

# Wisconsin DOT: State Patrol recognizes officers for heroism and commendable service

Posted on Friday, Oct 12, 2018

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

## **For more information, contact:**

WisDOT Office of Public Affairs  
608/266-3581, [opa.exec@dot.wi.gov](mailto:opa.exec@dot.wi.gov)

## **Wisconsin DOT: State Patrol recognizes officers for heroism and commendable service**

The Wisconsin State Patrol's annual awards ceremony, held Thursday at the State Capitol, recognized 25 law enforcement officers for lifesaving efforts and exemplary public service. Seven officers received awards that involved administering the opioid antidote Narcan to overdose victims. As of January 19, 2018, all Wisconsin State Patrol officers were trained and equipped to administer Narcan.

"Wisconsin is extremely fortunate to have so many outstanding law enforcement officers and emergency responders," Governor Scott Walker said. "These annual awards serve as powerful reminders of their extraordinary courage and dedication to duty."

The award categories, officers recognized and their hometowns include:

### **Lifesaving Awards** (efforts that maintained or saved a life)

<b>Officer</b>	<b>Hometown</b>
Trooper Mitchell Schaeppi	Maplewood, MN
Trooper Keith Wright	Somerset, WI

Trooper Ashley Morales	Chippewa Falls, WI
Trooper Christopher Saraniecki	Lake Zurich, IL
Sergeant Edward Witkiewicz	Sun Prairie, WI
Trooper Jason Tauschek	New Franken, WI
Trooper Kevin Kinderman	Oshkosh, WI
Trooper Jonathan Fenrick	Campbellsport, WI
Trooper Aaron Peterson	Madison, WI
Trooper Joseph Youngblood	Monroe, WI
Trooper Adam Lukaszewski	Madison, WI
Trooper Alex Medina	Milwaukee, WI
Trooper Scott Darin	Slinger, WI
Trooper Jake Fricke	Eau Claire, WI

**Lifesaving Effort Awards** (recognizes significant or prolonged lifesaving efforts)

<b>Officer</b>	<b>Hometown</b>
Trooper Evan Fox	Shell Lake, WI
Sergeant Nathan Wright	Oostburg, WI
Trooper Jeffery Zuzunaga	Lodi, WI
Trooper Jeffery Splinter	Hazel Green, WI
Trooper Megan LaFave	Oconto, WI
Trooper Jason Tauschek	New Franken, WI

**Meritorious Service Awards** (efforts that exceed duty expectations and place officers at risk)

<b>Officer</b>	<b>Hometown/Agency</b>
Trooper Joshua Troth	Caledonia, MN

Officer William Charlebois Portage Police  
Department

**Superintendent's Star of Recognition Awards** (recognizes distinguished or exceptional achievements in the performance of duties)

<b>Officer</b>	<b>Hometown</b>
Sergeant Robert Hartson	Merrill, WI
Trooper Alex Trofin	Little Suamico, WI
Trooper Ryan Zukowski	West Bend, WI
Inspector David Cahoon	Tomah, WI

The officers' award-winning actions are detailed below. Digital photos of the recipients receiving their award are available

at: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1q7G2696XxAvzUaySVz9vC0Ka2floiU6N>

### **Lifesaving Awards**

- **Trooper Mitchell Schaeppi of Maplewood, MN, Trooper Keith Wright of Somerset, WI and Trooper Ashley Morales of Chippewa Falls, WI** (*Lifesaving Award*) - On October 7, 2017, Troopers Schaeppi, Morales and Wright responded to assist two elderly, unresponsive motorists inside a vehicle along I-94 in St. Croix County. The female passenger had a weak pulse. The male driver was pulseless and not breathing. The troopers performed CPR on both subjects until an ambulance arrived and transported them to a hospital where they were later released. It was later determined the elderly motorists had accidentally ingested a toxic substance.
- **Trooper Christopher Saraniecki of Lake Zurich, IL** (*Lifesaving Award*) - On December 31, 2017, Trooper Saraniecki responded to assist the Jackson County Sheriff's Department with an unresponsive female. As the woman was pulseless and not breathing, Trooper Saraniecki and a Jackson County deputy began performing CPR. After about four minutes, the woman regained a pulse and began breathing. She was transported to a hospital and made a full recovery.
- **Sergeant Edward Witkiewicz of Sun Prairie, WI** (*Lifesaving Award*) - On October 26, 2017, Sgt. Witkiewicz was helping Deforest police locate a woman

who had a history of suicide attempts. Officers discovered the woman's vehicle outside a hotel. Sgt. Witkiewicz and a Dane County Sheriff's deputy found the woman in a hotel room unconscious and without a pulse. After performing CPR, the officers located a pulse on the woman. She was transported to a local hospital and recovered.

- **Trooper Jason Tauschek of New Franken, WI** (*Lifesaving Award*) - On September 14, 2017, Trooper Tauschek assisted officers with the Shawano County Sheriff's Department and Bonduel police with a suicidal woman threatening to jump from a railroad bridge. As Trooper Tauschek approached, the woman stated she would jump if he took one step closer. When other officers distracted the woman, a Shawano County deputy and Trooper Tauschek grabbed the woman and pulled her to safety.
- **Trooper Kevin Kinderman of Oshkosh, WI** (*Lifesaving Award*) - On April 20, 2017, Trooper Kinderman responded to a report of an unconscious man in a vehicle along I-39 in Rock County. The man was pulseless, not breathing, had a syringe in his arm and possibly overdosed on heroin. Trooper Kinderman removed the man from the vehicle and began CPR. After about three minutes, the man started breathing and regained a pulse. Edgerton EMS personnel transported the man to the hospital. A doctor stated that Trooper Kinderman's actions were instrumental in saving the man's life.
- **Trooper Jonathan Fenrick of Campbellsport, WI and Trooper Aaron Peterson of Madison, WI** (*Lifesaving Award*) - On May 28, 2018, Troopers Fenrick and Peterson responded to a vehicle in the ditch along the Madison Beltline interchange. The vehicle's driver was slumped unconscious over the center console and had labored breathing. Suspecting an overdose, the officers administered four doses of the opioid antidote Narcan. About 90 seconds later, the man began to breathe normally and opened his eyes. The man was taken to a Madison hospital where he recovered from the incident.
- **Trooper Joseph Youngblood of Monroe, WI and Trooper Adam Lukaszewski of Madison, WI** (*Lifesaving Award*) - On April 19, 2018, troopers discovered a disabled vehicle along US 12 near Monona with an unconscious man inside who was struggling to breathe. After determining the man was experiencing an opioid overdose, Troopers Youngblood and Lukaszewski along with a Madison police officer administered four doses of Narcan. The subject's breathing finally improved and he was taken to an area hospital where he recovered from the incident.
- **Trooper Alex Medina of Milwaukee, WI** (*Lifesaving Award*) - On February 26, 2018, Trooper Medina assisted Waukesha County deputies with a traffic

stop along I-94 near Brookfield. As Trooper Medina monitored the two people from the stopped vehicle, a deputy searching the vehicle was exposed to a white powdery substance. The deputy reported a tingling in her nose and throat, then began to fade in and out of consciousness. When the deputy's breathing became shallow, Trooper Medina administered a full dose of Narcan which had an immediate reversing effect. Officials determined the powdery substance contained the opioid Fentanyl.

- **Trooper Scott Darin of Slinger, WI** (*Lifesaving Award*) – On February 16, 2018, Trooper Darin approached a stopped vehicle along I-41 in Washington County and found a man slouched over the center console. The vehicle was running with the doors locked and the driver stepping on the brakes. Trooper Darin used his baton to break a side window and turned off the vehicle's ignition. The man had a weak pulse, was unresponsive and struggled to breathe. Suspecting an opioid overdose, Trooper Darin administered two doses of Narcan. The man became responsive, eventually stood up, began walking around and admitted to injecting an unknown white substance. He was transported to a hospital where he recovered from the incident.
- **Trooper Jake Fricke of Eau Claire, WI** (*Lifesaving Award*) – In the early morning of December 31, 2017, Trooper Fricke assisted Sawyer County deputies with a man suspected of overdosing on heroin. The man had shallow breathing and a weak pulse. Recognizing the man was experiencing an opioid overdose, Trooper Fricke administered a dose of Narcan and the man's condition improved. Sawyer County EMS personnel administered another dose of Narcan and the subject recovered from the incident.

### **Lifesaving Effort Awards**

- **Trooper Evan Fox of Shell Lake, WI** (*Lifesaving Effort Award*) – On July 15, 2017, Trooper Fox responded to a traffic incident in Washburn County where a motorcyclist lost control on a curve, left the roadway and crashed. Trooper Fox retrieved his medical kit and assisted Spooner police officers to perform CPR on the subject. After re-establishing a pulse, the motorcyclist was transported to a hospital via helicopter. Despite these life-saving efforts, the man succumbed to his injuries the following day.
- **Sergeant Nathan Wright of Oostburg, WI** (*Lifesaving Effort Award*) – On Thanksgiving Day, November 23, 2017, Sergeant Wright responded to a report of a man having a heart attack at a Christmas tree sales lot in the town of Sheboygan. The subject was on top of the load of trees that were stacked on a

semi-trailer. Sergeant Wright and a Sheboygan County deputy performed CPR on the man and used an automated external defibrillator (AED) to administer a shock, returning the man's heartbeat to a steady rhythm. Despite the life-saving efforts, the man did not survive.

- **Trooper Jeffery Zuzunaga of Lodi, WI and Trooper Jeffery Splinter of Hazel Green, WI** (*Lifesaving Effort Award*) – On October 8, 2017, Troopers Zuzunaga and Splinter responded to a report of a man who was pulseless and not breathing along I-90/94 in Columbia County. The troopers performed CPR and utilized an AED to try and revive the individual. Despite the life-saving efforts, the man did not survive.
- **Trooper Megan LaFave of Oconto, WI and Trooper Jason Tauschek of New Franken, WI** (*Lifesaving Effort Award*) – On March 24, 2018, Troopers LaFave and Tauschek responded to a report of an unconscious woman at a tavern in Pella, WI. The officers learned the woman had choked on food before losing consciousness. Troopers LaFave and Tauschek performed CPR on the woman. Despite significant lifesaving efforts, the woman did not survive.

### **Meritorious Service Award**

- **Trooper Joshua Troth of Caledonia, MN and Portage Police Officer William Charlebois**, (*Meritorious Service Award*) – On May 11, 2018, Trooper Troth and Officer Charlebois joined other law enforcement officials to assist a suicidal woman who entered the Wisconsin River in Portage, WI. Trooper Troth and Officer Charlebois drove to nearby Pauquette Park where they observed the woman holding onto a branch about 50 feet from shore. As the officers worked to reach the woman, they were pulled underwater several times by the strong current. Finally, the woman grabbed onto a rope and the officers pulled her out of the river. Since the woman was unconscious and not breathing, Officer Charlebois and Trooper Troth worked to expel water from her lungs and restored her breathing. The woman recovered from the incident.

### **Superintendent's Star of Recognition**

- **Sergeant Robert Hartson of Merrill, WI** (*Superintendent's Star of Recognition*) – Currently a supervisor in the State Patrol's 18-county North Central Region, Sergeant Hartson also oversees 15 members of the State Patrol's Honor Guard Unit. Last year, the Honor Guard was deployed to 51

ceremonial events including funerals for law enforcement officers who died in the line of duty. Under Sergeant Hartson's leadership, the Honor Guard Unit is widely commended for its professionalism.

- **Trooper Alex Trofin of Little Suamico, WI** (*Superintendent's Star of Recognition*) - Over the last seven years, Trooper Trofin has built a reputation of excellence in performing a variety of duties including highway criminal interdiction, crash scene investigation and as a field training officer. Within the State Patrol's 11-county Northeast Region, Trofin provides vital leadership and professional assistance to several multi-agency law enforcement groups.
- **Trooper Ryan Zukowski of West Bend, WI** (*Superintendent's Star of Recognition*) - A 22-year State Patrol veteran, Trooper Zukowski provides vital leadership as a crash and crime scene investigator. As one of the original members of the State Patrol's Technical Reconstruction Unit established in 2006, Zukowski serves as an instructor at the State Patrol Academy. Due to his expertise in crash and crime scene reconstruction, he is frequently called upon to present and testify in court proceedings.
- **Inspector David Cahoon of Tomah, WI** (*Superintendent's Star of Recognition*) - Inspector Cahoon plays a key role as a trainer in the State Patrol's Defensive and Arrest Tactics (DAAT) program and has served as a DAAT instructor for every State Patrol recruit class since 1995. A master instructor in DAAT and in professional communications, Cahoon also provides training related to firearms, emergency response and physical readiness. Along with his training role, Cahoon maintains all his motor carrier safety and salvage inspector certifications.

NOTE: View this document online at the WisDOT

Newsroom: <http://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/about-wisdot/newsroom/default.aspx>.