

Community Announcement

Cortland Police Officer Robert Harris Recognized as 2026 Officer of the Year

Dear Cortland Residents,

I am proud to share some exceptional news with our community.

Officer Robert Harris of the Cortland Police Department has been named the 2026 Officer of the Year by the Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police. This statewide recognition was awarded for his outstanding investigative work in a complex child exploitation case that ultimately resulted in multiple arrests across several states.

What makes this recognition especially meaningful is how the case began.

The investigation originated from a concern brought forward by a resident of the Town of Cortland. That initial report set in motion a detailed investigation led by Officer Harris. Through persistence, careful investigative work, and coordination with partner agencies, the case expanded beyond our community and ultimately helped identify and apprehend multiple offenders operating across state lines.

This case demonstrates something important: community safety is strongest when residents and law enforcement work together. A single report from a concerned citizen, followed by the dedication of a skilled investigator, helped protect vulnerable victims and disrupt a criminal network far beyond our town.

Investigations involving crimes against children are among the most difficult that law enforcement officers face. Officer Harris approached this work with professionalism, determination, and an unwavering commitment to protecting those who cannot protect themselves.

On behalf of the Cortland Police Department and the Town of Cortland, please join me in congratulating Officer Robert Harris on this well-deserved honor. His work reflects the very best of our profession and the values we strive to uphold in service to this community.

Thank you to the residents of Cortland for continuing to be active partners in keeping our town safe.

Respectfully,

Chief Lin Dargis

Chief of Police

Cortland Police Department