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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
December 11, 2009

AREA LAW ENFORCEMENT LAUDED **FOR FIGHT AGAINST DRUNK DRIVING**

ELEVENTH-ANNUAL EVENT HONORS GREATER WASHINGTON'S POLICE

McLean, VA, Dec. 11 – Twelve Washington-metropolitan area police officers were cited for their “outstanding commitment in the fight against drunk driving in Greater Washington” today and presented with the area’s twelfth-annual “Law Enforcement Awards of Excellence for Impaired Driving Prevention.”

Presented this morning at a regional ceremony held in McLean, Virginia, the nonprofit Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) presented its 2009 Law Enforcement Awards to:

- **City of Alexandria Police Department’s** Deputy Chief Eddie Reyes
- **Arlington County Police Department’s** Officer Andrew Necelli
- **Fairfax County Police Department’s** Auxiliary Police Officer Program
- **Loudoun County Sheriff’s Office’s** Deputy Jason Totaro
- **Maryland State Police’s** Trooper Matthew L. Allen
- **Metropolitan Police Department’s** (D.C.) Officer Jose E. Rodriguez
- **Montgomery County Department of Police’s** Officer III John Romack
- **Prince George’s County Police Department’s** Sergeant James L. Ianni
- **Prince William County Police Department’s** Officer David A. Ehrhardt AND
Officer Curt Redlin
- **United States Park Police’s** Officer Adam E. Zielinski
- **Virginia State Police** Senior Trooper Michael S. Middleton

The annual awards, presented at a ceremony this morning at Maggiano’s Little Italy in the Tysons Galleria, were bestowed by WRAP in memory of Metropolitan Police Department’s Motor Patrol Officer Anthony W. Simms. Officer Simms, as a result of injuries sustained while on duty, lost his life to an impaired driver during Memorial Day weekend in 1996. WRAP’s 2009 Law Enforcement Awards were presented by Officer Simms’ widow, Lieutenant Pamela Simms, also formerly with the Metropolitan Police Department, along with News4’s Sports Anchor Lindsay Czarniak. Today’s event speakers included Virginia Delegate Vivian Watts (D-Annandale) and Alexandria Police Chief Earl L. Cook, amongst others.

(more)

“Today’s awardees represent the front lines in the fight against drunk driving in Greater Washington,” said Kurt Gregory Erickson, WRAP’s President. ***“It is only through their commitment in stopping the threat that impaired driving presents to all our friends and families that the Washington-metropolitan area continues to have a rate of alcohol-related traffic deaths lower than the national average.”***

According to WRAP and contained in the organization’s pending 2009 “How Safe are Our Roads” report (see online at: <http://www.wrap.org/highwaysafety09.pdf>), alcohol-related traffic fatalities, injuries and crashes all decreased in the Washington-metropolitan area last year.

In addition to receiving the Law Enforcement Awards, each of the 2009 WRAP honorees also received a pair of complementary Washington Wizards tickets (courtesy of the Washington Wizards), a \$ 25 prepaid gas card (courtesy of Exxon Mobil) and two high-tech and illuminated ticket boards and embroidered work bag (courtesy of the region’s *Checkpoint Strikeforce* campaign).

Founded in 1982, the Washington Regional Alcohol Program is an award-winning public-private partnership working to prevent drunk driving and underage drinking. Through public education, innovative health education programs and advocacy, WRAP is credited with keeping the metro-Washington area’s alcohol-related traffic deaths consistently lower than the national average. WRAP, however, may best be known to area residents via the organization’s popular free cab ride service for would-be drunk drivers, *SoberRide*. For more information, visit WRAP’s web site at www.wrap.org.

(WRAP’s holiday free cab ride service for would-be drunk drivers, SoberRide, will operate between 10:00 pm and 6:00 am each day between tonight and January 1, 2010. During these evening hours, Washington-metropolitan area residents ages 21 and older celebrating with alcohol may call the toll-free SoberRide phone number 1-800-200-TAXI and be afforded a no-cost [up to a \$ 50 fare], safe way home. AT&T wireless customers can call #-TAXI for the same service. See www.soberride.com for more details.)