



PRESS RELEASE

San Joaquin County's James "Jim" Christensen Recognized with Statewide Award of Excellence for Heroism and Service

San Joaquin County, Calif. – December 4, 2025 – James "Jim" Christensen, Senior Deputy Probation Officer with the San Joaquin County Probation Department, has been honored at the statewide 2025 Annual Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC) Awards Ceremony with the statewide CPOC Award of Excellence. The award is a prestigious recognition presented to an outstanding probation employee who has demonstrated extraordinary contributions with far-reaching impact throughout California in the field of probation.

"Jim is widely known as one of the most dedicated, compassionate, and respected officers in our department. His courage and commitment to protecting others embody the highest ideals of this profession," said Steve Jackson, Chief Probation Officer of San Joaquin County and CPOC's current President. "We are honored to celebrate his exceptional service and remarkable strength."

A 23-year veteran of the department, Jim is known for his unmatched ability to connect with people. He has trained countless new employees, supported probationers with dignity and respect, and consistently sets a standard of professionalism admired by colleagues and community members alike.

In July 2025, Jim demonstrated extraordinary bravery during a critical incident at the Adult Probation building. After receiving an emergency alert that an individual was threatening to ignite the building on fire, Jim was among the first to respond. Recognizing the imminent danger to staff and the public, he attempted to de-escalate the situation before the individual fled to a nearby parking garage. When officers attempted to detain him, the individual ignited a can of fuel, causing Jim to catch fire. His fellow officers quickly extinguished the flames and secured the individual while emergency responders provided lifesaving care. Jim sustained significant second- and third-degree burns and underwent critical treatment at the UC Davis Burn Center.

Despite the severity of his injuries, Jim's immediate concern was the well-being of his colleagues who witnessed the event and intervened to save his life. From his hospital bed, he offered reassurance, gratitude, and encouragement, reflecting the selflessness and compassion he has demonstrated throughout his 23-year career.

"Jim's courage, resilience, and unwavering compassion reflect exactly what the CPOC Award of Excellence was created to honor," said Karen Pank, Executive Director of CPOC. "His actions that day, and throughout his entire career, exemplify the profound impact probation professionals make in communities across California."

CPOC proudly recognizes James "Jim" Christensen for his heroism, leadership, and extraordinary contributions to the field of probation.

The Chief Probation Officers of California (CPOC) is an association of all 58 counties with a shared identity as law enforcement leaders. CPOC is committed to a research-based approach to public safety that promotes positive behavior change. Their leadership guides policy and practice in prevention, community-based corrections, secure detention for youth, and direct human services. CPOC aims to

prevent crime and delinquency, reduce recidivism, restore victims, and promote healthy families and communities.

For more information about CPOC, please go to www.cpoc.org.

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