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Officer Paul Lancaster is the “exception to the rule” when you think of a 20-plus year veteran police officer, according to Sgt. Darin Pool, who nominated Lancaster for the Burleson Police Department’s first Most Outstanding Community Policing Award.

“He has not lost any of his desire or drive to aggressively work his beat and develop contacts that can assist him in his investigation,” Sgt. Pool said. “He often works through meal breaks and will stay late to make a phone call or meet with someone just so he can conclude a case.”

The inaugural award was announced at the Burleson Police Department’s annual banquet Feb. 17. Lancaster was one of two officers nominated for the honor.

The intent of community policing is to both develop and enhance relationships throughout the community with all citizens and community organizations; to listen to concerns; to evaluate crime-related data; and to provide timely and realistic proactive, and when necessary, re-active responses to the citizens.

Sgt. Pool said Lancaster has “always stood out as a high performer. His work ethic is unrivaled and his commitment to the City is without question. He has been commended by citizens as well as co-workers for his willingness to go the extra mile to assure that the citizens receive the highest level of service possible.”

No call is too small for the officer. The sergeant said Lancaster will “use every bit of his free time to follow up on leads and rule out suspects before completing a final report. He often has a suspect identified and the case completed before it ever reaches our criminal investigations division.”

Lancaster was hired by the Burleson Police Department in 1987. He is quick to volunteer to assist other officers and often serves as a mentor.

“Officer Lancaster is well known among the citizens,” Sgt. Pool said. “They know he can be counted on to deal with their issues in a professional and expedient manner. He has always embraced the community oriented policing concept, even before we gave it a title.”