



*An Innovative Community; Authentically Hometown*

## **Police Department Receives National Recognition**

*Honored by LAW Publications for specialized training, therapy dog programs*

MOUNT VERNON, March 14, 2023 – The Mount Vernon Police Department is proud to announce that it has been recognized for its exceptional work in implementing two programs, one focused on specialized training and the other introducing a therapy dog to the community.



*Lieutenant R.A. Young*

The specialized training program, which was implemented three years ago, is designed to help officers by using a scenario-based format that provides practical and realistic situations that can be analyzed and improved upon. Lt. R.A. Young, who manages the program and leads the instruction, began building the program after extensive research and through his continuing education. The program focuses on officer response to rapidly changing scenarios and environments. This training has proven to be crucial in helping officers effectively respond to high-risk situations, as well as for de-escalation methods, resulting in a safer outcome for all involved.

Lt. Young is a decorated veteran and law enforcement officer with an impressive career spanning more than two decades. He served in the U.S. Army in Iraq and Afghanistan before working as a contractor for the Defense Security Service. Later, he attended the Ohio State Highway Patrol Training Academy before becoming a member of the Mount Vernon Police Department in 2008. In addition, Lt. Young has served as a SWAT Commander and later as Team Leader. He

was promoted to Emergency Service Unit Commander in 2020, making him responsible for leading the team during high-risk situations.

The Mount Vernon Police Department has also implemented a therapy dog program, with a canine assigned to School Resource Officer Jeremiah Armstrong. The program is used daily at the schools and features Nova, who is trained to work with Patrolman Armstrong to provide emotional support to people in need. Nova is specially trained to work with individuals who have experienced trauma or high levels of stress, such as crime victims or children in difficult situations. The program has been a great success, with students and community members expressing gratitude for Nova's comforting presence during difficult times.



*Patrolman Jeremiah Armstrong with therapy dog Nova*

Patrolman Armstrong is a highly respected Police Officer with a career spanning more than two decades. After graduating with a Bachelor's degree in sociology from Mount Vernon Nazarene University, he began his career with the Marion Police Department in 2003, where he served until joining the Mount Vernon Police Department in 2008. In 2014, Patrolman Armstrong was assigned a temporary position as a School Resource Officer (SRO), which turned into a full-time position a year later. As an SRO, he has worked tirelessly to create a safe and secure learning environment for students, faculty and staff.

"The outstanding work of the Mount Vernon Police Department has not gone unnoticed, as seen by LAW Publications' recognition of both of these programs," said Police Chief Robert Morgan. "This recognition serves as a testament to the dedication and hard work of the officers and staff of the department in providing exceptional service to the community."

The Mount Vernon Police Department would like to thank the community for its continued support and for the opportunity to serve and protect them. It remains committed to providing the highest level of service and support to those in need.

### END ###

#### **ABOUT THE CITY OF MOUNT VERNON:**

The City of Mount Vernon is an innovative community with an authentic hometown feel. The City is dedicated to providing modern services with an emphasis on continual improvement, customer service and equitable laws that support our citizens and visitors, while retaining and attracting investors in our community. Home to 17,000 people, Mount Vernon is the county seat for Knox County and boasts historic buildings and districts as well as business and professional, educational and recreational opportunities through many adaptive reuses of the community's infrastructure and spaces. The City has strong ties to higher education, with Mount Vernon Nazarene University, Kenyon College and Central Ohio Technical College operating satellite locations in the historic downtown. Located 40 miles northeast of Columbus, Mount Vernon is near the geographic center of Ohio and has connections all over the globe.

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