

# City of Bristol Tennessee

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Thursday, November 1, 2012

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## **Officer Awarded Mark Vance Domestic Violence Award**

A domestic disturbance call is one of the most dreaded calls the city's police dispatcher receives and probably one of the most dangerous calls an officer has to go out on. In recent years the Bristol Police Department lost one of their own on a domestic disturbance call, Officer Mark Vance. His death is a daily reminder just how dangerous our officers' jobs are.

Officer Matt Cousins recently received one of those calls over the radio. He arrived at the residence only to find the victim so severely beaten that he could not understand what she was saying to him. After all the official paperwork had been completed and the normal course of police actions were taken, Officer Cousins told the victim of a program here in town that would help her get the help she needed to get out of the hostile environment. Days later, Officer Cousins was in a training class and received a call from Abuse Alternatives advising him that the victim was in their office seeking help. The officer took his lunch break to talk to the counselor to tell them of the details of the night of the incident.

Officer Matt Cousins was awarded the 2<sup>nd</sup> Judicial District Task Force's Mark Vance Domestic Violence Award. Upon accepting the award Officer Cousins stated, "I did not answer this call alone and cannot take sole credit for this award. My co-workers and I are very supportive of each other and we help each other. We make sure we all go home at the end of our shift. I owe a big thank you to my fellow shift mates, Lt. Kirkpatrick, Sgt. Brown, Sgt. Caudill, Officer Griffin, Officer Kistner, Officer Boling, Officer Keese, and Officer Newman."

The victim remained emotionally strong through reconstructive surgeries and the Bristol Tennessee Police Department was able to successfully prosecute the offender.

For more information on domestic violence and the help available please contact the Bristol Tennessee Police Department at 423-989-5600.