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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

***Oglethorpe Police Department Wins McClung Award from GA Police Chiefs Association***

**OGLETHORPE, Ga.** – On July 20, 2020, The Oglethorpe Police Department won the 2020 “Dr. Curtis E. McClung/Motorola Award of Excellence” and received a check for \$1,000 to support their community policing programs from The Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police. This award is the highest honor a law enforcement agency can receive at the state level for innovative programs.

The Oglethorpe Police Department is the home of Georgia’s community policing resource center. The SW GA Community Policing Resource Center focuses exclusively on supporting rural agencies with implementing community policing programs.

The Dr. Curtis E. McClung/Motorola Award of Excellence is a prestigious award that honors achievements in innovative programs that:

- Have an impact on a department’s mission, goals and objectives;
- Have widespread implications on community/department and the law enforcement profession;
- Utilize or deploy resources to accomplish a stated goal effectively;
- Affect quality of life issues of the community;
- Impact professionalism in law enforcement;
- Promote community and media relations;
- Enhance the spirit of cooperation among agencies of multiple jurisdictions; and
- Address an operational challenge (i.e., natural disaster, unique crime problem, etc.).

Making history is no stranger to these women. Chief Rachael Lee Hart made history in 2017 when she became the first female police chief for the Oglethorpe Police Department. In 2018, Oglethorpe Police Department made history by becoming the only police department in Southwest GA to use an immersion centered prevention focused community policing model and by partnering with The Dr. Annise Mabry Foundation to implement its “Cops in Community” programs. In 2019, the Dr. Annise Mabry Foundation was invited to join the “State of Hope Ecosystem” a movement to cultivate family-centered support systems by connecting, equipping, and nurturing diverse community collaborators with the goal of creating communities where children are safe, thriving and full of hope.

Such a system had never been implemented inside of a police department; but, Chief Hart and Dr. Mabry were up for the challenge. The Dr. Annise Mabry Foundation moved into the police department in February 2019 and opened the Southwest Georgia Rural Community Policing Resource Center eight months later. The community policing resource center operates under the Dr. Annise Mabry Foundation. Corporate grants from Flint Energies and International Paper as well as non-profit partnerships regularly provided resources to the Dr. Annise Mabry Foundation.

When Chief Hart was asked why she not only agreed to bring a nonprofit organization into her department but also why she decided to adopt an immersion based model for community policing, she explained “I knew that we were reaching a tipping point for the police department and our community relations. I knew something had to change and it had to start with me as the leader. I have always believed in community policing and working with Dr. Mabry showed me that community policing isn’t a single program or a patrol unit. It truly is a departmental philosophy that drives every interaction”.

When asked how she got the idea to take her graduate research work to the Oglethorpe Police Department and to create a resource center focused exclusively on community policing for rural communities, Dr. Mabry explained that “small rural agencies struggle with two things: access to resources and access to funding. It just made sense to bring these two things together in a single location.”

The foundation’s footprint in the community is easy to see: The Dr. Annise Mabry Foundation receives product donations from Blackhound Optics and Good360 to redistribute to families in need in not only Macon County but throughout Southwest Georgia. The foundation has also provided law enforcement agencies in Southwest Georgia with more than 4,600 toys to families, 1,500 backpacks, 4,000 pieces of candy; and, awarded 46 high school diplomas through the Chiefs Diploma Program.

For more information about the SW GA Community Policing Resource Center, visit our website at [www.drannisemabry.com](http://www.drannisemabry.com).

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