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Press Release

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THE NATIONAL CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY BOARD NAMES CALIFORNIA'S CARINA ORTIZ NATIONAL CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY INSTRUCTOR OF THE YEAR

San Antonio, TX – Carina Ortiz, the community relations specialist for the Bakersfield Police Department in Bakersfield, CA, was honored by the National Child Passenger Safety Board as the 2018 Child Passenger Safety Instructor of the Year.

Ortiz is a graduate of California State University of Bakersfield in Public Policy and Administration and has worked in the Community Relations Unit for the Bakersfield Police Department since 2002. One of the primary objectives of the unit is to educate the community on various ways citizens can protect themselves and their families. She was assigned to attend the Child Passenger Safety (CPS) Certification class in October of 2005, completing her certification while nine months pregnant with her first child.

“After returning from the course, I was inspired to further involve our department in child passenger safety,” said Ortiz. “I started our first fitting station in January 2006. Since then, we have been able to certify 14 members of our department’s staff as technicians.”

As a CPS instructor, colleagues praise her dedication to addressing diversity in the community, specifically by introducing materials in Spanish and training Spanish-speaking technicians in an effort to educate the Spanish-speaking community. Ortiz plays games and introduces videos to the technicians to help them recall material.

Kelsey Taylor, a co-worker of Ortiz, said, “Calling Carina a ‘mentor’ for our technicians feels like an understatement. Her goal of growing the number of technicians in our agency seemed challenging when she first began. Now, she is mentoring several of the technicians to follow in her footsteps and become instructors.

“This touches on the heart of why she works to tirelessly educate people on car seat safety.; She truly cares about the safety of each and every little one. If her goal was to receive accolades, she

could fill countless shelves with trophies highlighting all the good work she has done. But she is not in this for the trophies or the praise.”

The National Child Passenger Safety Board is proud to recognize Ortiz with this honor. In a ceremony on April 21st, she also received a monetary award from AAA at the Lifesavers Conference in San Antonio. The Lifesavers Conference is a national highway safety conference attended by hundreds of professionals in the fields of law enforcement, traffic safety, statewide and national highway safety planning, injury prevention and public health.

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