

NEWS RELEASE

Luther Strange

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AG STRANGE TO HOLD 16th ANNUAL LAW ENFORCEMENT SUMMIT

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Luther Strange will present the 16th annual Attorney General’s Law Enforcement Summit on Tuesday, September 29, carrying on a tradition since 2000. This year’s theme is “Meeting the Challenges of Drug Abuse Through Education, Communication, and Collaboration.” About 667 law enforcement officers from throughout Alabama are registered to attend and will receive practical information and professional training. The focus of education is current drug abuse trends and how to protect Alabamians from this pervasive problem. The 2015 summit will be held in Montgomery at Frazer United Methodist Church.

Attorney General Strange will welcome law enforcement officers and discuss the work of his office in assisting law enforcement in combatting crime, including illegal drugs. “The scourge of illegal drugs ravages too many families and wastes too many lives in our society. I am encouraged by the steadfast dedication of law enforcement officers throughout our great state, and am proud to stand beside them in this important fight.”

This year’s conference features a series of presentations from experts: “Protecting Students: Teacher Misconduct Laws,” from Assistant Attorney General Susan Crowther of the Alabama Department of Education; “Prescription Drugs, Heroin, GHB, and Spice,” from Clay Morris, Assistant Special Agent in Charge for the Drug Enforcement Administration; “Forensics Drug Analysis and Evidence,” from Michael Sparks, Director of the Alabama Department of Forensic Sciences; “GHB – Problems on Campuses,” from Investigator Chris Carver of the Auburn Police Department and the FBI Drug Task Force; “Drug Enforcement in Alabama,” from Gene Wiggins, Director of the State Bureau of Investigation, Alabama Law Enforcement Agency; “K9 Presentation,” from the Montgomery Police Department; “Drug Investigation and Prosecution,” from a panel of experts; “Cyber Crime Investigation,” from Sterling J. Frith, Special Agent of the Alabama Attorney General’s Office; and “Cell Phone Evidence and Case Solving,” from Director Randy Hillman and Deputy Director Barry Matson of the Alabama Office of Prosecution Services.

A somber highlight of the day comes with the commemoration of fallen officers who lost their lives in the line of duty during the past year. The Attorney General will recognize the sacrifices of the following officers with a presentation of memorial flags and certificates of honor:

Deputy Sheriff John T. Williamson of the Butler County Sheriff’s Office died on October 25, 2014. He suffered a heart attack after a struggle with someone he was trying to arrest and died a few days later following a second, massive heart attack. Deputy Williamson was a U.S. Navy veteran and had served with the Butler County Sheriff’s Office for 20 years.



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Sergeant Jeffrey W. Garrett of the Dothan Police Department died on October 27, 2014. He suffered a heart attack while participating in a training run. Sergeant Garrett was a U.S. Marine Corps veteran and served with the Dothan Police Department for 22 years.

Deputy Sheriff James "Bart" Hart of the Elmore County Sheriff's Office died on November 23, 2014. He was killed when his patrol car was struck head-on by another vehicle that was traveling at high speed and crossed the center line. Deputy Hart had served with the Elmore County Sheriff's Office for 2 ½ years after retiring from the Montgomery Fire Department.

Sergeant Charles Kerry Mitchum of the Loxley Police Department died on January 26, 2015. He was killed in a single-vehicle crash while enroute to the sheriff's office firing range.

Patrolman Roger O'Dell of the Town Creek Police Department died on January 28, 2015. He suffered a heart attack after taking two escaped juveniles into custody. He was a veteran of the Alabama National Guard and served with the Town Creek Police Department for about 18 months following his retirement as Chief of the Courtland Police Department.

Lieutenant Richard Woods of the Pell City Police Department died on March 17, 2015. He suffered a heart attack while helping to rescue several teenagers from a vehicle after a serious accident. Lieutenant Woods had served with the Pell City Police Department for 20 years and was commander of the Special Operations Division.

Officer David Lee Colley of the Montgomery Police Department died on April 4, 2015. He was responding to a call when a tractor trailer truck collided with his vehicle. Officer Colley served with the Montgomery Police Department for two years.

"I am grateful and proud of the bravery and unselfish dedication that law enforcement officers give to people of Alabama in their service to us each day," said Attorney General Strange. "It is my hope that this summit will provide valuable instruction and shared information that law enforcement will take back to their communities and that it may be of assistance as they carry out their noble task of protecting the people of Alabama."