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## Dartmouth Dental and Panagakos Development help fund protective vest for Dartmouth police K-9

**Herald News Staff**

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DARTMOUTH — The police department's newest K-9 dog is equipped with a bullet- and stab-protective vest thanks to two local businesses.

Reaper, a 2-year-old Belgian Shepherd, received the body armor through the financial support of Dartmouth Dental — which has locations in Dartmouth and New Bedford — and Panagakos Development in New Bedford.

The vest cost \$1,006.

Both businesses have provided funding for numerous ballistic vests during the past several years, working with Vested Interest in K-9s Inc. of Taunton, a nonprofit fundraising organization, said police spokesman Detective Robert Levinson.

Vested Interest's mission is to provide bullet- and stab-protective vests for law enforcement K-9s throughout the commonwealth. Each vest costs between \$735 and \$1006. The group maintains a waiting list.

President Sandy Marcal of Vested Interest, K-9 Officer Jared White and his partner, Reaper, attended a vesting ceremony hosted by Dartmouth Dental of Dartmouth earlier this month.

"It's a great pleasure working with the folks from Dartmouth Dental and Panagakos Development to secure protective vests for Massachusetts K-9s," Marcal said. "They have been amazing supporters of the program, and we are grateful."

Reaper is a 2010 graduate of the Boston Police K-9 Academy and has been in service since September. White and Reaper underwent extensive training at the academy and continue to train regularly. Reaper is trained as a dual-purpose dog specializing in narcotic detection and patrol operations.

"K-9 Reaper is trained to recognize many types of narcotic odors and indicate to his handler upon finding them," Levinson said. "He is also trained to search for missing persons, fleeing suspects or those in hiding. He is trained in building and open-area searches, suspect apprehension and handler protection."

Levinson said, "Officer White and K-9 Reaper look forward to providing a valuable and much-needed resource to the citizens of Dartmouth and any other agency who may request their services."

Chief Timothy Lee, White and Reaper "would like to thank Dartmouth Dental and the Panagakos Development for their generous donations," Levinson said.

For more information about Vested Interest in K-9s, visit: [www.vikos.org](http://www.vikos.org) or call 508-824-6978. Tax deductible donations are accepted online or at P.O. Box 9, East Taunton, MA 02718.

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