



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 29, 2015
CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

**RUSH TRANSCRIPT: MAYOR DE BLASIO DELIVERS REMARKS AT POLICE ACADEMY
GRADUATION CEREMONY**

Mayor Bill de Blasio: Good morning, graduates.

Congratulations, graduates.

Congratulations, officers now.

We are very, very proud of you and you are doing something great for New York City starting today.

I want to tell you, there's a lot of people here who are proud of you. There's a lot of members of your family who stood by you throughout, who watched you grow, who watched you achieve this moment in your life. It is a day you should be welling up with pride because you've done something great and we are so proud of you.

[Applause]

And I want to thank all the family members. I want to thank all the parents, the grandparents, the brothers, sisters, everyone who helped these good men and women along the way because no one gets there alone. It is a tall order to reach this point, to become a New York City Police Officer. It is something that requires toughness – mental toughness, physical toughness. It requires commitment. It requires strength. And the family members were there every step along the way.

Family members, give yourselves a round of applause because you helped make this happen.

[Applause]

1,123 new New York City Police Officers. That is a good day for New York City.

[Applause]

Now, you represent the best of us and you represent people who deeply, deeply care about this city. And in fact, not only are you embarking on a long career of serving the people of this city – a lot of you have served already. 95 of you have served in our armed forces. Let's give them a special thank you for all they've done for this nation.

[Applause]

Many of you are related to police officers and firefighters and other folks who serve this city well and you are following on a great tradition. You represent every community of this great city. You look like New York City and you make us proud because you bring the best of New York City to this work.

Now, there is one family – and I think, probably, everyone’s read about them already – there’s one family that we got to say a special thank you to, because talk about giving back to this city and serving this city – it does not get better than the Favale family. Three brothers –

[Applause]

Alec, and John, and Steven Favale all graduating together today – the first time anyone can remember this happening in the history of the police academy – it is an amazing day for New York.

[Applause]

Now, talk about running in the family and family tradition – I want to thank their father, and obviously their role model, Deputy Inspector Anthony Favale, a 30-year veteran of the NYPD.

[Applause]

Let’s thank mom as well, Stephanie Favale, for raising these three great children.

[Applause]

And, but wait there’s more – Transit Bureau Police Officer Joyce Dilemno is their aunt and Police Officer Francesco Favale is their cousin. What an amazing family.

[Applause]

So, to all the graduates here, you have now entered into an extraordinary status. You are now our first responders. You are now the people who will stand up for everyone else around you and protect them. You’ll be there in the moment of need for eight-and-a-half million people and we know that you’re ready. We know that you chose this. You believe in this. You have the courage. You have the strength. You have the compassion. You have the understanding to do this extraordinary work. And you have the character to be there for the most wonderful city in the world but also one of the most complicated places in the world. It takes a special character, a special understanding to serve this city.

So we appreciate you deeply – all the people in this city, all of us up here appreciate deeply what you do and we want you to know, we will stand by you in many, many ways. And that means investing in you. That means making sure you have the very best training – this is something Commissioner Bratton is particularly passionate about – the best and the latest training to regularly make you even better at what you do.

The best technology, so you have cutting-edge information and capacity to do your job every single day.

Support in all the forms that it takes to help you keep this city safe – to help you take an extraordinary track record that the NYPD has compiled over more than 20 years and keep building on it.

And we have to keep you safe to keep our neighborhoods safe. That means the latest bulletproof vests. That means technology that can help you know information immediately so that you’ll be safe and you can protect those around you. That’s what we are committed to. It does cost money, but it’s worth the investment, to say the least.

And I want to take this opportunity to thank my partners in this endeavor, who helped authorize the resources for those vests, for ShotSpotter, and for the – all the new technologies – the tablets, the iPhones – all of the

training, all of the things that are supporting you and helping you to be the best. I want to thank Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito and the New York City Council for supporting these crucial investments in the NYPD.

[Applause]

1,300 more officers were authorized in the budget that the City Council voted on in June – 1,300 more NYPD officers and you represent the beginning of that new wave.

In addition to the efforts we're making with civilianization, by this time next year, the increase in real patrol strength on the streets of this city will be more than 2,000 officers – and that has not happened in more than a decade in this city and it's going to make a big difference for all of us.

[Applause]

Now, I've got to take a moment to talk about your leadership, because with no fear of contradiction I can tell you you have the finest police leadership anywhere, literally anywhere. It does not get better than Commissioner Bill Bratton. You are serving under the very best.

[Applause]

And I've heard Commissioner Bratton at different ceremonies say that out here, in this group of officers today, will be the future chiefs of this department, will be the future commissioner of this department, potentially, that one of you may rise to that level. Well, if you want a role model, if you want someone to start modeling yourself on just look to Bill Bratton, look to our Chief of Department, Jimmy O'Neill, look to the other senior leaders up here who continue to drive down crime, who show that it can get better each and every year. I want to thank all of them – all the leadership here.

I want to say a special thank you – you were sworn in by Deputy Commissioner of Personnel Michael Julian, who is about to go on to other endeavors. I want to say, Michael, thank you for a job well done – for helping to make New York City even better. Thank you very much.

[Applause]

We have great partners in all we do, and it is a particular honor for all of us today to be joined by a man who protects this nation every single day. And this is one of the toughest jobs in America, and he takes it on every day with extraordinary integrity, our Secretary for Homeland Security Jeh Johnson, thank you for all you do for New York City and this country.

[Applause]

And I want to thank the elected officials – in addition to Speaker Mark-Viverito, Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, and the DAs, who are our key partners in keeping New York City safe – DA Cy Vance of Manhattan, DA Ken Thompson of Brooklyn, DA Richard Brown of Queens, thank you for your leadership. And thank you to the union leaders here today, to Pat Lynch and Roy Richter, thank you very much as well.

[Applause]

Now, I'll be brief, but I want to say something else I think is important. You are joining a team. You're not joining just any team. You're joining an elite team, and you're joining a winning team. You're joining a team that has over not just a few years, over more than two decades shown this country, and in fact the world, that something different could happen. You took a city that was believed to be stuck in place when it came to crime,

and over more than two decades the men and women of the NYPD relentlessly went at the crime problem and changed the very face of our city.

I often say we're not going back to the bad old days. And the reason we're not going back to the bad old days is all of you, because you proved that we could go farther than anyone imagined. So, you're joining a team that right now is doing better than ever.

Let me give you a few facts to make it clear. Shootings are down more than 2.5 percent from last year. Last year was one of our lowest years ever for shootings. You've continued to drive it down. The men and women of this department that you're joining have continued to drive it down. Homicides at near record lows, overall crime gone down – by then end of the year – we have a few more days to go – there will be a two-percent drop compared to last year. Last year was a record year. The NYPD keeps setting records. The NYPD keeps going farther.

We face profound challenges, of course. And one is we know – we know we are the number one terror target in this country. What has the NYPD done in response? For 14 years, fended off every threat, undermined every plot.

And now, again, due to the support of the City Council, in the last budget we authorized a 500-person-plus Critical Response Command. It will be the most advanced anti-terror force of any police department in this country. That is the winning team you are joining, and it's something to be proud of.

And you're proving at the same time – this new class will be in the vanguard of proving that we can be a safer city and a fairer city simultaneously.

We are bringing police and community together under the leadership of Commissioner Bratton and Chief O'Neill. We are developing a strategy of neighborhood-policing that is the most ambitious, the most innovative ever attempted in this city before, and it's already bearing fruit. You will be the next wave.

You will be the generation that bonds police and community together as never before. And the result will be a level of safety we've never seen before. You have a historic mission, and you are up to that mission. So, I want to thank you for making this decision. I want to commend you for having gone through the rigorous training and reached this day. I want to tell you, you are joining a lot of absolutely extraordinary men and women who make up this agency – and you will build on that legacy. And we will support you every step of the way as you make this city even greater.

So, I conclude by saying – and it's a great honor that comes with this role – I get to say, on behalf of eight-and-a-half million people, thank you.

Thank you for joining the NYPD, and God bless you all.

[Applause]

###