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COLUMBIA, SC, UNITED STATES, October 2, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Captain Daniel Baker, a 19-year veteran of the S.C. Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) Law Enforcement Division, recently joined a truly elite corps of law enforcement officers nationwide – even within his own SCDNR – when he graduated from the Quantico, VA-based FBI National Academy.

Baker, who currently oversees field operations in SCDNR's Region 1 encompassing 12 counties across the S.C. Upstate, completed the FBI's 10-week on-campus training program Sept. 17.

Established in 1935 and developed by both the FBI and U.S. Marines from Marine Corps Base Quantico (of which 547 acres have been allocated for the Academy), the FBI National Academy was established "during the height of the gangster era," and out of necessity for the standardization of law enforcement agencies nationwide.

Dubbed the "West Point for Law Enforcement," the FBI National Academy trains executive-level law enforcement leaders in law, behavioral science, forensic science, terrorism and the terrorist mindset, communication, health and fitness, and executive leadership development.

In 1935, the initial class of 25 students immersed themselves in the law enforcement sub-disciplines of criminal investigation techniques, scientific aids in crime detection, report preparation, and administration and organization. During World War II, courses in espionage and sabotage were added, according to the FBI's website.

According to a statement released by SCDNR: “Captain Baker was among 265 law enforcement officers who graduated from the 299th Session. The class included professionals from 44 states and the District of Columbia, as well as 29 international participants representing 28 countries, five military organizations and four federal civilian organizations.”

The statement continues: “Internationally recognized for its academic excellence, the FBI National Academy provides 10 weeks of advanced training in communication, leadership and physical fitness. Participation is highly selective and reserved for experienced law enforcement professionals who have demonstrated leadership within their agencies.”

Dr. Tom Mullikin, director of SCDNR and himself a Class-1 law-enforcement officer, says the FBI National Academy, its demanding criteria, and its challenging curriculum have for decades proven to be enormously beneficial both for graduates like Baker and the agency he (or she) represents.

A total of six SCDNR law enforcement leaders have graduated from the FBI National Academy, five of whom continue to serve as active SCDNR law enforcement officers.

"Captain Baker's successful completion of the physically and mentally challenging course-curriculum at this historically significant school for law enforcement leaders speak to his commitment and professionalism," said Mullikin. "Moreover, his now life-defining accomplishment reflects all that is good and – far too often – unsung about our game wardens and the culture of excellence we have within our SCDNR law enforcement community."

Baker says the Academy was a 10-week journey of personal reflection, growth (physically and academically), and renewed purpose.

“Perhaps the greatest impact of the FBI National Academy was the opportunity to step away from the demands of my everyday responsibilities and truly reflect on who I am as a leader and the leader I want to become,” Baker said. “In many ways, the Academy served as a reset button for me—both professionally and personally. It gave me time to evaluate my experiences, consider new approaches, and gain a greater appreciation for the responsibility that comes with leadership.”

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A total of 57,461 graduates have completed the FBI National Academy since its inception in 1935.

– For more information about the FBI and the FBI National Academy, visit https://www.fbi.gov/

– For more information about the S.C. Department of Natural Resources, visit https://www.dnr.sc.gov/

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