

Steve Marshall  
Alabama Attorney General



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## Attorney General Steve Marshall Holds 23rd Annual Alabama Law Enforcement Summit

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Steve Marshall hosted Thursday hundreds of law enforcement officials from all over the state of Alabama for the 23rd annual Attorney General’s Law Enforcement Summit. The 2022 summit offered a day of instruction for police officers, sheriff’s offices and State law enforcement officials.

“With over 400 law enforcement agencies in Alabama, our men and women in uniform protect diverse communities with many different challenges,” said Attorney General Marshall. “Each year, it is my honor to host the Attorney General’s Law Enforcement Summit to share best practices and new legal information with Alabama law enforcement. It is not only a unique educational opportunity, but a much-anticipated time for personnel to get to know their counterparts from across the state.”

During the six-hour Summit, officials were updated on Alabama criminal law, personally delivered by **Alabama Court of Criminal Appeals judges Chris McCool and Richard Minor**. That was followed by an in-depth training session focused on “Leadership During a Crisis,” provided by former **South Carolina police chief Byron Snellgrove**, whose community was thrust in the national spotlight during the investigation of the disappearance of a six-year-old girl.

The gathering also reflected a somber tone with the commemoration of fallen officers who lost their lives in the line of duty since last year’s Summit. Attorney General Marshall recognized the sacrifices of the following fallen officers:

**Senior Trooper Jason Lynn Vice of the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency** died on September 9, 2021, as a result of contracting COVID-19 in the line of duty. Trooper Vice served 15 years with the Alabama Law Enforcement Agency and was assigned to the Highway Patrol Unit at the Tuscaloosa-Selma Highway Patrol Post. He is survived by his wife, two daughters, sister, father, grandmother, and stepfather.

**Chief Buddy Ray Crabtree of the Ider Police Department** died on October 30, 2021, from complications as a result of contracting COVID-19 in the line of duty. Chief Crabtree served with the Ider Police Department for 10 years and had previously served with the Bridgeport Police Department. He is survived by his wife, four children, and eight grandchildren.

**Constable Madison “Skip” Nicholson of the Wilcox County Constable’s Office** died on December 1, 2021, after being shot while responding to a domestic disturbance call in Yellow Bluff. Constable Nicholson was a 40-year veteran of Wilcox County law enforcement, having served as full-time and reserve deputy sheriff, and an elected constable. He was previously



wounded in the line of duty. He is survived by his wife, two sons, daughter, and eight grandchildren.

**Investigator Steven Ray Finley of the Madison County Sheriff's Office** died on January 14, 2022, as a result of contracting COVID-19 in the line of duty. Investigator Finley was a United States Army veteran and served with the Madison County Sheriff's Office for 29 years. He is survived by his wife.

**Lieutenant Kevin Pounders of the Hanceville Police Department** died on January 23, 2022, as a result of contracting COVID-19 in the line of duty. Lt. Pounders was a United States Marine Corps veteran who served with the Hanceville Police Department for 24 years. He is survived by his wife, son, grandchild, and mother.

**Deputy Sheriff Steve Bobbitt of the DeKalb County Sheriff's Office** died on February 3, 2022, as a result of contracting COVID-19 in the line of duty. Deputy Bobbitt served the DeKalb County Sheriff's Office for 13 years. He is survived by his wife, two daughters, and one granddaughter.

**Corporal Keith Morgan of the Cherokee County Sheriff's Office** died on February 16, 2022, as a result of contracting COVID-19 in the line of duty. Cpl. Morgan served with the Cherokee County Sheriff's Office for 12 years. He is survived by his wife and two daughters.

**Sergeant Christopher Michael Vaughn of the Cedar Bluff Police Department** died on April 1, 2022, from a medical condition after assisting in a vehicle pursuit that resulted in a vehicle crash. Sgt. Vaughn served with the Cedar Bluff Police Department for six years and previously served with the Leesburg Police Department for seven years. He is survived by his wife, two sons, parents, and brother.

**Officer Darryl Wayne Fortner of the Vestavia Hills Police Department** died on April 6, 2022, from complications as a result of contracting COVID-19 in the line of duty. Officer Fortner served with the Vestavia Hills Police Department for over seven years and previously served 20 years with the Birmingham Police Department. He is survived by his wife, son, daughter, three grandchildren, mother, and sister.

**Deputy Sheriff J'Mar Colin Abel of the Chambers County Sheriff's Office** died on June 20, 2022, from a vehicle crash while assisting the Roanoke Police Department in the pursuit of a suspect. Deputy Abel lost his life on his second anniversary with the Chambers County Sheriff's Office. He is survived by his father and fiancée.

**Deputy Sheriff Bradly Steven Henry Johnson of the Bibb County Sheriff's Office** died on June 30, 2022, from a gunshot wound sustained the previous day while encountering a suspect who fired on Deputy Johnson and a second deputy. Deputy Johnson served with the Bibb County Sheriff's Office for eight years. He is survived by his fiancée, two children, and his parents.

**Officer Ivan Mauricio Lopez of the Mount Vernon Police Department** died on August 22, 2022, when a vehicle driving approximately 90 mph ran a stop sign and stuck his patrol car. Officer Lopez served with the Mount Vernon Police Department for 12 years. He is survived by his wife and two daughters.

**Corrections Officer Rickey Cooper of the Alabama Department of Corrections** died on August 27, 2022, after collapsing while on duty at Easterling Correctional Facility. Officer Cooper served with the Alabama Department of Corrections since 2007 and would have completed 15 years on September 4. He is survived by his mother, son, and two grandsons.

“As with much of the nation, Alabama continues to experience an increase in law enforcement deaths in recent years,” Attorney General Marshall observed. “The commitment to protect and serve is absolutely vital to the long-term safety of our cities and towns, yet it also comes with great risk. Too many of our best in uniform have lost their lives on duty, leaving behind families and friends. Law enforcement is not only a protection force but also a very big family and it is important for us to come together each year to honor those we have lost.”

The 2022 Attorney General Law Enforcement Summit was held at Church of the Highlands in Montgomery.

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**Links to Summit Photos:**

[Attorney General Marshall](#)

[ACCA Judges Richard Minor and Chris McCool](#)

[Former Chief Byron E. Snellgrove, Cayce, SC \(Guest Speaker\)](#)

[Montgomery Police Department Honor Guard](#)