

# IOWA POLICE JOURNAL

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## 2015 IOWA LAW ENFORCEMENT PURPLE HEART HONOREES

*The Iowa State Police Association (ISPA) will recognize the service and sacrifice of Purple Heart Honorees and their families at the 83rd Annual ISPA Conference in October.*



**Officer Jill Ohm Fitch**  
**Sioux City Police Department**  
**Date of Incident: 10-03-2014**

On October 3, 2014, Officer Jill Ohm Fitch, Sioux City Police, was dispatched to a disturbance involving a subject that was possibly suicidal. A male exited the residence and Officer Fitch initiated contact with him, not knowing if he was involved. This subject was being compliant with Officer Fitch and was following verbal directives. Without warning or provocation, the suspect pulled a handgun from his pocket and advanced on Officer Fitch, firing two shots at point blank range. One of the bullets struck Officer Fitch in the chin.

Even after being shot in the face, Officer Fitch was able to show composure and controlled the scene. This encounter, from the time of first contact with the suspect to the calling out of officer down, was less than two minutes. Officer Fitch was able to not only control the scene but also relay the suspect's name, description and direction of travel to responding officers.

Because of Officer Fitch's strength and courage under the most extreme situation, officers were able to set up a perimeter to help contain the suspect, thus potentially saving the life of any citizens in the area or other law enforcement officers. After a four-hour manhunt, the suspect was taken into custody (within the perimeter initially set up). At the time of the incident Officer Fitch had served the Sioux City Police Department for four years.



### **About the Purple Heart Award**

The Purple Heart Award is granted to any sworn Iowa peace officer who has been seriously, critically, or fatally injured in the performance of law enforcement duty. In addition, this award may be conferred if an injury was averted by the wearing of body armor.

This award will be given in all cases resulting in line of duty death, but will otherwise be limited to those cases involving an attack by an assailant or the performance of an act of valor. Please visit our [Purple Heart page](#) to nominate an officer for this award.