

Stanislaus County **SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT**

Sheriff Adam Christianson
250 E. Hackett Road, Modesto, CA 95358



MEDIA RELATIONS



**NEWS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

DATE December 19, 2008
TIME 9:00 AM

Air Support Unit Receives Award from Helicopter Association International

Alexandria, VA- Helicopter Association International Announces Recipient of the 2009 MD Helicopters Law Enforcement Award, Flight Crew Air 101; Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department, Modesto, California.



On September 14, 2008, Air 101, a Bell 206 helicopter of the Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department was conducting a routine patrol when it was notified of a man in a roadway beating an infant. The unit decided to intervene directly. The pilot, then Deputy Rob Latapie, made the decision to conduct a landing in a cow pasture near the roadway. Officer Jerry Ramar, a Tactical Flight Officer that evening, immediately exited the helicopter and ran to the roadway to confront the man. The actions of the crew, combined with the unique capabilities of the helicopter, provided an early conclusion to this mission.

Sergeant Latapie has been with the Department's Air Unit for almost 13 years, and is chief pilot. He is also a Field Training Officer and has served on the Mounted and the Drug Units. Trained by Bell Helicopter in four different aircraft, he has been a pilot for more than 20 years and has over 5,000 accident-free flying hours. He has won the Attorney General's Award for finding two children taken in a stolen vehicle. Officer Ramar has been with the Modesto Police Department for nearly 6 years and is assigned to the Street Crimes Unit focusing on gangs. He has been in the Air Support Unit for two years. In 2007 Ramar was awarded the Department's Distinguished Service Medal for his service in the Street Crimes Unit.

The Department has had air support since 1948, receiving four military surplus Bell OH-58 helicopters in 1995. In 2000 the Air Support Unit was formed. Currently the Air Support Unit operates four aircraft. Two Bell 206 helicopters used primarily for patrol and search and rescue functions, and two Cessna airplanes.

HAI congratulates Flight Crew Air 101 of the Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department for their contribution to the advancement of the crime-suppression concept of helicopter patrol service to ensure public safety.

All winners will be recognized at HELI-EXPO 2009's annual "Salute to Excellence" Awards Banquet on February 23, 2009 at 8:00 p.m. in Anaheim, California. For more information about the 2009 "Salute to Excellence" Awards Banquet, contact HAI's Communications Department at 703-683-4646, fax: 703-683-4745, or email: rotor@rotor.com. For more information on HELI-EXPO 2009, visit www.heliexpo.com.

For information regarding this press release please contact Deputy Royjindar Singh (209) 652-6597.

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