



State of Missouri 2014 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity Executive Summary

Project or Team Name: Digital Forensic Investigative Unit (DFIU)

Nominator: Captain Sarah L. Eberhard

Nominating Department: (Nominations must include names of all agencies/departments/organizations/businesses, etc.)

Public Safety, Missouri State Highway Patrol, Division of Drug and Crime Control

Category: Efficiency/Process Improvement

Executive Summary: (Executive Summary page must be 500 words or less, 12 points, Times New Roman font, and left justified. Attach the Executive Summary to the front of the nomination.)

The Digital Forensic Investigative Unit (DFIU) investigates crimes facilitated by digital devices and the Internet, as well as recovers data from digital devices in support of criminal investigations. In the past three years, the unit has taken significant steps to redirect the focus of the unit. A special focus of the unit is the investigation of offenses involving the sexual exploitation of children.

In 2011, the unit began to take a more aggressive and holistic approach to Internet facilitated child sexual exploitation cases. It was determined working in conjunction with other state agencies to share talent and resources, as well as applying new investigative techniques, would be more efficient and effective.

A goal of the program is to work within existing budget constraints. Task force officers from the Department of Revenue and State Technical Assistance Team were brought into the unit based on their specific skills. This allowed an efficient use of manpower as the officers would have a larger number of cases to work, but the various tasks are shared to improve productivity.

Equipment costs were reduced by using existing hardware where possible. For instance, surplus state computers were used to download child pornography files to advance investigations. An existing crime scene van, first purchased in 1997, was converted into a mobile forensics laboratory using ICAC grant money. A case tracking database was developed in-house using existing software which saved over \$30,000 in what a commercial product would cost.

Now that the team has been constructed and the efficiencies implemented, it is anticipated the number of investigations will continue to increase. By using the unit to develop leads and initiate investigations, unit members can leverage the numerous local law enforcement agencies across the state to complete the investigation, execute search warrants, and effect arrests of suspects. We hope to add additional task force officers to enhance the group's skills and increase the number of cases that can be investigated. In 2014 alone, DFIU officers have arrested three school teachers, from within the classroom, in response to child exploitation investigations. This is a direct and measurable example of the unit's efforts to protect Missouri's children.



State of Missouri – 2014 Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity

NOMINATION FORM

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

Department: Public Safety

1. Project or team name: Digital Forensic Investigative Unit (DFIU)

2. List the name of all team members, job titles, state agency department, and/or other organizations including public, private sector or business: *(Please list alphabetically by last name – 2 to 20 team members maximum.)*

1. Justin Glick, Special Agent, Department of Revenue
2. Jeffery M. Owen, Sergeant, MSHP
3. John Pehle, Investigator, State Technical Assistance Team
4. James A. Pragman, Sergeant, MSHP
5. Patrick Sublette, Trooper, MSHP

3. Nomination Category: *(Check only one.)*

☐ INNOVATION

☐ CUSTOMER SERVICE

☒ EFFICIENCY / PROCESS IMPROVEMENT

☐ TECHNOLOGY IN GOVERNMENT

4. Explain why you selected this category:

The Digital Forensic Investigative Unit (DFIU) investigates crimes facilitated by digital devices and the Internet, as well as recovers data from digital devices in support of criminal investigations. In the past three years, the unit has taken significant steps to redirect the focus of the unit. A special focus of the unit is the investigation of offenses involving the sexual exploitation of children.

II. BACKGROUND

1. When did the team begin its work?

The Patrol has had computer forensics capabilities since the late 1990s. In 2011, the unit began to take a more aggressive and holistic approach to Internet facilitated child sexual exploitation cases.

2. What date did the team initiate the implementation phase of the project?

November 2011

3. Is the project:

☐ Time Limited

☐ Completed

☒ Ongoing

III. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Why was the project necessary?

The proliferation of digital devices and the exploding use of those devices by children and adults have led to an increase in the number and severity of child exploitation complaints and offenses. The project provides the means to attack the problem and leverage the resources of the state, as well as municipal and county law enforcement agencies.

2. What were the primary goals of the project? *(150 words or less.)*

The primary goal is to reduce the sexual exploitation of children by aggressively investigating the trading of child pornography on file sharing networks, as well as the enticement of children on social media.

3. Describe the project: *(200 words or less.)*

The Patrol used the DFIU framework and added task force officers from other state agencies to aggressively investigate child exploitation offenses. Software and training provided by Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) was used to develop suspects and initiate investigations. Additional

funding from the State Cyber Crime Grant (SCCG) provided needed training and equipment to facilitate the investigations and enhance forensic capabilities.

4. Explain how the accomplishment of the team exceeds its regular duties and responsibilities. (150 words or less.)

The unit's success is largely based on the members' success in building working relationships with existing partners, but applied in a more efficient working structure. Though each agency has investigators, working together in the same office allows them to respond as a cohesive unit. Once targets are identified, the unit responds as a group, working with the local agency resources, to quickly locate, investigate, question, and if necessary, arrest the offender. The time lapse from suspect identification to arrest is subsequently greatly reduced.

5. Which of the following describes the intended benefits of the project? (Check all that apply and provide an explanation.)

☐ Cost Reduction

☒ Time Savings

☒ Increased Effectiveness

☒ Improved Process

☐ Other: Describe

IV. RESULTS / MEASUREMENT

1. Explain how the success of the project was measured and what outcomes were achieved. (Explanation should not exceed 300-500 words.)

A typical investigation is initiated by the identification of a suspect from a complaint or by application of various online investigative techniques. Subpoenas are used to determine the identity of suspects or the location of evidence. Once a warrant is obtained, the location is searched, with the assistance of local law enforcement agencies. The DFIU team will conduct the field investigation in segments, including search of the location, questioning of the suspect/witnesses, as well as the forensic examination of located evidence using the mobile laboratory. Each segment is led by a DFIU member with subject matter expertise. Once there has been enough evidence gathered, the team will assemble and put together necessary information to charge the suspect. This allows for a more efficient investigation and reduces the amount of time from suspect identification to arrest.

A principle metric of the program is the number of cases initiated, the number of search warrants executed, and the number of persons arrested. Since the project started, the DFIU has initiated 49 child pornography investigations. Ten arrests have been made to date, with other indictments anticipated or pending. The pace of investigation is accelerating. In 2014 alone, DFIU officers have arrested three licensed school teachers, from within the classroom, for child exploitation offenses. These type of results reflect a direct impact on improving the safety of Missouri's children.

Another goal of the program is to work within existing budget constraints. Investigators from other state agencies are assigned to the DFIU as task force officers based on their specific skills. Currently, there is a task force officer from the Department of Revenue and a task force officer from the State Technical Assistance Team. This allows for an efficient use of manpower as these officers would have had a larger caseload, but the various tasks are now shared to improve productivity.

Equipment costs were reduced by using existing hardware where possible. For instance, surplus state computers were used to download child pornography files to advance investigations. An existing crime scene van, first purchased in 1997, was converted into a mobile forensics laboratory using ICAC grant money. A case tracking database was developed in-house utilizing existing software, which saved over \$30,000 in what a commercial product would cost.

2. Are the benefits derived from this project: (Check only one.)

☒ Recurring

☐ One-time

3. If recurring, how will the benefits be sustained? (Explain in 150 words or less.)

Now that the DFIU team has been constructed and the efficiencies have been implemented, it is anticipated the number of investigations will continue to increase. By using the unit to develop leads and initiate investigations, unit members can leverage the numerous local law enforcement agencies across the state to complete the investigation, execute search warrants, and effect arrests of suspects. We hope to add additional task force officers to enhance the group's skills and increase the number of cases that can be investigated.

V. RECOGNITION / AWARDS

1. Has this project previously been nominated for the Governor's Award for Quality and Productivity? If yes, when?

N/A

2. If yes, for which category was it nominated?

N/A

3. Has this project received any other awards or recognition? If yes, describe.

Individual officers within the unit have been recognized for their efforts. Trooper Patrick D. Sublette was awarded the Richard Easter Award by the Children's Trust Fund in 2014 for his work in conducting child exploitation investigations. Special Agent Justin Glick received the Task Force Officer of the Year for the Division of Drug and Crime Control.

VI. NOMINATOR'S INFORMATION

Nominating Department: Public Safety

Name: Captain Sarah L. Eberhard

Telephone Number: 573-751-3452

Signature:



E-Mail Address:

sarah.eberhard@mshp.dps.mo.gov

VII. DEPARTMENT COORDINATOR'S INFORMATION

Name: Mary Beckwith

Telephone Number: 573-751-5424

Signature:



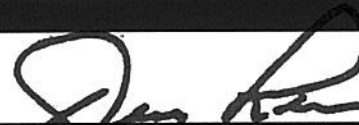
E-Mail Address: mary.beckwith@dps.mo.gov

VIII. DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR APPROVAL

Department Director's Name:

Jerry Lee

Signature:



Nomination must be signed ONLY by the Department Director to be eligible for consideration. Nominations not signed by the Department Director will be returned to the agency coordinator.