

Yosemite High graduate honored for volunteer efforts

By [Irene Thirlwall](#)

(Updated Friday, October 7, 2005, 9:16 AM)

Going above and beyond the call of duty. Helping others in their time of need. Spending time with her children. A volunteer for her community. These are just some of the phrases people say when they hear the name Katrina Poitras.

A graduate of Yosemite High School class of 1981, Poitras has been honored with a "Citizen of the Year" award at the Fresno/Madera Counties Police Chief's Association 16th annual citizen's awards.



Katrina Poitras accepts her Citizen of the Year award.
Courtesy of Sandy Hale

Poitras is a marketing coordinator for Manco Abbott, Inc. She has worked for the company for nine years and in doing so has helped the communities of Fresno and Madera.

"It was a very humbling experience," Poitras said. "It's not about heroics, it's just about doing what you need to do and trying to find a better way to do it."

Poitras began as the on-site resident relations coordinator in south east Fresno. During her tenure, she has acted as Manco Abbott's police liaison to help build relations and coordinate programs that benefit the residential apartment communities.

"Her enthusiastic efforts have helped to raise the level of awareness between the rental industry and law enforcement," read a statement from the Fresno Police Department.

Poitras said she has specific goals to achieve in her work as a liaison.

"My goal in what I am doing is to make apartment communities and police departments work together as a team," she said. "For the residents to feel a sense of community. It's about getting the residents involved as well about getting a mutual trust, to where it's an awareness on everyone's part."

Poitras still makes time to visit family in the Mountain Area and is involved with Madera County Sheriff's Department Search and Rescue.

"My parents, Dick and Joddie Poitras, still live in Oakhurst," she said.

She also remembered a couple of instructors she had as a student at YHS.

Ellen Peterson, a history teacher at the high school, still recalls the former student.

"I remember her," Peterson said, recalling that she had instructed her brother as well. "She had a sense of maturity, she was an excellent student. Because I have 16 year olds, it is a time of transition, some have already transitioned into adult responsibilities and adult behavior. Katrina was very much an adult, she had already transitioned."

Peterson was in awe that she had remembered Poitras saying it had been awhile since she had been a student.

"Anyone who is remembered after 24 years was an outstanding student," Peterson said. "It is a testimony to Katrina's excellence, the minute you said her name, I thought, absolutely. I can picture her so clearly."

"I am excited and happy she won the award."

Throughout the nine years, Poitras has partnered with every one of the Fresno Police Department's POP (Problem-Oriented Policing) Teams as well as working with many other crime prevention organizations throughout the San Joaquin Valley. She is a certified instructor from the El Cajun Police Department in the Crime Free Multi-Housing Program which was developed to help the housing industry and police departments work together to support each other in the fight on crime. She has certified managers and rental properties throughout the valley and plans to expand the program next year to Sacramento, Merced, Manteca, Modesto and Lemoore.

Poitras has facilitated large events for "National Night Out" in Bakersfield, Corcoran and Fresno and is working with the Southeast POP team on their newest project, the "Fresno Landlords and Tenant Services" program (F.L.A.T.S.). This program develops strategies to address crime problems at rental properties and teaches problem solving to landlords and tenants.

At the awards ceremony last month, Poitras said each county's sheriff and city police gave awards to citizens. Her award was issued from the Fresno Police Department.

"I felt quite honored with the company that was honored," she said.

When Poitras was asked what she did to go above and beyond, she paused and said, "I never sleep, if they need anything I try to be there."

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