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Florida

POLICE CHIEF

MID-WINTER 2024

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION FOR THE FLORIDA POLICE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION





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March 2024

FPCA CONVENES ANNUAL MID-WINTER TRAINING CONFERENCE AND EXPOSITION



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The Florida Police Chief’s Association (FPCA) convened its Annual Mid-Winter Training Conference and Exposition January 6th - 9th, 2024, at the Rosen Plaza Hotel in Orlando, Florida.

This year, the conference welcomed over 200 FPCA members, featuring an array of esteemed speakers, engaging trainings, and 135 vendors enthusiastic to partner with law enforcement. The conference provides members with an exceptional opportunity to network with fellow law enforcement personnel and businesses. The exposition gives attendees an opportunity to see the most recent technology and advancements in products and services tailored to the law enforcement profession.

This year’s speakers included Dr. Joseph Saviak, Retired Police Chief and Secret Service Agent Tim McCarthy, Director Christopher Kimball, Lisa Hurst, Chief Eric Smith, and Doug and Karen Monda. Training sessions covered a variety of topics, spanning from the assassination attempt on former US President Ronald Reagan and how critical incidents impact your role as a police chief to building mental health and wellness at your department.

FPCA also held its annual new member orientation meeting during the conference, where the association welcomed a record 72 new members. The increase in recruitment can be attributed to the association’s drive to grow membership among police chiefs’ command staff. FPCA hopes to maintain the momentum and see an increase in new members over the coming years.

The conference continued a new tradition established last year for female chiefs. This reception, sponsored by AXON, was hosted Sunday evening and provided a networking opportunity for the growing increase in women in upper law enforcement positions.

While this conference offered plenty learning and technical opportunities, it was not short of fun. Attendees and guests were invited to attend a college game night sponsored by AXON, PMAM Corporation, and Verra Mobility. This allowed attendees to let loose for a night and socialize with other members.

If you missed this year’s Mid-Winter Conference and Exposition, the 2025 Mid-Winter Conference will be held January 3rd - 8th, 2025 at the Rosen Plaza Hotel in Orlando, Florida.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Members,

As many of you know, in the past two years we began to produce an FPCA magazine again. The FPCA magazine had been a staple product for many years, but had become difficult to produce with limited staffing. We heard from many of you that you wanted to be informed about the training provided at our conferences, and original news and information about the law enforcement profession.

To that end, in this edition you will see several summaries of the training sessions or committee meetings held during our Mid-Winter Conference in January. We developed these summaries with the help of an FPCA partnership with the Florida Institute of Technology (FIT) and a team of student interns. Not only will this partnership add value to our events and publications, it will also give exposure and experience to those who desire to become part of the law enforcement or criminal justice workforce. A special shout out to FIT Assistant Professor Marshall Jones for helping bring this project to fruition with Cookie!

I also want to thank all of you for working to increase FPCA's membership, as we have seen remarkable growth among command staff. In turn, we had record attendance at our Mid-Winter Conference, from members to exhibitors to sponsors. I hope those of you who were able to attend found the presentations and training helpful in your professional development and approach to "on the job" moments in the future. I know I was truly inspired by the operational, policy, and leadership lessons provided by Chief Eric Smith during his training on the handling of a double officer-involved shooting.

To conclude our training at the Mid-Winter Conference, we hosted a mental wellness panel. When I began my term as President of the FPCA, I promised that a matter of paramount importance would be the well-being of our officers. As chiefs and command staff, it's our duty to ensure that those who have chosen our noble and honest profession are well-prepared emotionally and mentally, because healthy officers result in better policing, and the FPCA will continue to support training and other initiatives to provide the most timely and effective information we can on the topic of holistic wellness for our departments.

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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To that end, I am delighted to announce that the Florida Police Chiefs Education and Research Foundation has pledged to support financial assistance to the ongoing deliveries of the Post Critical Incident Seminar spearheaded by the FPCA, FSA, and FDLE. We are honored to support this much-needed peer support program, and I wanted to say a special thanks to our Foundation Board of Trustees for their commitment to raising funds in an effort to assist these types of programs.

Finally, at the time of this publication, the Florida Legislature completed the 2024 Regular Legislative Session. This year, the FPCA asked for support for our New Chiefs training, and we are happy to report our request was included as part of the final budget now awaiting the Governor's signature. Many thanks to all those who helped us carry the water on this issue, including our Lobbyist Tim Stanfield and our legislative champions, Senator Baxley, Senator Broxson, Representative Synder, and Representative Leek.

We look forward to seeing you all at our Summer Conference. Register now while spots are still available. We have an exciting agenda planned and details can be found [here](#).

Be safe, be well –



Charles "Chuck" Broadway. FPCA President
Clermont Chief of Police



President Broadway and Chairman Leek





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ACCOUNTABILITY AND SOCIETAL CHANGE COMMITTEE



L-R (Front): Paula Hoisington, Dr. Randy Nelson, Chief Jennifer Michaux

The FPCA Mid-Winter Conference kicked off Sunday morning with the first ever in-person meeting of the Committee on Accountability & Societal Change. Formed as a select committee in June, 2020, in the wake of the George Floyd murder, the group brings together law enforcement leaders, community members, and subject matter experts from across Florida to facilitate the intersection of law enforcement and the community. Recognizing the committee's importance, the FPCA Membership subsequently voted to make it a permanent committee.

At this meeting, the central topic of discussion was recruitment, as departments across the state are competing with each other to identify those best suited for law enforcement. Law enforcement officials shared their department's strategies with officer sourcing and retention, and community members weighed in on the kinds of individuals they would like to see serving their community.

FPCA President Chief Charles "Chuck" Broadway, opened the meeting by expressing how police

recruitment is a big concern and challenge nationwide. Agencies and communities need to collaborate for solutions since the officers hired directly impact citizens trust and perception of their departments.. Chief Broadway also brought up a critical tool available to hiring agencies -- officers currently under investigation at other departments are flagged to notify potential employers. This check and balance prevents officers under scrutiny from applying for and taking a job at another agency until their 90-day investigation is completed.

Department leaders and community members then began sharing their individual experiences with hiring. Several chiefs noted that each department's approach to recruitment must reflect knowledge of their location and personal community characteristics. For example, Chief Lee Bercaw of Tampa Police Department explained that they expanded their hiring pool by allowing for tattoos to be visible, and allowing a (strict) beard

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policy. They also have a unique work schedule of four days on and four days off that is attractive to those looking for more extended break periods.

Multiple agencies and community representatives discussed the need to recruit members who have a background in the area they will be policing. Those with local knowledge will be better at discretionary decision-making and community policing. Some agencies allow community members to become directly involved in this hiring process. There was great discussion on the distinction between “lowering standards” and merging current values with the new landscape of police recruits.

Cities like St. Petersburg require eight selected community officials to sit in on the hiring process, speak directly with the candidate, and give their input back to the recruiting officer. “Recruiting people is like marrying them, it’s either going to be noticeably good or bad,” said Esther Matthews, current President of the NAACP-St. Petersburg, participant in the St. Petersburg hiring process, and community leader committee member. “And I’m particular about my husbands, I’ve had two.”

Committee members also discussed the noticeable gap in youth recruitment as a barrier, and brought up various direct approaches to help bridge the generational discontinuity. These shared strategies included increasing an agency’s presence on social media, intentional guidance in elementary and middle schools, high school training programs, college intern partnerships, hosting community job events, and working with military personnel.

Other strategies are as simple as ensuring they are the first to call applicants back or as abstract as hosting a podcast. Assistant Chief David De La Espriella said the Miami Beach Police Department hired Michael Bay, famed director, to coordinate their recruitment video.

Community Leader Dr. Randy Nelson, who works as the Program Director for Bethune-Cookman’s University Center of Law and Social Justice, gave closing commentary on this committee meeting. He emphasized that the real work for the Committee on Accountability & Societal Change did not happen in this conversation. Instead, it is taking action to implement action items related to what was discussed. “Policing is not something that you do to a community,” Dr. Nelson says, “It is something that you do with a community.”



L-R Sabrita Thurman-Newby, DC De La Espirella and FPCA President Broadway



L-R Chief Revell, Dr. Marshall Jones, and Chief Bercaw



L-R FPCA ED Cookie Pritt and Chief Gandy

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION

The FPCA held its New Members Orientation Meeting on the opening day of the annual Mid-Winter conference. The meeting was a testament to the association's commitment to fostering camaraderie, professional growth, and a sense of community among its members. FPCA strives to create a welcoming environment and this year the Association saw its largest influx of new members with seventy-two members joining since early October. This spike in recruitment numbers can be attributed to the association's push to extend the invite to the second in command, in addition to the police chief; as well as the inclusion of the business community, recognizing the pivotal role they play in the overall success of law enforcement agencies.



Welcoming the new members were the FPCA's president, vice presidents, executive board, and general counsel, Executive Director alongside several longstanding (LIFE) members. As a token of initiation, new members received the FPCA New Member Guide, providing a comprehensive introduction to the association's ethos and resources.

Of course, one of the largest draws for new members' is networking. The FPCA offers connections between members, district directors, and local businesses on a scale and at a depth that no other association can provide. The association also provides departments with information, advice, general counsel, aid with natural disasters, and extensive, varied training. What sets FPCA apart is its close-knit, family-like community. This familial bond extends even to retirees, many who still remain active in the association.



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June 1989

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The sum of \$750.00 has been earmarked for tuition and books to the college of your choice. If you will produce the proper receipts for your tuition and books to this office, the Florida Police Chiefs Association will be happy to reimburse you.

Congratulations again and best wishes on behalf of the Chiefs of Police in the State of Florida and we wish you continued success in furthering your education.

Sincerely,

WILLIS D. BOOTH
Executive Director

WDB/bl

Deputy Chief Ruth Cate's 1989 FPCA Scholarship Letter

One of the new members attending the conference was Deputy Chief Ruth Cate from Tampa Police Department. Deputy Chief Cate, who literally "started when she was two," shared her journey from receiving an FPCA scholarship in high school to becoming Deputy Chief at Tampa Police Department. Deputy Chief Cate had always had the goal of being a police officer, so at the age of thirteen, she became an explorer with the Temple Terrace Police. During her time as an explorer, she applied and received a scholarship, but until recently, she never realized who it was from. After being accepted into the FPCA, Chief Cate decided to look for the original scholarship and upon finding it, was amazed to see that the scholarship was issued by the FPCA.

So the lesson is, it's never too early to think about joining the FPCA!



A Traffic Safety Solution

The Florida Police Chiefs Association is proud to announce a new Preferred Corporate Partnership with RedSpeed. RedSpeed has been an FPCA business partner and significant sponsor for many years.

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LEADERSHIP TRAINING

On Sunday, Dr. Joseph “Joe” Saviak, gave a talk on leadership to the crowd of police chiefs. Dr. Saviak, former executive director for the Flagler County Sheriff’s Office, operates his own consulting firm for management and leadership. This talk stemmed from the book *It’s Your Ship* by Captain Michael Abrashoff. He began by introducing a video of Captain Abrashoff, who shared his experience dealing with a bottom tier ship in the United States Navy. By interviewing every single crew member on this ship, Captain Abrashoff was able to make improvements that drastically enhanced the ship’s culture. These improvements continued on after Captain Abrashoff left. This story displays the impact of taking the time to understand the individuals that you lead.

Dr. Saviak emphasized personal connection is an invaluable leadership skill. “Everyone claps at your retirement party for one of two reasons,” explained Dr. Saviak, “They are either happy to see you go, or celebrating the good work that you have put in.” It is up to the leader to decide what kind of claps they will want to see at the end of their career. As a leader, there is a gray area on what your responsibilities should be. When asked, the crowd at the FPCA conference answered, “planning,” “vision,” “motivation,” “accountability,” “overall personal wellbeing,” “the missions,” “your team alignment,” and “culture.” Dr. Saviak emphasized that last one, because it is important to work in a culture where people feel free to make mistakes. The culture that you cultivate as a leader will determine the kinds of claps that you receive at your retirement party.

For a team leader, trust and delegation are paramount in the process of meeting goals. Often, when control goes down, performance goes up. When asked by Dr. Saviak, no one in the crowd raised their hand to signify that they would want to work for a toxic and trustless leader, even if they were getting paid well. No price point can be put on a good work culture. As a police chief, people pay more attention to you. Recognizing this status, people listen and follow closer to the behavior

chiefs exhibit. “What do you gain from holding yourself accountable?” Dr. Saviak asked the police chiefs, “You gain trust and respect.” The behavior chiefs model will be the behavior chiefs elicit from their subordinates. He emphasized that police chiefs’ own actions reflect the kind of work environment they lead. The goal? To make the culture of their agency invaluable to work for.

If these goals are not met, issues with personnel can arise. Dr. Saviak addressed how to prevent corruption within a police agency with personal connection. Corruption and cover ups will always come to light, but how quickly they are seen is a matter of good communication within an agency. More than that, good communication brings a sense of value to the team. “People value being valued,” Dr. Saviak says, “They will protect and add value to the things they own.” No one wants to tear down the house that they helped build, much like no one would want to harm a police force that they had a strong contribution to.

At the end of his talk, Dr. Saviak emphasized that keeping a positive perspective, even in the face of hardship, is essential to department morale. He pointed out that the second you become chief, your jokes instantly become funnier and you start to hear the word “yes” a lot more. To manifest personal connection in a police department, it is important to provide that same positive feedback to those you lead.



Dr. Joe Saviak and Chief Tracy Frazzano, Chair of the Professional Standards Committee

DEFINING MOMENTS IN POLICING

Law enforcement isn't a job, it's a career and a prime example of that was retired Police Chief and Secret Service Agent Tim McCarthy who spoke on "Defining Moments in Policing" for a training segment.

Throughout his presentation, Agent McCarthy emphasized the difficulties of being a police officer and chief. He noted that the average career of a chief of police is five years, and in that time a chief is likely to be sued, face frivolous lawsuits, and possibly threatened to be fired on any small mistake. However, Agent McCarthy said, he does not regret a moment of it and would never change the career he chose.

He discussed the "ugly parts" of the job like negative viewpoints of law enforcement on social media, and dealing with the officers whose actions negatively affect the reputation of the officers around them. He also discussed how rewarding it is to help the people around you and that we should "not forget the poor and powerless."



Throughout his 50 years in law enforcement, Agent McCarthy has led a variety of different initiatives. At one point, he worked with a crisis intervention team, which consisted of 45 officers trained to identify mental illness. Most of the cases consisted of those self-medicating with either alcohol or drugs and that could have eventually led to voluntary or involuntary commitments.

At the end of Agent McCarthy's presentation, he offered one of his defining moments: while working as a Secret Service Agent, he was shot during President Ronald Reagan's assassination attempt. He described every detail of the day and how a coin was tossed to decide who would be a part of the detail. In the end, everyone survived but the damage had been done. Agent McCarthy described visiting the President afterwards and quipped that he worried his kids would accidentally unplug the machines keeping the president alive!

Sharing his stories with humility and wit, Agent McCarthy concluded that his law enforcement career was really a story of him simply doing the right thing at the right time, the job of all officers.



Retired Police Chief and Secret Service Agent Tim McCarthy

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RAPID DNA

Lisa Hurst, Director for North America, GTH-DNA Consulting, provided a training briefing on rapid DNA solutions. Rapid DNA is a self-contained, desktop-sized instrument that processes DNA in as little as 90 minutes. There are two major companies manufacturing this device: Thermo Fisher and ANDE. This device is designed for non-laboratory personnel. While these devices are not a replacement for a lab, as they cannot do complex samples where DNA is mixed and not admissible in a court of law, they are beneficial for quick results that will later be confirmed by a secondary, traditional lab.



Director Lisa Hurst

Rapid DNA offers two main applications. The first is enrolling suspects in the state database during booking. Traditional enrollment has a two-to-three-week backlog, and in custodial arrests, time matters. Rapid DNA devices allow departments to take DNA samples and avoid the wait. The second application of Rapid DNA is for a direct comparison. While Rapid DNA again cannot replace a traditional lab, it can be used as a quick confirmation where two swabs are taken – A swab and B swab – and one sample is sent to a lab and the second sample is used in the Rapid DNA machine. This device can provide a quick comparison and can connect or exclude potential suspects or can be used to identify victims or unidentified remains.



Since Rapid DNA is not admissible in court, traditional lab results are still required to confirm the device's findings, however, it reduces the time law enforcement personnel must wait to receive results.



OFFICE OF MEDICAL MARIJUANA



The Office of Medical Marijuana provided conference attendees with an update on the Office's activities and other topics surrounding the controversial use of marijuana as a legal medicine.

Director Kimball immediately explained that the Office's role was not to promote medical marijuana, but to regulate the product according to the law and inform people of those regulations. For instance, without proper instruction, people could have a license but still be using the substance illegally, and law enforcement officers may not know all the intricacies of what is a highly regulated product.

Director Kimball gave an example, noting that smoking marijuana without having a registry card on hand is a misdemeanor, but smoking in a public place with a card on hand merits a warning.

Director Kimball further reported that the Office is using its funding in part to continue educating the public, including improving their website to educate patients, caregivers, and law enforcement. Agencies can download information regarding the legal use of medical marijuana and products and product packaging requirements on a 3" x 5" Tip Card or in a Mobile Data Terminal (MDT) format. These have been updated to include low-THC and edibles.

In an interview after the training session with Perry Police Department Chief Jamie Cruse, he explained that while he had heard some of this information before, it was important information to hear again to dispel misconceptions among police officers.



Director Christopher Kimball



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TWO OFFICERS SHOT IN THE LINE OF DUTY

A POLICE CHIEF'S ACCOUNT OF THE 24-HOUR MANHUNT AND STANDOFF

On August 4th, 2023, two Orlando police officers were shot in Orlando's entertainment district, an area with 87 bars in nine city blocks. This incident occurred while Orlando Police Department Chief Eric Smith was conducting his monthly downtown patrol with WFTV Channel 9 news. Chief Smith regularly participates in patrol to stay connected with the department and community. However, this situation was unique because WFTV newscaster Daralene Jones and her crew were with him to report on his first year as Orlando City Police Chief. Chief Smith recounted his experience, involvement, and takeaways from this 24-hour manhunt for the critical incident review at the FPCA's Mid-Winter Conference.

The incident began with an initial stop for suspecting drug dealing, but quickly turned violent when one of the suspects fled. As two officers (a male and a female) were trying to apprehend this individual, they were both shot and retreated to separate areas. The suspect then conducted an armed carjacking to escape the scene. Meanwhile, both officers received initial medical help from fellow officers nearby.

During his explanation, Chief Smith noted that a quick response from an officer who previously worked as an EMT helped the officer survive severe injuries, which exemplifies the value of medical experience and training among law enforcement. Additional insight was taken from the officer's body camera footage. Specifically, it is crucial to imagine how officers interpret department rules and policies. Lessons learned help inform future clarifications and refinements.

Chief Smith described his next steps and delegated law enforcement agencies and officials to track this suspect and get to Orlando Regional Medical Center, where his officers were being treated. Only

after all this occurred did Chief Smith realize he was still mic'd up from his wayward WFTV interview. In the heat of the moment, he had no idea how to turn off the transmitter, so he instead opted to snap it in half and toss it in the back of his vehicle.

When he arrived at the hospital, he took sixty seconds to bring his adrenaline down before entering a world of trauma and chaos. Mental preparation is an essential function that is often overlooked in these situations but can significantly impact decision-making and responsiveness. As the search progressed, the next important step was to contact family members. While police officials connected with the victim's parents quickly, it was



Chief Eric Smith

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evident in their initial contacts that officers should be required to update their emergency contact information periodically to remain current.

As the night turned into morning, the suspect was at a hotel under his girlfriend's name at around 7:00 am. Chief Smith stated that he decided to cancel a meeting with Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer to be there to support his team as they attempted to apprehend the suspect. Quick efforts from multiple law enforcement agencies helped evacuate the hotel and equip officers with the right tools. After much negotiation, the suspect engaged in a shootout with SWAT during which he was killed.

Chief Smith finished his points by emphasizing the importance of sending updates of injured personnel to departments so they could find out in a personable way rather than on the nightly news.

Additionally, it is vital to keep injured officers incorporated as part of the law enforcement family. Supporting these officers in any way possible is essential in aiding the mental aspect of their long recovery. Chief Smith also recognized the importance of having strong ties with other agencies; be there to help them, and they will show up to help you.

There is never a circumstance where these incidents should happen, but it is essential to understand what lessons can be learned from them to protect and prevent future occurrences. At the end of his recount, Chief Smith explained how he worked to keep his strong ties with WFTV, "I really felt bad about breaking their mic, but I did ask them to send me a quote for it later on," remarked Chief Smith.

Chief Smith received a standing ovation from the packed room of chiefs and command staff members. Several of them commented that this was without question the best officer-involved shooting after-action presentation they had ever seen and heard in their careers.



MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS PANEL

PERSPECTIVES FROM CHIEFS TO CLINICIANS TO SURVIVORS AND SPOUSES



L-R: Deputy Commissioner Matt Walsh, Major Melissa Barosela, Chief Mariano Augello

The final training of the FPCA's Mid-Winter Conference consisted of a panel to discuss mental health and wellness in police departments. Chief Lawrence Revell, Tallahassee PD moderated the panel that included Chief Mariano Augello, Palm Bay PD, Melissa Barosela representing Blue Line Counseling, FDLE Deputy Commissioner Matt Walsh, and Doug and Karen Monda with Survive First.

Each panelist first shared their story of how they work to increase awareness of mental health inside of police departments. That was followed by a 13-minute video of many other first responders also sharing their experiences. These stories emphasized the staggering statistic that “more first responders die by their own hand than any line of duty death”. The impactful film portrayed how families were affected by the death of loved ones, how many never noticed how much the people around them were struggling, and the fear of losing their job if they so much as mentioned they were struggling with their mental health.

After the video, panelists answered a series of questions from Chief Revell.

Chief Mariano Augello discussed the current obstacles to implementing programs for wellness and peer support. He explained that it is difficult to figure out which programs are real and have law enforcement's best interests truly at heart. Mental health is not a publicity stunt, so the programs need to deliver on their promises. He recommended having training sessions where people can open up about their own personal experiences. Having department leaders share their stories makes others feel better in knowing that they are not the only ones who may be struggling. Remembering those who are retired, not just the officers on active duty, is also important.

Responding to a question about what groups are working together on peer support services, Doug Monda said that his chief worked with the neighboring department to find good resources that could aid in finding mental health services. Doing this led the departments to realize that they needed to start a program to address this lack of resources. Mr. Monda concluded that more and more people are committing to raise awareness, especially of peer support services.

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Karen Monda discussed what spouses or partners might need, and what organizations may be able to help. She emphasized “education is the most important thing that we can do”. Whether that is simply doing research on your own, or reaching out to programs like How 2 Love Our Cops, which aim to specifically support families who are helping a loved one going through a difficult time. Bringing someone into a department to train spouses alongside officers to identify signs of mental health concerns can also be helpful.



L-R: Doug Monda, Karen Monda

The next question was directed to Melissa Barosela, who discussed what can be done to reduce stigma and encourage people to seek help. She explained that while law enforcement has already come a long way in encouraging discussions and research, more time is spent on protecting physical health, but very little is spent on mental health. Ms. Barolsela said that everyone’s experiences need to be normalized so that nobody feels singled out, and that counselors who are hired must be able to build rapport and make the officers feel comfortable. She further suggested embedding counselors within departments so that more proactive measures are taken, instead of waiting until after an incident, and concluded by recognizing this training session as a good start to increasing awareness.

FDLE Deputy Commissioner Matt Walsh fielded the last moderator’s question, asked about what aspects work best for promoting mental health and wellness. He responded by saying that the biggest promoting features of any wellness program are the ideas of building trust and vulnerability. When the people around them are sharing their stories, others

will open up and support them. When someone becomes isolated and does not want to speak of their struggles, this is what develops depression and suicidality. There need to be interventions to support people and ensure they are getting help.

Along those lines, Deputy Commissioner Walsh discussed how FDLE and FPCA have worked together with the Florida Sheriffs Association to fund the Post-Critical Incident Seminars (PCIS) initiative. This program provides three days of direct clinical psychotherapy and psychoeducation and post-seminar resources to officers in need. Deputy Commissioner Walsh said that PCIS has saved many lives and has helped people go back to work after they have experienced traumatic events.

The training concluded with a variety of questions from the audience about the importance of coworkers knowing the signs of mental illness, and different peer support services and confidentiality of these programs. Many commenters expressed concerns that officers are still worried about stigma and how acknowledging a mental health challenge and seeking treatment may affect their career and credibility. Over and over again, the message was simple: you cannot help others if you cannot help yourself.



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A NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR LEARNING

As part of a new initiative, FPCA was pleased to welcome six interns from the Florida Institute of Technology (FIT) to help staff the Mid-Winter Conference. The FPCA recently signed an MOU with FIT to engage in mutually beneficial projects and initiatives that will include engaging interns on a regular basis.

Under the supervision of Assistant Professor Marshall Jones, Director of FIT's Center for Applied Criminal Case Analysis (CACCA), undergraduates Kaitlyn Bonner, Gabby Fox, Emily Martin, and Sydney Minor, and graduate students Izzy Avento and Natalie Buczek provided invaluable assistance to FPCA, and in turn gained real world exposure to law enforcement at the executive level.

The students attended and took notes at many of the regular committee meetings and training sessions, and helped staff the registration desk. They also wrote the majority of this issue's coverage of the conference. A particularly light-hearted moment took place at the conference when they were handed the microphone to call the trade show raffle winners!



Intern, Kaitlyn Bonner, announcing giveaway winners.



L-R: Sydney Minor, Emily Martin, Dr. Marshall Jones, Kaitlyn Bonner, Gabby Fox

According to their website, CACCA's mission is "to develop and deploy innovative applied techniques in response to field driven inquiries regarding the micro and macro factors of criminal case analysis." In particular, "CACCA's strength is innovative research methodologies including data-mining of offender and victim files and records." Students interested in participating in research at the CACCA must have taken courses in forensic psychology.

FPCA thanks these young scholars for their time, energy, and interest in the law enforcement profession, and we hope to welcome more interns in the future.



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INVESTING IN SERGEANTS AND SUPERVISORS

THE BEST ROI FOR RECRUITING AND RETENTION

By Dr. Marshall Jones

Agencies nationwide and internationally are reporting challenges in maintaining the staffing of both sworn and professional support staff. There is little, if any, debate among law enforcement executives that recruiting challenges today are a major concern for agencies. As agencies struggle to revise and retool decades-long recruiting strategies to meet demand, their daily expectations only increase. Advancements in technology, such as AI, offer as many threats as opportunities. Policing the dark web is a recognized challenge in the profession, necessitating the evolution of specialists among our ranks (PERF, 2019). In a time where agency leaders need to focus on evolving with the nature of crime and leveraging technology, most are swimming in the quicksand of a seemingly constant recruiting loop.

In the “business” side of policing, the majority of agencies are not getting a good return on investment (ROI) from recruiting. The investment in attracting, selecting, and training personnel is multi-faceted and includes the impact of the media and political coverage of events such as Ferguson and Minneapolis, Defund the Police, the retirement bubble, and the preferences and values of Gen Z, where work-life balance is not historically associated with police work.

Best ROI for Recruiting and Retention

Retention mitigates the challenges of excessive recruiting needs. The best practice in retention is line supervisors, the sergeants and supervisors in agency ranks that have the most impact on the line-level personnel that keep our communities safe. Today’s new agency members consider “happy as the new rich.” People do not quit bad jobs; they quit bad bosses. Recent research (Wilson et al., 2023) exploring the body of research specific to police retention found turnover was strong where

supervision was perceived as abusive or unfair and where supervision was considered to be generally poor, as well as poor department morale and organizational stress, which also appear to increase turnover.

Consider the impact and influence of sergeants on officers. According to PERF (2018), sergeants make up 6.6% of all sworn agency members and directly supervise 85% of agency personnel. The nexus to “happy” between officers, professional staff, and line supervisors is well supported in research across multiple professions. If happiness is the new “rich,” then sergeants are the new “bankers.”

The few agencies reporting a stable workforce, due to strong retention, have a common denominator. It is neither pay nor benefit. The common success factor is a culture of development and leadership. While the concept sounds simple, developing a culture that develops followership and leadership takes time and deliberate focus, both sparse commodities in agencies struggling with maintaining day-to-day efficiency, meeting staffing requirements, and constantly anxious about having enough people to meet the “brushfires” of policework.

Be a Learning Organization: Changing Realities and Testing Assumptions

There is a grand irony about policing: we are in the business of dealing with chaos, conflict, and change, yet as a culture, we are slow to change and adapt. Police executives need to retool and become more cognitively noble and lead their agencies toward becoming a learning organization, encouraging and rewarding agency members to learn from mistakes, innovate, and evolve. In the case of recruiting, an agency's attributes as a learning organization can be a competitive advantage in the competition of local

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and regional potential applicants (Wilson et. al., 2024).

There are four distinct generations represented in policing, a collection of work attitudes and preferences more diverse than any other time. This diversity can lead to false assumptions, which can exasperate progress. It is also human nature to assume that our experiences generalize over time. Agency leaders can fall into the trap of “been there and done that” or “back in my days on the road” and fail to listen and observe major and nuanced differences that can be critical stumbling blocks. For example:

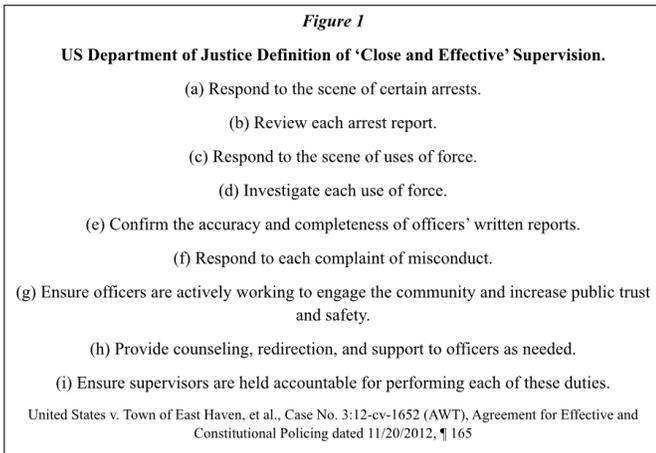
- **Military Veterans:** Once a mainstay of applicant pools, veterans have become much rarer. The new members bring not only life experience but years of experience as effective followers and leaders, molded by training and culturally expected modeling of behaviors. The decreased infusion of veterans, usually older than most applicants and with rich life and professional skills aligned with policing, has resulted in less peer-mentoring among new employee cohorts but also impacted the overall pool of officers prepared for promotion.
- **Generational Cops:** Where veterans leveraged their understanding of structure, respect for tenants of followership and leadership, and life experience, generational cops helped peers understand the culture and reality of policing. Current and former law enforcement professionals report a drastic decrease in encouraging their children to follow in their footsteps.
- **Agency Jumpers:** Officers and professional staff jumping from one agency to another is nothing new. Whether they are actively poached by another agency or leaving for “greener grass,” one agency lost someone and one agency gained. The growing concern for the profession is the exodus from policing. Many members leave the profession and not just the agency (PERF, 2019). When an officer jumps to another agency, the profession sees a zero-sum effect on the overall workforce. Officers and professional staff leaving the profession double the overall

loss of talent.

- **Education versus Training:** A common flawed expectation of sending an upcoming or newly promoted sergeant to a two-week Line Supervision Class is preparation. That is education, which has a place, but we must engage in the “see, show, do” aspect of training (Enter, 2022) that is best achieved through a Sergeant’s FTO Program.
- **Modeling:** Modeling behavior, good or bad, is the most powerful method of shaping behavior across our lives. The question we must ask is, “Are my troops getting good modeling of effective supervision and leadership or learning ‘what not to do’ from an ill prepared or micromanaging boss?”
- **Coaching and Mentoring:** Coaching and mentoring are not synonyms. Coaching is an aspect of the Close and Effective Supervision expectations from line supervision that the DOJ uses to gauge if agencies hold supervisors to performance duties (Figure 1). Coaching is a *retrospective* review of performance and behavior specific to improving or correcting performance. We expect supervisors to coach as part of their duties. Mentoring, on the other hand, is a *proactive focus on future* with a development goal. A mentoring program can assign mentors, but the best practice is to provide mentor training and encourage agency members of all ranks to seek out and invite mentoring. Mentoring, when done correctly, requires the development of rapport and trust to the point that the mentor gives developmental feedback welcomed by the mentee (Jones and Blackledge, 2021).
- **Quicker Promotions:** Agencies nationwide report a trend in promotional pools for Sergeants comprised of candidates with less experience than even 5 years ago. Some agencies report promoting sergeants with less than 5 years of total experience in policing. Another trend of concern is the number of patrol sergeants who report not having experienced assignments other than patrol. While not necessarily a challenge for a “patrol sergeant,” it

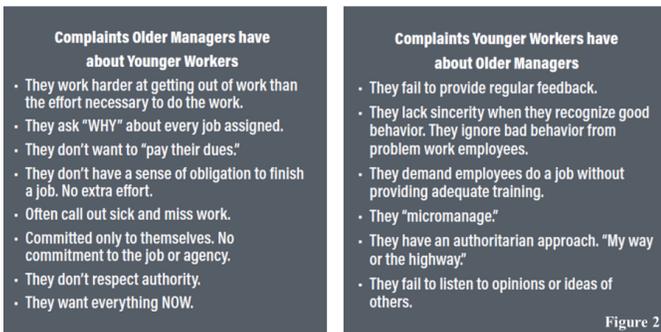
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certainly poses agency challenges in filling supervisory needs in other units and in the development of future lieutenant pools. What is the average service time of your most recently promoted supervisors?

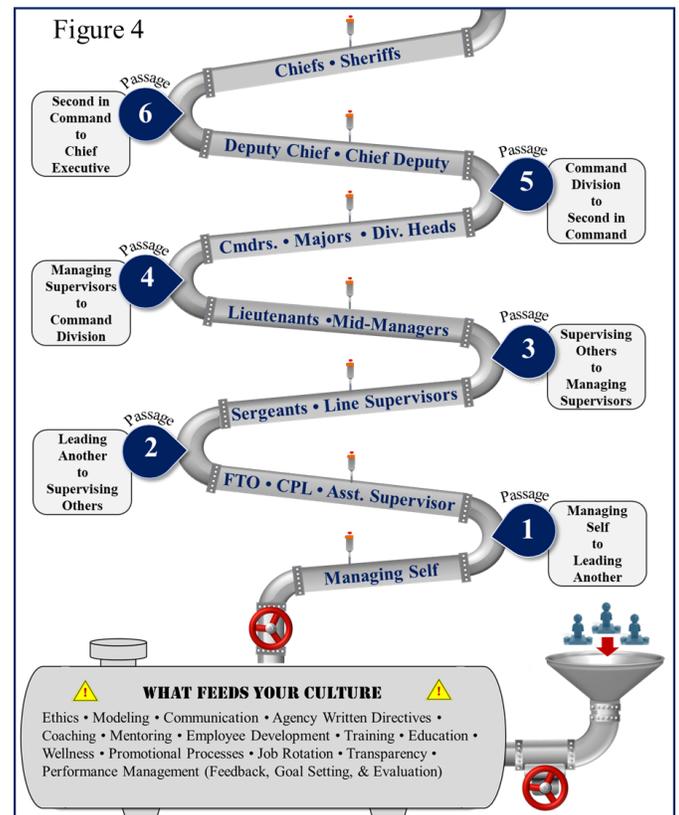
- **Specialty Unit Assignments:** We all recognize the shift from welcoming overtime and off-duty detail opportunities to people preferring their time off. Generational values and preferences explain this change, and we need to accept this reality. What is emerging from the same generational preference is specialty unit interest, especially if it involves being on call or being subject to callout. This is impacting line-level needs and supervisors. Agencies must assess if the “post and hope” mechanism works for their agency or if they need to consider shifting to an “assign and develop” strategy.



- **Failure to Accept and Leverage Generational Values and Preferences:** We want to find ideal candidates that meet our concept of ideal, but our leaders must influence the generation available. Older generations seem to focus on

what is “wrong” with them and can fail to leverage opportunities (Figure 2). For example, Gen Z members want to know their purpose, which explains their asking “why?” They want, if not demand, feedback on their performance, which we as a profession should embrace. They also expect to be trained in how to do their jobs, which we should also value (Jones, 2023).

- **Focus on the System, Not the Parts:** We have a tendency in policing to assess, examine, and focus on various parts, components, and units of accountability within our agencies. In doing so, we miss the critical nature of the interdependence of agency outcomes. Just as good supervision positively impacts retention and, in turn, reduces recruiting pressures, the entire agency must be viewed as an “ecosystem” and viewed as such for improved overall outcomes (Wilson & Gammich, 2024). The Law Enforcement Leadership Pipeline (LEPP) offers a model (Figure 3) to assist in assessing and adapting components that impact your agency culture and ecosystem (Jones, 2024).



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Blueprints for Action

Over the next few editions of *The Florida Police Chief*, we will explore various aspects of assessing and addressing agency development. We will conclude this article by exploring PERF's (2018) findings and suggestions on selecting, training, and leadership development for line supervisors (Figure 4), along with some best practice offerings.

Figure 4

PERF's 11 Steps Agencies Can Take to Improve First-Line Supervision

1. If civil service regulations or collective bargaining agreements limit your ability to conduct adequate testing of candidates for sergeant or to select the best candidates for these positions, look for ways to challenge these regulations or agreements.
2. Offer promotional tests on a regular schedule.
3. Use additional testing tools besides written tests.
4. Provide comprehensive training that goes beyond state mandates.
5. Give sergeants training before they hit the streets.
6. Provide sergeants with scenario-based training, particularly on high-risk encounters.
7. Keep officer-to-sergeant ratios down, so sergeants have more time to spend on the street.
8. Provide sergeants with mobile digital technology that allows them to complete more administrative tasks in the field.
9. Evaluate sergeants on the key aspects of their roles.
10. New sergeants should receive regular, detailed feedback.
11. Provide sergeants with opportunities to develop their careers before and after promotion.

PERF (2018)

Sergeant Selection Processes

Sergeant promotional processes help set expectations for the requirements of the rank and how to prepare. Promotional processes should be based on a job description that identifies the required knowledge, skills, abilities, and other attributes (KSAOs) for the job of sergeant. Processes vary from agency to agency and range from simple multiple-choice exams to full assessment centers.

Promotional processes are very important to agency culture and leadership development. The aspects of policy that set the criteria for qualifications, experience, and points are critical. Psychometrically, the best practice is the use of agency-written directive systems, case law, and other applicable reference materials that are commonly necessary for sergeants to understand and access. Is knowing where the backup key to the emergency generator is a necessary question on an exam? Probably not. Recognizing that an arrest effected in another county resulting from a pursuit requires seeing a magistrate in the county of arrest? Absolutely.

The goal of any agency or union should be to promote the best-prepared and most capable person to the position. Some agencies include added points for time in service, education, training, and other bonus points. These should be added with caution, as the weight of these points can be underestimated in the scope of the total points of the process and the actual final scores. Percentages can mediate the unintended consequences of points, but agencies must have a good grasp on how the points factor into an overall score. Situations where the bottom-scoring candidate leapfrogs better candidates because they have been around for a couple decades can result in promoting ill-prepared candidates.

High-fidelity exams allow problem-solving activities using materials typically readily available to sergeants. These include in-basket assessments, scenarios, tabletops, or full assessment centers. Written exams, based on multiple-choice responses to agency-written directives, can be helpful in testing a base level of knowledge and make a good first hurdle in a process. Multiple-choice knowledge used as the sole test component does not result in promotion lists accurately reflecting potential success as a sergeant. Technically proficient test takers, and those with the time to study, often score well. Psychometrically robust processes assess a candidate's ability to assess problems, identify issues related to an issue, and probe problem solving.

Action Step: What is your current promotional process? Is it robust? Are there points for seniority, merit, education, or other things? Most importantly, is your process producing candidates who ultimately become successful supervisors?

Sergeant Field Training and FTOs

Yes, send emerging and new sergeants to Line Supervision Class. But that can't be an indicator of a new sergeant being properly prepared or having the confidence to lead a shift. Proper development for Sergeants includes a Sergeant Field Training

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Program that includes task familiarity checklists, feedback mechanisms, and ongoing developmental opportunities.

Sergeant FTO programs are gaining momentum across the US. In a study of 273 agencies in Texas, 50 agencies use a Sergeant FTO program (Jones, 2023b). This is a relatively low number, reflecting 18%, but it is an improvement. Sergeant FTO programs range from short orientation periods to probation-long structured programs that include peer shadowing, structured training, and routine sessions with a FTO or mentor.

With the increasing absence of military veterans in candidate pools preparing for promotion, as well as less-tenured officers being thrust into promotions, structured and supportive training programs are a critical component of success in developing skills and confidence for success. This conceptual model is akin to models used by the US military.

Another often overlooked training ground for future supervisors are Field Training Officers. Agencies need to assess their FTEP and determine if it is based on an *observer-evaluator approach* or a *leader-coach model*, supported by research, to produce better outcomes (Tannenbaum et al., 1991). The developmental opportunities for FTOs, as well as department trainers, improve in the leader-coach model. They gain critical experience and build skills regarding coaching, providing feedback, and confronting emotional or less-than-optimal behaviors. Given that many FTOs and trainees share a common generation, Gen X, this approach leads to better overall developmental outcomes.

Action Step: Do you have a Sergeant Field Training Program? If so, is it robust and meeting your needs? If not, why not? Are your FTOs practicing as observer-evaluators or leader-coaches?

Sergeant Performance Evaluations

A key component of agency culture, as reflected in the LEPP above, is an effective and impactful performance management system. Performance appraisal systems range from basic performance

appraisals used for all employees, while others are designed based on the specific functions of policing with appropriate rubrics and anchored scales of performance.

Law enforcement has the most robust performance management system for field training and evaluation programs among any industry, yet we lag decades behind best practices for performance management. Given the consequence of not providing solid performance evaluation and the desire for feedback from Gen Z, it is ironic that good systems to an industry standard are not readily available.

Officers need properly anchored performance feedback and appraisal systems, evaluated by their sergeants. Sergeants need psychometrically sound performance reviews as well, based on the job description of their duties. These systems highlight expectations and accountability. It is common for managers, supervisors, and officers to dread performance appraisals. Good systems can be great developmental tools, and well-designed processes make it easier for managers and supervisors to provide critical goal-setting and feedback.

DOJ's Close and Effective Supervision Guidelines (Figure 1) are what an attorney will use to hold agencies accountable in court and call for supervisors to *provide counseling, redirection, and support to officers as needed* and for agencies to *ensure supervisors are held accountable for performing each of these duties*. Can we, as a profession, afford not to pay attention to performance management systems?

Action Step: Review your performance appraisal or performance management systems. Are they geared toward anyone or specific to officers and their roles? Do your supervisors have specific performance appraisal components for their supervisory duties?

Help Sergeants Stay on the Road

Agencies and officers need sergeants to be out in the community and available for officers where

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they are most effective at both supporting their troops and holding them accountable. The span of control is critical. In the PERF (2018) study, agencies surveyed reported a span of control for sergeants ranging from 4:1 to 15:1. The ideal ratio, according to those participating in the project, was a 6:1 ratio.

Sergeants are where the rubber meets the road. They control the flow of information, gain buy-in, and serve as the embodiment of the agency, which is critical to job satisfaction. The most valuable commodity sergeants have to give is their time and attention. Agencies need to perform periodic functional analyses to assess the level of administrative versus supervisory expectations of supervisors. Added Sergeant duties related to body cameras, faulty assumptions that NIBRS, electronic report review systems, and other systems promised to reduce administrative time actually added time off the road need to be assessed and addressed.

Officers have always responded best when they know their sergeant is “out and about.” Coaching, assisting on a call, being a mature and calming presence, and holding people accountable are important to the rapport and trust necessary for good leader-follower relationships, which are critical to retention.

Action Step: How many employees do your sergeants supervise? Is that an acceptable span of control? How much administrative responsibility do sergeants have that requires them to be at the station? Are you effectively leveraging technology? Are expectations clear that sergeants are expected to be out among the officers

Final Takeaway

Continuing to do the same things and expecting better outcomes is said to be insanity. Many agencies hold on to traditional methods, processes, and traditions. Guide your agency to learn, innovate, and leverage best practices from policing and outside the profession. Review your agency and its culture as a whole and leverage improvements to your ecosystem. Become a student of generational differences and find ways for cross-generational

training and mentoring opportunities. Review the agency aspects reflected in the LEPP (Figure 3) and assess where these systems are developing or hindering agency members. The success of our agency rests on its members. Investing throughout the agency to develop is the best ROI we can make.

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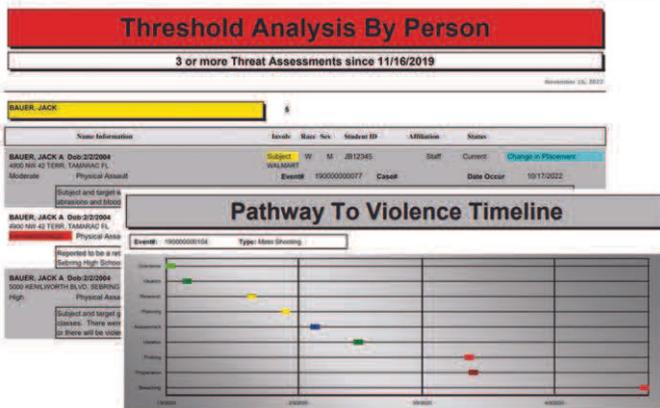
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VIOLENCE PREVENTION MODEL

POLICING AND BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT & MANAGEMENT

By Rick Parfitt

Historically, policing in America has centered on a prevention model of deterrence in that the presence of uniformed police officers and marked police vehicles will deter those seeking to break the law or engage in violent behavior.

Many offenders will be dissuaded by these actions, but not all. This long held and trained prevention model may deter the opportunistic offender and possibly have an influence to deter the impulsive offender, but not the predatory offender.

We have come to know the predatory criminal as a stalker, a domestic extremist, lone actor terrorist, many sex offenders and of course the active assailant. Predatory violence also referred to as targeted violence is not so easily deterred by a police presence. Targeted violence, first used in a 1995 National Institute of Justice Research in Action report, *Threat Assessment: An Approach to Prevent Targeted Violence* (Fein, Vossekuil & Holden, 1995) refers to situations in which an identifiable (or potentially identifiable) perpetrator poses (or may pose) a threat of violence to a particular individual or group.

Government agencies, including the Department of Homeland Security, US Secret Service and FBI along with various researchers have used the terms targeted violence and predatory violence in research and publications since that time. Targeted violence includes terrorist attacks, but unlike terrorism, targeted violence includes attacks many times that lack a clearly discernible political, ideological, or religious motivation, but that are of such severity and magnitude as to suggest an intent to inflict a degree of mass injury, destruction, or death commensurate with known terrorist tactics.

In their *Strategic Framework for Countering Terrorism and Targeted Violence* strategy, the Department of Homeland Security (2019) detailed that targeted

violence has a significant impact on the safety and security of our communities, schools, places of worship, and other public gatherings. They describe how threats of terrorism and targeted violence increasingly intersect with one another, and that lends to some alignment in the tools and methods that can be used to counter them.

Since targeted violence is distinct from violence that is affective, impulsive, random, or spontaneous it can oftentimes be distinguished by pre-attack behaviors that suggest violence as a possible outcome (SchoolSafety.gov).

In 2017, the FBI published, *Making Prevention a Reality: Identifying, Assessing, and Managing the Threat of Targeted Attacks*. This comprehensive, operational document describes that traditional police techniques historically have focused on the apprehension and prosecution of violent offenders after crimes are committed and points out that when police are given information that someone may potentially commit a crime or become violent in the future, their responsibilities, authorities, and available investigative tools are suddenly less clear. This FBI guide is about threat assessment and management, and how police and others may identify, assess, and manage the risk of future, planned violence (Amman, et. al, 2017).

This information is not new, as the U. S. Secret Service in their 1998 publication, *Protective Intelligence and Threat Assessment Investigations: A Guide for State and Local Law Enforcement Officials* described then that threat assessment is a developing field pioneered by the U.S. Secret Service and involves the investigation and analysis of situations and individuals that may pose threats to persons in public life (Fein & Vossekuil, 1998).

This guide and much of the basis of threat assessment in other research has a foundation in the
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five-year, U. S. Secret Service study referred to as the *Exceptional Case Study Project*. This study examined the thinking and behavior of individuals who have attacked or approached to attack prominent public officials or figures in the US between 1949-1996 with the goal to help refine law enforcement operations related to preventing and investigating violence and threats of violence (Fein & Vossekuil, 1997).

The findings of the study revealed general threat assessment information relating to attacks on public officials and figures, showing that planned, targeted attacks are not confined to those involving prominent public officials and celebrities. Additionally, the study suggested that the broader application of threat assessment protocols by Federal, State, and local law enforcement officials could help “*anticipate and prevent other crimes,*” including cases involving stalking, domestic violence, workplace violence, and bias-motivated criminal activity involve planned— often violent— attacks on intentionally selected targets (Fein & Vossekuil, 1997; Fein & Vossekuil, 1998).

Without looking at the research police agencies have been responding to the increased occurrence of mass shootings in our schools by increasing police presence in schools and school policy makers similarly are responding by additional ‘target hardening’ methods, including metal detectors, bulletproof glass and shield devices and many companies are marketing clear bookbags, bulletproof bookbags and panic alarm systems.

Most of these approaches are still reactive, in essence, waiting for persons with guns to show up and it is too late once an armed gunman shows up in the parking lot or lobby of our schools. Several studies have shown that having police at schools has reduced certain violence, mostly impulsive violence, but their presence does not prevent the targeted violence we are dealing with today. The data in *Presence of Armed School Officials and Fatal and Nonfatal Gunshot Injuries During Mass School Shootings, United States, 1980-2019* looked at 133 cases where

more than one person was shot in a school, or a person arrived at school with the intent to fire indiscriminately and learned in nearly 24% of the cases an armed guard was on scene and were not associated with significant reduction in rates of injuries. “The data suggest no association between having an armed officer and deterrence of violence in these cases.... The majority of shooters who target schools are students at that school, calling into question the effectiveness of hardened security and active shooter drills.” They conclude that schools must invest in resources to prevent shootings. (Peterson & Densley, 2021; Sorensen, Acosta, Engberg & Bushway, 2022).

Many times, school shooters have targeted schools with armed police or guards present. 2018 was a particularly deadly year for schools and in four high-profile school shootings, including Kentucky’s Marshall County High School in January; Florida’s Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in February; Maryland’s Great Mills High School in March, and Santa Fe High School in Texas in May. The attackers came onto the campuses despite the presence of armed police or guards and in all four of those cases, armed persons failed to stop the gunman from killing (Yablon, 2019).

There are many positive reasons to have SROs in our schools, including building positive relationships with students. In keeping with Community-Oriented Policing practices, SROs must have the discretionary authority to handle cases, especially non-violent or misdemeanor offenses without always making an arrest.

SROs have developed lasting relationships and have been a positive role model for students. SROs in schools can gather information and intelligence to prevent crimes outside of schools, including child abuse, human trafficking, gang violence and others.

As described, targeted violence is not easily prevented using the policing model and programs we have become accustomed to. Police and schools can prevent targeted or predatory violence if they

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adopt and practice the principles of behavioral threat assessment and management. This will be a change in methodology and especially protocol. Threat Assessment has police examining a person's behavior in relation to a pathway to violence. This requires learning and adopting concepts that are not instinctive to police officers.

Police have traditionally responded to reports of behavior, then determining if a crime was attempted or committed and following with a criminal investigation or if called to persons in crisis situations, determining if there are criteria showing that if the person is suffering from a mental illness that they are a danger to himself or others that allows an officer to take the person into custody. If not, most of those situations are referred to various social service agencies.

Most police agencies have limited resources and especially in recent times of calling for defunding the police so this may require reallocations of resources or personnel. Beyond this, agencies must look at collaboration with other, existing social service agencies. Police agencies are reassessing this traditional policing model and adopting a more holistic way of responding to concerning behavior, but too many times after a horrific incident, like a mass shooting. In many cases we hear that the perpetrator had come to the attention of police officers, and some have had frequent encounters. These are the times that we can greatly affect the outcome of potentially violent incidents by providing interventions. The most effective method for doing this is to establish BTAM principles and procedures.

An important tool added to our ability to keep guns out of the hands of potentially dangerous and threatening persons are Red Flag Laws, Extreme Risk Protection Orders, Gun Violence Restraining Orders, known as ERPOs, RPOs and GVROs.

These civil court Restraining Orders and Red Flag Laws or legislation that establishes a process for issuing a Protection Order to ensure individuals at

risk for harm to themselves or others are temporarily prohibited from purchasing or possessing a firearm. Issued by a court on petition from law enforcement, family, or household members of a person at risk for harming themselves. If granted, the order temporarily prohibits the purchase and possession of a firearm by the person of concern. After the order is granted, law enforcement will temporarily remove all firearms from the person's possession or control if the person does not do so voluntarily. As you can see these orders can be used to protect persons with suicidal as well as homicidal ideation (*American Foundation for Suicide Prevention website*).

As of January 2023, 19 states and the District of Columbia had enacted laws authorizing courts to issue extreme risk protection orders. Some limit petitioners to be law enforcement, but many allow family or household members to submit a petition for an ERPO, some allow mental health providers to petition, and New York and Hawaii also allow school administrators to petition (*Giffords Law Center website*).

For BTAM to be effective, police officers must be trained in these principles, and this will be a challenge. An example in a related, complimentary training has been the adoption of Crisis Intervention Team training programs (*NAMI website*; *University of Memphis CIT Center website*).

The program originally started with the Memphis Police Department, known as the Memphis Model in 1988. The National Alliance on Mental Illness, (NAMI), has made this weeklong program for police a priority training. Though the research has not definitively established that officers trained in CIT have experienced less use of force and especially less use of deadly force, there has been research showing that CIT-trained officers felt better equipped to handle these types of calls. Concerning police encounters with people with mental health and substance use disorders, CIT has been shown to have some measurable positive effects, mainly in

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Data for Decisions in Management



Police Testing Programs

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the area of officer-level outcomes, including officers are less likely to escalate to the use of force and CIT programs have also been promoted to increase diversion to psychiatric services rather than jails and to decrease costs (Rogers, McNiel & Binder, 2019).

My preference is to use ‘police’ or ‘policing’ rather than ‘law enforcement’ when describing our nation’s peacekeepers as most of an officer’s daily duties are not enforcing the law. This terminology changed at some point in policing history, and I believe causes some consternation among the public. Police respond to many more calls of people in crisis, than they do arresting or enforcing the law and having CIT training can help agencies avoid complaints and provide citizens with needed services and having officers trained in BTAM allow them to recognize someone on a “pathway to violence.”

BTAM trained and practiced properly will reduce targeted violence. Police officers will understand the Pathway to Violence and will be able to educate their communities, building relationships that encourage reporting of concerning behaviors. Sharing information is vital, whether between agencies and especially as part of a BTAM team.

Florida Department of Law Enforcement model

After several acts of mass targeted violence in Florida, the governor tasked the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) to establish a statewide strategy of targeted violence prevention. FDLE has trained police officers and others, including school officials, mental health professionals and persons involved in child protection bringing together various agencies to assist in Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management (Florida Department of Law Enforcement, 2021).

Some police agencies have been using BTAM for many years, including the United States Capitol Police, Los Angeles Police Department Threat Management Unit, and others. BTAM is required in schools in several states, including Virginia,

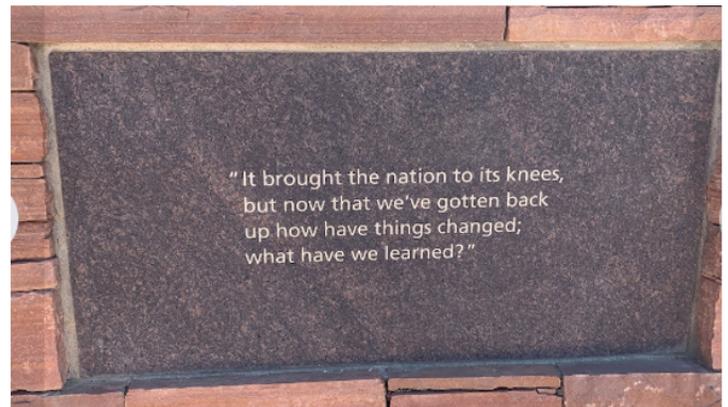
Colorado, Texas, and Florida. Many colleges and universities use BTAM, unfortunately many of these mandates came after tragedies in those states. All government studies and panels that have investigated school shootings starting with Columbine in 1999 to the 2018 Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School (MSDHS) in Florida and Santa Fe High School in Texas reports have described Behavioral Threat Assessment as the best, proven method for preventing violence.

MOST PEOPLE ARE TROUBLED LONG BEFORE THEY ARE TROUBLING...

A Dark Night in Aurora: Inside James Holmes and the Colorado Mass Shootings Dr. William H. Reid

Threat Assessment in schools and colleges and universities

State government commissions were established after most of the mass shootings at schools and colleges since the Columbine killings in 1999 to investigate and examine these horrific tragedies.



Source: <https://www.facebook.com/ColumbineMemorial/photos>

This quote on the Columbine Memorial presents an ominous and important question, “It brought a nation to its knees, but now that we’ve gotten back up how have things changed: what have we learned?” We have learned that behavioral threat assessment and management is a best practice and becoming the standard of care in violence prevention, but unfortunately change is slow in the adoption of BTAM.

Some of the examples from the various reports

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include:

The Columbine Review Commission recommended that “a state task force should be created to develop model threat-assessment plans, standards and training programs” A threat assessment team should be established at every Colorado middle and high school to evaluate threats of violence (May 2001).

The Final Report of the Sandy Hook Advisory Commission recommended each school district in Connecticut should have policies in place that are related to threat assessment and violence management. These teams should receive training in threat assessment that will enable them to review specific threats and help manage or support any person who issues a threat as well as warning the potential victims (March 6, 2015).

The *Report on the Arapahoe High School Shooting* found failures in information sharing, threat assessment and a failure of systems thinking in the time before killing. The report further stated there were ‘many missed opportunities to share information about and intervene with (killer) and his “concerning behaviors’ before the shooting. Information Sharing, Threat Assessment, Systems Thinking (January 18, 2016).

The *School and Firearm Safety Action Plan* from Texas recommended to provide schools with behavioral threat assessment programs and the Texas School Safety Center...will deliver training on behavioral threat assessment to school personnel (May 30,2018).

MSDHS Public Safety Commission, Initial Report stated that Behavioral threat assessments are one of the most important opportunities to provide a safer school environment and head off concerning behavior before it manifests into actual harm...and each school must have a robust Threat Assessment Team (January 2, 2019).

School mass shootings rightfully generate much attention and considerable research. A recent

National Institute of Justice report, *Five Facts About Mass Shootings In K-12 Schools*, revealed that, most people who commit a mass shooting are in crisis leading up to it and are likely to leak their plans to others which presents opportunities for intervention which means that everyone can help prevent school mass shootings and importantly reported that threat assessments are a promising prevention strategy to assess and respond to mass shooting threats, as well as other threats of violence by students (August 2022).

There has been a number of mass shootings at colleges and universities with similar findings.

The Mass Shootings at Virginia Tech Report of the Review Panel recommended VA Tech and other institutions of higher learning should have a threat assessment team that includes representatives from law enforcement, human resources, student and academic affairs, legal counsel, and mental health (August 2007).

The *Threat Assessment Process Review and Recommendations*, about a Tucson shooting involving a former Pima Community College student noted the “behavioral/threat assessment process must develop and manage an ‘all hands’ participation to be viable and successful” in recognizing student behavioral issues, addressing potential threats and in facilitating expedient positive outcomes. (Pima Community College, January 8, 2014).

Recently released, a *Review of the University of Arizona’s Safety and Security Environment* reported that the University of Arizona's threat management process was ineffective and its security systems inadequate in the period leading up to the fatal shooting of a professor last year (PAX Group, LLC).

There have been similar findings in reports from mass shootings at government offices, military bases, post offices, etc.

Finally, there has been and continues to be extensive research by the U.S. Secret Service, the

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FBI, and many practitioners in threat assessment. Following the stalking and murder of an up-and-coming actress in Los Angeles in 1989, the investigators of the murder began meeting with other police and mental health professionals and eventually created what became known as the *Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (ATAP)*. This organization is currently comprised of approximately 3000 individuals, including law enforcement, prosecutors, mental health professionals, corporate security experts, probation and parole personnel and others involved in threat and violence risk assessment.

ATAP affords its members a professional and educational environment to exchange ideas and strategies to address such issues as stalking, threats, and homeland security. The primary focus of this organization is to provide the necessary knowledge, tools, and support to better prepare members to handle these types of situations. This includes training conferences, seminars and networking with other professionals working in this field. ATAP has expanded internationally and there is now a Canadian Association of Threat Assessment Professionals, Association of European Threat Assessment Professionals, Asia-Pacific Association of Threat Assessment Professionals, African Association of Threat Assessment Professionals, and most recently, the America Latina Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (ATAP website).

The universal goal of all police agencies, be it federal, state or local is to protect citizens and prevent crime, in particular violent crime. With the increase in mass shootings in the United States, agencies must constantly evaluate and re-evaluate methods used to accomplish this all important responsibility and the evidence indicates that BTAM is a proven method to preventing targeted violence.

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