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Homeland Security

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OHIO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

John R. Kasich, Governor

John Born, Director

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OHIO HOMELAND SECURITY PRESENTED EXPLOSIVE DETECTION CANINE TO THE YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

COLUMBUS – The Youngstown State University and the surrounding area are safer today with the introduction of Gino, the university's new explosive detection canine. The canine was provided by federal grant funding through Ohio Homeland Security (OHS), a division of the Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS).

"In an effort to keep Ohio and its citizens safe, I am pleased that Ohio Homeland Security is able to offer this valuable resource to Youngstown State and the Mahoning Valley," said ODPS Director John Born. "I am confident that the efforts of Patrolman Mehley and Gino will help to contribute to a safer Ohio."

After 10 weeks of training, Gino, a male Belgian malinois, is ready to patrol YSU along-side his handler, Patrolman Mark Mehley. A graduate of YSU, Patrolman Mehley spent the past five weeks training with Gino in Columbus. Although their primary duty is on the YSU campus, Patrolman Mehley and Gino can be called upon by nearby local law enforcement for assistance.

"I want to thank Ohio Homeland Security and the Department of Public Safety for their leadership in providing this new resource to YSU and the greater Youngstown community," said YSU Police Chief John Beshara. "This is yet another example of how, by working together on the local, state and federal levels, we can make campus, the city and the region a safer place to live and work."

In addition to YSU, Bowling Green State University and Ohio State University were selected to receive canines based on their geography and whether other explosive detection canines are in the area. OHS created the pilot program this year to aid in response to bomb threats at Ohio universities and their surrounding communities.

Existing federal grants through OHS cover the expense of the purchase, training, veterinarian bills and other equipment necessary for the program's success. The cost for each canine is \$12,767.

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