



Attorney General Steve Marshall Holds 19th Annual Statewide Law Enforcement Summit

(MONTGOMERY)—Attorney General Steve Marshall hosted approximately 900 law enforcement officials from all over the state of Alabama today during the 19th annual Attorney General’s Law Enforcement Summit. The 2018 summit offered a day of instruction in ongoing and new challenges facing police officers, sheriff’s offices and State law enforcement officials.

Attorney General Marshall began the summit by welcoming law enforcement officers and thanking them for their service and sacrifice to ensure the public’s safety. “It is a great honor to serve as your Attorney General for the past 21 months and there is no job I would rather do than stand in support of you, the men and women who uphold the law and protect our communities,” he said. “I am thankful for the invaluable assistance and cooperation we have received from law enforcement throughout Alabama. The teamwork exhibited on all levels of law enforcement is making a positive difference for Alabamians.”

The Attorney General provided an update on law enforcement activities by his office in the past year, noting that his Investigations Division conducted regional law enforcement training sessions attended by 226 personnel from the Shoals to the Wiregrass, including 22 police departments, eight sheriff’s offices and 11 other agencies. Attorney General Marshall’s Office also participated in four federal, state and local violent crime operations which have collectively taken more than 200 violent offenders with guns off the streets from the Central Alabama River Region to the Gulf Coast.

This year’s summit featured a presentation from Chief Jarrod Burguan of the San Bernardino, California, Police Department about how law enforcement handled a 2015 terrorist attack and lessons learned from the experience. Alabama Assistant Attorney General Michael Dean gave a comprehensive update of recent changes in Alabama’s criminal laws including updates about search and seizure laws. Douglas Astralaga, Chief Division Counsel for the Mobile Division of the FBI, addressed issues related to the use of force and deadly force confrontations.

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A somber highlight of the day came with the commemoration of fallen officers who lost their lives in the line of duty during the past year. Attorney General Marshall and Chief Deputy Attorney General Clay Crenshaw recognized the sacrifices of the following officers with a presentation of certificates of honor:

Officer Justin Taylor Billa of the Mobile Police Department was shot and killed on February 20, 2018, while assisting in the apprehension of a suspect who had just murdered his ex-wife. Officer Billa, who was only 27-years-old at the time of his death, is remembered for his dedication to duty and as a loving father. He served two years with the Mobile Police Department, and is survived by his wife and a one-year-old son.

Huntsville Police Officer Keith O'Neal Earle died from injuries sustained in an on-duty vehicle accident on March 26, 2018. He is remembered as an encourager and motivator to not only his family but also to the people in the Huntsville community he served daily in his 25 years with the Huntsville Police Department. He is survived by his wife and five children.

Special Agent Gregory P. Fee was assigned to the Special Prosecutions Division of the Attorney General's Office. On July 31, 2018, Special Agent Fee used his lunch hour for an exercise work-out, as he regularly did, and died after an apparent heart attack. He was a retired FBI Special Agent. Special Agent Fee is remembered by his family and loved ones as an adventurer and a wonderful provider.

"We pause to remember those who have given the ultimate sacrifice for public safety," observed Attorney General Marshall. "Let us all be encouraged as we remember and honor their legacy of commitment, dedication and service."

The 2018 Attorney General Law Enforcement Summit was held at Frazer United Methodist Church in Montgomery.