

**DEPARTMENT OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGE CONTROL**

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**ABC Picks up Statewide Awards for Outstanding Law Enforcement Work**

*California Office of Traffic Safety Recognizes Monrovia District Office and Supervising Investigators Gerry Sanchez, Joe McCullough, Dana Saladen and Investigator Eric Burlingame*

**Sacramento** – The California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) has recognized The California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Monrovia District Office, Southern Division Special Operations Unit Supervising Investigator Gerry Sanchez, Northern Division Special Operations Unit Supervising Investigator Joe McCullough, Rancho Mirage Supervising Investigator Dana Saladen and Riverside Investigator Eric Burlingame for their stellar efforts reducing underage drinking, illegal drug activity and alcohol-related crime in California.

All received their awards on Thursday, September 4, 2008 at the OTS/CHP/ABC Annual Law Enforcement Challenge Awards Ceremony held in Sacramento.

The Monrovia District received the award for reporting over 250 arrests, 32 accusations against ABC licensed premises that broke the law and suspensions totaling 940 days. In addition, the team of investigators worked on several different types of investigations involving underage drinking, community problems, illegal narcotics activity, stolen property, false ownership, illegal solicitation of alcohol and prostitution. “I’m very proud of the work this team has done to improve safety in this district,” said ABC Monrovia District Administrator Hilarie Vazquez. “They deserve this award.”

Southern Division Special Operations Unit Supervising Investigator Gerry Sanchez was recognized for his efforts of handling 14 complicated investigations including one case involving the sale of false government documents. Federal agents had been working the location for over a year and within months, Sanchez was able to secure felony arrest warrants for two suspects, one being an employee of an ABC licensed premises.

Northern Division Special Operations Unit Supervising Investigator Joe McCullough received an award for his supervision of 436 misdemeanor and felony arrests by his unit. Arrests involved underage drinking, illegal narcotics activity, receiving stolen property, parole violations and disorderly conduct.

Rancho Mirage District Supervising Investigator Dana Saladen was honored for coordinating enforcement efforts involving huge events such as the Coachella Music and Art Festival, the Stagecoach Music Festival and the Colorado River Taskforce. With her organization and guidance, 140 arrests were made.

Riverside District Investigator Eric Burlingame was recognized for his relentless efforts involving multiple high profile Target Responsibility for Alcohol-Connected Emergencies (TRACE) cases. Burlingame has taken on these cases in addition to his regularly assigned investigative duties..

“All of these professionals represent ABC’s finest efforts,” said Director Steve Hardy. “I’m happy to see them get credit for tough work that makes our streets safer.”

ABC is a department of the Business, Transportation and Housing Agency, which is under the direction of Secretary Dale Bonner, a member of the Governor’s Cabinet.