



Texas

Department of Public Safety

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NEWS RELEASE

DPS Presents Awards For Excellence

Injured trooper, Bastrop wildfire response and Department fitness recognized

AUSTIN – The Texas Public Safety Commission and DPS Director Steven McCraw today awarded Trooper Justin Duck, of Houston, a *Purple Heart* for serious injuries suffered after his patrol car was struck on the side of the road in March of 2011. They also presented *Unit Citations* to Bastrop area troopers for their response to the Bastrop wildfire and to the DPS Fitness Unit for their efforts in improving DPS employee physical readiness.

“Today’s award recipients have displayed the finest qualities this agency has to offer,” said Director McCraw. “Trooper Duck, the Bastrop area troopers and the department’s Fitness Unit have committed time and effort to serving and protecting Texans, and they should be proud of their accomplishments.”

- **Highway Patrol Trooper Justin Duck** was awarded a *Purple Heart* today. On March 12, 2011, Trooper Duck was conducting a traffic stop in northwest Harris County, when a full-size truck driven by an intoxicated driver slammed into the back of his patrol car. After being trapped in the vehicle for 45 minutes, he was air transported to a nearby hospital. A serious head injury, including bleeding in his brain, and multiple injuries to his neck, back and hand required months of rehabilitation before he could return to work. His determination to return to duty despite the pain was an inspiration to his fellow troopers.
- The Bastrop Highway Patrol Sergeant Area received a *Unit Citation* today for their work during the historic and devastating Bastrop County wildfire that started on Sept. 4, 2011. The sergeant and troopers stationed in the Bastrop area joined the fight against the destructive fire even as the blaze threatened their own homes and families. The fire raged for two weeks, burning more than 34,000 acres, destroying more than 1,600 homes, and displacing thousands of residents. In a tireless effort to respond to the wildfire, area troopers worked around the clock to block roadways, guide endangered residents to safety and provide necessary assistance to save lives and assist residents impacted by this disaster. **Sgt. Tony Thompson, Cpl. Keith Jenkins, and Troopers Burke Wray, Keith Montgomery, Clifford Drake, Darryl Tidwell, James Perry, Rueben Corbell, Michael Monaghan and Craig Swantner** were all recognized as part of the *Unit Citation*.

- The Education, Training and Research Fitness Unit was presented a *Unit Citation* today for development and implementation of a department-wide physical fitness program. Their research led to the use of the Concept 2 Rower as a low-impact physical readiness testing option and general exercise tool. As a result of these efforts, physical readiness and fitness among department employees has taken a major step forward for both commissioned and non-commissioned personnel. **Sgt. Greg Davis** and **Training Specialist Kelley Cady** were recognized for their leadership and commitment to implementing and promoting the program.

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