**Award of Distinction (Public Safety Lieutenant Stewart BayCare)**

**Plaque and $100 Amazon Gift Card**

Sponsored by Hanwha

Public Safety Lieutenant Mervin Stewart has been with BayCare for 12 and has over 23 years of service in law enforcement in Polk County. He retired as a captain for Haines City PD before starting his PS career with BayCare.

Lt. Stewart is the lead WELLE instructor for all BayCare’s Public Safety teams. This includes all the 255 Public Safety Officers systemwide. WELLE is another version of CPI and is a way to deescalate patients with as minimal force as possible.

Lt. Stewart is a fully engaged hands on instructor and has instructed classes across the BayCare System. He also mentors new instructors who are just starting out teaching WELLE classes. BayCare has over 30,000 plus team members who benefit from the many levels of WELLE training and Lt. Stewart has been a key element in many aspects of the program that were developed.

Additionally, Lt. Stewart served as a subject matter expert when BayCare was transitioning from NAPPI to WELLE. He is a member of the BayCare WELLE steering committee who focuses on the WELLE continuous improvement. Lt. Stewart also helped implement a blended learning format for WELLE. Thanks to his hard work, our team members now have a robust de-escalation tool to serve our patients and to help keep our staff safe.

Lastly, during COVID BayCare Public Safety lost a majority of those certified to instruct WELLE for our Public Safety teams. Lt. Stewart at one point was the only instructor maintaining all the annual certification classes for Public Safety. This was on top of all of his other duties and responsibilities. He never once complained or fell behind on his duties as a public safety supervisor.

For his hard work, dedication, and involvement with the BayCare WELLE transition and clinical implementation Public Safety Lieutenant Mervin Stewart is hereby awarded the 2023 IAHSS West Central Florida Chapter award of Distinction. Congratulations!