hours, Washington-metropolitan area residents ages 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may call the toll-free SoberRide phone number 1-800-200-TAXI and be afforded a no-cost [up to a \$ 30 fare], safe way home. AT&T wireless customers can call #WRAP for the same service. See **[www.soberride.com](http://www.soberride.com)** for more details.)*