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She has exemplary analytical and organizational skills and is instrumental in synthesizing crime data. Kathy James, who will mark 24 years with the Burleson Police Department in March, was honored Jan. 29 as the Burleson Police Department's Civilian Employee of the Year.

"I was surprised because I didn't realize that others in the department were aware of the roles I have and the duties I perform," James said. "Most of what I do is behind the scenes work to assist the officers and administration in doing their jobs."

James' current title is civilian records supervisor/crime analyst. She earned her bachelor of criminology and criminal justice from the University of Texas at Arlington in 2012.

In 1991, James started as a part-time dispatcher.

"I was applying for positions at city hall then the part-time dispatch position came open and I took it to get my foot in the door," James said. "I got hooked on dispatching and realized that it was something I loved, so my short-term part-time job has lasted 24 years."

James was a dispatcher/communications operator, 1991-1997, and then was promoted to supervisor of the department's records section in 1997. In 2011, crime analyst was added to her job title.

"She took on the responsibility of synthesizing crime data and has been successful at identifying crime trends and making crime predictions," according to the award nomination. "She is instrumental in the collection and processing of an enormous amount of data. This has been very useful in the allocation of resources."

The 51-year-old Burleson resident is a certified criminal/intelligence analyst, certified records management, and certified GIS for crime analysis. She counts Sgt. Melvin McGuire as her mentor, saying, "I have the upmost respect for Sgt. McGuire and I value his opinion as well as his expertise."

James has volunteered with the American Cancer Society Relay for Life, coordinated the Christmas wrapping paper drive for the Disabled Crime Victims Assistance, Inc., has assisted with the Citizens Police Academy and Citizens on Patrol, and served on awards committees for the police department and the City. The Civilian Employee of the Year is not her first major honor. James was picked as the police department's 1996 Employee of the Year.

The honoree is one of three children. Her father is retired and her mother, Sandy Janusch, passed away in 2012. Kathy James is married to David James. Their shared family includes children Jon and his wife Aubrey Allen, Mandi Allen, Sydney James and Harrison James, and granddaughter Kennadi Allen.