



# LAGRANGE

GEORGIA

## ***News Release***

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

July 31, 2017

## **LaGrange Police Department Receives Recognition for being among the Best Law Enforcement Agencies in the World for Policy and Practice**

LaGrange, Ga. June 31, 2017 – The LaGrange Police Department received international accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, or CALEA, for a 7<sup>th</sup> time.



The department also achieved the accreditation with excellence award.

Chief Louis Dekmar is proud of the achievement. “There are 18,000 law enforcement agencies across the country and less than 1,000 receive accreditation. Of those 1,000 agencies, only 10% of those receive the accreditation of excellence.”

Chief Dekmar, along with LPD and city leaders officially received the accreditation award Saturday during the CALEA Conference in Providence, Rhode Island.

The LaGrange Police Department first received accreditation in July 1999. Since then, every three years the department consistently received the honor in 2002, 2005, 2008, 2011, 2014, and now in 2017.

To receive the CALEA Accreditation, the agency must demonstrate a commitment to professional excellence in policy and practice. The accreditation is accomplished through a highly regarded and broadly recognized body of professional standards.

The honor is for four years and the agency is required to maintain continuous compliance during the time period.

“We are being recognized for being on the cutting edge for best practices,” said Chief Dekmar. “Our folks do an excellent job.”



In January, Dekmar received international recognition for publicly apologizing for his agency's role in the 1940 lynching of Austin Callaway. He says to build trust in the African-American community, the department must acknowledge the past and apologize.

He feels the apology was a big part in his department's receiving the excellence in accreditation award.

"We have a strong understanding of the social contract with our citizens." Dekmar says. "We deliberately develop strong relationships with the organizations that help the citizens we work with on a daily basis."

According to Chief Dekmar, use of force in the department is getting a lot of attention nationally and it's a big focus in his department.

"As a result of our accountability, we have a very low use of force arrest rate. Less than 1% per arrest."

City Manager Meg Kelsey is proud of the accomplishment.

"This type of award is important for the community because it establishes the guidelines and principles that guide the LaGrange Police Department toward a goal of professional excellence," she says.

"I was honored to stand beside Chief Dekmar, our accreditation manager Sgt. Karen Sanders, and law enforcement staff to receive our sixth reaccreditation with excellence. We are fortunate to have such an amazing staff that is dedicated to excellence."

**Contact:** Accreditation Manager Sgt. Karen Sanders, LaGrange Police (706) 883-2678 or [ksanders@lagrangega.org](mailto:ksanders@lagrangega.org)

Picture attached. Photographed from left to right – Senior Officer Jim Davison, Sergeant Karen Sanders, Chief Louis Dekmar, LaGrange City Manager Meg Kelsey, Captain Mike Pheil, and Lt. Eric Lohr

For more information on CALEA, go to [www.calea.org](http://www.calea.org).

To learn more about the City of LaGrange, go to [www.lagrangega.org](http://www.lagrangega.org) or follow us on Facebook at [facebook.com/lagrangegagov](https://facebook.com/lagrangegagov) and on Twitter at [@lagrangegagov](https://twitter.com/lagrangegagov).

###