

PRESS RELEASE

Annual Awards Ceremony Recognizes Outstanding Contributions From Western Pennsylvania Law Enforcement Officers and Prosecutors

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For Immediate Release

U.S. Attorney's Office, Western District of Pennsylvania

PITTSBURGH, Pa. - The Law Enforcement Agency Directors (LEAD) of Western Pennsylvania recognized more than three dozen area law enforcement officers and prosecutors during its 26th Annual LEAD Awards Ceremony, announced United States Attorney Eric G. Olshan. Comprising the Western Pennsylvania heads of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, LEAD bestows awards annually as a way of recognizing outstanding performance from law enforcement agents and officers, as well as prosecutors.

Notable among the LEAD Awards presented were:

- The Lifetime Service Award was presented to (Retired) Supervisory Special Agent Louis "Lou" Weiers for his outstanding service with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). Weiers began his career with the ATF in January 1991 as a Special Agent with the Pittsburgh field office's Arson/Explosives group, also serving as a member of the National Response Team from 1998 until 2005. Weiers was promoted to Resident Agent in Charge of the Pittsburgh Firearms Trafficking and Violent Crime group in March 2005, and was among the longest tenured supervisory investigators within the ATF upon his September 2024 retirement. Among the many investigations on which he worked during his career, Weiers served as the first-line supervisor at the 2018 Tree of Life shooting in Pittsburgh, where his group led the ATF response and firearms investigation with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI); represented ATF at the September 11, 2001, Flight 93 crash site in Shanksville, Pennsylvania; and was involved in the 2014 48-day manhunt for Eric Frein, who killed a Pennsylvania State Trooper and critically injured another during an attack at a State Police barracks. Weiers also served in several

acting Assistant Special Agent in Charge details within the Philadelphia Field Division throughout the decades.

- The Courage Under Hostile Fire Award was presented to Pittsburgh Bureau of Police Officer Craig Claflin, who, as the first officer on the scene of a domestic dispute call at a Kincaid Street residence in Pittsburgh's Garfield neighborhood in July 2024, was immediately fired upon by the assailant. Officer Claflin quickly neutralized, disarmed, and detained the assailant, saving lives and preventing injuries to neighboring civilians and fellow law enforcement officers.
- An individual LEAD award was presented to Assistant U.S. Attorney Katherine Jordan of the U.S. Attorney's Office. AUSA Jordan's work has consistently involved the handling of both complex, long-term investigations and prosecutions of violent individuals and drug traffickers. During the past year, her cases included multiple long-term drug trafficking investigations conducted by FBI's Greater Pittsburgh Safe Streets Task Force—one of which was a Title-III wiretap investigation—as well as a long-term Drug Enforcement Administration investigation into a large-scale drug trafficking organization, the latter of which included the execution of multiple search warrants in late-June 2024 that ultimately resulted in the seizure of nearly 120 kilograms of cocaine, over \$1.2 million in cash, and eight firearms, in addition to the charging of numerous individuals. In September 2024, shortly after the takedown of her FBI Title-III investigation, AUSA Jordan secured a guilty verdict in the jury trial of local large-scale drug trafficker Leon Ford Sr., whom Jordan and her team of investigators had indicted and successfully convicted of conspiracy to distribute five kilograms or more of cocaine and 400 grams or more of fentanyl, as well as possession with intent to distribute 400 grams or more of fentanyl.
- Several individuals from the ATF, along with Assistant U.S. Attorney Maureen Sheehan-Balchon of the U.S. Attorney's Office, received a team award for outstanding performance for their seven-month investigation and prosecution of a complex illegal firearms manufacturing and distribution network out of Altoona, Pennsylvania. The criminal conspiracy involved the manufacture and sale of untraceable ghost guns, AR-15 style rifles, and "hit kits" containing a Polymer 80 privately made firearm with no serial number, a threaded barrel to attach an included silencer, subsonic ammunition, and latex gloves.
- Members of the Mt. Lebanon Police Department, Allegheny County Police Department, Allegheny County Sheriff's Office, and FBI received a team award for their investigation of a series of crimes involving the sexual exploitation of children.

- Corporals and troopers from Pennsylvania State Police Troops B and D Forensic Services Units were honored with a team award for their processing of a particularly complex Pittsburgh crime scene.
- Two U.S. Postal Inspection Service officials received individual LEAD awards for their roles in helping to uncover and disrupt criminal operations in separate investigations involving, in one case, a California-to-Western Pennsylvania drug trafficking network, and, in the other, a games of chance theft ring. Officers and agents from organizations including the Allegheny County Sheriff's Office, ATF, FBI, Homeland Security Investigations, Internal Revenue Service – Criminal Investigation, and Pennsylvania State Police also received individual awards for their performance in a variety of incidents and investigations involving firearms, narcotics, sexual exploitation of minors, tax evasion, and public safety.

LEAD is composed of the following law enforcement agencies: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; Drug Enforcement Administration; Federal Bureau of Investigation; U.S. Attorney's Office, Western District of Pennsylvania; Homeland Security Investigations; Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation; U.S. Department of Homeland Security, Transportation Security Administration; U.S. Department of Defense - Defense Criminal Investigative Service; U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; U.S. Marshals Service; U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General; U.S. Postal Inspection Service; U.S. Probation & Pretrial Services; United States Secret Service; U.S. Social Security Administration – Office of Inspector General; U.S. Department of State – Diplomatic Security Service; U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Air Marshal Service; U.S. Department of Transportation - Office of Inspector General; U.S. Department of Veterans Administration - Office of Inspector General; U.S. Department of Labor - Office of Inspector General; U.S. Department of Agriculture - Office of Inspector General; U.S. Department of Homeland Security – Federal Protective Service; U.S. Food and Drug Administration – Office of Criminal Investigations; Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General; Pennsylvania State Police; Pennsylvania Board of Probation and Parole; Western Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association; Allegheny County Police Department; Allegheny County Sheriff's Office; Allegheny County District Attorney's Office; Allegheny County Chiefs of Police Association; Allegheny County Housing Authority Police Department; Port Authority of Allegheny County Police Department; Washington County District Attorney's Office; Westmoreland County District Attorney's Office; Pittsburgh Bureau of Police; Mt. Lebanon Police Department; Carnegie Mellon University Police Department, and University of Pittsburgh Department of Public Safety.

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