

Press Release

Geneva Police Recognized for Sex Offender Management Keeping Communities Safe Using Best Practices

SCHENECTADY, NEW YORK – MAY 27, 2009 - The Geneva Police Department received certification today by the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police in a new sex offender management program. The certification recognizes that Geneva Police are employing proactive and sound practices in managing sex offenders in their community. The presentation was made at 4:00 PM ceremony at police headquarters in Geneva, New York. The “Best Practices” certification program was launched in January and focuses on certain strategies used by police to: monitor sex offenders, provide community notification, and conduct enforcement. Geneva Police were the third agency to be certified under the new program. Association Executive Director John P. Grebert said, “For more than a decade, managing sex offenders has become an important function of law enforcement. Police are on the front lines in ensuring that offenders comply with the law and that citizens are informed about certain offenders living in their communities.”



Geneva Police Chief Frank Pane commented, "Our Officers provide a number of vital services to the community. None more critical than monitoring convicted sex offenders' activities and whereabouts. To accomplish our mission of protecting our citizens and visitors, particularly children, from sex offenders, we rely on our Offender Management Program". Chief Pane noted that the entire department handles various aspects of sex offender management, but he specifically lauded the efforts of Sgt. James Picchi, who is in charge of the program, along with Officers Matthew Valenti, Todd Yancey and Patrick Quigley. "These officers play an

integral role in Geneva Police Department's management of sex offenders. I am proud of the efforts of all our sworn and unsworn staff. They truly make a difference for our community."

Association President Robert D'Angelo (North Castle PD) said, "This program provides an independent review of the law enforcement role in sex offender management. I am so pleased that we are able to provide this service not only to recognize those agencies that are being proactive, but more important, to promote safety in our communities."

The policies and operations of the Geneva Police Department were assessed and found to be in compliance with the elements of the Best Practices program. In addition to having a written policy pertaining to sex offender management, they were also required to submit proof of monitoring of offenders, community notification, cooperation with other agencies, and enforcement.

Ontario County Assistant District Attorney William J. Hart congratulated Geneva Police, saying, "Under Chief Pane's and Sgt. Picchi's leadership, they have set the standard by which other law enforcement agencies should be judged." ADA Hart continued, "Our Office has been able to successfully prosecute a number of felony cases as a result of their efforts, and the City of Geneva is a safer place as a result of the emphasis they place on the enforcement of the Sex Offender Registration Act."

Dr. Robert Young, Superintendent of the Geneva City School District commented about the relationship between Geneva PD and the school district, saying, "We are extremely grateful for our partnership with the Geneva PD. By working together, the school district and PD engage in a procedure which gives us the very best possibility of preventing needless problems associated with these individuals. This partnership reflects the high level of concern and dedication of so many professionals in looking out for the safety of our children."

At Wednesday's presentation, Chief Pane received the certification from Mark A. Spawn, Director of Research, Development and Training for the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police. Spawn said that the Best Practices program takes several factors into consideration. "This program identifies the most important aspects of sex offender registration and gives agencies the ability to have an external validation of their processes." Spawn praised the work of Sgt. James Picchi and Officer Matt Valenti who worked extensively on the agency's application for certification. "Sgt. Picchi and Officer Valenti's dedication to sex offender management is clear. They are committed to Geneva's program and to the safety of this community. I would like to thank them personally for their assistance throughout the certification process."

The Best Practices program was recently highlighted at the 2009 National Symposium on Sex Offender Management and Accountability in Houston, Texas. Spawn said that for agencies that do not yet have a policy in place, the Association has resources to assist them in developing a plan to meet their needs.