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# SFPD Holds Annual Denim Day Event in Solidarity with Sexual Assault Survivors 25-054

Image



April 30, 2025 | 4:30 PM

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The San Francisco Police Department hosted its third annual Denim Day event at Police Headquarters on Wednesday in solidarity with sexual assault survivors around

the world.

The purpose of the event is to support survivors, acknowledge advocates in the field, and educate SFPD members and attendees about all forms of sexual violence. The SFPD recognized individuals and organizations during the event who have dedicated their careers to supporting victims and survivors of sexual violence and have served as tireless advocates in the field.

*“SFPD stands in solidarity with sexual assault victims from around the world,”* said Police Chief William Scott. *“Our city is committed to supporting survivors and advocating for a safe and respectful environment for all. On Denim Day, we encourage everyone to wear denim as a visible means of participating in this important cause. Let us use this opportunity to educate ourselves and others about the realities of sexual violence and to advocate for change.”*

The origins of Denim Day date back to a court case in Italy in 1998, where a rape conviction was overturned because the victim was wearing tight jeans. The court’s decision implied consent, suggesting that the jeans could only have been removed with the victim’s assistance. This ruling sparked global outrage and led to the establishment of Denim Day on the last Wednesday of April each year as a symbol of protest against erroneous and destructive attitudes about sexual assault.

## **2025 SFPD Denim Day Award Recipients:**

SFPD Forensics Lab - DNA Team is headed by Director of Forensics Services Mark Powell. As a team, they focus on the work on SART (Sexual Assault Response Teams) kits. In the DNA lab, kits are processed as a team, dividing up the different parts of DNA analysis, such as screening, DNA lab work, and interpretation, to allow them to complete kits on average in less than 30 days. To be a member of the DNA team, each professional staff member must meet federal standards for education and years of experience, complete an extensive internal training program, and obtain annual continuing education.

Officer Colleen Chavarin-Fitzpatrick (Central Station) utilized her excellent report-writing skills in a report pertaining to one of two sexual assaults against the victim committed by the suspect, who was convicted and sentenced earlier this year to over 17 years in prison. Her exceptional communication with investigators at SVU during the investigation aided in bringing justice. Officer Chavarin-Fitzpatrick’s

integrity, compassion, and pursuit of truth are what define real justice. Her work with Officer Durkin was inspiring to the SFPD.

Officer Valerie Durkin (Robbery Unit) is recognized for her significant role in the aforementioned case where she was instrumental in obtaining key surveillance footage that solidified the evidence against the suspect, who was convicted and sentenced earlier this year to over 17 years in prison. Officer Durkin's integrity, compassion, and pursuit of truth are what define real justice. Her work with Officer Chavarin-Fitzpatrick was inspiring to the SFPD.

Officer Hilary J. King (Tenderloin Station) is exceptional in her work as a police officer. She is a model in handling sensitive cases, particularly those involving domestic violence. She has shown through her meticulous documentation and her diligent approach to these cases that they are of the utmost importance to her as well as the SFPD. Officer King assists with teaching at the Police Academy to train new officers because of her ability to effectively connect with victims and ensure that their experiences are handled with care and understanding.

CROC, which stands for Cooperative Restraining Order Clinic, is a San Francisco-based legal services agency that upholds the legal rights and dignity of sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking survivors. With the organization's experienced Director Emberly Cross, CROC, and its dynamic team empowers survivors to understand their legal rights and options, and the organization provides free legal services to help enforce and protect those rights, with a particular focus on restraining orders, family law, and crime victim representation. CROC's commitment to effective legal assistance, institutional training, and policy advocacy has made an impact in San Francisco's justice system.

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