



Join us as we
Illuminate
Stories of Healing and Hope

"For every one negative story you hear, there are thousands of positive stories happening every day that go unnoticed."

*~Greg Alia, Forest Acres Police Department
End of Watch September 30, 2015*

Every day, there are incredible stories of hope, compassion, and partnership where police and community are working together to help one another and make communities across our country safer and stronger. Help us illuminate these positive stories by nominating police and community heroes for Serve & Connect's annual awards.

This year, we will celebrate **TWO** awards, the **Greg Alia Award** and the **Change Maker Award**, at our *Illuminight Gala* scheduled for March 3, 2023, in Columbia, SC.

Nomination Information: Nominations are open through February 10, 2023. Nominations may be submitted via email to: kassy@serveandconnect.org or via mail to 1721 Saunders Street Columbia, SC 29201. Nominations are open to the public. Packets must include: 1) contact information for both the nominee as well as the individual submitting the nomination; 2) a letter detailing why this candidate is deserving of this award; and 3) a letter of support from the nominee's department (for Gregory Alia award). Supporting documentation (e.g., news articles, pictures, letters of community support) are also welcomed and encouraged.

Applications will be reviewed by a committee of law enforcement and community leaders. A decision will be determined no later than February 17, 2023. Finalists and departments will be notified upon decision and will be invited to *Illuminight Gala* scheduled for March 3, 2023. Finalists will be recognized via digital communications and media leading up to and following the event.

For more inquiries about award nominations or to learn more about Serve & Connect, please contact: Kassy Alia Ray at kassy@serveandconnect.org or (301) 908-2635.



About the Officer Gregory Alia Award: Officer Alia was a hero for how he died; but more importantly, for how he lived. Since his death, countless stories have emerged about the ways in which Officer Alia touched lives everyday through his kind, compassionate, and thoughtful approach to policing. He treated each person he encountered with dignity and respect, and he went above and beyond to ensure that all people were cared for in large and small ways.

It is in this spirit that we seek to elevate the power of little moments – those everyday moments that so often go untold – in which police are making our communities safer, healthier and happier places for all through their acts of compassionate service.

The Officer Gregory Alia Award recognizes an outstanding officer who demonstrates a commitment to serve his/her community with respect and compassion; one who goes above the call of duty to ensure that members of the community are protected, cared for, and feel valued; one who is committed to building trust and partnerships within the community they serve; and who works together with partners to make their community safer and stronger. This prestigious award is open to any law enforcement officer and is intended for officers who, like Officer Alia, are serving in a non-command position.

About the Change Maker Award: In every community, there are outstanding leaders who have dedicated tremendous time, love, and compassion to the betterment of their neighborhood. These leaders are instrumental in making communities safer and happier places for all. They work tirelessly to understand what their community needs and build bridges to bring resources and support to lift others up.

Too often, the work of these Change Makers goes unnoticed. That is why our Change Maker award recognizes the unsung heroes who are going above and beyond to serve their neighbors in communities throughout South Carolina.

The Change Maker award will recognize a community leader who demonstrates a commitment to serving his/her community with respect and compassion; one who goes above and beyond to understand the needs of others; one who works diligently to build bridges with diverse groups, including law enforcement, to connect resources; and one who creates opportunities for understanding, trust, and building relationships. This award is open to any community leader. The community leader may be affiliated with an organization or may serve independently but is intended for leaders who often go unrecognized.



About Serve & Connect: Serve & Connect is a nonprofit organization with the mission of fostering positive change through sustainable police and community partnerships. We envision a future where police and citizens are working together as one community to address root causes of crime and promote safety so everyone can thrive. We were founded in honor of the life and service of Officer Greg Alia.

About Illuminight Gala: This year's annual *Illuminight Gala* will be hosted on March 3, 2023, from 6:30 - 10:30 PM at Central Energy in Columbia, SC. The event will feature Chicago Police Superintendent David Brown as our guest speaker. The presentation of the Greg Alia and Change Maker awards is a key feature of the event. Heavy hors d'oeuvres and an open bar will be provided for this optional black tie optional with neon as this year's theme.