

SPPD MAJOR LISA MCKINNEY NAMED CIT OFFICER OF THE YEAR

By John Jones, NAMI Past President and CIT Liaison

CRISIS INTERVENTION TEAM

There will be a CIT refresher training course on P.T.S.D. at the VA Hospital, March 23, from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. This course is organized and training given by the CIT Committee and open to all CIT graduates.

The next 40 hour CIT training class will be June 1st – June 5th at Suncoast Hospice.

Congratulations to **Major Lisa McKinney** of the St. Petersburg Police Department, who received the *CIT Officer of the Year* award at **County Commissioner John Morroni's** Emergency Personnel Appreciation Dinner January 28th. **The Crisis Intervention Team** program selects patrol officers who volunteer and receive 40 hours of specialized training. These officers are responders to all calls related to persons with mental illness and particularly those in crisis.

The Pinellas County Mental Health and Substance Abuse Coalition has trained more than 1000 officers in Pinellas County during the last 11 years.

As soon as Major McKinney completed the CIT training, she assumed the responsibility for one of the most critical aspects of the CIT training; the scenarios. She recruits and trains approximately 25 volunteers from law enforcement agencies, community mental health agencies, and other organizations, to help facilitate and to play roles in the scenarios.

Scenarios are the opportunity for officers in the CIT training program to put into practice the skills taught in the classroom to help calm, assess, and facilitate a peaceful and effective resolution to crises situations. This vital component is expertly coordinated by Major McKinney.

Since Major McKinney became involved in CIT, the number of St. Petersburg Police officers participating in subsequent training sessions has increased dramatically. This is due, in part, to the leadership Major McKinney provides and her commitment to making our community safer.

Major McKinney received the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Iris Award in May 2010. She is a member of the Board of Trustees for Suncoast Center, Inc. She also is a certified instructor, training police cadets and officers in the areas of Internal Affairs and Crisis Intervention. Thank you Major McKinney for all your contributions to CIT and our community.



Pinellas County Commissioner John Morroni hosted the 16th annual Emergency Personnel Appreciation Dinner. Major Lisa McKinney of the St. Petersburg Police Department received the CIT Officer of the Year Award. The award was presented by John Jones, NAMI CIT Liaison for the Pinellas County Mental Health and Substance Abuse Coalition. Photography donated by Jim Houck, Main Street Studios in Dunedin.

If you have a mental health emergency and need to call 911 for response from law enforcement, please remember to ask for a CIT-trained officer. These officers have received 40 hours of specialized training that guide them as they interact with individuals with a mental illness.