

BLACKSBURG POLICE DEPARTMENT

A police officer in a dark blue uniform and white helmet is riding a silver motorcycle. The officer is smiling and waving with their right hand. The motorcycle has "POLICE" written on the front fairing and a police badge. The background is blurred, showing a street scene.

# ANNUAL REPORT 2017

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# MEET THE CHIEF

Chief Wilson has served with the Blacksburg Police Department for 19 years. During his time with the department, he has served as a Patrol Officer, Detective, Detective Sergeant, Patrol Lieutenant, Captain of Services Division, Homeland Defense Coordinator, Tactical Commander during William Morva manhunt and the Virginia Tech shootings, Emergency Response Team Commander and K-9 Unit Commander. In his previous years, he served in the United States Marine Corps and as a volunteer firefighter and officer for the Blacksburg Fire Department.

Chief Wilson was promoted to Chief of Police on March 1st, 2014. Chief Wilson received his Bachelor's Degree in Dairy Science from Virginia Tech in 1990. He is a graduate of the 240th session of the FBI National Academy and the Professional Executive Leadership School in Richmond, Virginia. He has received a Medal of Valor, Virginia Police Chief Foundation's Lifesaving Award, Distinguished Service Award, Meritorious Service Award, and the American Legion Outstanding Law Enforcement Officer Award.



## INTRODUCTION

### MISSION

The mission of the Blacksburg Police Department is to provide exceptional service and protection through leadership and partnership with with community.

### VISION

The Blacksburg Police Department believes in the principals of community policing and works in partnership with citizens and local businesses to promote, encourage, and enact ways to maintain a low crime rate, increase public safety, and enhance our quality of life.

# MISSION OF TOB

The mission of the Town of Blacksburg is to support a vibrant community by providing effective municipal services and enhancing Blacksburg's quality of life. The Town of Blacksburg values:

>Innovation

>Community Pride

>Fiscal Responsibility

>Customer Service

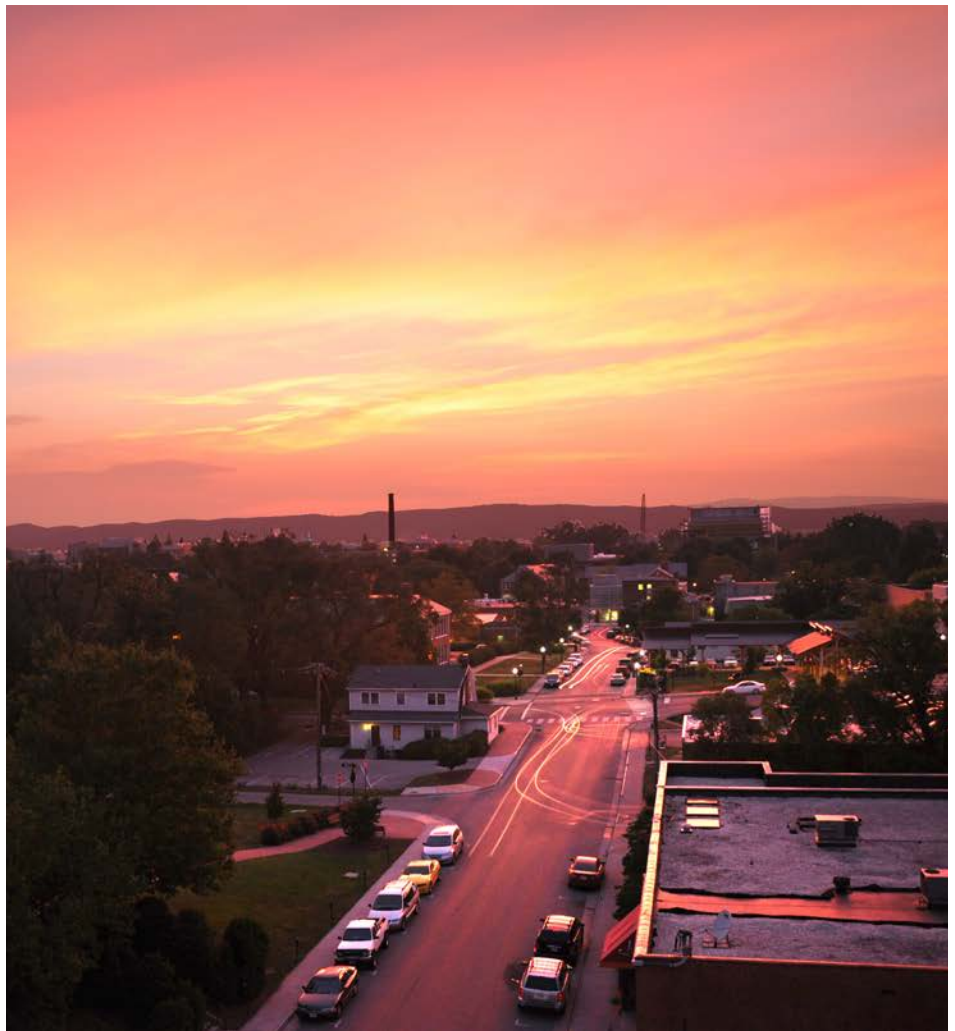
>Leadership

>Citizen Involvement

>Open Government

>Integrity

>Public Safety



# 2017/2018 DEPARTMENTAL EXPENDITURES

The Blacksburg Police Department's approved fiscal year 2017/2018 budget contained \$8,597,475. The graph below represents how those monies were spent during the course of the fiscal year.

ITEM ACCOUNT	2017/2018 COUNCIL ADOPTED
Personnel Services	\$ 4,554,474
Benefits	\$ 2,149,910
Contractual Services	\$ 199,851
Supplies	\$ 254,095
Training and Travel	\$ 93,658
Internal Services	\$ 282,909
Capital Outlay	\$ 97,739
Contributions	\$ 862,408
Grant Expenditures	\$ 102,431
TOTAL	\$ 8,597,475



# UNIFORM CRIME REPORT STATISTICS

The Uniform Crime Report represents statistics submitted to the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The eight crimes shown below are known as the Part I Index Crimes. These figures represent actual offenses where a report was taken and the crime can be substantiated. These figures are somewhat lower than the figures appearing on the "calls for service" summary produced by the Blacksburg Police Department due to calls being reclassified as unfounded or as matters civil in nature, following police response.

Type of Crime	2015	2016	2017
Murder & Attempts	0	0	0
Rape & Attempts	24	22	15
Robbery	4	0	1
Aggravated Assaults	9	13	12
Burglary	39	54	40
Larceny-Theft	317	331	297
Motor Vehicle Theft	10	15	11
Arson	0	1	2

Offense	Cleared Arrest Total	Cleared Other Total	Active Total	Inactive Total
Murder & Attempts	0	0	0	0
Rape & Attempts	2	7	2	3
Robbery	0	0	0	1
Aggravated Assaults	5	3	0	2
Burglary	5	6	7	18
Larceny-Theft	24	31	34	188
Motor Vehicle Theft	3	3	1	2
Arson	1	1	0	0

Incidents	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTAL
Murder & Attempts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rape & Attempts	1	2	0	2	0	1	2	2	2	3	0	0	15
Robbery	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Aggravated Assaults	0	1	0	1	1	2	0	1	2	3	0	1	12
Burglary	2	4	4	4	5	2	3	2	5	4	4	1	40
Larceny-Theft	25	28	22	21	25	33	20	39	30	22	22	23	310
Motor Vehicle Theft	0	0	0	2	0	0	2	2	2	1	0	2	11
Arson	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>391</b>

# INTERNAL AFFAIRS & PERSONNEL COMPLAINTS

The department strives to ensure that it offers the citizens of the Town of Blacksburg the most professional police force possible. To that end, the department examines the actions of employees who are involved in complaints of misconduct. Although the delivery of some police services is not always welcomed by those associated with an event, the department expects professionalism from all employees. The table above details the internal affairs and personnel complaints against Blacksburg Police Department Personnel.

Internal Affairs and Personnel Complaints	2015	2016	2017	Total
Unfounded Complaint	1	1	1	3
Employee Exonerated	0	0	0	0
Complaint Not Sustained	2	1	0	3
Complaint Sustained	1	2	2	5
Policy Review	0	0	2	2
Other	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>13</b>

# PHYSICAL ARRESTS

During 2017, the Blacksburg Police Department arrested 771 individuals averaging 64 arrests per month. Of the arrested individuals in 2017, 79% were male, 17% were female and less than 1% were juveniles.

Month	Adult Male	Adult Female	Juvenile	Total
January	49	4	0	53
February	46	15	0	61
March	39	10	0	49
April	68	9	0	77
May	33	12	2	47
June	27	10	2	37
July	37	6	0	43
August	47	14	0	61
September	101	21	1	123
October	70	22	0	92
November	49	11	2	62
December	48	17	1	66
Total	614	134	8	771





# TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT & CRASH INVESTIGATIONS

The table below lists some common infractions drivers were cited for in 2017 and the totals in each category. The list does not include all infraction types, just the top 10. In 2017 there were 2,017 summons issued.

Charge	Citation Total
46.2-874 - SPEEDING IN A 25 MPH ZONE	709
46.2-830 - FAIL TO OBEY HIGHWAY SIGN	263
46.2-646 - EXPIRED STATE TAGS	242
46.2-821 - VEHICLES BEFORE ENTERING CERTAIN HIGHWAYS SHALL STOP OR YIELD RIGHT-OF-WAY	214
46.2-833 - FAIL TO OBEY A TRAFFIC LIGHT	162
46.2-875 - SPEEDING IN A 35 MPH ZONE	154
46.2-1158 - EXPIRED INSPECTION/REJECTION DECAL	108
46.2-816 - FOLLOWING TOO CLOSE	70
46.2-873 - 10-19 MPH OVER SPEED LIMIT IN SCHOOL ZONE	48
46.2-300 NO DRIVERS LICENSE	47

In 2011 the Blacksburg Police Department implemented a monthly traffic safety initiative to increase traffic enforcement in identified areas. Focus areas included speeding, seatbelt violations, child safety seat violations, stop sign violations, equipment and inspection violations, red light violations, school zone speed violations, bicycle violations, work zone violations, and cell phone violations. Below are the monthly topics of focus and the total number of citations issued in 2017 based on the focus.

Month	Traffic Focus	Citations
January	School Zone Speed Violations	0
February	Red Light Violations	20
March	Stop Sign Violations	4
April	Seatbelt Violations	3
May	Bicycle Violations	0
June	Child Safety Seat Violations	0
July	Work Zones Violations	0
August	School Zones, Cell, Crosswalks Violations	3
September	Speeding, Stop Signs, Bicycle Violations	219
October	Seatbelt Violations	5
November	Red Light Violations	8
December	Speeding Violations	47



## TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT & CRASH INVESTIGATIONS

The Blacksburg Police Department has a seven member team that are certified as crash investigators. The Crash Team holds training on a monthly basis for eight hours. The members of the Blacksburg Police Department Crash Team are also members of the Blue Ridge Regional Crash Investigations Team (BRRICIT). During the 2017 calendar year the crash team investigated one case for the Town of Blacksburg and assisted the Montgomery County Sherriff's Office on three cases.



## POLICE OPERATIONS DIVISION

Uniform police patrol is the backbone of every municipal law enforcement agency and the Blacksburg Police Department is no different. Our enforcement techniques are evaluated daily and thoroughly analyzed annually so that we may better respond to the rapidly changing needs of our citizens. Our mission is accomplished through a highly adaptable approach to mobile and bicycle patrols, utilizing specialized equipment and expertly trained personnel. Working around the clock, our uniform patrol function consists of highly visible marked vehicles, unmarked “slick-top” cars, motorcycles and bicycles. In 2013 the department changed the design scheme of the patrol vehicles. Using a variety of vehicles allows our officers closer contact with members of our community and makes it possible to focus enforcement efforts in areas that are not readily accessible by car.

The Department continues to acquire grant funding to increase speed enforcement and engage in preventative alcohol violation programs. While enforcement is an essential component of our peace-keeping efforts, it is equally important that we join with the community to serve other needs as well. In 2017, we supported and participated in activities for Virginia Special Olympics and continued raising funds to provide child safety seats for indigent families. Participation in community groups such as the Town's traffic committee enables a participative approach to problem solving.



## **NARCOTICS K9 OFFICERS**

In 2007 the Blacksburg Police Department was authorized to establish a Canine Unit, the first in the town's history. The Department currently has four Patrol Canine Handlers and three drug canines and one explosives detective canine which allows for accessibility of use and strengthens the department's enforcement activities. The Canine Unit conducts searches of vehicles, buildings, packages, mail, luggage, and open areas, and has proven a highly valuable tool in the Department's proactive approach to the suppression of the use and distribution of illegal narcotics in the Town of Blacksburg.

The unit's primary function is to detect and eradicate illegal narcotics in our schools, neighborhoods and on our streets. Each pairing of officer and drug canine have been certified by the Virginia State Police and U.S. Customs in the detection of illegal narcotics to include marijuana, cocaine, heroine, methamphetamine, ecstasy and hashish. They have been instrumental in the arrest of numerous suspects involved in illegal narcotic distribution and the seizure of assets and quantities of illegal narcotics. Through a collaborative regional agreement, the unit has been utilized by neighboring agencies in their policing efforts. In 2017 the drug K9 unit conducted 175 utilizations. The Canine Unit also conduct's public demonstrations on a regular basis to civic groups, scout troops, childcare centers, church groups and schools.





## **EXPLOSIVES DETECTION K9 OFFICER**

The Department introduced a fourth Patrol Canine Handler and the department's first explosives detection canine, Brek, in 2014. Canine Brek is trained in the detection of multiple different explosives and responses to items recently contaminated with, or associated with, the odor of one or more of the explosive substances. Canine Brek and his handler were certified together as a team on May 21, 2014 at the Virginia State Police Training Academy. They are required to conduct 24 hours of maintenance training per month. In 2017 the team conducted 24 utilizations.





## **SPECIAL WEAPONS AND TACTICS TEAM**

The Blacksburg Police Department Special Weapons and Tactics Team (S.W.A.T) is comprised of thirteen highly trained officers and two tactical medics who perform various critical functions within the Police Department including high risk warrant service, barricade response, hostage rescue, VIP security, hazardous materials situations and weapons of mass destruction response. The tactical medics were added to S.W.A.T in 2012. The tactical medics provide medical care in situations that are often too dangerous for regular paramedics and ambulance workers. The tactical medics treat victims, suspects, and law enforcement officers.

All prospective S.W.A.T members go through a rigorous selection process which includes interviews, advanced weapons qualification and demanding annual physical fitness and strength training requirements. The team is comprised of a division commander, one team commander, one assistant team commander, ten police officers, and two tactical medics. Individual members are highly trained and skilled in specific disciplines including: Less Lethal/Chemical Munitions, Sharp Shooter, Forced Entry, Tactical Medic and K-9 Operations. S.W.A.T members stand ready at a moment's notice to respond to any emergency and are committed to providing the best possible service to our community.



## **FUSION CENTER**

In July 2016 the Blacksburg Police Department along with all other police departments in Montgomery County consolidated into the NRV Regional 911 Center. The 911 calls for service are processed through the new Regional Center and allocated to the police jurisdiction where the service is needed. Due to the transition of emergency dispatched services the Blacksburg Police Department formed the Fusion Center to act as the public liaison branch of the department. The Fusion Center is the central point of contact for our agency, our officers, and community members. The Fusion Center is staffed with 8 full-time and 2 part-time Public Liaison Assistants. The Fusion Center provides 24/7 coverage.



## CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS UNIT

The Criminal Investigations Unit (C.I.U.) of the Police Department is responsible for the investigation of multiple and major crimes including homicide, rape, robbery, arson, burglary and drug violations. The plain-clothes investigative unit consists of one Lieutenant, one Sergeant, five detectives, one forensic detective, one street crimes officer, one drug task force officer, one Joint Terrorism Task Force detective, and one evidence technician/property clerk. Members of this unit are prepared to respond to crimes as needed, around the clock. In 2017, the Criminal Investigations Unit initiated 267 investigative cases, clearing 195 cases. Of the 195 cases, the Criminal Investigations Unit made 128 criminal arrests.



## **STREET CRIMES UNIT**

The Street Crimes Unit was created in 2012 to monitor and investigate street level drug violations, investigate violations of laws regulating the sale of alcohol, develop and maintain street level intelligence through confidential informants, apprehend wanted fugitives, and to assist the criminal investigation units at both law enforcement agencies with investigations concerning violent and serial crime. The Street Crimes Unit is composed of one sworn law enforcement officer.



## **JOINT TERRORISM TASK FORCE**

The Joint Terrorism Task Force is a partnership between the Federal Bureau of Investigation, other federal agencies, and state and local law enforcement. The Blacksburg Police Department currently has one sworn detective assigned to the task force. The Joint Terrorism Task Force detective conducts specialized investigations involving matters of National Security and terrorism, including the documentation of information, determination of subject nexus to terrorism, and performs related duties as required.



## CRIME SCENE UNIT & PROPERTY AND EVIDENCE

The proper identification, collection and handling of evidence are crucial elements in any criminal investigation. Since 1975, Blacksburg Police personnel have received intensive training at the Virginia Forensic Science Academy in Richmond. The Forensic Technician utilizes modern methods and technology to ensure the integrity of property and evidence protocols, crime scene processing and related case-sensitive documents. In 2017 Forensic Detective M.P. Czernicki and Evidence Technician E.F. Moore processed and/or handled 1,638 pieces of evidence and processed 24 crime scenes.



## **CRIME PREVENTION & COMMUNITY RELATIONS**

The success of any law enforcement agency, particularly in the realm of crime prevention, is dependent upon the active participation of its' service community. The Police Department has long enjoyed a solid, cooperative and positive relationship with our citizens resulting in a low crime rate and enhanced public safety. Each year, the Crime Prevention Unit provides comprehensive prevention education programs and curriculums to thousands of citizens of all ages and backgrounds. The unit is comprised of Crime Prevention officers and specialists, three full-time School Resource Officers and one roving School Resource Officer/ D.A.R.E officer. Among the community outreach programs offered are neighborhood and apartment watch, child safety seat installations, law enforcement internships, home and business security surveys, and victim/witness assistance.

The Blacksburg Police Department is a longtime member of the Virginia Crime Prevention Association. Established in 1978, the VCPA is a non-profit organization established to develop and implement programs that prevent crime. The VCPA partners with law enforcement, community groups, schools businesses, public housing, the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, the Virginia Community Policing Institute, the Virginia State Police, the National Crime Prevention Council and other organizations to deliver programs and services. Services include training, technical assistance, program development, advocacy and resource material.

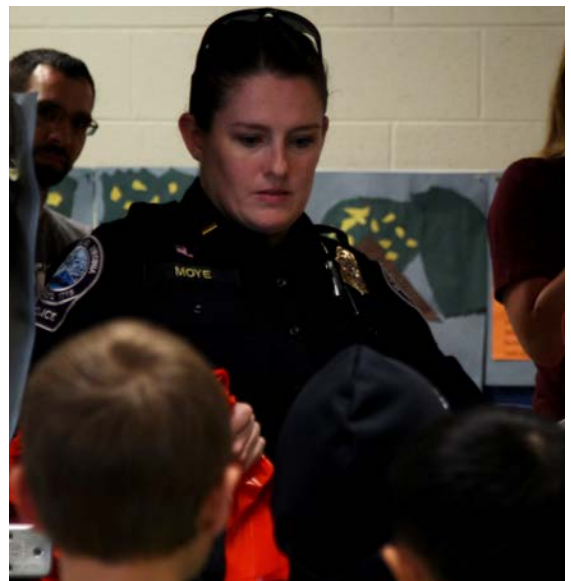




## POLICE SERVICES DIVISION

Programs, services, and information available through the Blacksburg Police Department Crime Prevention Unit:

- >Class Action curriculum for Middle and High School students
- >D.A.R.E (Drug Abuse Resistance Program)
- >Bicycle Safety
- >Alcohol Laws and Awareness
- >Personal Safety
- >Fraud Prevention
- >Neighborhood and Apartment Watch
- >Traffic Safety
- >Victim/Witness Assistance
- >Designated Driver Programs
- >Stranger Safety for Children
- >Home and Business Security Surveys
- >Operation I.D.
- >Date Rape Awareness
- >Fake I.D. Awareness
- >Reporting Crimes and Accidents
- >Records, Reports, and Fingerprinting



## SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICERS

The Blacksburg Police Department maintains a partnership with the Montgomery County Public Schools, working closely with school administrators, teachers, and other staff to enhance the overall educational environment. A Virginia certified law enforcement officer works in the Middle and High Schools to provide immediate access to all law enforcement services and to assist in maintaining a high level of safety, order, and discipline. The program operates under a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Montgomery County School System and provides four highly qualified and specially trained officers to serve as School Resource Officers (SRO).

School Resource Officers are, first and foremost, Law Enforcement Officers and are responsible for addressing any criminal complaints or incidents that arise on school property, or during school sponsored events. School Resource Officers are state certified by the Commonwealth of Virginia to function as SROs, and they are also certified to instruct the "Class Action" program. The "Class Action" program teaches students their rights, responsibilities, and obligations under the Law; and informs them of consequences of their actions. School Resource Officers also provide classroom instructional programs on drug and alcohol awareness and laws, narcotic drugs, computer crimes, personal safety, and the role of the police and provide brochures on numerous topics of concern to students and parents.





## DRUG ABUSE RESISTANCE EDUCATION

In cooperation with Montgomery County Schools, the Blacksburg Police Department provides the Drug Abuse Resistance Education program. The 10 week curriculum overseen by the Virginia State Police is an interactive program taught to fifth grade classes in all four Blacksburg Elementary Schools. The curriculum provides students with effective techniques to make healthy decisions dealing with peer pressure and the social and legal consequences of drugs and violence. In 2017, approximately 239 fifth grade students between four elementary schools received D.A.R.E. instruction.



## SCHOOL CROSSING GUARDS

As a component in our effort to help keep children safe, the Blacksburg Police Department employs 7 part-time School Crossing Guards. Working in teams of two at Gilbert Linkous, Harding Avenue, Kipps and Margaret Beeks Elementary schools, our School Crossing Guards have assisted thousands of children, pedestrians, motorists and cyclists to enter and depart school property and their adjoining intersections safely.



## PARKING ENFORCEMENT

The Blacksburg Police Department enforces parking violations throughout the town with a primary focus on the metered spaces in Blacksburg's active downtown business district. The agency employs one full-time parking enforcement officer. For the calendar year of 2017, 5,360 parking tickets were issued.

## **ADOPT-A-COP PROGRAM**

The Adopt-a-Cop Program was initiated in the spring of 2013. The six week long academy was created to improve the relationship between the fraternities of Virginia Tech and the Blacksburg Police Department. Off-campus fraternities are the majority of the population that contributes to the social interaction and engagement in the community. Reputations of fraternities are often portrayed as deviant and problematic, opposite of how the police department sees their potential. For most fraternities, they view police officers with fear and mistrust. This program is designed to increase positive interaction with the fraternities and educate them about the true purpose of the police department, address problems in the neighborhood, explain the local laws and ordinances to them, provide direction for social services, and many other steps to keep the fraternities and police officers safe.

The relationship of the Adopt-A-Cop program is between one officer and one fraternity. A fraternity applies to be a part of the program, and once approved a police officer is assigned to the fraternity. The officer acts as a teacher and mentor to the fraternity, educating them on how to stay safe when out with friends, drink responsibly, and how to be role models in the community. The officer attends fraternity meetings at least once a semester to give input on events and answer questions.





## **NO HOKIE LEFT BEHIND**

The No Hokie Left behind and Be Safe Blacksburg Programs were initiated in the Fall of 2014. No Hokie Left Behind was created because of the increasing number of college students that would walk by themselves at night, which sometimes lead to them becoming victims of crimes. This initiative is designed to let students know that they should look out for each other and never travel alone. If students go out the objective, is that they will plan to go together, stay together, and leave together.

## **BE SAFE BLACKSBURG**

Be Safe Blacksburg was created for the community and public school students to increase knowledge about how to stay safe. The focus for high school students is on drugs and alcohol and how both cannot only harm the body, but also the lives of others. For K-12 the focus is on bullying and peer pressure. Students are influenced by how their peers treat them, so the Be Safe Blacksburg program helps educate students on how to prevent bullying and step up if they see someone being bullied. For adults, the program tries to get the community to look out for their fellow neighbors be either helping someone in need, such as walking an elderly woman across the street or calling emergency services for someone who cannot. These programs are for community safety and education.





## **CITIZENS POLICE ACADEMY**

The Blacksburg Police Department conducts a Citizens Police Academy annually. One night per week over a seven week period, academy students learn about the basic functions in most areas of the police department. Academy topics include evidence and crime scene processing, communications, crime prevention, search and seizure and patrol. Citizen involvement in this program aids us in achieving our goal of developing and maintaining a positive interactive relationship with our community. The academy is open to residents of Blacksburg as well as the County of Montgomery. Pictured below are the 32nd session graduates with Chief Wilson and Sergeant Sarver.



## **DEPARTMENT GRANTS**

Annually, the Blacksburg Police Department applies for grant monies to fund selective enforcement activities. The grants are submitted to the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles and the Virginia Alcohol Beverage Control. This directed patrol and enforcement activity targets specific enforcement issues in two primary fields. The Blacksburg Police Department was awarded funds in FY 2017/2018 of \$25,980 through the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Highway Safety Funds through the Virginia Division of Motor Vehicles to target speed, occupancy protection, and driving under the influence offenses. Blacksburg Police Officers worked 480 extra duty hours enforcing speed limits, occupant protection laws, and other moving violations, as well as seeking out DUI drivers. In 2017, officers issued 398 traffic citations and made 10 arrests while working grant funded directed patrol.



## **NATIONAL ACCREDITATION**

The Blacksburg Police Department has been a Nationally Accredited law enforcement agency since 1993. In April 2016 the agency received its' eighth award, successfully re-accrediting in the gold standard with excellence. The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) evaluates law enforcement agencies on their compliance with 479 public safety standards over a three year cycle. This award represents the culmination of self-evaluation, concluded by a review from independent assessors and CALEA's Commissioners demonstrating Blacksburg Police Departments commitment to professional excellence in policy and practice. CALEA accreditation also represents acceptance of an ongoing obligation to continue the quest for professional excellence. The Blacksburg Police Department is honored to have been recognized. The Blacksburg Police Department will be evaluated again for CALEA compliance in April 2020.





## **POLICE CHAPLAINS**

The Blacksburg Police Department has two Police Chaplains, Dr. Thomas McDearis and Scott Obenchain. Chaplains work with Law enforcement personnel on a professional level by making themselves immediately available as trained and caring professionals who can assist in times of loss, confusion, depression, or grief to people in crisis situations. The chaplains provide this service no only to the community, but also to all department employees and their families as well. Dr. McDearis has served the department since October 2003 and Mr. Obenchain began his service in 2014.



Dr. Thomas McDearis



Scott Obenchain

