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NEW FACTS

Attorney General Honors 16 DEA Employees at The Department of Justice's Annual Awards Ceremony

Individuals honored for Katrina relief efforts, anti-drug teen website, and law enforcement corruption battles

SEP 12 -- WASHINGTON - Sixteen DEA employees were honored today at the Department's 54th Annual Awards Ceremony at Constitution Hall in Washington, D.C. The Attorney General's awards recognize the extraordinary accomplishments of outstanding U.S. Department of Justice employees, as well as individuals from outside the Department.



"From rescuing elderly Hurricane Katrina victims, to launching an innovative website educating teens about the dangers of drugs, to exposing former corrupt New York City police detectives, DEA employees have once again demonstrated the depth of their compassion, talent, and investigative skills," said DEA Deputy Administrator Michele Leonhart, who attended the ceremony. "The entire DEA family is proud of what our award winners have accomplished."

"Today's award recipients make me proud to be their colleague," said Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales. "Their dedication and achievements remind me why it is an honor to serve at the Department of Justice."

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, many Department employees responded to assist those most impacted. The first award was presented to employees who valued service to the public above their personal needs. The team of DEA special agents ultimately rescued 90 abandoned elderly residents at a flooded nursing home.

"The award was extremely well-deserved and it was earned the old fashioned way through ingenuity, a can-do spirit and lots of courage. I am proud of the dedication and commitment the men and women of DEA showed under some very difficult and challenging circumstances," said New Orleans Special Agent in Charge William J. Renton.

In addition, seven individuals from DEA's Office of Demand Reduction received the Attorney General's Award for Excellence in Information Technology. They were honored for their work on the state-of-the-art www.justthinktwice.com anti-drug website for teens. The initiative displayed in developing this site has been an invaluable asset in spreading the anti-drug message to teenagers.

"Our Demand Reduction staff was thrilled to be recognized for their work in educating young people about the dangers of drugs through our teen website. Being honored by the Attorney General is very gratifying. There was our Demand Reduction program in the same company as impressive DOJ and other DEA employees who made great contributions to national security, prosecuted major violators and rescued people in Hurricane Katrina. This award re-affirmed for us the value of our Demand Reduction efforts," said Catherine Harnett, Chief of Demand Reduction Programs at DEA Headquarters.

Harnett also added that her team is in the final stages of adding several new items to the teen web site. "Because there are so many mixed messages on drugs, it's important to provide young people with new and interesting anti-drug information regularly."

Four DEA Special Agents received awards for their contributions to the investigation of former New York City Police Department detectives Louis Eppolito and Stephen Caracappa, who exploited their law enforcement positions to perpetrate a broad range of racketeering acts on behalf of the Luchese organized crime family.

"This investigation demanded that these DEA Agents bring to bear investigative prowess which led to the exposure of two former New York City Detectives who betrayed their shields. Because of their work, a shroud of secrecy and deceit was torn away, shining a light on the past of two individuals who were sworn to uphold the law but in reality were deceiving the



citizens of New York" stated Special Agent in Charge John P. Gilbride. "I am proud of our agents and the truth they exposed."

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