



**1/12/24 Media Release**

**Sheriff Moon Appoints New Undersheriff,  
Promotes New Captain, and Grants Life-Saving Medals**

Nevada City, CA – On the morning of Jan. 12, 2024, Sam Brown was sworn in as the official new undersheriff of Nevada County, as appointed by Sheriff Shannan Moon, following the retirement of Undersheriff Alicia Burget. As part of the Swearing in and Promotional Ceremony, which took place in the board chambers of the Eric Rood Administration Center, Sheriff Moon also promoted Sean Scales from lieutenant to captain, and issued two life-saving awards and 11-related certificates of recognition. Five additional staff were promoted, and 13 new employees joined the NCSO team.

**Undersheriff Brown:**

Undersheriff Brown assumes his new role with over 20 years of experience in law enforcement. He has been with NCSO since 2003 and began his career as a correctional officer, working in Wayne Brown Correctional Facility. In 2005, the Sheriff's Office sponsored him in attending the Peace Officers and Standards Training (POST) Academy at Yuba College in 2005, where he graduated with an academic achievement award. Upon completion of POST, he began working as a sheriff's deputy. In 2008 and 2012, Undersheriff Brown received the Deputy of the Year Award for his dedication and commitment to Nevada County. Throughout his 21-year career, the undersheriff has held several roles, including court security officer and bailiff; field training officer; corporal; detective; sergeant; background investigator; internal affairs investigator; negotiator; commander; lieutenant; executive lieutenant; and captain before becoming undersheriff. He has also worked in and/or supervised a variety of NCSO departments and divisions, including Corrections; Patrol; Court Security; the Major Crimes Unit, Search and Rescue; the Volunteer Program; Animal Control; the Crisis Negotiation Team; Special Enforcement Detail; Operations Division; and Field Training Program.

“Sam is a born leader and someone I can always count on to get the job done,” said Sheriff Moon. “He is one of the most resilient individuals I know and his passion to serve and protect others has been evident throughout countless incidents and the countless hours he has devoted to garner positive outcomes. With his vast experience and knowledge across our divisions, coupled with his ability to lead crises and oversee major incidents and our entire operations division, he is decidedly qualified to take on this role and I am proud to appoint him as our community's newest undersheriff.”

Undersheriff Brown was born in Germany and grew up in Salinas, CA. He received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology from the University of California, Santa Cruz. Today, Undersheriff Brown lives locally with his wife and two teenage sons. He enjoys spending time with his family and friends, sports, camping and other outdoor activities.

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## **Captain Sean Scales:**

Captain Sean Scales assumes his new role with 18 years of experience in law enforcement. Captain Scales began his law enforcement career by attending the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office Basic Recruit Academy in 2006. Following graduation, he worked as a deputy for the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office for approximately four years. In 2010, Captain Scales found a new opportunity with NCSO and has been with NCSO ever since. Much like Undersheriff Brown, Captain Scales has worked in a variety of capacities for the Sheriff's Office. As a deputy, Captain Scales worked in Patrol and the Major Crimes Unit. As a sergeant, he was an asset to the Nevada County Regional Dispatch Center (where 911 calls are managed), Patrol, and the Professional Standards Unit; and in his last role as lieutenant, Captain Scales worked in Patrol, Corrections, Investigations, and the Office of Emergency Services (OES).

"Sean is one of the most level-headed and hardest working people I know," said Sheriff Moon. "For the last few years, we've had him embedded with OES to assist with the management of crises, ranging from fires, evacuations, and blizzards to major incidents, which requires not only the competence to juggle simultaneous events but the ability to provide quick and accurate communication to the public. His ability to stay calm and collected under pressure in any situation is a key strength, making him a natural fit and commander of our Operations Division and Major Crimes Unit."

## **Other Notable Promotions:**

Jennifer McCormack was promoted from sergeant to correctional lieutenant and joins the leadership team at NCSO. Lieutenant McCormack began her career with NCSO in 2005 and much like Lieutenant Nau, she has remained a pillar of Wayne Brown Correctional Facility ever since. In addition to working her way up the chain of command, Lieutenant McCormack is also a baton instructor and assists with physical agility testing for all incoming applicants. When not working, Lieutenant McCormack enjoys traveling and hiking with her husband and has plans to go bungee jumping very soon.

Jon "Jay" Nau was promoted from sergeant to correctional lieutenant and joins the leadership team at NCSO. Lieutenant Nau has been with NCSO since 2002. For over 20 years, he has been an asset to Wayne Brown Correctional Facility, in addition to serving the community these last 27 years as a firefighter. As a firefighter reserve, Lieutenant Nau has been instrumental in life-saving situations and has been a primary instructor at NCSO for teaching CPR and first aid. When not working or volunteering, Lieutenant Nau enjoys traveling, the outdoors, and watching 49ers and Giants games with his family.

The following three staff were also promoted during the ceremony: Michael Schnitzius became correctional sergeant; Elizabeth Hare became correctional sergeant; and Stacey Ward became senior accounting assistant.

## **Two Life-Saving Awards:**

**Officer Austen Reilly Awarded Life-Saving Medal:** On Jan. 12, 2024, Sheriff Moon publicly awarded Officer Austen Reilly with a life-saving medal for his heroic actions on Oct. 14, 2023. On the day in question, Officer Reilly was working inside Wayne Brown Correctional Facility when an incarcerated person collapsed to the ground. Officer Reilly called for medical, secured the facility, and evaluated the man for a pulse. With no pulse felt, he immediately began performing chest compressions and continued to do chest compressions until medical and additional officers arrived to assist.

Because of the quick actions of Officer Reilly and fellow staff who worked together, a life was saved. The man was transported to Sierra Nevada Memorial Hospital (SNMH) where he made a full recovery.

The following Sheriff's staff were also awarded certificates of recognition for their direct assistance in saving a life: Sergeant Randal Langer and Officers Robert Vaughn, Jonathan Carrillo, Christopher Lambert, and Darrick Cossairt.

**Deputy Sheriff Trainee William Bierwirth II Awarded Life-Saving Medal:** On Jan. 12, 2024, Sheriff Moon publicly awarded Deputy Sheriff Trainee William Bierwirth II with a life-saving medal for his heroic actions on Oct. 22, 2023. On the day in question, Bierwirth was working inside Wayne Brown Correctional Facility (as a jail training officer at the time) when it was requested that he check on an incarcerated person who failed to exit his cell. He found the incarcerated person unresponsive and barely breathing. Bierwirth immediately called for help and began administering medical aid. Shortly after, medical and several staff came to assist and successfully revived the man.

Because of the quick actions of Deputy Sheriff Trainee Bierwirth and fellow staff who worked together, a life was saved. The man was transported to SNMH where he made a full recovery.

The following Sheriff's staff were also awarded certificates of recognition for their direct assistance in saving a life: Sergeant Broadhurst and Officers Ryan Stanley, Kody Kencke, Jonathan Carrillo, Tyler Wells and trainee Logan Twitchell.

Ceremonial photos and videos will be posted on NCSO's Facebook page as soon as possible.

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