

HEAT Program Honors Virginia Law Enforcement Agencies and Officers at VSA Conference

Awards Recognize Efforts in Auto-Theft Reduction

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EINPresswire.com/ -- The Virginia State Police (VSP) Help Eliminate [Auto Theft](#) (HEAT) program presented awards to four Virginia sheriff's offices and one [law enforcement](#) officer to recognize their efforts in reducing vehicle theft and theft of vehicle parts across the Commonwealth. The awards ceremony took place on September 20 during the annual conference of the Virginia Sheriffs' Association held in Virginia Beach.



First Sgt. Peter Lazear Presenting HEAT Awards at VSA Conference

The following awards were presented by First Sergeant Peter Lazear, HEAT Program Coordinator.

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We are grateful to law enforcement agencies and officers from throughout Virginia who join with the Virginia State Police in fighting vehicle theft.”

First Sgt. Peter Lazear

The Spotsylvania County Sheriff's Office was the winner in the agency category serving a population of more than 100,000. The New Kent County Sheriff's Office took the top prize in the agency category serving a population from 20,001 to 100,000, and the Fauquier County Sheriff's Office was recognized as a finalist in the same category. The Suffolk Sheriff's Office was the winner in the public outreach category.

Additionally, Deputy Jonathan Piersol, Spotsylvania County Sheriff's Office, received an individual certificate of merit for departments serving a population of over 100,000.

The HEAT Awards program is open to all Virginia law enforcement entities and employees who work in auto theft enforcement and prevention. “We are grateful to law enforcement agencies and officers from throughout Virginia who join with the Virginia State Police in fighting vehicle theft,” said First Sgt. Lazear. “These annual awards are an opportunity to recognize outstanding efforts.”

“Virginia citizens also have an important role to play in preventing auto theft,” said First Sgt. Lazear. “By following a few common-sense tips, they can protect their vehicles.” The HEAT program recommends the following:

- Take your keys and lock your doors every time you leave your vehicle.
- Never leave valuables in plain sight in your vehicle. Place them in the trunk or somewhere out of sight.
- Be aware of your surroundings when out and about.
- Park in well-lit areas.
- Invest in an audible or visible deterrent.
- Install GPS or other tracking devices.

Learn more about the HEAT program at [HEATreward.com](https://www.heatreward.com).

The Virginia State Police Help Eliminate Auto Theft (HEAT) program was established in 1992 to educate citizens and law enforcement about the theft of vehicles and vehicle parts. For more information, visit [HEATreward.com](https://www.heatreward.com). Visit Virginia State Police online at www.vsp.virginia.gov.

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SA Bryce Meekins, Sgt. Nicolas Fico, Sheriff J.J. 'Joe' McLaughlin, Jr., and SSA Shannon Pinto (2)

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