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Press Release

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City of Modesto Receives Three Helen Putnam Awards for Excellence

Modesto, CA, October 17, 2024 – The City of Modesto is proud to announce that it is the recipient of three prestigious Helen Putnam Awards for Excellence. Established in 1982 by the League of California Cities, the Helen Putnam Award for Excellence celebrates exceptional achievements by California's 482 cities. These awards recognize the outstanding contributions of city governments delivering innovative and effective programs enhancing the well-being of their residents and businesses of the community.

The first Helen Putnam Award for Excellence recognizes the City of Modesto's partnership with the Downtown Streets Team (DST). This collaboration through Community and Economic Development engages individuals experiencing homelessness and supports them with critical case management, housing navigation, and housing placement services. This has included an individualized strategy designed to meet individuals where they are and swiftly connect them to permanent housing through a tailored assistance package through barrier removal and robust community partnerships.

The City of Modesto received two Helen Putnam Awards for Excellence for remarkable initiatives through the Modesto Police Department (MPD). The first initiative highlighted are two programs aimed at fostering positive relationships between law enforcement and local students. The Student Engagement Officer and 10K With a Cop event have both been instrumental in promoting community engagement and healthy lifestyles. These initiatives connect students with Police Officers, helping to break down barriers and build trust while promoting physical activity. School Liaison Officer Sean Dodge has been a key figure in ensuring the success of these programs.

The second initiative recognized with a Helen Putnam Award for Excellence is MPD's Healthy Room Project. This project is designed to provide safe and supportive spaces for individuals

experiencing homelessness, the Healthy Room Project focuses on creating opportunities for stability and recovery within our community. Officer Sean Dodge also played a pivotal role in bringing this project to life, helping connect residents to much-needed resources and services.

These awards acknowledge the City of Modesto's achievement and dedication to enhancing the quality of life for the residents of Modesto while providing essential services, fostering community engagement, and building trust.

End