

CO Lashonda Byrd

Friday, May 31, 2019 was like any other day in the 911 center for Virginia Beach Communications Officers. Shortly after 4pm Virginia Beach Emergency Communications Center (ECC) was inundated with calls reporting shots fired at the Municipal Center. The Communications Officers multitasking skills were put to the test. Words like death, blood, victims, fear started to settle in their headset and there was barely time for them to think. Every ring of the phone brought more voices reaching out for help. In just seconds the Communications Officer's trained minds were processing the appropriate responses to the callers. The Communications Officers were the go-to person to assist and comfort the callers. The Communications Officers at the Department of Emergency Communications (DEC) can easily relate to this scenario.

Communications Officer (CO) Lashonda Byrd and the team at DEC sympathized with the Communications Officers at Virginia Beach for what they had just experienced. CO Byrd and her co-workers are all too familiar with working high impact incidents and understanding the stresses of the job. The idea was to reach out to Virginia Beach ECC to let them know that DEC cares for them. A notice was sent informing that



money would be collected to prepare" Care Baskets" for Virginia Beach and more than \$200 was collected. CO Byrd volunteered to shop for items to place in the baskets. CO Byrd had the idea to purchase items that would be needed and desired by Communications Officers. CO Byrd created three baskets which included a breakfast basket, a snack basket and an "all things 911" basket. CO Byrd delivered the items to Virginia Beach ECC on June 7, 2019 and presented the baskets to the staff. Also a gift bag with extra items was presented along with several gift cards.

This act of kindness and CO Byrd's desire to go above and beyond shouldn't go by unnoticed. CO Byrd was excited for the assignment and she did it all with a smile on her face. CO Byrd is the type of employee that you'd be proud to have on your team. Her unselfishness and compassionate spirit is an asset to the Department.