

News Release

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For Immediate Release

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TUSTIN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OFFICER OF THE MONTH JANUARY 2008

POLICE OFFICER CHRIS GERBER

TUSTIN, Calif. – On Wednesday, February 13, the Tustin Chamber of Commerce “Officer of the Month” program recognized Police Officer Chris Gerber for the month of January. The recognition was granted for his excellent dedication, tenacity, and tireless efforts to help maintain the departments’s vision to make the City of Tustin and its neighborhoods the most livable and safest in the state of California.

Since joining the Gang Unit in July 2002, Chris has followed the example set forth by Gang Unit personnel from inception in 1996: dedication, thoroughness, and willingness to work each and every case to a successful conclusion. His ability to build and maintain professional and personal relationships with peers from outside agencies has been a tremendous asset to Tustin. These relationships have made the job in Gangs much easier and more productive. He is an expert on all Tustin gangs along with gangs claiming turf in other cities. He has been recognized as a gang expert in courts on countless occasions and has successfully passed knowledge on to new gang investigators assigned to the unit.

Following are a few cases in which Chris has been the lead investigator and has proven to be instrumental with the investigation/prosecution of gang members committing crimes in Tustin.

- A local Tustin gang member attempted to rob a grocery store and stabbed the store manager in the neck. The victim survived and identified the suspect. The suspect was sentenced to 24 years in state prison.
- A suspect from the TFK gang attempted to elude officers and the vehicle pursuit ended up in Tustin. The suspect fought with the officers, but was subsequently arrested. Officer Gerber took lead over the investigation and the suspect was sentenced to 12 years in state prison.
- A West Side Anaheim gang member committed a residential burglary in Tustin Ranch, then attempted to carjack a Tustin Ranch resident by shooting at her moving vehicle. He fled on foot and broke into another home where police found him hiding in a closet when the resident and her small children returned home. The suspect received 32 years in state prison.
- An SSK Anaheim gang member robbed an elderly woman in the parking lot of Costco and fled the scene in a stolen vehicle. Officer Gerber set up surveillance at a local gang member hangout and the suspect was apprehended. He received 15 years in state prison.

Chris Gerber was born in Montebello and graduated from Marina High School in Huntington Beach. He attended Rio Hondo Police Academy and began his career in law enforcement with UCI Police Department. He joined the Tustin Police Department in 1999. Chris has worked assignments in Patrol and the Bicycle Team. He was assigned to the Gang Unit for the past five and one-half years. Chris lives in Rancho Santa Margarita with his five-year old son, Gabe. In his spare time, he enjoys camping, working out, riding bikes, and attending live sporting events.

About the Officer of the Month Program

The second Wednesday of every month is the Tustin Chamber of Commerce's Membership Breakfast meeting. A special feature of this meeting is the Police Officer of the Month Program.

About the Tustin Chamber of Commerce

In 2007, the Tustin Chamber of Commerce celebrated 50 years of service to the community and exceeded 500 members. The mission of the chamber is to preserve the free enterprise system; to preserve and expand the potential of all business and professional enterprises; and to promote the civic, cultural and social well-being of the City of Tustin and surrounding community. Tustin Chamber of Commerce is located in Old Town Tustin at the corner of El Camino Real and Main Street and can be reached at (714) 544-5341 or www.tustinchamber.org.

About the Tustin Police Department

The Tustin Police Department is a full service law enforcement agency staffed by 95 sworn officers and 52 civilians. In 2006, The Department moved to a progressive "Community Governance Policing" structure, which implements continuous contact with the community to explore creative and new solutions to crime and quality of life issues. The Department enjoys a reputation of professional excellence and has been recognized numerous times, including being named "Tops Among Cops" along with receiving an "A" from the local newspaper, *The Orange County Register*.

About the City of Tustin

Located in the heart of Orange County, Tustin embraces both the historical past of citrus groves and the promising future of a vibrant 21st Century economy. From rustic Old Town Tustin to vital Tustin Ranch and the emerging Legacy development, Tustin is the place that 71,767 people, many families and businesses choose to call home. Tustin is the most dynamic city in Orange County and a significant contributor to Orange County's world-competitive economy. Families choose to live in Tustin because of its central location and small town feel. Businesses choose to locate in Tustin because of its central location and easy access to transportation. The City is proud of its reputation for sound fiscal management and its progressive, business-friendly atmosphere.

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