

2003 Officer John Lien – Distinguished Service Award

On 8/2/02 Officer John Lien responded to a reported intoxicated driver at Main Avenue and 20th Street South. A witness behind the vehicle on a cell phone was reporting that the vehicle was swerving between the curb and main traffic area of the roadway. Officer Lien learned that Officer Birmingham was behind the vehicle Southbound on 20th Street and that the vehicle was not pulling over. Responding with lights and siren to assist, Officer Lien observed oncoming traffic pulling to the curb to avoid collisions with the suspect vehicle. Officer Lien believed that one of the occupied vehicles was going to be struck by the suspect vehicle. He proceeded to pass and pull in front of the suspect vehicle causing him to strike the Left Rear of his squad car bringing them to a stop. The male driver was incoherent, however he stepped on the accelerator pushing forward and spinning his tires into the squad car. Officer Lien was able to turn off the vehicle and determine that the subject was a diabetic. It was learned that the suspect vehicle had struck and killed a pedestrian a couple blocks North of where Officer Lien made the stop. In addition to a Diabetic Reaction, the male tested positive for Amphetamine and Methamphetamine. He was later successfully prosecuted for Criminal Vehicular Homicide.

Recognizing the eminent danger this driver was putting others in, Officer Lien responded without hesitation or concern for whether or not his actions were against Departmental Policy. His actions were exemplary and showed unusual conscientiousness in the heat of the moment