

Media Release

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Police investigator regains vision, earns achievement award



From the left are Estes' supervisor J. R. Davenport and Kevin Estes, both of the Arkansas State Police Crimes Against Children Division, accepting awards from DSB Area Field Supervisor Tina Shelby. Estes, a detective and investigator, has been named the area's outstanding Consumer of the Year by the Department of Human Services Division of Services for the Blind, and his employer was recognized as an outstanding business partner for its commitment to promoting the employment of persons with vision impairment.

Kevin Estes of Harrison, a detective and investigator for the Arkansas State Police Crimes Against Children Division, has been named the area's outstanding Consumer of the Year by the Department of Human Services Division of Services for the Blind (DSB).

DSB Area Field Supervisor Tina Shelby nominated him for the achievement award because of his determination to overcome adversity and succeed at work. Estes has been employed with the State of Arkansas for almost 12 years, and nine years have been with the Arkansas State Police.

Estes is one of only 13 people in Arkansas who will receive an area award and was selected from the area that includes Baxter, Benton, Boone, Carroll, and Marion Counties.

The Arkansas State Police Crimes Against Children Division was recognized as an outstanding business partner for its commitment to promoting the employment of persons with vision impairment.

The awards were presented at the noon meeting of the Harrison Lions Club at the Western Sizzlin restaurant on December 2.

When he started having eye trouble, Estes said he sought DSB services and was sent to an eye doctor, who diagnosed him with a detached retina in his right eye and the threat of losing his vision.

He said the doctor sent him **that** night to a specialized eye center in Springfield, Mo. Estes had emergency surgery in May 2012 for the retinal detachment. He also had a smaller laser surgery on the other eye to prevent its retina from detaching. In the end, he had a total of seven surgeries.

Estes thanked DSB for helping restore his sight and enabling him to maintain his employment. In addition to paying for his surgeries and related medical treatment, he said DSB paid part of the cost for his eyeglasses and contact lenses.

Estes received his undergraduate degree from Arkansas State University at Jonesboro and his Master's degree from the University of Arkansas in Fayetteville.

In his leisure time, Estes enjoys hunting, fishing, and raising his two sons, ages 14 and 17. He's lived in the Harrison area for 36 years.

This is the eighth year that DSB has given Consumer of the Year awards to recognize individuals who have managed their rehabilitation plans, gained marketable skills, secured good jobs, and become role models for others. An overall state winner will be selected at the end of the year.

DSB provides vocational rehabilitation services to adults who are blind or severely visually impaired and whose goal is successful employment. The division also serves youth and older blind individuals. For information about DSB's programs and services, visit the DSB website at <http://humanservices.arkansas.gov/dsb/Pages/default.aspx> or call 1-800-960-9270, 501-682-5463, or TDD 501-682-0093.