

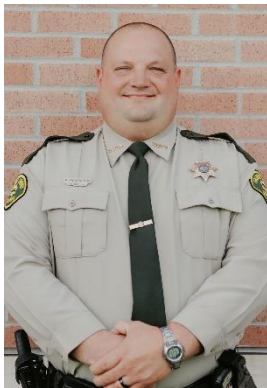
## PURPLE HEART AWARD NOMINATION

By Steve Hanson, Past President

The Iowa State Police Association '**Purple Heart**' award was developed in 2013 for the purpose of honoring law enforcement officers who have been seriously wounded or killed in the line of duty as a result of a combat incident.

The Purple Heart award is granted to any sworn Iowa peace officer who has been seriously, critically, or fatally injured in the performance of law enforcement duty. In addition, this award may be conferred if an injury was averted by the wearing of body armor. This award will be given in all cases resulting in line of duty death, but will otherwise be limited to those cases involving an attack by an assailant or the performance of an act of valor.

The 2022 Purple Heart Award will be given to 4 different recipients at the 90<sup>th</sup> Annual Iowa State Police Association Conference in Cedar Rapids on Tuesday evening October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022.



**Deputy Austin "Melvin" Richardson**  
**Fremont County Sheriffs Office**  
**E.O.W. June 14, 2022**

On June 14, 2022, at approximately 12:40, Deputy Austin "Melvin" Richardson age 37 was on duty, operating a marked patrol in the 2600 block of Hwy 275, north of Hamburg, Iowa in Fremont County. Deputy Richardson struck a southbound harvesting combine being operated partially in his lane, after cresting a hill.

Deputy Richardson died as a result of injuries sustained in the accident.

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**Trooper Ted Benda**  
**Iowa State Patrol**  
**E.O.W. October 20, 2021**

Trooper Ted Benda ISP #313 was involved in a single-vehicle crash on Thursday, October 14, 2021 while in route to assist the Clayton County Sheriff's Office with a wanted suspect. He was airlifted to the Gunderson Lutheran Medical Center in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

Trooper Benda succumbed to his injuries on October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021.



**Deputy William Halverson**  
**Linn County Sheriff's Office**  
**Date of Incident, June 20, 2021**

On the evening of Sunday June 20, 2021, Deputy William Halverson was responding to an alarm at a Casey's General Store located on Highway 13 in Coggon, Iowa. When Deputy Halverson entered the front door, he was immediately met by the suspect trying to exit the building. During a struggle with the suspect the suspect fired his weapon striking Deputy Halverson multiple times. Deputy Halverson was airlifted to the University of Iowa Hospital and Clinics for treatment of his injuries. The suspect was later arrested after a vehicle pursuit that ended in the suspect crashing and fleeing on foot. Area law enforcement officers secured the area, the suspect was taken into custody the next morning. The suspect is still in custody on a \$2.5 million bond while he awaits trial for this incident.

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**Officer Michael Clark**  
**Iowa City Police Department**  
**Date of Incident, July 29, 2019**

On July 29, 2019, Iowa City Police Officer Michael Clark responded to a report of a shoplifter in the area of Starbucks Coffee at 11 Highway 1 in Iowa City, Iowa. Upon arrival, he observed a woman that matched the description given by the store employees of the suspect. The woman, refused to stop when requested by Officer Clark and kept walking away. As he approached her, she remained uncooperative, becoming more belligerent and swearing at him. From near her many bags, the suspect picked up a metal mobile power outlet stand. Officer Clark took the stand away from her and turned away to set it several feet from her. As he turned back to face the suspect, he was presented with a gun that was only a few feet from his face. The suspect shot the gun several times directly at Officer Clark. Officer Clark drew his service handgun, a Glock 22, and returned fire, striking the suspect in her left hand. Despite having sustained a through and through wound to his left cheek, Officer Clark and a responding officer took the suspect into custody. Officer Clark and the suspect were both transported by ambulance to University Hospitals and Clinics for treatment of their injuries. The suspect's weapon was later determined to be a CO2 BB gun.

Officer Clark was first nominated and awarded the Purple Heart Award in 2020, however due to COVID 19 restrictions the 88<sup>th</sup> annual conference in Des Moines did not include an in-person ceremony for Officer Clark to be recognized.