



NEIGHBORS IN UNIFORM

A newsletter from Gwinnett Police

February 2024

Welcome to Neighbors in Uniform, a monthly newsletter that provides information about Gwinnett County Police events, topics, programs, and initiatives. We are honored to have the respect and trust of the residents we serve and protect, and we're happy to be a resource and support.

Happy Black History Month and enjoy Valentine's Day!

Black History Month Spotlight: Assistant Chief Everett Spellman



In celebration of Black History Month, we shine a spotlight on Training Division Commander Assistant Chief Everett Spellman. He began his career with Gwinnett Police 26 years ago as a member of the 40th police academy. He has risen through the ranks, demonstrating his expertise in specialized units, including the community response team, gangs, crime suppression, DUI, K-9, and SWAT teams. Assistant Chief Spellman advocates for fair hiring practices, mentorship programs, and unbiased policing. His commitment to justice extends beyond the badge, ensuring that all individuals are treated with respect and dignity.

"Chief Spellman is a genuine and fearless leader. Not only will he lead you in the right direction, but he will be right there on the front line with you. As an Assistant Chief, he's one of the first to arrive in the building and the last to leave. Chief Spellman's character and leadership showed me, a young black man, that it's okay to look like us and achieve such greatness. He makes me feel like I can be the chief of the Gwinnett Police Department one day," said Recruit Training Instructor Fed Joseph.

Assistant Chief Spellman received several medals and awards for honorable and distinguished service. He earned a master's degree in public safety administration from Columbus State University. He has served on local boards and committees, including the Gwinnett Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Launch Committee in 2023. Aside from his primary role as a peace officer, Spellman is most proud of Feed My Sheep Ministries SC, a nonprofit organization he created to support children and families in need in his hometown in South Carolina.

As we celebrate Black History Month, let us celebrate Assistant Chief Spellman's contributions and honor the legacy of black leaders who have shaped our history. Peace officers are not only guardians of the law but also stewards of hope. Together, we can build bridges, break down barriers, and forge a path toward a more just and equitable tomorrow. Let us honor our past, embrace our present, and shape a legacy that inspires and unifies generations to come.

E-commerce spaces now available at Police headquarters and precincts

Gwinnett Police now offers designated parking spots at each precinct and headquarters for e-commerce transactions. These spots are marked with signs and monitored by video surveillance 24/7. To ensure safety during transactions, follow these tips:

- Avoid sharing personal info
- Communicate through the platform
- Meet in public, well-lit areas

- Bring a companion
- Prefer electronic payments
- Beware of meeting location changes
- If it sounds too good, it may be a scam

[Find Gwinnett Police headquarters and precinct locations near you for safe transactions.](#)

Talent and exhibitors wanted for the 10th annual Multicultural Festival

Gwinnett County is one of the most diverse counties in the United States. Our diversity is our strength and worth celebrating!



Mark your calendars for the 10th annual Multicultural Festival and County Government Open House to take place on **Saturday, May 18**, at Gwinnett Place Mall located at 2100 Pleasant Hill Road in Duluth. The festival celebrates Gwinnett's diverse community of nearly one million residents and showcases live performances of traditional music, dance, instruments and other performing arts. From Bollywood dance to Caribbean steel pan to African drums, let the rhythm unite us! The open house is a great opportunity to meet the people who work in the County departments and discover what each department does to serve the community.



The festival is a platform for unity, learning, and appreciation. If you're a talented performing artist and interested in contributing to the vibrant mosaic that makes Gwinnett special, please fill out a [talent application form](#). The deadline to apply is **Friday, March 29**.

Applications are also being accepted for event exhibitors who would like to display traditional clothing, crafts, artifacts, or instruments that represent your culture while sharing information about language, customs, and cultural practices.

[Exhibitor applications](#) will be accepted until **Friday, April 19**.

We look forward to the opportunity to proudly share your heritage, traditions, and artistic expressions with a wide audience to promote cross-cultural understanding and showcase the rich tapestry of cultures that thrive in Gwinnett County.

Get to know your local officers at this month's community events

Do you know the officers who serve your community? The officers who respond to emergencies, patrol your neighborhood, and support local businesses are committed to improving the quality of life for our community.



We invite you to ask questions, voice concerns, and get to know the officers who work in your neighborhood at Coffee with a Cop. The event will take place on **Monday, February 26**, from **10:00am to noon** at **Paragon Golf Range**, located at 4470 Satellite Boulevard in Duluth.

On **Tuesday, February 27**, from **11:00am to 1:00pm** join us for our Salsa and Sirens event at **El Indio Restaurante & Taqueria**, located at 4025 Satellite Boulevard in Duluth. Invite your neighbors, colleagues, and friends for a Taco Tuesday lunch with Gwinnett Police. We hope you will share your ideas, questions, and learn how to protect yourself from becoming a victim of crime.

Nominations are open for the Rising Star Award

The Gwinnett Police Department wants to recognize the youth in our community who are actively making good choices and a positive impact.

We are accepting nominations for the Rising Star Award until **Friday, March 29**. The Rising Star Award recognizes Gwinnett youth who are active volunteers in the community and are proactive in improving the



lives of others.

Our Community Affairs Section will review the nominations and recognize our Rising Stars in May 2024. Award recipients will receive a Rising Star Award, a chief of police coin, VIP tour of the Gwinnett Police Training Center, and other prizes. Review the [criteria and nomination guidelines](#) to nominate a Rising Star today!

Youth Safety and Mental Health leaders share latest data and resources for support

Many behaviors that can affect a person's health and well-being later in life start during adolescence — the phase of life that ranges from 10 to 19 years old. This group also experiences many developmental changes that can affect their physical and mental health.

Firearm deaths among U.S. children and adolescents have steadily increased with widening disparities. Guns remain the leading cause of death among American children and teens.

On January 25, the Gwinnett Police Community Affairs Section participated in a Youth Safety & Mental Health Community Discussion in conjunction with the Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office and GUIDE, Inc. There were 68 attendees in person and 281 viewers via [live stream on Facebook](#). Panelists, including our own Lt. Acevedo, a United States Marine Corps veteran who has spent more than 27 years in law enforcement, discussed the mental health crisis in Gwinnett and surrounding counties, firearm safety and storage, and how to access local programs addressing mental health. The Community Affairs team was one of 14 vendors at the event providing free gun locks; residents also received Narcan kits and gun safes.



By fostering open lines of communication and providing resources to educate parents about the signs and risks youth are facing, we can empower adults to play an active role. Parenting workshops and community forums are just a few ways in which we can collectively support families in navigating these complex challenges. Let's continue to invest in our youth by providing them with positive opportunities and creating supportive environments. We can empower young people to make better choices and build a brighter future for themselves and our community.

Gwinnett Police encourages safe gun storage and firearm safety by offering a monthly firearm safety and security class for families. Visit [Firearm Safety & Security](#) for more details.



Safety Tip of the Month: Don't let language be a barrier in an emergency

Gwinnett is known as a vibrant and diverse community, where more than 25 percent of the population is foreign-born and more than 130 languages are spoken. Protecting and serving all residents is our top priority.

During an emergency, every second counts and our 911 Center is always on standby, ready to help. If English isn't your first language, we have translators available to help take in vital information. Please don't hang up! Understand 911 before you need it by visiting GwinnettCounty.com/911.

For questions regarding the Neighbors in Uniform newsletter, please contact Rachael Warnsley at Rachael.Warnsley@GwinnettCounty.com or 770.513.5348. Be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#), [X](#), and [Instagram](#) @GwinnettPD.



Gwinnett County Police Department | 770 Hi Hope Road, Lawrenceville, GA 30044

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Sent by rachael.warnsley@gwinnettcountry.com