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The recipient of the Burleson Police Department's Supervisor of the Year leads or is involved in more than half a dozen vital department programs. Sgt. Darin Pool was honored at the March 1 police awards banquet.

Pool, a Benbrook native, is respected by his fellow officers. According to the nomination, "this supervisor is quick to offer assistance to anyone in need and does not use his position as a sergeant to pull rank on fellow officers. He takes the calls as they are assigned to him and does not pass the buck."

Pool, 41, joined the Burleson Police Department in November 1994. He has served as a patrol officer, patrol corporal, detective corporal/crimes against children and has served as a patrol sergeant since 2005. He is certified as a master peace officer, field training officer and coordinator, team leader for the Burleson Police Honor Guard, head advisor for Burleson Police Explorer Post #4911, member of the Hostage/Crisis Negotiation Team and the Critical Incident/Stress Management Team, agency coordinator for the Drug Recognition Expert/Drug Evaluation and Classification program, and member of the Rapid Response Task Force/Command Post Operations Team.

The sergeant earned an associate of applied science degree in criminal justice in 1990 and a bachelor of science degree in criminal justice in 1993. Prior to joining Burleson, Pool worked as an adult probation officer for the Tarrant County Community Supervision and Corrections Department in 1993 and was a deputy sheriff for the Tarrant County Sheriff's Office, 1993-1994.

"I liked the size and growth potential of Burleson and the greater opportunities to serve with greater responsibilities," Pool said.

Pool's father was his mentor "due to his strong work ethic and dedication to his family and his country. He served in the United States Air Force for more than 20 years during the Korean War and the Vietnam War. After retiring he continued to work for the federal government for another 20 years."

As an active member of the department's Crisis Negotiation Team for more than 10 years, Pool has been involved in many hostage, barricaded person and suicide calls. Pool said that "due to the dedication and advanced training of all of

the team members, we have saved countless lives and brought many violent situations to a peaceful conclusion.”

He is also part of the Critical Incident/Stress Management Team which works with members of the public safety community to provide debriefings following traumatic incidents.

“Public safety employees often witness violence, mass casualties and traffic accidents and they need an outlet to discuss what they have experienced and recuperate,” the award winner said. “The CISM team facilitates this process through peer support and referral.”

As the agency coordinator for the Drug Recognition Officer/Drug Evaluation and Classification program, the award winner is the liaison between the department’s experts and the state. Drug Recognition Experts (DREs) are officers who have received highly technical, advanced training in the identification of drugs and the drug’s effects on the human body. The training is most commonly used in the prosecution of drug-related DWI cases but it is also beneficial in other criminal cases. Pool has been a Drug Recognition Officer for 12 years. There are approximately 350 DREs in the state.

The sergeant also serves as the field training coordinator, under the authority of Commander Aaron. He schedules the shifts of new officers, assigns them to field training officers, oversees the progress of new officers, and assures that training officers follow the correct procedures.

The award winner isn’t just affecting the future of new officers. Pool has been an advisor with the Burleson Police Explorers on and off since 1994. In 2010, he asked fellow officers to help him mount an intense recruiting effort to reestablish the program.

“I have always seen the benefit of this program and the positive impact it has on the kids and the community,” the sergeant said.

The award winner wrote new policies and procedures and gained statewide affiliation for the program through the Texas Law Enforcement Explorer Advisors Association. The Explorers have assisted with the American Cancer Society Relay For Life of Burleson, Cinco de Mayo, the Burleson Police Department Open House, Fourth of July concert and fireworks, and have even conducted a fundraiser for Harvest House.

“We have a strong core group of young men and women who are dedicated to assisting the police department,” Pool said.

The Burleson Police Honor Guard is something that Pool always saw a need for so in 2009 he asked the Burleson Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association if they would help fund the unit. In 2010, the BCPAAA did provide funding for basic equipment, a team was selected and Pool wrote the training manual. The guard trains every month and has performed at the Police Department Open House,

the Military Veteran Tribute, Memorial Day, and the Texas Citizens on Patrol awards.

“Our greatest honor and most humbling duty was assisting the Johnson County Sheriff’s Department with the visitation, funeral and burial of Deputy Clifton Taylor who was killed in the line of duty on April 23, 2011,” the award winner said. “The most important duty of the Honor Guard is to pay respects to those officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the defense of freedom.”

The award winner also works in conjunction with the fire department and fire marshal’s office on the Command Post Operations Team. This team and the Mobile Command Unit are part of a statewide regional task force that is deployed to natural or manmade disasters such as hurricanes, wildfires and terroristic incidents.

The sergeant’s family includes two daughters, an 11-year-old and a 9-year-old, and an older brother who lives in South Carolina.