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For Immediate Release

New Jersey Law Enforcement Announces Statewide "Goal: Zero" Traffic Safety Detail on Thanksgiving Eve

Dedicated to the Memory of Patrolman Jason "Jay" Marles, Ocean Gate Police Department, Badge #271

EOW: November 25, 2010

TRENTON, NJ — November 22, 2026 – The New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police (NJSACOP) today announced that law enforcement agencies across the state will unite on Wednesday, November 25, 2026—Thanksgiving Eve, also known as "Blackout Wednesday" or "Drinksgiving"—for a high-visibility Goal: Zero traffic enforcement detail dedicated to the memory of Ocean Gate Patrolman Jason "Jay" Marles.

On Thanksgiving Eve 2010, Patrolman Marles had just completed a drunk driving enforcement detail to protect the residents of Ocean Gate. While driving home to his wife and children on the Garden State Parkway, he was struck and killed by a drunk driver. A dedicated officer, loyal friend, devoted husband, and loving father was taken from us far too soon. Sixteen years later, New Jersey's law enforcement community continues to honor his sacrifice and the mission he was carrying out that night.

Goal Zero promotes a shared commitment to Zero Deaths, Zero Injuries, Zero Crashes on New Jersey's roads. The initiative, inspired by Holmdel Township Patrolman Matt Menosky, began in 2024 when 36 municipalities joined forces following a tragic crash. Its bright green logo represents high visibility and pedestrian and school safety, while the black mourning band honors all lives lost in traffic crashes. The 2025 statewide launch built on early local success, including a 61% reduction in fatal crashes in Monmouth County (from 39 in 2024 to 15 in 2025).

This year's Thanksgiving Eve operation continues that momentum. As of November 19, 2026, New Jersey had recorded approximately 480 roadway fatalities, including 37 in Ocean County, underscoring the ongoing need for coordinated action during one of the most dangerous travel periods of the year. Officers statewide will conduct high-visibility patrols throughout the day., focusing on impaired driving, aggressive driving, distracted driving, and other high-risk behaviors on priority roadways. Many agencies will use Division of Highway Traffic Safety grant funding or assign on-duty personnel to ensure strong coverage.

"This detail is a direct continuation of the work Patrolman Marles was doing when he was taken from us," said Manchester Township Chief Antonio Ellis, President of the New Jersey Police Traffic Officers Association. "Goal Zero turns enforcement into prevention. We honor Jay by protecting every family that is trying to get home safely on Thanksgiving Eve."

"Goal Zero honors the lives we have lost and represents every life we still have the power to save," said Collingswood Police Chief Kevin Carey, President of NJSACOP. "No family should suffer the pain of losing a loved one in a preventable crash. Drive sober, slow down, and stay alert."

Goal: Zero is more than a single evening of enforcement; it is a year-round commitment reflected on the 2026 enforcement calendar at NJLEL.org. Through collaboration, visibility, and consistent action, New Jersey can move closer to the goal every resident deserves: Zero Deaths, Zero Injuries, Zero Crashes.

Learn more at njsacop.org and NJLEL.org.

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