



**Rick Staly, Sheriff**

## **FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**

*"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."*

# **NEWS RELEASE**

**Date:** Thursday, February 28, 2019

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## **Sheriff Hosts Ceremony of Appreciation for all Involved in Missing Person Rickey Wheeler's Recovery**

Thursday morning, Sheriff Rick Staly recognized over 130 first responders and volunteers who spent five days and nights in September 2018 searching for missing and endangered child Rickey Wheeler.



Pictured Above: Members of the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office and Putnam County Sheriff's Office received Certificates of Commendation from Sheriff Staly.

Seventeen-year-old Rickey Wheeler was reported missing on Friday, September 21<sup>st</sup>. Members of the FCSO were joined by neighboring agencies to search tirelessly to find Rickey for five days. The search was successful and Rickey was reunited with his family.

Members of the Putnam County Sheriff's Office and the St. Johns County Sheriff's Office were in attendance at the awards ceremony on Thursday morning along with Putnam County Sheriff Gator DeLoach, St. Johns County Sheriff David Shoar, and their command staff. Bloodhound K9s involved in the search, from St. Johns and Putnam Counties, were also present. K9 Putnam, who located Rickey, was gifted a bone from Sheriff Staly.

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Pictured Above: Sheriff Rick Staly awards members of the Flagler County Sheriff's Office with Certificates of Commendations.

“We can count on the agencies here today anytime we need them and we appreciate their partnership,” Sheriff Staly said at the awards ceremony. “The support from our neighboring Sheriff's Offices, local Fire Departments and so many volunteers played an integral role in finding Rickey alive. Without the help and support of our fellow first responders, this story could have had a different outcome.”



Pictured Above: Members of the Palm Coast Fire Department and Flagler County Fire Rescue and Fire Police received Certificates of Commendation from Sheriff Staly.

Also recognized during the ceremony were members of the Flagler County CERT and REACT teams, Palm Coast Fire Department, Flagler County Fire Rescue and Fire Police, Flagler County Department of Children and Families, FCSO C.O.P.s, the FCSO Mounted Posse, Flagler County Emergency Management, and Flagler County Fire Flight.

To see a video highlighting the ceremony, please click here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/p2y0m53lzb280l/First%20Responder%20Appreciation.mp4?dl=0>

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