



AWARD ANNOUNCEMENT AND REQUEST FOR NOMINATIONS

WSATI Southern Chapter is proudly accepting nominations for our 2025 awards which will be presented at the Annual Training Conference (October 12, 2025, to October 15, 2025) at the Bally's Lake Tahoe Resort in Lake Tahoe, NV. Information on the Training Seminar can be found here:

<https://wsati.org/event/western-states-auto-theft-investigators-central-california-chapter/>

These awards are named after WSATI pioneering members whose value and impact resonate to this day. Nominations are open to any WSATI chapter member or participant (in the specified field) and are limited to actions or investigations that took place during the 2024-2025 calendar years.

Each nomination should include a brief synopsis of the nominated individual, team, or investigation and emailed to dennisfrias@locatortechnologies.com, osanchez@nicb.org, bglick@nicb.org, and rknapp@knapp-spurlock.com by September 22, 2025.

Billy Osborn Award for Investigative Support

(Contributions & dedication to vehicle theft investigations)

Billy Osborn was a long-time friend of law enforcement while he was the manager of the State Farm Auto Theft Unit. Billy was also a long-time member of the Southern Chapter of WSATI. Billy was one of those people who you could always count on when you needed something, whether it was something planned months in advance or something that came up that needed an immediate response. Quite literally, Billy would find a vehicle for a bait car at a moment's notice, or somehow locate \$5,000 buy money late on a Friday afternoon...and he would deliver them to you with a smile on his face. After Billy's untimely death, the WSATI Southern Chapter memorialized him by establishing an annual award to recognize an individual within the Southern Chapter who showed the contribution and dedication to vehicle theft investigation and the WSATI Southern Chapter that was so apparent by Billy.

Lee S. Cole Award for Officer of the Year

This award is presented to a member of the law enforcement community who has demonstrated exceptional performance in the area of auto theft prevention and investigation. The award is restricted to active law enforcement personnel. Lee S. Cole was a private investigator and consultant specializing in Vehicle Fires, theft & fraud cases. In 1955 he was appointed a Special Agent with the National Automobile Theft Bureau. In 1964, he was promoted to Chief Special Agent and five years later was named Assistant Division Manager. In 1976 he started his own firm, Lee S. Cole + Associates, Inc. which specializes in vehicle fire investigation, mechanical failures, locking systems and theft investigation. Mr. Cole has taught vehicle fire and vehicle theft investigative techniques at numerous schools and universities throughout the United States, Canada and Europe along with seminars for corporations and other interested individuals.



Gary Labb Award for Task Force of the Year

Presented to a task force for outstanding achievements in auto theft investigations and recoveries, who have demonstrated comprehensive investigative skills and resources that brought their respective investigations to successful conclusions. While this award is not based on dollar value, it should be included with your submission. This award is named after Gary Labb, an officer with the Santa Ana PD, a member of the Orange County Auto Theft Taskforce, and a long-time member of WSATI's Southern Chapter.

Please see the attached nomination form below.



Nomination Form

Date _____

Name (Individual or Group) Being Nominated

Agency _____

Address _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Submitted by: _____ Phone _____

Agency _____ Title / Rank _____

E-mail _____

Please include a *detailed* description of the activities performed which qualify the nominee(s) for this award. Include specifics of the case(s) that demonstrate why your nominee is deserving of this award – statistics, arrests, mitigating financial losses for clients / victims, etc.

Nominations and questions can be directed to:

Denis Frias @ dennisfrias@locatortechnologies.com

Octavio Sanchez @ osanchez@nicb.org

Brian Glick @ bglick@nicb.org

Richard Knapp @ rknapp@knapp-spurlock.com

Nominations are due by September 22, 2025.