



AURORA POLICE DEPARTMENT NEWS RELEASE

AURORA POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENTS OBSERVE A MOMENT OF SILENCE TO MARK ONE YEAR SINCE THE HENRY PRATT MASS SHOOTING

[AURORA, Ill. – February 15, 2020]: The Aurora Police and Fire Departments observed a moment of silence over the radio on Saturday to mark one year since the mass shooting at the Henry Pratt Company that took the lives of five people and injured five Aurora Police on that day.

At 1:24 p.m. on Saturday, exactly one year since the first call went out for an active shooter at the Henry Pratt Company, Aurora Telecom Lead Operator Melissa Johnson read aloud a message to Aurora Police officers, Aurora Firefighters and the hundreds of first responders that came to assist on that tragic day. She also read the names of the five employees killed and the five Aurora Police officers shot while running towards gunfire one year ago. The remembrance culminated with first responders from around the city observing a moment of silence.

Johnson has been a dispatcher for the City of Aurora 911 Center for 33 years and was working on the day of the Henry Pratt mass shooting. Johnson answered one of the first 911 calls from someone inside the plant reporting an active shooter.

The moment of silence was followed by Aurora Fire Chief Gary Krienitz who said, “When faced with this act of violence in our community we responded with professionalism, bravery and skill. Without question, our members rose to the task to preserve life and treat injuries. Your dedication and diligence is not forgotten.”

Aurora Police Chief Kristen Ziman followed and said, “One year ago today, the city of lights turned dark. We remember those we lost and we honor all of our officers who ran towards the gunfire. Our citizens are in capable hands because the men and women of the Aurora Police Department are the first line of defense for this fine city. Thank you for your sacrifice and may we continue to be Aurora Strong.”

Then just as the special radio message was about to end, Officer Marco Gomez called in, “Paul 23 – Officer Gomez, can you put me in-service?”

Officer Gomez was the first of five officers to be shot while running towards the gunfire on February 15th, 2019. He was cleared to return to full duty on Saturday, exactly one-year after the shooting.

Holding back tears, Johnson responded, “Paul 23 – Officer Gomez. Welcome back to duty. It’s great to have you back.”

“This is Aurora. We are Aurora Strong and we will never forget that day one year ago,” Johnson said to finish the message.

Links:

- Audio from message and moment of silence: <https://youtu.be/ZEIuago274c>
- Video from Aurora Police radio of message and moment of silence: <https://youtu.be/xUB7K2rBrFI>
- Video from Aurora Fire Station 10 of message and moment of silence: <https://youtu.be/DixS31UjDnI>

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Media: A copy of the script read on Saturday, February 15th, 2020 is attached as a PDF to this news release. Additionally, please feel free to download and use the video and/or audio from the links above. No credit is needed.