

# Thompson and Woodward Honored for Service and Trailblazing Efforts

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Ken J. Mascara  
Sheriff of St. Lucie County, FL  
4700 West Midway Road  
Fort Pierce, FL 34982-4825

Contact: Bryan Beaty  
Public Information Officer  
beatyb@stluciesheriff.com

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Headline: Thompson and Woodward Honored for Service and Trailblazing Efforts

Sheriff Ken Mascara announced that Major David Thompson and Sergeant Suzanne Woodward were honored a separate awards ceremonies yesterday for their service to the community and trailblazing efforts within the law enforcement profession.

Major David Thompson was recognized with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the 2017 ASIS Law Enforcement Awards. ASIS International is a global community of security practitioners comprised of virtually every industry in the public and private sectors, and organizations of all sizes.

According to the Sheriff, in a ceremony held Thursday at PGA National in Palm Beach Gardens, awards were presented to outstanding law enforcement professionals in 13 categories. These categories included Chief/Sheriff of the Year, Police Officer of the Year, Corrections Officer of the Year, Excellence in Criminal Investigations, Life Saving, Peers Award, Lifetime Achievement, Valor, Dispatcher of the Year, Community Policing, K-9 Achievement, Above and Beyond the Call of Duty and Task Force of the Year. Of the 13 categories available, the Sheriff's Office had nominations in seven of them.

"Major Thompson is a leader among law enforcement professionals across our state," said Sheriff Ken J. Mascara. "Throughout his 32 years in law enforcement, he has consistently shown sound, solid and effective leadership in each and every role he has been assigned."

Major Thompson was selected based on this nomination:

Service to country and community best describes St. Lucie Sheriff's Major David Thompson who began his career in the U.S. Marine Corps. He turned to serving his community through law enforcement, spending 32 years in the profession, the majority with St. Lucie County, and will retire in July as Director of Law Enforcement.

Thompson has worked in almost every capacity: patrol, investigations, narcotics/VICE, school resource, civil, court security, and training. He has seen trends come and go, watched the profession evolve and ensured his agency evolved with it to meet the ever-present demand of protecting the life and property of citizens.

Some of his most notable accomplishments include supervising the Escobedo murder case where a family was found murdered on the Turnpike, overseeing security enhancements to the St. Lucie County Courthouse after back-to-back hurricanes, guiding funeral arrangements and response after the death of Sergeant Gary Morales, spear-heading a SWAT Medic program between his agency and the St. Lucie Fire-Rescue, managing the September 2016 hate crime arson at a local Mosque and serving as the agency's emergency manager for large-scale events. All of this while accomplishing his daily responsibilities in each of the assignments he's held.

His service extends beyond the badge. He is an Indian River State College adjunct instructor in criminal justice and public administration, an FBI National Academy alumnus, a board member of SafeSpace of the Treasure Coast, a domestic violence shelter for women and children, and was the first Senate-confirmed law enforcement member of the Florida Department of Education's Education Practices Commission, a quasi-judicial arm of DOE that imposes sanctions for educator misconduct. Serving two four-year terms, he eventually became the Commission's chair and is now its first emeritus member.

Major David Thompson has accomplished a lifetime of achievements with one focus in mind; service to others.

According to the Sheriff, in a separate ceremony yesterday, Sergeant Suzanne Woodward was presented the Trailblazer Award.

Through a joint collaboration, The Inner Truth Project, Post Insurance, the Peter W. Busch Family Foundation, Traxx Entertainment and All Things Treasure Coast established the Trailblazer Award to recognize outstanding women who have forged a path in areas that make it possible for others to do the work they do today and reach the high standards they have set.

“Sergeant Woodward is an example for women throughout law enforcement,” said Sheriff Ken J. Mascara. “Mentorship is a hallmark of her leadership style and she clearly strives each and every day to set an example for others to follow.”

Sergeant Woodward was recognized based in part on this nomination:

When Sergeant Suzanne Woodward became the second supervisor of the St. Lucie Sheriff’s Office STAR Team she accepted the responsibility knowing expectations by Command Staff were high. Designed to fill the gaps between patrol and investigations, Woodward determined to showcase exactly what the Team could do and become a bridge for the agency spanning community service and outreach, strengthening ties with the community.

Under her leadership, the Team made its mark. Immediately after taking over, a series of fires were started in the county. Working with analysts and detectives, Woodward mapped locations and times when the fires started and developed a plan to disburse the Team to identify the suspect. Within hours, they accomplished their mission.

Throughout the year, Woodward and the Team ramped up community service efforts working with Trinity Lutheran Church and Families Meals, Inc. delivering Thanksgiving meal to residents of Fort Pierce, repeating this again at Easter. The bridge to the community didn’t stop just with the holidays, Woodward and the Team took an active role in the First Step initiative, a project that’s fulfilling for both the kids that attend as well as the deputies that participate.

Committed to the core mission of policing, Woodward strengthened the connection between STAR, patrol and investigations, meeting daily with other supervisors and analysts to identify trends and hot spots where enforcement or surveillance was needed. Woodward also led multi-unit and multi-agency efforts, including the annual summer task force with the Fort Pierce Police, DEA, ATF and HSI.

Throughout, Woodward and her dedicated team fulfilled the old saying of “other duties as assigned” without hesitation. Whether a school open house, a parade, a highway interdiction, an active crime scene or a media interview, Sergeant Sue Woodward met the need and delivered with the highest level of quality and professionalism.