



To: Mayor Merkes and Members of the Common Council

From: Lt. Tim Styka

Date: April 27, 2011

RE: The 2011 NAMI CIT Officer of the Year, Officer Chris Groeschel

On behalf of the Police Department, I am delighted to inform you that Officer Chris Groeschel has been named the 2011 CIT Officer of the Year from the National Alliance on Mental Illness, Fox Valley. Chris received this award at their annual conference held on April 12, 2011 in Appleton.

A Crisis Intervention Officer (CIT) undergoes specific training to understand the nature of mental illness and how it affects individuals, families and the community. Combining this knowledge with traditional law enforcement procedures and techniques a CIT officer can help to deescalate a person in a mental health crisis. The officers also support existing social programs and provide assistance to those living with mental illnesses and their families. CIT officers can also take a proactive part in helping those prior to a situation escalating into a crisis. Historically, when a person was having a mental health crisis their actions often times led to law enforcement involvement, which resulted in negative consequences. A CIT program expands a police officer's knowledge base and sets up a system which can create long term positive outcomes, which is a benefit to all stakeholders.

The CIT training coordinated through NAMI Fox Valley has trained over 300 officers; 9 of which work for Menasha. Chris Groeschel is one of those officers. Since Chris has gone through this training he has truly embraced the concept and ideas the program offers. Chris really became involved with the CIT program after helping out a young woman who had a history of suicide attempts. Chris intervened and worked with her during a number of crisis situations. I believe this person would not be alive today if it was not for additional actions and assistance Chris provided. Chris has also reached out to others members in the community who live with mental illness. Most recently he worked with a person that has chronic alcohol issues, who has since taken his first steps to sobriety in years. He also works as a liaison between the department and Social Services to coordinate assistance between the two agencies. He even worked to create a communication log for the CIT officers in the department.

In recognition of his devotion to the program, NAMI Fox Valley did present Chris with this prestigious award. I am very proud of Chris's accomplishment and wanted to take this opportunity to share his achievement with you.