



LAGRANGE
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News Release

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September 25, 2017

LaGrange Police Chief Honored for "Exceptional Strength, Courage, and Compassion"



LaGrange, Ga. September 25, 2017 -

LaGrange Police Chief Louis Dekmar will be honored in Washington, D.C. for his "exceptional strength, courage and compassion when confronted by the forces of hate."

The 23rd annual Anti-Defamation League In Concert Against Hate will be October 30th at the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts.

Chief Dekmar is one of only four people in the country honored for being "a hero in the battle against intolerance, injustice, and extremism."

In January, Dekmar, LaGrange Mayor Jim Thornton, LaGrange College President Dan McAlexander, along with other community and faith members apologized for the department's involvement in the 1940 lynching death of Austin Callaway, an

African-American teenager. After the teen's death, officials did not investigate or attempt to find Callaway's killers.

Debra Tatum, Austin Callaway's relative, NAACP President Ernest Ward along with other community members and members of the faith community worked together with Dekmar and continue to do so today.

Chief Dekmar is hoping the admission will help lead to a deeper trust between police and the community.

Dekmar wants everyone to know this was a community effort.

"This would not have been possible without the support of Debra Tatum, NAACP President Ernest Ward, Mayor Thornton, President McAlexander, city leaders, and our faith community," he said.

"Without this collaborative effort, it would not have been possible."

According to the ADL, Dekmar will be honored as a "bridge builder for racial reconciliation in the South."

According to Doron Ezickson with the Anti-Defamation League, "Chief Louis Dekmar recognized the power and responsibility of his office in moving his department and the citizens of LaGrange towards racial reconciliation."

"By publicly acknowledging and apologizing for historical wrongs, he led the community forward in a process that is working to restore trust between members of law enforcement and those in the community who remained acutely aware of those family members and friends unjustly treated in the past. His actions serve as a model for other agencies across the country."

Other honorees include Ann Jaffe, a "Holocaust survivor and educator ensuring that every generation will never forget", Tolu Olubunmi, a "DREAMer and outspoken voice for immigrants", and Gavin Grimm, a "brave youth advocating for transgender rights."

Past hosts for this annual event include Barbara Walters, Liev Schreiber, Taye Diggs, Gabrielle Union, and Jeff Daniel. This year's hosts have not been announced yet.

The ADL In Concert Against Hate will be Monday, October 30th at the JFK Center for the Performing Arts at 8:30pm.

2017 ADL IN CONCERT AGAINST HATE HONOREES



CHIEF LOUIS
DEKMAR



GAVIN
GRIMM



ANN
JAFFE



TOLU
OLUBUNMI

purchase tickets today at [adlconcert.org](https://www.adlconcert.org)

For more information go to <https://www.adlconcert.org>

Contact: Melanie Kahn, Associate Regional Director, Washington DC Region, (202) 740-8063 or mkahn@adl.org

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