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CITY OF KEARNEY **PRESS RELEASE** ***For Immediate Release***

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Kearney Police Department Advances Training Program with VirTra Simulator

Thanks to a generous, local donation, the Kearney Police Department recently purchased and installed a *VirTra* judgmental use of force training simulator at the Law Enforcement Center. The system is designed to prepare officers for real-life incidents in a safe training environment. The *VirTra* V-180 solution includes three large screens for a 180-degree immersive training environment. Outcomes are based on the actions taken by the police officer in real-time with multiple responses from on-screen persons. The immersive environment recreates psychological stressors like an elevated heart rate and high levels of adrenaline, similar to what officers may experience during real-world incidents. Officers can use de-escalation techniques, communication skills, less lethal options, and tactics often challenging to duplicate in a training environment.

This technology will allow KPD to make training more convenient for all 57 officers and keep our community and officers safer. The *VirTra* System will allow the department to enhance its current annual training opportunities and provide realistic training to our entire department in a safe environment where they can pause the scenario and learn from their trainer.

“As an innovative, professional, forward thinking organization, adding the *VirTra* System makes sense for KPD. It allows for realistic training, with real-world scenarios, placing officers in an immersive training environment. Training simulators serve multiple purposes, teaching a variety of critical skills, such as: de-escalation, empathy, counteracting implicit bias and judgmental use of force, incorporating communication, less lethal options, mental health/crisis intervention, decision making and so much more. The ultimate goal is achieving a safe outcome for all involved in high-stress situations.” – Chief Bryan D. Waugh

Several other law enforcement agencies in Nebraska use *VirTra* to improve judgment, critical thinking, communication skills, and decision making during highly stressful encounters. By using the *VirTra* system, training officers will have more dynamic high impact training results. Members of the Buffalo County Sheriff’s Office will also have access to the *VirTra* system for training.

Check out our web site at www.cityofkearney.org.

We are sending this News Release as a service to the news media and citizens of Kearney.

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