Louisiana Highway Safety Commission News Release
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Louisiana police officers awarded prestigious Fricke Cooper Award

Baton Rouge – On Friday, November 13, during the Northwestern University Center for Public Safety School of Police Staff and Command graduation ceremony, 13 Louisiana police officers were honored with the Fricke Cooper Achievement Award for traffic crash investigation and reconstruction.

These police officers have gone above and beyond the call of duty and have completed a challenging, nine-course curriculum with funding provided by the Louisiana Highway Safety Commission. Traffic safety programming in Louisiana is data-driven. The knowledge gained by these officers bolsters their agencies' ability to gather the most accurate data.

To earn this distinction, recipients must successfully complete nine specialized courses encompassing foundational crash investigation, vehicle dynamics, advanced reconstruction, crash data retrieval analysis, and additional elective studies. Collectively, these requirements represent hundreds of hours of classroom instruction, practical exercises, independent study, technical assignments and examinations.

The 2026 Fricke Cooper Award recipients included:

- Detective Stephen A. McGee, New Orleans Police Department
- Lieutenant Bobby Falcon, Louisiana State Police
- Trooper First Class Jason Henson, Louisiana State Police
- Trooper First Class Travis Williams, Louisiana State Police
- Trooper Bronson Dauzat, Louisiana State Police
- Trooper John Barnard, Louisiana State Police
- Darron Kerry, Bossier City Police
- Detective Richard Chambers, New Orleans Police
- Detective Jason B. Naquin, New Orleans Police
- Sergeant Terry Meyer, Jr., St. Bernard Parish Sheriff
- Detective Jonathan Balestra, Jefferson Parish Sheriff
- Sergeant Travis Blanchard, Louisiana State Police
- Chris Nielsen, St. Tammany Parish Sheriff's Office

"The hundreds of hours of course work, homework, study, and examinations that you have put toward successfully completing the program—are an awesome testament to your dedication as public servants," Governor's Highway Safety Representative and Executive Director of LHSC Lisa Freeman said in her address to the graduates. "What you've accomplished moves the needle toward the goal of saving lives."

These officers join a short list of distinction in their field. The inaugural year for officers from Louisiana to participate in Northwestern's Crash Investigation and Reconstruction Training Program was 2023. The

award honors Lynn B. Fricke and Gary Cooper, whose contributions to traffic crash investigation and reconstruction have influenced generations of investigators throughout the United States and internationally.

“The Fricke Cooper Achievement Award represents far more than the completion of a series of courses. It reflects an extraordinary investment of time, effort, and dedication to mastering the science of traffic crash investigation and reconstruction,” Adam Hyde, deputy director and director of highway and transportation safety programs at NUCPS, said. “These professionals have made a significant commitment to strengthening their technical knowledge and investigative capabilities. Their achievement also reflects the support of the agencies and organizations that recognize the importance of advanced training in serving their communities.”

For more information on the Northwestern Center for Public Safety, please visit their website.

Photo Attribution: Greg Fischer, public information officer, Louisiana Highway Safety Commission



Photo Caption: 2026 Fricke Cooper Award recipients with Adam Hyde, director of highway and transportation safety programs, Northwestern University Center for Public Safety School of Professional Studies (right) and the Governor’s Representative for Highway Safety and LHSC Executive Director Lisa Freeman (center).

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