



City of Arts & Innovation

## News Release

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### Riverside to recognize local heroes and kick off Peace Officer Memorial Month

**Riverside, Calif.** – On Tues, May 7 City of Riverside Mayor Rusty Bailey and the City Council will present a proclamation to Chief Sergio Diaz in recognition of Peace Officer Memorial Month.

Courtney Christiansen, the granddaughter of Riverside Officer Leonard Christiansen who was killed in the line of duty in 1971, is also scheduled to share her high school history project – a documentary about her grandfather – who she never met.

Courtney is 17 years old and a junior at Riverside Poly High School. The short film has received local and regional accolades. Courtney's father is current Riverside Police Detective Steve Christiansen.

Her documentary tells the story of two Riverside police officers who were gunned down in an ambush style attack. Officers Leonard Christiansen and Paul Teel were responding to a reported burglary at 4792 Ottawa on April 2, 1971. Ottawa Avenue had no street lights, and with no moon in the sky on that Friday evening, it was unusually dark.



Following that incident, the City of Riverside Police Department took the lead in recommending training and tactics modifications. The ambush was examined in instruction books and in a training film that resulted in a change in police procedures across the country.

Ms. Christiansen's documentary will be shown at City Council at 6:15 p.m.

"Ms. Christiansen's documentary and this proclamation have special meaning to Riverside" said Mayor Rusty Bailey. "They represent a personal and tragic story of Riverside's past – used to

bring positive change. We appreciate that Courtney has shared this important incident to remind us that we have the ability to transform our future – to Seize our Destiny.”

The month of May has been designated by the United States Congress and the California State Legislature as Peace Officer Memorial Month. Peace Officers have unselfishly given their lives in the line of duty to protect and serve the citizens of the United States of America. Peace Officers who have given that full measure of devotion are remembered for their selfless dedication to duty, conspicuous gallantry, and service above and beyond the call of duty.

Since 1893 when Riverside County was created, 16 City of Riverside Police Officers and 44 other county, state and federal peace officers have given their lives in the line of duty while protecting and serving the citizens of our County.

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