

• Police Officer of the Year •

Patrol Officer Anna Mercado
CPD Bureau of Community Policing

Growing up on the City's near west side, Anna Mercado has always felt a passion to help people. Upon graduation from Lincoln West High School in 1988, she began nursing school studying to become a registered nurse at Cuyahoga Community College. She also started a family with her fiancé and their daughter.

One night, her fiancé went out for the evening with a group of friends. He didn't make it home. He was shot and killed while a bystander at an argument between two other males. While coping with that devastating loss, Anna took time to pray and reflect on her future. She came to reevaluate her goal in life and decided that she would rather try to prevent such tragedies, rather than treat them in the hospital after they occurred.

Anna then took the entrance examination for the Cleveland Division of Police and was appointed in September 28th, 1998. Upon graduation from the police academy, she was assigned to basic patrol in the Second District.

She stated that during her encounters as a police officer she was rewarded with the opportunity to touch people's lives... many times with something as simple as a smile, a hello, taking time to listen or offer advice, and treating people with respect.

In July of 2013, Anna was transferred to the Bureau of Community Policing and became a D.A.R.E. instructor in Cleveland's elementary schools. D.A.R.E. is the acronym for Drug Abuse Resistance

Education. By teaching youngsters about avoiding substance abuse, making smart decisions, and becoming good citizens, Anna is a positive role model and demonstrates to the kids that police officers really are there to help.



When asked about what she likes best about her position Anna stated, "I was so excited to be given the opportunity to become a D.A.R.E. officer. During my first year I taught over 1,100 students and when I returned to my schools for the new year, I was received by many of my children with smiles and hugs. Moments like that confirm that this is where I belong."

Sgt. Tim Higgins, Anna's immediate supervisor, remarked, "Anna's a very dedicated officer. She takes a genuine interest in the kids' welfare, and they know that she cares. After she's done instructing, she stays

and has lunch and spends time with them at recess. The positive relationships that she forges is worth its weight in gold"

It is an honor to recognize Patrol Officer Anna Mercado as the 2014 Police Officer of the Year.

Editor's Note: PO Mercado is unable to attend this evening as she and her family are on a vacation that was arranged prior to her being selected to receive the award. When notified about the award she stated, "I am humbled to be recognized for something that I think is my job and find so rewarding. Thank you all very much."