



**U. S. Department of Justice**  
*United States Attorney*  
*Eastern District of Washington*

## **PRESS RELEASE**

<p>FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE</p> <p>Thursday, December 17, 2020</p>	<p>FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:</p> <p>George J.C. Jacobs, III Public Information Officer United States Attorney's Office (509) 353-2767</p>
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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE RECOGNIZES  
RAYMOND F. FLECK, SUPERVISORY DEPUTY U.S. MARSHAL (Ret.)  
WITH ITS NATIONAL AWARD FOR  
OUTSTANDING INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE  
PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS PROGRAM IN YAKIMA COUNTY**

*United States Attorney William Hyslop will present Raymond F. Fleck, Supervisory Deputy Marshal (ret.), U.S. Marshals Service, with the Department of Justice's National Outstanding Individual Contribution Award for supporting the U.S. Attorney-sponsored Project Safe Neighborhoods Program in a ceremony on December 17, 2020 in Yakima County, the site of the PSN program in the Eastern District of Washington*

Yakima – The United States Department of Justice has recognized and awarded Raymond F. Fleck, Supervisory Deputy Marshal (ret.), U.S. Marshals Service, for his Outstanding Individual Contribution to the U.S. Attorney's Office-sponsored Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) Initiative in the Eastern District of Washington. [PSN](#) is a critical piece of the Department's crime reduction efforts. The program focuses on prosecuting those individuals who most significantly drive violence in our communities. It supports and fosters partnerships between law enforcement, schools, the faith community, and local community leaders to prevent and deter future criminal conduct. In the Eastern District of Washington, the United States Attorney designated Yakima County for this special crime-fighting program in 2017 as a result of the County's high rates of gang and gun-related violent crime.

From June 3, 2019 through September 20, 2019, Supervisory Deputy Marshal Fleck planned and led 18 federal, state, local, and Tribal agencies in Operation *Invictus Civitas* (meaning Undefeatable Community) in a 90-day operation which resulted in 246 violent offenders being arrested for crimes committed in Yakima County. Of these, 133 were gang arrests, leading to 9 federal prosecutions with an additional 21 referrals for federal prosecution and numerous state

prosecutions. During that time, the community of Yakima experienced a 19% reduction in violent crime, a 100% reduction in homicides over the same corresponding period in 2018, and the **only** summer free of homicides in Yakima in recent history.

Supervisory Deputy Fleck's remarkable effort brought together the joint initiatives of Project Safe Neighborhoods, Operation Triple Beam (OTB) of the U.S. Marshals Service, and the Pacific Northwest Violent Offender Task Force (PNVOTF). The initiative was designed to improve public safety by reducing violent crime within the city and county of Yakima, Washington, including the Yakama Nation Reservation. Ultimately, approximately 15 federal, state and local law enforcement agencies were involved in this combined effort; the agencies involved are listed below. In addition, the PNVOTF seized 33 firearms, \$37,691.65 in cash, 4.47 pounds of heroin and methamphetamine, and 12 vehicles. Throughout the operation, officer safety was emphasized as all worked together to maximize their combined efforts.

William D. Hyslop, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Washington said: "I wholeheartedly commend Raymond F. Fleck for his outstanding leadership in planning and executing Operation *Invictus Civitas*. It was a tremendously successful operation that highlights the joint commitment, dedication, and partnership between our state, local, Tribal and federal law enforcement partners in combatting violent crime and removing violent criminals and gang members from the greater Yakima community and the Yakama Nation to face justice. Due to Ray Fleck's superb efforts, indeed, "Undefeatable Community" describes the summer of 2019 in Yakima County."

United States Marshal Craig Thayer said, "*Invictus Civitas* was an extremely successful DOJ Project Safe Neighborhoods violent offender fugitive arrest operation to reduce violent crime in Eastern Washington's Yakima community. Now retired, Supervisory Deputy U.S. Marshal Ray Fleck was the coordinating force behind the operation. Ray was not only able to bring together the state, local, Tribal, and federal partner law enforcement agencies that participated, but most importantly, the people of Yakima united to support this violent crime reduction operation."

Assistant United States Attorney Caitlin A. Baunsgard is the PSN Coordinator for the Eastern District of Washington. AUSA Baunsgard stated: "Yakima County was designated as this District's PSN Target Area. Supervisory Deputy Marshal Fleck (ret.) is a very worthy recipient of this national recognition. His leadership exemplifies the Eastern District of Washington's PSN mission to reduce violent crime in Yakima through cooperative efforts amongst all law enforcement agencies. Operation *Invictus Civitas*' success is due in large part to Supervisory Deputy Marshal Fleck's dedication to the PSN mission through the use of intelligence-based operations."

The year 2020 marks the 150th anniversary of the Department of Justice. Learn more about the history of our agency at [www.Justice.gov/Celebrating150Years](http://www.Justice.gov/Celebrating150Years).

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