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PRESS RELEASE

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Chico Police Honor September Employee of the Month
-- Problem Oriented Policing Creates Path to the National Park Service --

Chico, CA – The Chico Police Department is proud to recognize the September Employee of the Month honoree as an individual who is the perfect example of how connecting with individuals in the community can make a positive difference and change lives.

Officer Cedric Schwyzer successfully employed the department’s initiative of enhanced Community Policing known as P.O.P.; Problem Oriented Policing, to assist a young Chico resident who is now on a path to success.

In January of 2016, Officer Schwyzer initially made contact with a young man who was facing numerous challenges and seemingly on a path to trouble. Recognizing and reporting to his supervisor that this young man ‘*seemed like a decent kid...and trying to stay away from trouble,*’ Officer Schwyzer and then Sgt. Scott Zuschin thought this youth would be a perfect candidate for the Youth Build Chico program. It is a hands-on work program for at-risk youth which offers a path to graduation credits while learning applicable skills, such as decision-making and leadership.

That young man, 19-year old Steven Huerta has since successfully completed the program, earned his high-school diploma and in the summer of 2017, gained employment with the City of Chico Parks Department as a member of the parks clean-up crew. He has spent the past several weeks working in and around Bidwell Park.

“Making a difference in the lives of those we serve, one person at a time, is exactly what Officer Cedric Schwyzer has done,” said Police Chief Michael O’Brien. “He set into motion a chain of events which have truly altered the life course of one young man and possibly other family members and friends. I also commend both the Youth Build Chico program and the Butte County Sheriff’s Office for playing a significant role in this success story.”

Mr. Huerta has since discovered a knack for working in the outdoors. His work with the City of Chico Parks Department has inspired him so much, that while having yet to visit a National Park, he now has plans to work towards becoming a National Park Ranger.

Learning of the success Officer Schwyzer set into motion and Mr. Huerta’s career ambitions, Lassen Volcanic National Park Superintendent James Richardson joined Chico Police in honoring Officer

Schwyzler and personally meeting Huerta. A 31-year National Park Service veteran, Richardson, who took the helm of Lassen Volcanic National Park in early 2017, is well-known for working with neighboring communities and building partnerships which complement mutual success stories and engaging park visitors.

Officer Schwyzler joined the Chico Police Department in the fall of 2015. A member of the SWAT team, he holds a Bachelor of Arts in Exercise Physiology and a Master's in Pedagogy [the art, science or profession of teaching]. Officer Schwyzler spent four years with the Butte County Sheriff's Office before joining the Chico Police Department.

"I would like to thank Officer Cedric Schwyzler for his commitment to the community," said Chief O'Brien. "He took the extra steps necessary to personally connect with Mr. Huerta and because of that, this young man is on a new path to a bright future."

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About the Chico Parks Division: The Parks Division is a component of Chico Public works, which is charged with protecting and managing public resources for the enjoyment of the citizens of Chico, to maintain safe streets, storm drains and facilities for public use and to establish sustainable management techniques that ensure availability of fully functional and efficient infrastructure, facilities, parks and greenways for future generations. The Parks Division is also charged with the stewardship of Bidwell Park, Chico's urban forest, various parks and playgrounds, and other public landscape areas.

About the National Park Service: More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 417 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. NPS encourages everyone to find your park! Learn more at <http://www.nps.gov>