

# BLACKSTONE POST



The Voice of Blackstone Security



The Secret to Our Success is in Our People

SUMMER 2018

## Residents Lament Guard Leaving

# “No Joy in Mudville,” Damien Davis Departs

Phoenix – There is an old showbiz adage that goes, “always leave them wanting more.” That’s just what former Blackstone security guard Damien Davis did. He left the client and the company wanting more.

When the five-year employee announced his departure, 49 homeowners in a local subdivision went into a deep depression at the loss of someone they had come to know as a rallying point and a member of the community.

“There was no joy in Mudville when Damien knocked on my door to give me the news personally,” said B.J. Freeman, referencing the 1888 Ernest Lawrence Thayer poem, *Casey at the Bat*. “Telling the other 48 households he was leaving was one of the hardest things I’ve had to do in a long time.”

Freeman, who is president of the

neighborhood association, said there was an “enormous outpouring” of friendship, with cards and front yard signs with best wishes.

“There were also profound expressions of gratitude for his deep loyalty, his un-failing support and his heartfelt commitment to our community.”

In an email to Blackstone Executive Vice President Jeanne Croft, Freeman said she was caught by surprise and explained how the community felt about Damien. “It’s well-known how attached our neighborhood is to him and to his loyalty,” she wrote. “There’s no question that I’ve been able to keep our program going because of his commitment to us and his interpersonal interactions with his clients.”

Croft told Freeman in an email that Blackstone also would rather he

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**Blackstone Operations Director Ken Vandiver (l) Presents Damien Davis with a Certificate of Recognition.**

## Becomes the Second Winner

# Alex Chamberlain Wins Bill Richards Scholarship Award



Alex Chamberlain

Phoenix – Alexander Chamberlain has been a security officer with Blackstone Security Services, Inc.® for five years. He has spent much of that time soul searching about what to do with his life. As long as he could remember, he has had three passions in his life: law enforcement, wildlife and the great outdoors.

A couple of years ago, Alex discovered a career path that would allow him to incorporate all three of his passions, he would become a Game Warden. Alex reasoned that game wardens, called wildlife managers in Arizona, are trained and certified as state police officers whose primary mission is to enforce all hunting, fishing and recreation laws.

Alex, who is currently attending classes on several different campuses in the Maricopa County Community College

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# POST ORDERS

Dan Swindall, President & CEO

## Harassment, Hostility have No Place in the Workplace

It was recently brought to my attention that one of our female security officers was the target of suggestive and inappropriate comments from an employee of one of our clients. This particular employee was also making negative comments to Blackstone employees in general which created a hostile work environment for our security officers assigned to that post.

That particular employee no longer works for that client. Kudos to our client.

That one situation embodies two of the most toxic conditions that can exist in the workplace. They destroy morale, negatively impact productivity and expose a company to litigation.

Security officers have enough to deal with while on duty. They should not have to deal with lame-brain comments from client employees or from fellow security officers.

The secret to our success is in our people is not just a mantra for potential clients, it means we treat each other with respect and dignity. We at Blackstone will not stand by and allow our security personnel to be harassed or exposed to hostile working conditions by our clients.

If you believe you are being exposed to harassment or a hostile work environment on your post, inform your supervisor. We will address the situation.

Conversely, I will not allow either of those conditions to exist amongst ourselves. We cannot ask for respect unless we extend it to our clients and coworkers.

And as the graphics included in our story on harassment indicate, sexual harassment is a two-way street. Even though the preponderance of the incidents happens to women, men are also affected.

I don't want to send a chill through the air that has everybody uptight. A relaxed atmosphere where everybody feels comfortable is healthy and productive. People should want to come to work, not dread it.

So, if you are being exposed to harassment or hostility at your post, let us know. We've got your back.



## Sexual Harassment in the time of the #MeToo movement

By Bobby Holley

The news and social media are packed with stories and comments concerning high profile cases and influential personalities accused and/or convicted of sexual harassment or assault. So just how does that affect the public and you as a Security Professional?

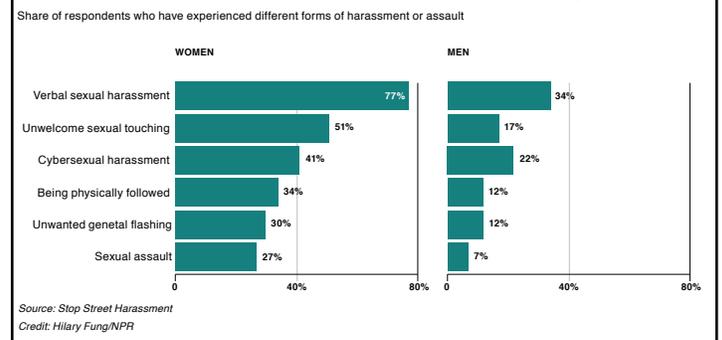
A study conducted by Stop Street Harassment (a nonprofit organization) in January 2018 revealed that 81% of women and 43% of men had experienced some form of sexual harassment during their lifetime. This is much higher than other studies conducted by various government agencies and nonprofit organizations in the past few years.



**Bobby Holley**  
Quality Assurance Manager

The survey also revealed 66% of women were sexually harassed in a public space while 38% of women experienced sexual harassment in a workplace. These are the places we as Security Profes-

### More Than 3 Out Of 4 Women Have Been Verbally Harassed



sionals are located to provide detection and protection of our clients, their employees, visitors and customers.

What this means to you as a Security Professional is that sexual harassment is happening more often than we previously thought and is also happening everywhere, possibly even at YOUR job site. We are in a position to offer a deterrent to this type of harassment by maintaining situational awareness. Keep looking and pay atten

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### Blackstone Post Editorial Staff

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This newsletter is produced at Blackstone Corporate Headquarters for the use and enjoyment of our employees and clients.

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www.blackstonesecurity.com

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**You Are What You Eat**

## How Nutrition Impacts Work Performance

Good nutrition and adequate hydration can have a direct physiological impact on security officers, affecting their abilities to perform safely and effectively on the job. Here are just a few examples:

- Not eating enough or choosing the wrong food options can result in low blood sugar levels, or hypoglycemia. Hypoglycemia can result in lightheadedness or dizziness, blurred/ impaired vision, weakness or fatigue.
- After eating a high-calorie, high-fat meal, the risk of a heart attack increases for two hours, especially if a person is overweight.
- An obese officer is more likely to be injured in an auto accident and incur more severe injuries than an officer at a healthy weight.
- Dehydration can contribute to tiredness, dizziness, or lightheadedness on the job.

### General Tips to improve intake

Whether you are eating on duty or off, a few basics apply whenever you sit down for a meal. Here are two things which should always be top of mind:

- **1. Avoid empty calories:** Processed junk food like soda, chips and candy are a cheap and easy way to get something quick. But they provide empty calories that will cause your energy levels to crash later, and they encourage your body to store fat. You wouldn't put dirty fuel in your patrol car, so don't put it in your body.
- **2. Eat nutrient-dense whole foods:** Choose to eat real foods like meat, vegetables, fruit, eggs and nuts whenever you have the

option. Finding something to eat while on the road may limit your whole food options, but even gas stations have some decent choices. If you must eat at a gas station, opt for beef jerky, almonds, sunflower seeds or packaged hard-boiled eggs.

### • Buying Your Lunch

You won't be able to plan ahead all the time. If you get held over your shift or forced to work a double, you'll need to buy a meal. Here are three considerations.

• **3. Choose "grilled" at sit-down restaurants:** If you're eating at a sit-down restaurant, most places offer grilled meat and vegetables, salad with a meat topping or omelets. Any of these options will give you the protein you need to feel full and support muscle growth. Swap fries or chips for a side salad or seasonal vegetable option and you'll avoid feeling bloated and tired later.

• **4. Try eating at a make-your-own burrito restaurant:** It's easy to eat healthy when you can get a burrito bowl with fajita veggies, tomato salsa, lettuce, guacamole and the meat of your choice. Skip the beans — they are a large carbohydrate source and can cause digestion issues. Consider skipping the rice and going with a double serving of meat instead. If you do choose the rice, ask for half a serving.

• The protein and healthy fats in this type of meal will leave you full and satisfied for your entire shift, and by going with the bowl and passing on rice and beans you'll avoid the carbohydrate overload (and resulting energy crash) that comes with the traditional, tortilla-wrapped burrito.

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## VETERAN'S CORNER

By Carolyn Thompson

Many veterans know about the basic health care and education benefits available to them through the Department of Veterans Affairs: Tricare and the GI Bill. While these benefits alone are substantial, numerous other programs help provide more benefits to veterans and their families. Even within the health care and education programs are little-known benefits to improve the lives of veterans and help ease the financial burden of medical care or other expenses. Here are 10 veterans benefits you haven't heard about that all veterans should see if they qualify for.

### 1. Long Term Care

Long-term care is expensive, but often necessary to provide care for aging relatives. Through the Aid and Attendance program, many veterans are eligible to receive money to cover the cost of nursing homes, assisted living programs and other long-term care options. With the ability for couples to receive up to \$25,020 a year, the Aid & Attendance benefit will help take care of a significant portion of long-term care costs. Surviving spouses of veterans are also eligible to receive up to \$13,560 a year to cover their long-term care costs.



## 10 Veterans' Benefits You May Not Know About

### 2. Caregiver Support

Should you choose to take care of an ailing Veteran at home, the Department of Veterans Affairs offers a caregiver support program. While this program does not offer any monetary support to caregivers, they are provided with a free support line and a caregiver support coordinator to help navigate military benefits and the stress of care giving.

### 3. Death Benefits

When a veteran dies, families have a few unique benefits available to them. A U.S. flag may be requested to drape over the casket and families may request a Presidential Memorial Certificate to honor the deceased loved ones service. The Department of Veterans Affairs also provides free headstones or grave markers.

### 4. Certification Programs

In addition to receiving credits to use toward a college degree, the GI Bill offers up to \$2,000 to help cover the cost of certification courses or other vocational training programs. This benefit

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## Antonio Pineda

**Officer of the Quarter  
Division 52 - El Paso**

**El Paso** – Look up the word ‘consistent’ in the dictionary and you’re likely to see a picture of Antonio Pineda. During a time when call-offs are plaguing the industry, the 22-year security veteran has not missed a day in the three years he’s been with Blackstone. Showing up is a prerequisite to anything good happening on the job.

That’s why Officer Pineda is the Officer of the Quarter for Blackstone’s Division 54 in El Paso.

Supervisor Connie Contreras said Pineda is being recognized for his “hard work and dedication to his job, the company and the client.”

“He’s always punctual and willing to help when needed,” Contreras said. “He always provides excellent customer service and always greets with a smile. He is the quality that Blackstone seeks and wants to employ.”

A native of Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, Pineda is a former federal law enforcement officer in Mexico. He also teaches GED classes at El Paso Community College.

Pineda said what he most enjoys about Blackstone are the people he works with. He enjoys the security industry as a whole and likes to make people feel secure and safe.

His philosophy on security: “Performing my duties to the best of my abilities and ensuring that all property and persons within the scope of my duties stay safe and secure.”

When Officer Pineda is not on duty, he enjoys teaching and spending time with his family. He and his wife, Maria Angela Jimenez, are the proud parents of a son and a daughter.

Congratulations, Antonio, and thanks for being a Blackstone ambassador.



## Othman Azeez

**Officer of the Quarter  
Division 54 Houston**

**Houston** – Othman Azeez is described by his boss, Tony Browe, as a Swiss Army Knife because he is so reliable and versatile. That’s why Azeez is the Officer of the Quarter for Blackstone’s Division 54 in Houston.

“No matter what the site, where it’s at, what the duties are or when I need it, I know I can rely on Othman to help dig us out of a hole,” Browe said. “He’s put in a lot of hours this past year and he’s done a great job every step of the way.”

“I always preach to our clients that I want them to sleep better at night,” Browe continued. “Othman is the guy that allows me to sleep better at night. I know when he is on duty he will act in our best interests and get the job done.”

Browe says Othman is a guy who resists recognition, so this designation will come as a surprise to him.

Surprise Othman!

An Iraqi National, Othman has a decade of security experience in addition to assisting U.S. Forces in Iraq. He has been with Blackstone for one year. He is married with three children.

Congratulations, Othman, and thanks for being a Blackstone ambassador.

“If at first you don’t succeed, then skydiving definitely isn’t for you.”

*Stephen Wright*

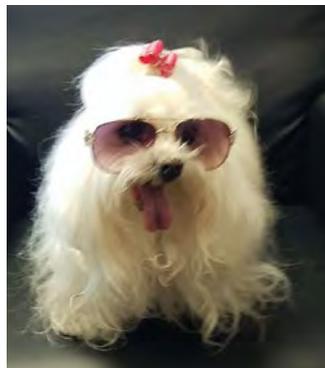
“Horse sense is the thing a horse has that keeps it from betting on people.”

*WC Fields*

### Blackstone goes to the dogs – sort of

## Working Like a Dog

Things got a “little hairy” at two Blackstone offices when employees participated in “Take Your Dog to Work Day,” an unofficial holiday created in 1999 by Pet Sitters International as a way to encourage dog adoption. Studies have shown that bringing pets to work can increase productivity, possibly because employees are shown how to work like dogs. Molle Mae Croft visited the Phoenix office. She is owned by Blackstone Executive Vice Pres-



**Molle Mae Croft**

ident Jeanne Croft. Edwina Hubush McConaughy, the Weenie Dog, dropped in to help out at the El Paso office. Edwina is owned by Associate Account Manager Vincent McConaughy. It was a day when Blackstone literally went to the dogs, but in a good way. TYDTWD is celebrated on the first Friday following Father’s Day.



**Edwina Hubush McConaughy**

## Chamberlain *Continued from Page 1*

District, needed a leg up financially to complete his associate's degree.

He received that leg up this summer when he became the 2018 recipient of an award from Blackstone's Bill Richards Memorial Scholarship Fund. Alex is the second Blackstone employee to receive the \$1,000 grant, named for Bill Richards, a long-time employee whose contributions to the company in customer service and other areas greatly enhanced Blackstone's standing in the security industry.

Blackstone President & CEO Dan Swindall decided three years ago to offer financial assistance to deserving employees to pursue their education. When long time Blackstone employee Bill Richards passed away in May 2016, that financial assistance gained a name – the Bill Richards Memorial Scholarship Fund.

To be considered for the financial assistance, applicants had to submit an essay of up to 500 words on why they should be considered. Entries are sanitized so the selection committee cannot tell who submitted the entries or their division. Alex's essay was a unanimous choice. He was really happy to hear the news.

"I really can't put into words how excited I was," said the Phoenix native. "School is really expensive and (Blackstone) is helping out a lot with this. I really, really appreciate it. They are saving me a lot of money. Being a unanimous selection is really flattering. Me of all people. Wow."

Alex said in his essay, he chose this career path because of the wide range of duties that wildlife managers have, including educating the general public about the animals they might encounter as well as protecting wildlife.

"They work with biologists to ensure the overall health of wildlife," he wrote in his narrative. "They work diligently to ensure the protection of threatened and endangered species. And they are often the first to be called when it comes to rescuing animals in distress as well as people who are lost or injured in the wilderness."

Alex studied law enforcement and Fish and Wildlife Management at the East Valley Institute of Technology in Mesa, Arizona. While there he was referred to Blackstone by a security guard trainer who told him Blackstone was a good company to work for.

Alex applied and now says that Blackstone is one of the best companies he's worked for. "I tell people that all the time," he said.

"I've worked here longer than I've worked anywhere."

Alex also volunteers at the Game and Fish Department. He said his supervisor, schedulers and Human Resources have always done their best to accommodate his schedules.

"I can work 44 hours a week and be a full-time student," he said. "And they always work with me to make time for my volunteer work. They've always done right by me, especially my education."

Alex said that while a bachelor's degree is required to become a Wildlife Manager in Arizona, he does not look to get rich from his decision.

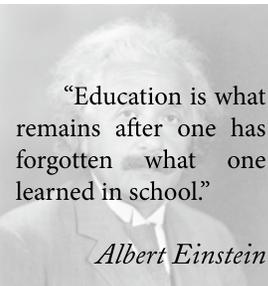
"Like most public servants, choosing to become a Wildlife Manager is essentially choosing to take a vow of poverty," Alex wrote in his essay. "But like other public servants, I am entering this field because it is much more than a job, it is a calling. I am truly

*"I really can't put into words how excited I was. School is really expensive and (Blackstone) is helping out a lot with this. I really, really appreciate it. They are saving me a lot of money. Being a unanimous selection is really flattering. Me of all people. Wow."*

*Alex Chamberlain*

passionate about this career. I feel like it is what I was meant to do, and I know I can make a difference in ensuring that the wildlife we all enjoy is protected for future generations."

Alex will decide later where he will attend a four-year school.



"Education is what remains after one has forgotten what one learned in school."

*Albert Einstein*

## Nutrition *Continued from Page 3*

• **5. Modifying fast food:** Avoid fast food whenever possible. However, if you're working nights it might be the only 24/7 option available. You can eat healthier at a burger joint by ordering your burger wrapped in a few leaves of lettuce instead of a bun. Order fresh fruit or a side salad instead of French fries. Finally, choose water or black coffee over the giant fountain soda.

### • Packing Your Lunch

Packing a lunch is the easiest way to eat healthy on duty. Willpower is a finite resource, and you use a lot of it making decisions while on patrol. When it's break time, your reserve of willpower might be drained, and the temptation for junk food can be strong if you don't have anything on hand.

• Planning ahead and packing a healthy meal takes away the

need for willpower at break time because your meal was decided ahead of time. As an added financial bonus, packing your lunch saves money in the long run.

• **6. Preparing your meal:** You can easily make healthy meals for the whole week with a few hours of meal prep on an off day and a slow cooker. Using a slow cooker is simple, even if you can't cook. Choose seven healthy slow-cooker recipes and go grocery shopping for all the ingredients on a day off.

If you make eating healthy a priority while you are on duty, you will quickly find that eating healthy becomes a lot easier when you are at home as well. If you are looking to improve your health and fitness levels, eating healthy while you are on the job is a great place to start.

## Davis *Continued from Page 1*

stayed but wishes him well. “We wish we could keep him too,” Croft wrote. “He has been a very loyal employee of Blackstone’s, but we never hold anyone back from getting into another career for advancement.”

As for Damien, he is taking his act back to school where he is pursuing a degree in behavioral psychology. The father of a 4-year-old daughter said he loved his five years with Blackstone and his rolling patrol assignment at the subdivision.



**Neighborhood Association President B.J. Freeman.**

“It was a dream,” Damien said. “I’ve never had a better site in my entire life. It was one of those things that made you get up and want to go to work.”

Freeman said Damien was special because he took the time to get to know the residents, their habits and even the landscapers and other vendors that frequented the neighborhood. “He wasn’t asked to do that, but it was his way of doing his job and taking care of business,” Freeman said. “In order to be an effective patrol, you have to get to know the residents’ habits so if you

see an open garage door, you know if it is supposed to be open. He cared so much that he would know if something was out of place.”

Damien said knowing where things belong and who belongs is part of the job of a rolling patrol.

“You have to with a site like that,” he said. “You’ve got to know the people cutting the lawn. You’ve got to know who comes and goes there so if anything happens you can stop it. You’ve got to know the habits of the residents and their work schedules. If you can remember that stuff, then you’re good to go.”

Freeman said that until Damien’s daughter was born, the residents were his extended family. “People really liked him as a person as well as someone who did his job,” she said. “He had a smile from ear to ear and I never saw him without that smile. Quite frankly, Damien became our common denominator. There wasn’t anyone who didn’t know or like him. I had two other patrol companies before Blackstone and it was always hard to get across to them the importance of being friendly and getting to know the neighbors. That’s important because it builds trust and a bonding takes place.”

Besides enjoying his assignment, Damien said he “really loved” working for Blackstone. “It is a really good company if you put in the effort to get to know everyone there,” he said. “If you don’t know your peers, it’s just another 9 to 5. If you apply yourself overall, you get the social benefits. When I came to Blackstone I had social anxiety, but after working there I became more assertive and secure.”

Damien said he was aware that a lot of the residents were upset he was leaving, but they understood. “It was one of those bitter-sweet moments where you’re happy for someone but sad they are leaving.”

Damien and his wife, Sheigh, have a daughter, Xirena.

## Harassment *Continued from Page 2*

tion to your surroundings and what the people in the area are doing. Listen to what is going on and be alert to any catcalls, whistling, or other unwanted comments of a sexual nature. Make your presence known and most of the time, this undesirable behavior will stop. If it does not, then ask the offender to stop the actions and record and report the information.

The report further shows that most victims of Sexual Harassment suffer from anxiety and depression as well, just like victims of sexual violence. Some victims even go so far as to change their routes or routines, change jobs or move away from the area.

Because of the anxiety associated with being a victim, most never even report the problem or confront the offender. Keep this in mind when you see or hear something and don’t just dismiss it. Take some action, but always respect the privacy and dignity of the victim.

We may not fall under the same guidelines as the sworn officers in our area, Protect and Serve, but we do follow the basic guard’s credo of Observe and Report.

## Veterans *Continued from Page 3*

will work well for veterans who wish to change careers or pursue a career path that does not require a college degree.

### 5. Transferring GI Bill® Credits

Unused credits through the GI Bill may be transferred to spouses and dependents of veterans. There are service limits required to transfer the benefits.

### 6. Free Tax Preparation

Veterans and their family have access to free tax preparation services through the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance offices on military bases. The individuals who work in the offices have expertise working with the complicated nature of military-related tax issues.

### 7. Life Insurance

Many veterans have trouble obtaining traditional life insurance, particularly if they sustained an injury during their time of service. Through the Servicemembers’ and Veterans’ Group Life Insurance program, veterans may receive up to \$400,000 in life insurance. This program also offers competitive premium rates.

### 8. Mortgage Help

Veterans having trouble making their mortgage payments are eligible for repayment assistance through the Department of Veterans Affairs. Options for help include special repayment plans, loan forbearance and loan modification programs. Additional benefits are available for veterans with VA loans and for homeless veterans.

### 9. VA Foreclosures

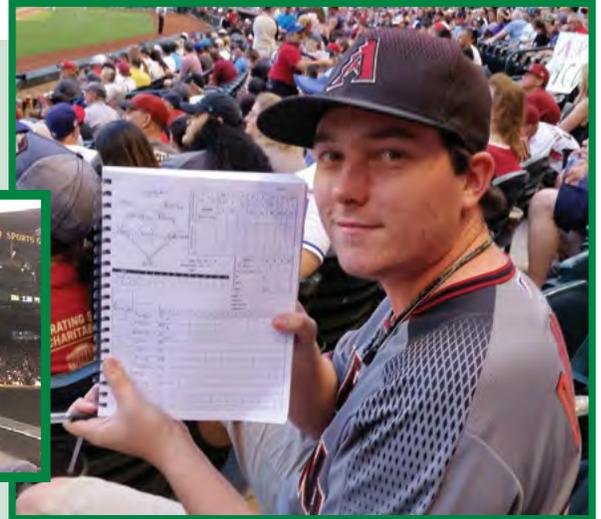
The VA maintains a list of homes serviced by VA loans that have gone into foreclosures. Veterans can search the list of VA acquired properties and purchase homes at a discount. You do not have to be a veteran to search the properties, but all properties qualify for VA financing.

### 10. American Corporate Partners

American Corporate Partners connects veterans with top companies to help them obtain a job after their time of service. Along with being connected to job opportunities, veterans can receive one-on-one mentoring and other career development services.

Fringe Benefits with Blackstone

♪ Root, root, root for the home team ... ♪



Blackstone clients attend Arizona Diamondbacks baseball games, Arizona Cardinals' football games and the Arizona Rattlers' Indoor Football League games with family and friends as guests of Blackstone Security Services, Inc.® where treating clients to these top-notch sports venues has become a tradition.

Attending MLB, NFL and IFL games is a great way for family members to bond with each other and with BFFs. This is just one of the ways Blackstone demonstrates its appreciation to clients. Yell if you see anyone you know!





## Employee Anniversaries

### Thirteen Years

Jerry Snyder

### Nine Years

Joseph Sojack

Ryan Swindall

### Eight Years

Jack Thurston

### Seven Years

Daniel Calderon

James Pilon

### Six Years

Shirley Wood

Manuel Yanez

### Five Years

Lawrence George  
Edward Risley

Anthony Nicholas  
Stephen Turney

### Four Years

Lana Callen  
Darvin Legah

Scott A. Clark

### Three Years

Koffi Afanou  
Jody Prendergast

Ray Parke

### Two Years

Bryce Cooper  
Robert Escobedo  
Craig Mejia  
Court Slabaugh

Sabrina Eisenberg  
Roy Junior  
Gregory Ratcliff

### One Year

Peter Carbonell  
Amireey Haroon  
Sandra Lerma  
Richard Martinez

Arsenio McAllister  
Raquel Regalado  
Darnell Taylor

## Things You Should Know



### Need an Extra 100? Participate in Blackstone's Employee Referral Program.

- Refer a new security officer to Blackstone
- This person must have a current Arizona Guard Card
- They must work a minimum of 90 days
- No disciplinary action
- You get \$100

Human Resources

### Health Insurance Information

Open enrollment for health insurance will be in late November or early December. While we do not have the details on coverage or cost at this point, there will be two plans offered. Be on the lookout for hand-outs from your Division office.

Human Resources

### For Arizona Armed Guards

Please remember that, if you did not renew your armed license this year, you will need to do your requalification shoot prior to the end of December. If you renewed your armed license this year, you will not need to requalify. If you need assistance in finding out where to go for your requalification, please see your Division office. You'll want to do this as soon as possible since classes fill up the closer we get to the end of the year. If the training paperwork is not in to AZ DPS prior to December 31, DPS will expire your armed license.

Human Resources

## Blackstone Security is a Proud Member of:

