

Michael A. Spera
Chief of Police

TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK DEPARTMENT OF POLICE SERVICES

225 Main Street • Old Saybrook, Connecticut 06475



NAUMD Acceptance Speech
March 6, 2010

On behalf of Chief Michael Spera and members of the Old Saybrook Department of Police Services it is my distinct honor and pleasure to accept this prestigious award.

Often times people who have no military or public service experience underestimate the importance of a uniform. Our new uniforms are a true example of the power that a properly designed and tailored uniform can provide to a public safety agency, its personnel, and the community they serve.

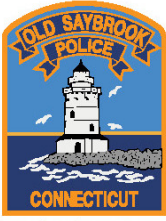
Previously our patrolman wore extremely light blue shirts and the supervisors wore white shirts. These uniforms were outdated, were comprised of material not conducive to police work, and were not tactically sound. In other words, we needed a change, we knew why we needed new uniforms, but never truly understood the power of a uniform change.

In July of 2009 the police department held a strategic planning session. The decision was made to make one of our goals for the coming year to improve our agency's image with the public.

The uniform committee's goals were to improve officer safety, improve officer moral, increase officer pride, and increase our public image. Due to hard economic times, we set out on a mission to complete the costly uniform change without the use of tax dollars. Finally we wished to unveil the new uniforms to the public at our department's Change of Command Ceremony held on October 21, 2009, in which Chief Michael Spera assumed command.

Our goals began to become reality as funding became available. Our police union donated funds needed to purchase all Class C uniforms as well as provided contractual concessions to provide partial funding for the new Class B uniforms. Additionally two very generous and significant private donations were received that allowed for the purchase of the uniforms you see before you.

We first met Bruce Klein, of Red the Uniform Tailor at an IACP trade show and were impressed with his product and knowledge. His guidance was instrumental to the completion of this project in the short four months we had to reach our goal. I can tell you this; the process is a lot more



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK DEPARTMENT OF POLICE SERVICES

225 Main Street • Old Saybrook, Connecticut 06475

Michael A. Spera
Chief of Police

detailed and not as easy as we thought. We all had apparently missed the uniform specification class while at the police academy.

Our committee also worked closely with John Dunn of Common Cents EMS Supply in Old Saybrook CT as we developed our awards program. He was instrumental with selecting and ordering the various pins, awards and badges that are worn on our uniforms.

As you know, the difference a uniform makes is indescribable. The first time officers donned their new uniforms at our change of command ceremony all witnessed the positive affect it had on them. The community has embraced our new uniforms citing that they have increased our command presence at a scene which directly enhanced police officer safety. Supervisors were no longer targets with their bright white shirts, yet were distinguished by uniform accessories that identified them as patrol leaders. Bottom line- our officers felt good about putting their uniform on and going to work.

I would like to thank the North American Association of Uniform Manufacturers and Distributors for bestowing this award upon our department. We look forward to the positive public recognition knowing that we will be featured in a publication that has great meaning and credibility in our profession, Law and Order Magazine.

Once again, on behalf of the men and women of the Old Saybrook Department of Police Services- Thank You.