CHULA VISTA POLICE DEPARTMENT
315 Fourth Avenue, MS P-200
Chula Vista, California 91910-3801

Roxana Kennedy
Chief of Police

POLICE MEDIA ADVISORY

Date: May 6, 2026
To: San Diego Media
From: Chula Vista Police Department
Contact: Sergeant Manny Salazar, Public Information Officer
Phone: (619) 691-5111
Email: pio@chulavistapd.org
Subject: Media Invite: 34th Annual Awards and Recognition Ceremony – Thursday, May 7, 2026, at 11 a.m.

Message: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA INVITE ONLY – NOT A PUBLIC EVENT

On Thursday, May 7, 2025, at 11 a.m., the Chula Vista Police Department will be holding a ceremony at the Department Headquarters (315 Fourth Ave, Chula Vista) to honor the officers and members of the community who performed above and beyond in the past year. Their stories are compelling and often go untold. This ceremony helps tell the story of the daily efforts our men and women make to serve others and of the exceptional efforts made by members of the community for the greater good.

FEATURED STORIES:

Officer Conrad Holden — Department Lifesaving Award

On February 7, 2025, Officer Conrad Holden responded to a medical emergency involving a man in cardiac arrest. Upon arrival, Officer Holden immediately began CPR and continued lifesaving efforts until fire personnel arrived and transported the patient to the hospital. Medical staff later confirmed that without Officer Holden's rapid response and immediate intervention, the patient would not have survived. The patient's family praised Officer Holden for his professionalism, compassion, and calm presence during the incident.

Officer Holden is being honored with the Department Lifesaving Award for his swift actions and dedication to preserving life.

2025 Employee of the Year — Senior Latent Print Examiner Denise Shepard

Senior Latent Print Examiner Denise Shepard is being recognized as the Chula Vista Police Department's 2025 Employee of the Year for her leadership, professionalism, and dedication to excellence.

As a working supervisor, Denise managed a significant caseload while completing 27 cases, conducting 94 technical reviews, and helping lead the department's transition involving approximately 12,000 latent print cases to a new records management system.

Her innovation, leadership, and commitment to both the department and community make her highly deserving of this recognition.

Citizen Exceptional Service Award — Jeremy Christofferson
Jeremy Christofferson, a Loss Prevention Officer for Dick's Sporting Goods on East H Street, is being honored for his outstanding partnership with law enforcement and dedication to the community.

Over the past year, Jeremy assisted in more than 100 criminal investigations that led to multiple arrests and worked closely with the Property Crimes Unit on organized retail theft cases. He also helped strengthen community relationships by coordinating youth shopping events with officers and participating in National Night Out and other outreach efforts.

VFW Officer of the Year Award — Agent Erick Mendoza
Agent Erick Mendoza is being recognized as the 2025 VFW Officer of the Year for his outstanding service, leadership, and commitment to youth and school safety. While serving in the School Resource Unit, Agent Mendoza revitalized the Safety Patrol Program following the COVID-19 pandemic and built strong relationships with students and staff throughout the community. He also played a key role in several investigations and critical incidents that helped ensure campus and community safety.

THE FOLLOWING IS A LIST OF THE AWARDS AND RECIPIENTS:

Life Saving Award – Officer Conrad Holden

MADD/DUI Award – Officer Daniel Wilcox, Officer Matthew Van Rossem

Proactive Narcotics Officer Award (Top 3) – Officer Gavin Baptiste, Officer Kevin Havrincea, Officer Dakota Jones

Joshua Cox DUI Award – Officer Mark Schmidt

Field Training Officer of the Year – Agent Alex Bates

CSO of the Year – CSO Natalia Minutelli

Senior Volunteers of the Year – Agent Karen Jacobs

Auto Theft Advisory Committee Award – "10851" Officer of the Year – Officer Shane Coleman

10851 Awards (Auto Theft) – Officer Noah Carter, Officer Antonio Vazquez, Officer Cameron King, Officer Brandon Martin, Officer Kevin McLean

Department Exceptional Service – Officer Quinn Bandy

Dispatcher of the Year – Dispatcher Diana Santisteban

Civilian Employee of the Year – Denise Shepard

Crime Stoppers "Enough is Enough" – Officer Gavin Baptiste

Citizen Exceptional Service – Jeremy Christofferson – Dicks Sporting Goods Loss Prevention Officer

VFW Officer of the Year – Agent Erick Mendoza

***MEDIA PERSONNEL**: **Please advise if you plan to attend and/or would like to arrange interviews. You can contact Sgt. Salazar at (619) 385-6010 or email pio@chulavistapdca.gov to RSVP. The ceremony starts promptly at 11 AM on Thursday.**

Prepared By:	Public Info Specialist Cait Clark	Approved By:	Sgt. Manny Salazar
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