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## **WYOMING DCI TASK FORCE RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD**

CHEYENNE, Wyo. – Attorney General Pat Crank today announced that the Wyoming Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force was the recipient of The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) and ChoicePoint® Excellence in Criminal Investigations Award. The award was presented to the Task Force at the IACP Annual Conference in Los Angeles this week.

The Wyoming Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) task force, a unit of the Wyoming Division of Criminal Investigation, created and launched “Operation Peerless,” an international undercover operation to combat the exchange of child pornography over the Internet, in the fall of 2003. The Wyoming ICAC uncovered widespread computer programs that were sharing graphic images of child victimization.

“Through Operation Peerless, the Wyoming Internet Crimes Against Children task force was able to leverage the resources of law enforcement around the world to identify and remove computers that were distributing these images,” said Attorney General Patrick Crank. “Of the more than 3,600 computers identified, nearly 2,000 were discovered by Wyoming DCI agents, each representing at least one computer that was actively distributing child pornography images. Hundreds of search warrants have been issued against these computers and more warrants are in process as law enforcement now has a new tool to combat the targeting of our children for sexual exploitation.”

“The ICAC team demonstrates how law enforcement uses technology to help protect our nation’s most vulnerable population, our children,” said IACP President, Joe Polisar, chief of the Garden Grove, California, Police Department. “The ICAC program is a prime example of how society benefits from new technologies and innovation in criminal investigations.”

The International Association of Chiefs of Police is the world’s oldest and largest non-profit membership organization of police executives, with over 19,000 members in over 89 countries. The inaugural recipient of the IACP/ChoicePoint® Excellence in Criminal Investigations Award was the Montgomery County, Maryland, Sniper Task Force for its investigation into a series of shootings across the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area in October 2002.

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