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Body Worn Camera Footage of Hightstown Police Officers Released as Part of BWC Wins Program

The Mercer County Prosecutor's Office today released body worn camera (BWC) footage of a March 31, 2024 incident in Hightstown where the quick response of Borough Officers Daniel Abbatemarco and Kenneth Larsen saved the life of a choking infant. The footage is being shared with the public as part of the BWC Wins program.

"Every day, officers face critical situations that the public would never learn about if not for body worn cameras. The BWC Wins program aims to create more transparency by highlighting body worn camera footage of officers during their daily duties," said Acting Mercer County Prosecutor Theresa L. Hilton. "By showing the community footage provided to the prosecutor's office by police departments in the county demonstrating how these police encounters are handled, it is our goal to strengthen trust between citizens and law enforcement within Mercer County."

The BWC Wins program is funded by a grant from the U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance. In addition to periodically releasing body worn camera footage to the public, the demonstration program also includes releasing monthly videos to sworn law enforcement personnel in Mercer County as part of a training component.

Body worn camera footage is crucial not only to prosecutorial success, but to encouraging officer accountability, transparency and reflection. By collecting footage of law enforcement interactions with citizens and utilizing that material in training, the BWC Wins program demonstrates to officers how their actions can affect the outcomes of cases that go to trial as well as public perception.

The featured video is courtesy of the Hightstown Police Department, under the leadership of Chief Frank Gendron, and can be watched here: <https://mercercountyprosecutor.com/bwc-wins-program/>.

“I am grateful to the prosecutor’s office for the opportunity to participate in the BWC Wins program,” said Chief Gendron. “Body cameras are powerful tools that protect and assist our officers with their difficult jobs, and I’m pleased to have the outstanding work of Officers Abbatemarco and Larsen recognized.”

“The Attorney General’s Excellence in Policing program has placed New Jersey at the forefront of policing reforms designed to promote and enhance professionalism, transparency and accountability across the law enforcement profession,” said Acting Prosecutor Hilton. “BWC Wins is a complement to the Body Worn Camera Policy, and I encourage the public to share the video and complete a brief survey that will help us improve the program.”

The survey can be found at <https://forms.gle/pkWxasHd3j5LAzpQ8>.

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