

SELMA POLICE OFFICER KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY

We are so saddened by the death of a Selma Police Officer who was gunned down while on patrol on Tuesday, January 31, 2023. We have reached out to assist officers with peer support. We also have offered our FDSA building as a gathering place for the Selma Police Department or for any needs they may have during this difficult time. In addition, we are contributing to a memorial fund established for the officer's family. Unfortunately, we know the pain of this journey all too well and will help in any way we can.

HONORING THE FALLEN: Our Longstanding History

I wanted to begin this month's message by sharing some important history about how we honor our local fallen deputies and the commitment we made many years ago. I'm sharing this since I know many of you are recent FDSA members and do not have the historical knowledge as some of your peers who have served here for an extended time.

My objective in providing you with this journey through time is summed up in the following quote, "A people without the knowledge of their past history, origin, and culture is like a tree without roots".

The groundwork and foundation built upon the premise we 'never forget' the fallen was established many years ago. We continue this important work year-round through various ways.

In 2008, the Fresno Deputy Sheriff's Association created a Peace Officer Memorial Fund to assist with expenses during line of duty deaths. The intent of the fund was to immediately help families when tragedy strikes our own agency and Fresno County Sheriff's deputies are killed in the line of duty.

Also, that year, a Peace Officer Memorial Golf Tournament was initiated as the primary source of fundraising. One hundred percent of the proceeds were directly deposited into the fund.

The first golf tournament was a great start with 60 golfers and a few ice chests filled of soda and water! Over the years, the annual event has evolved into a premiere event that boasts a sellout crowd of 210 golfers.

We have tremendous support from corporate sponsorships and local businesses each year. These partners understand the meaning behind the tournament and the noble cause their contributions are going toward. It's a tangible donation that directly assists families in their darkest, most difficult and devastating moments.

In the past, contributions from the fund have helped to assist with everything from meals or gift cards for family immediately following a death. Contributions have even helped assist the cost of a plot at the cemetery and a headstone. For the deputies who keep watch over the fallen officer 24/7, (prior to the burial) we also supply coffee and

refreshments at the funeral home. These are merely a few small examples of the important and meaningful ways the money is spent.

Honor and remembrance are always at the forefront of our efforts. Honoring our fallen friend, honoring their family and honoring their service and sacrifice to our community.

Throughout the years – we have raised more than \$800 thousand dollars for the Peace Officer Memorial Fund.

We are already planning for our 16th annual golf tournament, which will be held on October 20, 2023, at Eagle Springs Golf Course in Friant.

We remember our fallen at different events locally, as well as state and nationwide.

Each year, the FDSA sends 10 members to the California Peace Officer Memorial event in Sacramento. This allows our deputies, dispatchers and support personnel to participate in ceremonies honoring those locally and statewide who gave their lives in service to others. These events include a candlelight vigil on a Sunday night, followed by a Memorial ceremony on Monday morning, and then a lunch sponsored by PORAC to wrap up the memorial events.

In addition, each year two FDSA members are selected to attend national memorial events in Washington DC. The association pays the cost of airfare and lodging to attend the weeklong memorial events in the nation's capital.

The immediate families of the fallen always have an open invitation to attend these memorial events. We do not want the financial expense to hinder a family member from attending these important events to remember their loved one.

The FDSA Board has always maintained the desire to honor fallen local law enforcement officers and their families at a public place that is easily accessible to the community. We support our local Fresno County Peace Officer Memorial Foundation through financial contributions. The foundation maintains a memorial wall that sits in the middle of Fresno County's Courthouse Park and just steps away from Sheriff's Headquarters and Fresno County Superior Court. Each May a public memorial is held in front of the monument.

Our work doesn't stop at the local level.

Each time a law enforcement officer is killed in the line of duty in the State of California, we send a \$1,000 check to the family/officer's fund. We do this quietly, as we know the meaning of having support from other law enforcement agencies during these tough moments.

On the state level, we donate to the California Peace Officer Memorial Fund (CPOMF) to support the maintenance of the state memorial wall, along with a ceremony that takes place. Each year, during Peace Officer Memorial Week, the California Governor acknowledges and pays tribute to each California officer killed in the line of duty. This is a tradition and a gesture of gratitude for each of the officer's service and sacrifice.

Our promise to honor and remember is lived out every single day at the Fresno Deputy Sheriff's Association. We will continue to support organizations that serve to honor those killed in the line of duty, their families and every law enforcement officer who serves throughout our county, state and nation.

INSURANCE NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE

Community Health System is continuing to negotiate expired insurance contracts for several carriers – including Anthem Blue Cross. In late January, an agreement was reached with United Healthcare. We hope this is a positive sign for the other carriers (including Cigna) who remain without a contract. I will keep you updated as soon as we learn more or have new information. I have sent a letter in urging Anthem and Community Hospital to reach middle ground so service can be provided to those who rely on their health care.

FDSA Online Store

A reminder to all members – we have a wide range of FDSA items available through our new online store. The featured apparel and swag are stylish and modern.

The store is opened from the 1st of each month until the 16th. After the store closes on the 16th, orders are filled. The product options and name brands include items Nike, Travis Mathews, North Face, and more! Feel free to log on and shop today!

To visit the online store, just click on this link: <https://stores.inksoft.com/fdsa/shop/home>.

Take Care to each and every one of you.

Eric