



Office of the Chief • Chief John R. Batiste

**\*\*\*For Immediate Release\*\*\***

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Government and Media Relations

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### **WSP Graduates 58 Troopers from the 121<sup>st</sup> Basic and 5<sup>th</sup> Lateral Training Classes**

**OLYMPIA, Wash.** – The Washington State Patrol (WSP) added 58 newly commissioned troopers to its ranks today during the 121<sup>st</sup> Trooper Basic Training (TBTC) and 5<sup>th</sup> Trooper Lateral Training Class (TLTC) graduation ceremony held at the state Capitol Rotunda.

For the 121<sup>st</sup> TBTC, the graduation marks the completion of more than 1,400 hours of rigorous training, including classroom and practical exercises at the WSP Academy in Shelton. The training culminated with a coaching trip where the cadets worked the roads alongside field training officers.

The combined efforts of the 121<sup>st</sup> TBTC class resulted in 7,200 driver contacts, 2,164 calls for service, the removal of 401 impaired drivers from our roadways, and 830 collision investigations during their two-month long coaching trip.

Washington State Supreme Court Chief Justice Debra L. Stephens swore in the new troopers as the rotunda erupted with applause and cheers from family, friends, and colleagues.

Chief John R. Batiste, a member of the 55th Trooper Basic Training Class, thanked the new troopers and their families for their dedication to being a part of the future of the agency.

“We have high standards – you witnessed those through your training. The training was long, and it was rigorous, but it was for a purpose,” Chief John R. Batiste said to the graduates during Wednesday’s ceremony. “I thank you for your endurance and getting through the long training process.”

Chief Batiste, alongside Governor Bob Ferguson, congratulated each graduate, providing them with their commission card signifying they were now officially a commissioned WSP trooper.

“To the 121<sup>st</sup>, I couldn’t be prouder of you,” said Chief Batiste. “And to our laterals, thank you. Thank you for choosing to join us. We know you had a home but please know now that you have a family, inclusive of a new home.”

WSP Academy Captain Kyle W. Smith recognized several members of the class for excelling in aspects of specific skills and abilities, including:



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**Trooper Chris Gadd Top Academic Award:** Trooper Natalie McCracken

This award recognizes the outstanding efforts of the cadet who attains the highest-grade point average compiled more than 30 exams and quizzes. The award was officially re-named in honor of WSP fallen Trooper Christopher Gadd, who also received the award as a member of the 116th TBTC.

**Top Driving Award:** Trooper Koby W. Holt

This award recognizes the highest level of proficiency with respect to driving skills, techniques, decision-making, mindset, and the steady and constant improvement through each phase of drive training.

**Top Firearms Award:** Trooper Natalie McCracken

This award recognizes the highest level of proficiency with all weapons systems, marksmanship scores, skills, and demonstration of sound judgement during practical encounter scenarios.

**Top Physical Fitness Award:** Trooper Christian J. Beckham

This award recognizes the highest level of drive and tenacity in physical fitness testing and training. The recipient of this award consistently performed at the top of the TBTC during physical training. The award is named in honor of Trooper Kristopher Sperry, who tragically died off-duty during a house fire in 2010. Trooper Sperry received the Physical Fitness Award as a member of the 97th TBTC.

**Top Control Tactics Award:** Trooper Chase W. Woolsey

This award recognizes the highest level of proficiency in control tactics techniques, to include self-defense, handcuffing, searching, and the use of force thought process.

**Top Collision Investigation Award:** Trooper Natalie McCracken

This award recognizes the highest level of proficiency regarding collision investigation, including mathematical computation, scene investigation, evidence gathering, report writing, and teamwork.

**Top Communications Award:** Trooper Mercer A. Bedford

This award recognizes the highest level of efficiency of radio communications knowledge, based upon testing and practical exercises.

**Top Overall Cadet Award:** Trooper Natalie McCracken

This award recognizes the trooper cadet who demonstrated great courage to overcome obstacles, unwavering dedication to stay focused in reaching their goals and their ability to give 100 percent in every aspect of their training. Trooper McCracken demonstrated the necessary skills, abilities, and judgement to be an excellent trooper, and made the efforts to make continuous improvements.

**Core Values Award:** Trooper Natalie McCracken

The Core Values Award is determined by the anonymous vote of the members of the 121<sup>st</sup> TBTC, who chooses the classmate they feel best exemplified the training division's core values of strong leadership, effective partnerships, professional excellence, acting with integrity and accountability, respecting and protecting individual rights, and earning the trust and confidence of the public. The Core Values Award is sponsored by the WSP Memorial Foundation and presented in honor of the WSP troopers who gave their life in the line of duty. Today's award was given in honor of Trooper Christopher Gadd, who died in the line of duty on March 2, 2024. Retired Captain Neil Weaver presented the award to Trooper Natalie McCracken.



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### 121st TBTC Final Assignments

Trooper Cadet	Final Assignment
Aguayo-Chong, Yael	Bellevue
Andrade, Jose M.	Oak Harbor
Beckham, Christian J.	Marysville
Bedford, Mercer A.	Port Townsend
Blankers, Maximus K.	Bellingham
Cochran, Remington C.	Bellevue
Connor, Noah D.	Bellevue
Ethridge, Matthew J.	Oak Harbor
Fairman, Gavin M.	Bellevue
Ferguson, Zackary S.	Bellevue
Flamenco, Mario A.	Hoquiam
Goold, Sophie M.	Monroe
Grassman, William P.	Gig Harbor
Greenleaf, Kiel M.	Naselle
Haley, Austyn J.	Hoquiam
Hart, Zachary W.	Tacoma
Henrius, Anderson	Bellevue
Holt, Koby W.	Monroe
Jimenez, Francico Jr.	Monroe
Lauer, Brandon L.	Monroe
Lemmon, Timothy C.	Hoquiam
Looker, Tyce D.	Bellevue
McCracken, Natalie	Port Townsend
Morton, Dexter D.	Bellevue

Trooper Cadet	Final Assignment
Niva, Jonathan B.	Bellingham
Olson, Aaron W.	Tacoma
Ordonez, John M.	Bellevue
Ortiz, Jorge L.	Oak Harbor
Page, Christopher L.	Marysville
Patredis, Nicholas M.	Tacoma
Pettijohn, Waylon N.	Ellensburg
Rana, Dewa	Tacoma
Ross, Daniel S.	Marysville
Sacks, Jordan C.	Tacoma
Sharp, Zachary J.	Monroe
Smith, Robert L.	Tacoma
So, Justin T.J.	Bellevue
Solis, Guadalupe	Bellevue
Staib, Edward J.	Tacoma
Teow, Jian K.	Goldendale
Van Dyken, Joshua J.	Bellingham
Velez, Mason H.	Oak Harbor
Weber, Matthew W.	Bellevue
Williams, Jedidiah J.	Burlington
Wilhelm, Mathew D.	Monroe
Woolsey, Chase W.	Marysville
Wright, Andrew J.	Bellevue



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### 5<sup>th</sup> TLTC Final Assignments

Lateral Trooper	Final Assignment
Baughman, Stormy M	Moses Lake
Brunink, Kevin J.	Tacoma
Hall, Matthew J.R	Olympia
Hauck, Ryan P.	Kelso
Hencke, Kolten R.	Bellevue
McKinney, Gregory M.	Ritzville
Paul, Chuck H. Jr.	Basin
Schlecht, Mathew D.	Kelso
Schumacher, John C.	Newport
Stafford, Eric T.	Kennewick
Tutchtone, Jason D.	Bremerton

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