



Department of Justice

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JUSTICE DEPARTMENT HONORS SEVEN INDIVIDUALS IN NATIONAL MISSING CHILDREN'S DAY CEREMONY

WASHINGTON—The Justice Department today honored seven individuals from four states for their extraordinary efforts to recover missing children, rescue children from abuse and prosecute sexual predators, during its 31st annual commemoration of National Missing Children's Day.

“The work of these honorees in rescuing missing and exploited children – and in bringing perpetrators of these heinous crimes to justice – is exceptional,” said Associate Attorney General Tony West. “It takes very special people to perform such difficult – and in many cases heart-wrenching and life-changing – duties.”

Speakers included Associate Attorney General Tony West, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) Administrator Robert L. Listenbee, human trafficking survivor and advocate Holly Austin Smith and National Center for Missing & Exploited Children President and CEO John Ryan. Ceremony attendees included families of missing children, child advocates and others who support programs to recover missing children.

During the ceremony, Associate Attorney General West recognized efforts to protect children and presented the following awards:

Attorney General's Special Commendation: Recognizes an Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) task force or affiliate agency for making significant investigative or program contributions.

Recipient: Det. Sergeant Kevin P. Murphy, Berkeley County Sheriff's Office, Moncks Corner, S.C., for his efforts to expand the South Carolina ICAC task force's ability to investigate technology crimes throughout the state and to train other agents and law enforcement agencies in computer investigations.

Missing Children's Law Enforcement Award: Recognizes a law enforcement officer who made a significant investigative or program contribution to the safety of children.

Recipient: Det. Robert Erdely, Office of the District Attorney, Indiana, Pa., for training hundreds of officers across the country and around the world in computer investigations and for his many investigations into online pornography during his career.

OJJDP Administrator Missing Children's Citizen Award: Honors private citizens for their unselfish acts to safely recover missing or abducted children.

Recipients: Mark and Christa John and Michael and Mary Young, Sweet, Idaho, for acting on their concern and providing information to law enforcement that led to the safe return of an abducted 16 year old.

Missing Children's Child Protection Award: Honors a law enforcement officer who made a significant investigative or program contribution to protect children from abuse or victimization.

Recipient: Inspector Brian Bone, U.S. Postal Inspection Service, Washington, D.C., for his role in expanding the investigation of an international child pornography ring and for his support to more than 100 children whom the group had sexually abused.

Since 2000, OJJDP has hosted a national poster contest for fifth-graders to raise greater awareness about missing children. This year, Dawson Mack, a fifth grader from Athens Intermediate School in Athens, Ala. received the Missing Children's Day Art Contest Award.

President Ronald Reagan proclaimed May 25, 1983, the first National Missing Children's Day to remember Etan Patz, a six-year-old boy who disappeared from a New York City street corner on May 25, 1979. Missing Children's Day honors his memory and the memories of children still missing.

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