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Butler honored for work to prevent domestic violence

*By Pierrette J. Shields
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LONGMONT — The city’s top cop will be honored tonight for his role in a local campaign to encourage men to pledge themselves to fight domestic violence, and other community-wide efforts.

Moving to End Sexual Violence, or MESA, will acknowledge Longmont director of public safety Mike Butler for “his ongoing efforts to stop violence against women” during the organization’s “Brave Bold & Beautiful” event honoring sexual assault survivors at 6:30 p.m. in the terminal building hangar at the Boulder Municipal Airport. He will receive the Community Impact Recognition during the event.

During the two-week campaign in June, Butler served as one of the main spokesmen for the effort, which encouraged men to wear white ribbons to show their commitment to ending domestic violence.

“He has been a huge difference in the community for his work with violence against women. For example, he implemented the White Ribbon Campaign in Longmont in June creating tremendous awareness in the community about the issue,” MESA development director Deirdre Moynihan wrote in an e-mail to the Times-Call about Butler’s work. “At the moment, he is working with a collaborative group including Moving to End Sexual Assault to reach out to athletic directors in schools to help educate the athletic departments on how to help prevent sexual violence.”

The organization will recognize Butler alongside former CU football kicker Katie Hnida, who wrote the book “Still Kicking: My Journey as the First Woman to Play Division I College Football.” Hnida was noted as the first female member of the CU football team but made national headlines after she left CU and publicly alleged she was sexually harassed and assaulted by teammates in 2000.

She now is now a kicker for the Colorado Cobras football team.

Butler said a lot of people contributed to the organization and success of the city’s White Ribbon campaign, also sponsored by the Longmont Ending Violence Initiative, and that community leaders sometimes end up with all the credit.

“It is an honor to receive this recognition, but as always, this is not a one-person operation. We just happen to be surrounded by great people,” Butler said. “This is going to be accepted on behalf of everybody.”

Longmont Police Officer Tori Lucero on Thursday won the Beth Haynes Award for her work in domestic violence. The award, named for a Boulder police officer shot and killed in 1994 responding to a domestic violence call, is awarded annually to someone in Boulder County law enforcement whose work in domestic violence is notable.

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

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