

NEWS RELEASE | FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE | June 30, 2026

TROOPER DARBY KESSNER NAMED 2025 TROOPER OF THE YEAR

NARRATIVE: North Dakota State Patrol Trooper Darby Kessner was recently named the 2025 Trooper of the Year by the North Dakota Motor Carriers Association (NDMCA). Kessner serves the state patrol as a MCSAP (Motor Carrier Safety Assistance Program) Trooper in Motor Carrier Operations and is stationed in Williston.

Trooper Kessner graduated from Minot State University with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and a minor in management. Prior to joining the agency, Kessner served as a sheriff's deputy in Roosevelt County in Montana and in Ward County, North Dakota. He attended the NDHP Academy and graduated in 2018 and was initially stationed as a Traffic Enforcement Trooper in Williston. Kessner transferred to Motor Carrier Operations as a Size and Weight Trooper in January 2025 and then transferred to MCSAP in October 2025 where he continues to serve.

Being stationed in the oilfield, one of Trooper Kessner's primary duties is to patrol North Dakota roadways to ensure compliance with specific size and weight limits. His work area is heavily traveled not only by oilfield equipment, but agricultural, commercial, and industrial vehicles as well. Trooper Kessner was recognized for his extensive experience with weight enforcement and in 2025, he weighed 297 vehicles, checked 76 permits, and assessed 230 overloads. Kessner also is a crash technician on the agency's Crash Reconstruction Team and completed 19 on-scene reconstruction activities in 2025.

NDMCA's Trooper of the Year award reflects the trucking industry's appreciation for enhancing safety for those who depend on the highway for their livelihood. In a letter nominating him for the award, it was noted Trooper Kessner "truly cares about serving our citizens and those traveling through with numerous contacts in non-enforcement situations" and "is the standard bearer for the North Dakota Highway Patrol's weight enforcement efforts."

Other nominees for the 2025 award were **Trooper William Brown**, Southwest Region; **Trooper Nevon Heisler**, Northeast Region; **Trooper Darin Malafa**, Southeast Region; and **Trooper Thomas Steenstrup**, Southeast Region.

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