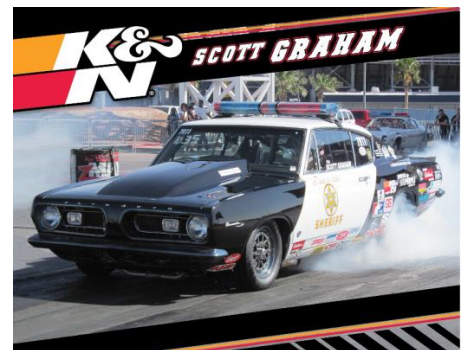


# LASD Motorsports Puts Kids On the Right Track

Race for pinks? No way! Deputy personnel from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) are revving-up their engines to teach young motorheads about the dangers of illegal street racing, as well as drugs and gangs. As a racing team comprised of deputy sheriffs, LASD Motorsports is laying down a patch of support for kids to keep them at the track instead of on the streets.

Begun by Scott Graham in 1996 under the Sherman Block administration, LASD Motorsports is endorsed by the LASD, but not run by it. It is a non-profit organization, funded privately and by sponsors; no tax dollars are spent on the program. All vehicles are privately owned and all deputy personnel participate in the program in their off-time.

Over the last 18 years, Scott Graham has remained deeply involved with the LASD Motorsports program, and has seen the team expand and flourish. He began as a deputy and has since promoted to the rank of sergeant, currently assigned to the Internal Affairs Bureau.



Since LASD Motorsports' inception as a drag racing program, it has developed into several types of racing: Sprint car, off-road, motorcycle, and supertruck categories.

The LASD Motorsports program was organized by deputies who are passionate about racing and interacting with their community. Even though team members are off-duty at racing events, they know they are always considered Department representatives. They project a professional demeanor at all times in an effort to "Establish a positive and trustworthy relationship between the public and law enforcement," which is part of their Mission Statement.

Team members embrace interaction with other drivers, kids and the general public at events, displaying a human side the public doesn't usually get to see. They found that professional racing lends them credibility, showing others they are regular people who are just as serious about their hobbies as they are about their job. They believe this is where they have the opportunity to strengthen public trust, guide and mentor youth to make healthy decisions, and promote safety programs.

During events, LASD Motorsports team members strive toward encouraging youth to develop their interest in racing on the track, not on the street. They also encourage participation in other safe interests such as the LASD Explorer Academy, which offers a curriculum geared toward building self-esteem, developing confidence and character; and the Sheriff's Youth Foundation, which offers after school and summer programs to at-risk youth; as well as distribute vital information found in Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and Crimestoppers literature.

Furthering their desire to foster a positive interest in motorsports, LASD Motorsports supports the Norwalk Regional Occupational Program (ROP) automotive shop, whose students assist Norwalk Station Deputy Jon Kerber in the maintenance and repair of the team's lightening sprint car and super truck. The reward returned to them this year when they learned one of the recent graduates received a scholarship to Cerritos College for Autobody Repair.

Sergeant Robert Furman, assigned to Century Sheriff's Station, also enjoys racing as an LASD Motorsports team member and interacting with the public. He enjoys the camaraderie of sharing an interest in fast cars with other drivers and the spreading the LASD Motorsports philosophy. He once humorously poked other racers by saying, "This is our way of giving back to the community. Where else can you run from the Sheriff, run after the Sheriff or run into the Sheriff without going to jail?"

The team members are Sergeant Scott Graham, Sergeant Robert Furman, Deputy John Bluntach, assigned to Men's Central Jail; Detective Dave Busk, assigned to Narcotics Bureau; Deputy Jonathan Kerber, assigned to Norwalk Sheriff's Station; Sergeant Hugo Mosquera, assigned to the Custody Force Response Team; Detective Erik Reynolds, assigned to Narcotics Bureau; Deputy Marcelo Sepulveda, assigned to Temple Sheriff's Station; and retired deputies Don Bluntach and Joe LoMonaco.



Recently, LASD Motorsports was challenged to race by the Edmonton Police Service Blue Line Racing organization. Sergeant Scott Graham competed against them at the International Hot Rod Association Rocky Mountain Nationals in Edmonton, Canada, and, although the Canadian police were great competitors, the LASD Motorsports 1967 'Cuda won seven out seven

heads-up races. The LASD Motorsports guys enjoy racing against other first responder teams and look forward to future opportunities.

For information about the Sheriff's Racing Team, visit [lasdmotorsports.com](http://lasdmotorsports.com), where you can see more photos and locate links to follow them on Twitter and like them on Facebook.

To read other publication about LASD Motorsports click the links below:

- Los Angeles Sheriff's Deputies (LASD) Motorsports: <http://bit.ly/1mS08z2>
- Cops Work The Fast Lane: <http://bit.ly/1mS1s50>

To learn about the numerous youth programs offered by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Community/Law Enforcement Partnership Program, visit [clepp.lasd.org](http://clepp.lasd.org)

To learn about the Sheriff's Youth Foundation, visit [sheriffsyouthfoundation.org](http://sheriffsyouthfoundation.org)