

The INFORMANT

The Kansas City Missouri Police Department

Officer Murphy changing the lives of KC youth

Officer Ann Murphy's two passions, helping others and soccer, fueled her mission of changing the lives of youth in Kansas City.

Eight boys from east zone who faced a multitude of life's obstacles, frequently in trouble at school, but loved to play soccer is what gave Officer Murphy the opportunity to start her passion of helping others. She saw this as a chance to show them a way out of that type of lifestyle by becoming their coach/mentor.



"The kids all had passion," Murphy said. "But my goal was to turn their frustration into communication and their aggression and anger into passion that would drive towards something that would better their lives (school, soccer and college)."

Officer Murphy's goal, along with the help of a KC Public School teacher and those eight kids, slowly grew into what is now Youth RISE. Founded by Officer Murphy, Youth RISE (Resilience, Influence, Support, and Education) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that revolves around soccer aiming to reach at-risk youth within the Kansas City community by offering mentorship through a high quality and structured soccer program.

"The coolest thing for me is watching all of my kids from so many different countries and backgrounds come together through one sport and work toward one common goal, while striving to reach their own dreams," Murphy said.

Officer Murphy joined the Kansas City Missouri Police Department in 2007. She has her Master's Degree and is currently working on her PhD focusing on youth mentorship and gang prevention. She plays semi-professional soccer for KC Courage Women's WPSL Team and teaches undergraduate Criminal Justice/Sociology courses part time for the University of Phoenix. Selflessly and with little sleep, Officer Murphy mentors around

120-130 kids through teams she coaches at Refugee Youth Association of Northeast Kansas City, Sporting LS Academy, KC Courage high school girls alternative program, KC Lutheran Varsity Boys Soccer and lastly her KC Youth RISE Jaguars.

When Officer Murphy isn't working coaching or teaching she's always mentoring, no matter the time of day. She takes kids on college visits touring campuses, helping with paperwork and taking kids to the doctor's office for sports physicals. She also attends at least five parent teacher conferences due to the lack of parental involvement.

"Giving a kid a little hope and putting forth the effort to show you genuinely care beyond the job requirements goes a long way in anyone's life," said Murphy. "So the lack of sleep and very busy schedule is worth it," she added.

The original eight kids, who Officer Murphy had been working with since the age of 12, will be graduating from high school this year, some with college scholarships. Officer Murphy says while they have had their fair share of tragedies, whether it be car accidents, victims of drive-by shootings or mourning the loss of their friends to violence, they have had more success than failure.

Officer Ann Murphy will be getting much deserved recognition, as she is one of four finalists out of 2,000+ nominees in the nation that will receive the 2017 Double-Goal Youth Coaching Award through the Positive Coaching Alliance (PCA) on April 22 in California. PCA's Double-Goal Coach Award is given to youth and high school sports coaches from throughout the U.S. who embody the ideals of the Double-Goal Coach, striving to win, while also pursuing the more important goal of teaching life lessons through sports.

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From teenage dream to reality

Since the age of 16, Fleet Technician Dennis Waldron dreamt of having a slick, muscle car like the one driven by Burt Reynolds in the classic film, Smokey and the Bandit.

Back then the black 1979 Pontiac Trans Am was out of Waldron's reach, financially. About 4 years ago, with better finances, Waldron and wife Kellie, an HR Specialist in the Benefits Section searched and finally found the car that had been only a dream. The car was in great shape, just needing a new rear end and shocks.

"It's been a life-long dream of mine. I've always wanted one since I was a teenager and I finally had the money to buy it," Waldron said. His friend used to have a gold Trans Am and has gifted his gold jacket to Waldron.

With over 30 years of marriage, and their daughter out of the house, the empty nesters decided to enter local car shows, the furthest being in Lathrop, MO.

"This allows us to reconnect," says Kellie. "He's the labor side and I'm the paperwork side. It's a lot of work, but I support my husband."

In 2014, they were invited to join the festivities at the Kansas Speedway Throttlefest rock concert. It was an impromptu decision to have cars at the event that year, so only 20-25 were on display.

Waldron was prepping the inside of his car prior to the competition and listening to the band Jackyl on his radio when he turned around to see the lead singer of Jackyl, Jesse James Dupree, admiring his car. During their conversation, Waldron discovered Dupree was an acquaintance of the Bandit films' stunt coordinator.

Waldron said, "He's a real nice guy, a class act. Most don't like going out in crowds and mingling but he does."



Dennis and Kellie Waldron display all their awards from car show competitions and show off their Smokey and the Bandit Car.



At the conclusion of the show, Waldron was presented with an award from Dupree. In keeping with the theme of the movies and the Bandit car, Dupree made sure he had a Coors beer in hand.

Says Kellie, "They weren't even selling Coors at the event, but he had one in his hand."

Kellie uses her own wedding dress and veil as props to signify Sally Field's character in the movie while a life-sized Burt Reynolds cutout is a hit with the selfie and photo-loving public. Sheriff Buford T. Justice and Sally Field cutouts may someday join Burt, but are cost prohibitive at \$400 apiece. To stay trivia sharp, they've had to watch the movie more times than they can count to combat the car buffs that try to stump them. They're quizzed on everything from Sally Field's CB handle, Frog, to the only reason Bandit will remove his hat.

A rarity at car shows is the ability to touch or sit in the displayed vehicles, but the couple allows people access as long as they ask and are respectful. They especially love to accommodate children and visitors with special needs.

The Waldron's have won a number of trophies including 1st place in their category at the 2015 and 2016 World of Wheel Car Shows. A fully restored Delorean nudged them out of the top spot in 2017.

They may expand their fleet to someday include a Pontiac LeMans or a semi

like the ones in the movies or an AMC AMX, which they had early in their marriage. Just recently, a local Kansas City band has contacted the couple about including the Bandit car in their music video.

In the meantime, they will continue taking their leisurely Sunday drives in the Bandit.



CIT Officer of the Year

Sergeant Sean Hess, Crisis Intervention Team Squad, was honored on March 28 in Columbia, MO, as the 2016-2017 Missouri State CIT Officer of the Year.

Hess said, "I'm really appreciative of it. It's something of a culmination of 17 years of work. It's nice to be recognized for the job and the effort."

He is one of the founding fathers of the Mid-America CIT Council (MACIT) and the Missouri State CIT Council (MOCIT) and served as the chair of the MACIT and MOCIT Training Committees since 2003 and 2006. Hess was instrumental in producing guidelines for CIT councils throughout the state to create their own training programs after the Memphis model. Beyond a 40-hour curriculum, Hess designed classes geared toward vets, youth and telecommunications dispatchers. He worked with the KC CIT squad to get it up and running and has formed partnerships with mental health liaisons and the KC-ATC Crisis Center.

Hess credits Captain Darren Ivey and Officers Aric Anderson and Ashley McCunniff for their vision, assistance and hard work.

"It's not a one-man show. I work with a lot of people who make me look good," said Hess. "Sergeant John Bryant of CPD and I have been together so long, it's like the Sean and John show. We've done hundreds of speaking engagements together."

Hess didn't think the program would advance to this stage and is excited to see how far it will go. He's had governors, politicians, police chiefs and sheriffs say it has made their departments and communities better.

The 2017 International CIT conference will be in Ft. Lauderdale, with Kansas City hosting in 2018.

Hess is also the winner of the 2016 Aaron Dougherty Crisis Intervention Team Award to be presented at the April 11 Board of Police Commissioners Meeting.

Badges and Baseball



"With so many kids consumed with electronics and social media these days, it's a blessing to be able to capture their attention with baseball," said Detective Chris Evans, Internal Affairs.

Members of the Kansas City Missouri Police Department, in partnership with the, I AM KING FOUNDATION, participated in the 3rd Annual Badges and Baseball event on March 25. Badges and Baseball is a baseball camp coached by police officers designed to bridge the communication and relationship gap between young men and law enforcement.

Detective Evans says baseball has a history of building race relations in this country and more specifically in Kansas City.

In addition to participating in various skills workshops the participants were given presentations on firearm safety and anti-bullying strategies. Approximately 50 young men participated in the camp.

"When it's all said and done, Badges & Baseball starts the conversation to bridging the generational gap," said Evans.

To learn more about the I AM KING FOUNDATION, you can visit their website at www.iamkingfoundation.com.



Upcoming Events

April 8
Tip-A-Cop

April 11
Board of Police
Commissioners Meeting

April 20
Crime Stoppers
Appreciation Breakfast

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Retired Major William Ponessa
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protect and serve with
professionalism, honor
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