



Sharing Ohio's Best Program

Recognizing Outstanding Community Policing



Agency of the Month

University Circle (Cleveland) Police Department

September 2023

Bridges of Trust

The University Circle Police Department has a new Community Policing puppy named GRACE, who is doing amazing work in building BRIDGES OF TRUST with those they serve, particularly their youngest customers. Grace is a four month old lab with a wonderful demeanor. Her handler is Sgt. Kurt Keeper.

The dog's role is strictly community policing. It has no bite, suspect tracking, or drug detection applications. Its roles includes the following:

- Accompany officer on foot patrols
- Attend community events
- Visits to hospitals
- Visits to schools as part of our youth outreach
- Visits to our treasured institutions such as the Botanical Gardens and world famous Cleveland Art Museum
- Officer wellness benefits for the officers.

Grace is a welcome relief for officers after dealing with all the stress and dangers they may encounter during a tour of duty.

Comfort therapy applications for crime victims or children exposed to violence. Grace will respond to calls where her presence could help a child dealing with trauma.

Grace is the only K-9 in the state and maybe country with this SPECIFIC title and assignment as a COMMUNITY POLICING K-9. Many departments have therapy dogs or community outreach ones, but Grace is solely for community policing applications.

Grace brings smiles to people's faces and helps break down barriers as she is a community's canine. Every police department in the country would benefit from one.



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