

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

April 11, 2019

MEDIA CONTACT:

Katie Fulkerson

812-369-1751 (cell)

MEDIA ADVISORY:

Hennepin County Sheriff Explorers to receive \$10,000 donation to support youth character development, leadership, and service learning

WHO:

- Youth Law Enforcement Explorers (high school students)
- Hennepin County Sheriff Deputy Matthew Petrone, Lead Explorer Advisor
- Craig Hartman, Chester Bird Post No. 523 American Legion Commander
- Becky Linstroth, Chair of the Hennepin County Sheriff Foundation

WHAT: Representatives of the Chester Bird American Legion and Hennepin County Sheriff Foundation will present a large donation check to the youth Explorers of Post #3744. The youth Explorers will explain what they do in terms of community service, leadership, and law enforcement training, and why it is important to support the Law Enforcement Explorer program.

WHEN: Friday, April 12, 2019 at 5:45 PM

WHERE: Chester Bird American Legion, 200 Lilac Dr N, Golden Valley, MN 55422

<Explorers.png>

Hennepin County Sheriff Explorer Post #3744 class of 2018, with Explorer Advisors Megan

Thompson and Matthew Petrone.

PRESS RELEASE:

(St. Paul, MN) – This week, the youth Explorers of Hennepin County Sheriff Explorer Post #3744 will be presented with the largest one-time donation in the history of the organization. The \$10,000 gift will be used to deliver character-building experiences and mentorship for youth Explorers 14-21 years old through Minnesota's Law Enforcement Explorer program. Chester Bird Post No. 523 American Legion has partnered with the Hennepin County Sheriff Foundation to donate nearly \$35,000 to Explorer Post #3744 since 2012.

The Hennepin County Sheriff's Office (HCSO) strives to provide Explorers with life skills, service learning, character education, and leadership experience. Licensed Deputy Sheriff Advisors from HCSO lead the program by organizing weekly meetings, developing character-building activities, and providing law enforcement training opportunities for Explorers. All Explorers are issued a training and Class A uniform, as well as a duty belt, that are worn at all meetings and inspected on a regular basis.

The Explorers' community service includes involvement with the Boys and Girls Club, Salvation Army bell ringing, and assisting the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office with officer training exercises. Each year, Explorers give back over 2,500 combined hours to the community.

As part of their law enforcement training, Explorers learn how to deliver emergency first aid and safely handle firearms. They are also trained to handle real-life law enforcement scenarios such as crime scene investigation, domestic crisis intervention, burglary in progress, hostage negotiation, and active shooter response. Post #3744 participates in state and national competitions and has won numerous awards in practical, academic, and marksmanship categories.

"I'm so proud of this year's class of Explorers. These young men and women are upstanding citizens with hearts for service to their communities. They are role models for their peers. Whether they choose to pursue law enforcement or another career path, they each have a bright future ahead of them," said Deputy Matthew Petrone, Lead Explorer Advisor. "This generous donation will enrich the Explorer experience and help us reach more kids."

"It is the responsibility of the American Legion to invest in America's future through the support of The Boy and Girl Scouts of America. Chester Bird Post No. 523 has actively been supporting the Hennepin County Sheriff's Exploring Scout Post 3744 since 2012. We feel that it is both an honor and a privilege to have the opportunity to work with this outstanding group of young individuals and look forward to providing continued support into the future," said Craig Hartman, Chester Bird Post No. 523 American Legion Commander.

"The Hennepin County Sheriff Foundation is thrilled to support these young men and women year after year as they grow into community leaders, thanks in large part to the Explorer program. The Foundation also provides scholarships for undergraduate students pursuing Criminal Justice degrees, and we encourage Explorers to apply," said Becky Linstroth, Chair of the Hennepin County Sheriff Foundation.

According to the Minnesota Law Enforcement Explorer Association, hundreds of Explorers who received law enforcement training as teenagers are currently employed in law enforcement careers in Minnesota. At the Hennepin County Sheriff's Office, at least twelve current deputies graduated from the program.

Youth ages 14-21 interested in becoming Explorers may contact Deputy Matthew Petrone at 612-239-2610 or Matthew.Petrone@hennepin.us. The program is open to applicants interested in a career in law enforcement who pass an oral interview and background check.

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