

# **Eddie Cathey**

## **Sheriff of Union County**

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### **NEWS RELEASE**

## **Capt. Jeff Outen Receives Officer of the Year Award**

**January 26, 2015, Monroe, NC** – Union County Sheriff’s Office Capt. Jeff Outen has been selected as the N.C. Outstanding Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Officer of the Year by the North Carolina CIT Conference Planning Committee. Captain Outen will be recognized at North Carolina’s 2015 CIT Conference in Raleigh on Feb. 10.

CIT programs are police-based jail diversion programs that aim to prevent the arrest and incarceration of persons with mental illness, developmental disabilities or substance abuse problems for minor crimes, and instead, divert them to treatment, when this can be done at little risk to public safety. Law enforcement agencies having CIT programs recruit officers with natural skills and abilities in helping people in crisis, and provide them with 40 hours of training designed to build upon their strengths in dealing with people in crisis. These agencies then establish policies and procedures that help assure that these specially trained officers are dispatched to “mental disturbance” calls.

Capt. Outen has championed the CIT program statewide for many years. The Union County Sheriff’s Office has the highest ratio of CIT-certified officers per capita of any law enforcement agency in North Carolina.

“This is a tremendous honor for our agency,” said Sheriff Eddie Cathey. “I congratulate Capt. Outen on this accomplishment, as well as all our CIT-certified officers.”

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