



International Union of Police Associations

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Statement of President Cabral Regarding I.U.P.A. Member and I.U.P.A. Family Member Being Awarded 2026 Union Plus Scholarship

The International is pleased to share that an I.U.P.A. member and an I.U.P.A. family member have been awarded the Union Plus Scholarship this year. The I.U.P.A. works hard to ensure that our members and their families enjoy the best benefits possible and this is one example of those important benefits paying off.

- Ms. Emma June Fontenot of the State of Washington is the daughter of Mr. David Fontenot, a member of Washington Council of Police and Sheriffs Law Enforcement Associates, I.U.P.A. Local 27, and she has been awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.
- Mr. Steve Johnson of the State of Washington is a member of Washington Council of Police and Sheriffs Law Enforcement Associates, I.U.P.A. Local 27, and he has been awarded a \$1,500 scholarship.

Ms. Fontenot is an art education major at Western Washington University with a minor in museum studies and expects to graduate in May 2028. The degree includes a preschool–12th grade teaching certification. She anticipates that she will teach before transitioning to a museum setting, where she hopes to design education programs and materials that bring art education to a broader audience. Emma was President of the Washington State 4-H Teen Equity and Inclusion Task Force while in high school and worked with the task force’s adult facilitator, Anna Zagelow. “Emma is a talented leader and combines expert public speaking and presentation skills with a natural ability to use compassion and empathy to connect authentically with others,” Zagelow said. “She collaborated with fellow teen volunteers to create and support diverse 4-H programming both throughout Washington state and nationally. The confidence and professionalism that Emma developed over her high school 4-H career is phenomenal.”

David Fontenot, Emma’s father, has been an I.U.P.A. member since 1994 and has been first Vice President for the Snohomish County Deputy Sheriff’s Association for the past six years. Her mother is a member of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1948, the Public School Employees of Washington. Emma anticipates joining a teachers union when her career begins. “I understood how incredibly valuable unions are from a young age,” Emma said.

“Having input in contract and policy negotiations has allowed us as a family to enjoy security in both my parents’ benefits and wages. I am excited to be a part of a union that will fight for my rights.”

Deputy Johnson, who has been awarded the Union Plus Scholarship for the second year in a row, is currently enrolled in the Highline Community College substance use disorder professional Associate of Arts online program and expects to graduate in March 2028. He has been a law enforcement officer since 1999, currently as a deputy for the King County [Washington] Sheriff’s Office (KCSO). He is a married father of four children and grateful I.U.P.A. member. He plans to retire from law enforcement in coming years and is transitioning to help with running the First Responder Intensive Outpatient Program at New Life Recovery Solutions in Bellevue, Washington. Deputy Johnson shared that vetted resources for first responders are available on their website at <https://code4northwest.org/>. His motivation for the next stage of his career is deeply personal as he has been working on self-improvement for five years. “I am a staunch advocate for first responders who are looking to battle their demons and work toward a life of wellness,” he stated. “Life is good now, and I am healthy again. I have become a champion for those in the first responder community who can’t advocate for themselves. I look forward to working full time as a drug and alcohol counselor when I retire from law enforcement in a few years.”

Since late 2020, Deputy Johnson has been a call taker with Code 4 NW, an all-volunteer nonprofit organization that provides behavioral health resources for first responders and their family members in Washington State. Code 4 NW Operations Director Nick Bauer, a retired Seattle Police sergeant, said that Deputy Johnson is a classic example of someone who faced substantial challenges from repeated exposure to trauma. “About five years ago, Steve contacted Code 4 to request help,” Bauer said. “I have a term — student of recovery — that I use to describe clients who jump headfirst into recovery and follow all necessary steps to get back to a healthy and productive person. Steve is an ‘A’ student of recovery. Now, he is one of our most valued assets as an advanced needs advisor, trainer, and follow-up companion. I consider him one of our most dedicated volunteers and am happy to see him pursuing a higher level of ability to help his cohorts find a similarly successful path to recovery. Steve will be a strong advocate for first responder wellness and recovery for decades into the future.”

The International joins with Washington Council of Police and Sheriffs Law Enforcement Associates, I.U.P.A. Local 27, and all of the I.U.P.A. to congratulate these inspiring and impressive students on this auspicious accomplishment.

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NOTE:

*Originally chartered in 1979, the **International Union of Police Associations** is the only chartered labor union that exclusively represents law enforcement personnel. The I.U.P.A. represents active-duty, rank and file law enforcement professionals and emergency medical personnel nationwide – including the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico. The I.U.P.A.’s mission is to protect and advance officers’ wages, benefits, and work conditions. Membership includes officers from agencies throughout the United States, including the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico.*

More information is available at www.iupa.org. Follow us on Twitter at [IUPA34233](https://twitter.com/IUPA34233).