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SANTA FE, N.M. – On July 16 at approximately 7:20 p.m., four people died in a Bernalillo County Sheriff's Office helicopter crash near Las Vegas, N.M., while returning from a wildfire. Deputy Michael Levison and Undersheriff Larry Koren were among them.

Levison, who has served in the New Mexico Air National Guard since 2011, was much loved by his family and community and will be missed terribly. Koren's son is currently serving in the New Mexico Army National Guard. Their losses will be felt by all members of the NMNG. We cannot begin to imagine the depth of grief that the families of all affected are experiencing right now.

In addition to his duties as Deputy for BCSO, Levison has served his community as a structural specialist in the 210th Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineer (RED HORSE) since 2011. He has three siblings who are also currently serving in the NMNG.

Levison's community service has extended to the Dominican Republic in support of the humanitarian mission Beyond the Horizons where he helped build classrooms and medical clinics in 2014.

Levison also served his nation during deployment to Jordan in support of Operation Inherent Resolve in 2015. He has participated in Deployments for Training (DFT) to Israel and Virginia Beach, Va.

"If I described him in three words, they would be reliable, dependable and trustworthy," said Lt. Col. Dennis Gallegos, commander of the 210th RED HORSE. "He was exactly the person you think of when you think of a good Airman."

"He was a good person," Gallegos said, "always the first to volunteer. He did things the right way and wanted to help others, always an authentic, good and helpful person."

"This tragic news has rocked the Law Enforcement, Fire Department and National Guard Community," said Brig. Gen. Miguel Aguilar, the Adjutant General of New Mexico. "Our thoughts and prayers are with the families, friends and co-workers of these faithful servants. In the coming days, we will rally around you and support you in your time of need. May God bless all impacted by the loss of these great men."



