

# The New York State Chief's Chronicle



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March 2020



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Do you have an interesting law enforcement story or an article you would like to submit, photographs of member activities or field scenes?  
Contact the editor: Larry Eggert at [leggett@nychiefs.org](mailto:leggett@nychiefs.org)

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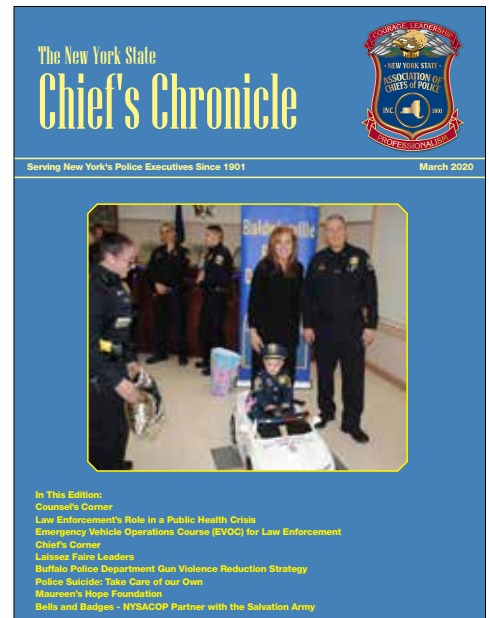
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# On the Cover:

Pictured are Michael Lefancheck, Police Chief of Baldwinsville PD, Susan Bertrand, Founder and Executive Director of Maureen's Hope Foundation, fellow Baldwinsville police officers and Rosie Snowden in her new 'Weese' car. Rosie was diagnosed with a rare cancer called rhabdomyosarcoma. On Monday, November 25th, 2019 at 10:30 AM at the Baldwinsville Village Hall, Rosie was inducted and sworn into the Baldwinsville Police Department as an honorary police officer.

—Story on Page 31



## Welcoming New Members of NYSACOP for 2020

Lieutenant Al Schiraldi	Old Westbury PD	<a href="mailto:ASCHIRALDI@OLDWESTBURYPD.ORG">ASCHIRALDI@OLDWESTBURYPD.ORG</a>
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Chief John T. Vasta	Harrison PD	<a href="mailto:jv102@harrisonpdney.gov">jv102@harrisonpdney.gov</a>
Aharon Kredi Kohen	Sustaining Member	<a href="mailto:henrykredi@gmail.com">henrykredi@gmail.com</a>
Chief Richard Schara	Hamburg Village PD	<a href="mailto:rschara@villagehamburg.com">rschara@villagehamburg.com</a>
Dep. Chief Chris Sapienza	Yonkers PD	<a href="mailto:chris.sapienza@ypd.yonkersny.gov">chris.sapienza@ypd.yonkersny.gov</a>
Chief Steven K. Abbott	Lockport City PD	<a href="mailto:Lkptska@yahoo.com">Lkptska@yahoo.com</a>
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Lt. Bradley Schaffer	Gloversville PD	<a href="mailto:bschaffer@gpd.fulton.ny.us">bschaffer@gpd.fulton.ny.us</a>
Lt. Michael Garavelli	Gloversville PD	<a href="mailto:mgaravelli@gpd.fulton.ny.us">mgaravelli@gpd.fulton.ny.us</a>

# Counsel's Corner



## Truth, Lies and Video: The *Brady/Giglio* Rule



BY CHIEF (RET.) MICHAEL RANALLI, ESQ.

A police officer testifies to the circumstances under which he found a gun in a woman's possession during an interview in a public hallway outside of her apartment. Her attorney secures a hallway surveillance video that reveals the officer's account to be false, leading to the charges being dropped against the woman

Officers execute a search warrant that requires them to knock and announce. They conduct the raid and end up shooting and seriously injuring the occupant, who had appeared in the hallway with a gun at his side. The officers give statements indicating they announced, "Police, search warrant!" and knocked on the door prior to forcing entry. The home had surveillance cameras that depicted a much different version of how the entry took place, leading a federal magistrate to conclude the officer's statements "were false."<sup>1</sup>

Cases such as these place police administrators in a difficult position and compromise the integrity of the agency. Internally, police administrators need to be able to rely on what their officers tell them. But beyond that internal issue, what are the implications of these findings as to the involved officers' ability to perform their essential job functions?

### THE *BRADY/GIGLIO* RULE

Most law enforcement officers should be familiar with the legal implications of the cases of *Brady v. Maryland*, 373 U.S. 83 (1963) and *Giglio v. United States*, 450 U.S. 150 (1972). The impact of these cases, and other similar cases that followed, established what is commonly known as the *Brady/Giglio* rule. This rule requires the prosecution to provide the defense with any evidence that could possibly be exculpatory (*Brady*) and information that might affect the credibility of a prosecution witness (*Giglio*), which includes police officers. Law enforcement similarly has a duty to disclose such information to the prosecution. The best rule for police administrators to follow is if there is any doubt whether the information is exculpatory and/or could impact the credibility of a witness, let the prosecutor decide.

A comprehensive analysis of all the possible types of *Brady/Giglio* material is beyond the scope of this article. My focus will be on the credibility of police officers and the impact dishonesty can have on both the officer's career and the operation of the agency.<sup>2</sup> Actions such as lying during an official investigation, falsifying business documents, giving false testimony, filing false search warrant affidavits and intentionally mishandling contraband and/or evidence are all examples of acts that would need to be reported pursuant to *Brady/Giglio*.

### IMPACT OF THE NEW DISCOVERY LAWS

The *Brady/Giglio* rule is not new and has existed for decades. The issue has, however, recently become more prominent with the passage of the new discovery laws in Article 245 of the Criminal Procedure Law. Prior to January 1, 2020, discovery was "on demand" of the defense pursuant to Article 240 (now repealed in its entirety). The release of *Brady/Giglio* material would have generally fallen under old CPL § 240.20(h) as "Anything required to be disclosed, prior to trial, to the defendant by the prosecutor, pursuant to the constitution of this state or the United States." There were no specific time requirements under this prior statute.

The new statutes require automatic discovery within 15 days of arraignment and include "All evidence and information, including that which is known to police or other law enforcement agencies acting on the government's behalf in the case, that tends to ... (iv) impeach the credibility of a testifying prosecution witness;... Information under this subdivision shall be disclosed whether or not such information is recorded in tangible form and irrespective of whether the prosecutor credits the information" (CPL § 245.20(k)).

As a result of the time constraints under the new law, district attorney's offices have been more aggressive soliciting information that could impact an officer's credibility and compiling the information. This allows the district attorney to be prepared to meet the discovery timeline and either disclose the information or make a motion to the court for an in-camera hearing to determine the relevance of the information to the particular case. Administrators should understand the personnel privacy protections of Civil Rights Law § 50-a are not absolute and never have been. Material deemed to impact the credibility of a police officer as a witness will not be protected.

### IMPLICATIONS OF THE RULE

The proliferation of recording devices is revealing that acts of officer deception do, unfortunately, occur. One occurrence is too many and damages the image of the entire law enforcement profession. When the agency does not take any disciplinary action against the officers, this damage is compounded.

Are their times when police officers may use deception in the course of their duties? The answer to this question is a definitive yes. An undercover police officer is clearly using deception for legitimate and lawful purposes. A police officer during a street encounter may tell the person being interviewed a false reason for



the interview to keep the person at ease. Another example is using deception during the interview of a criminal suspect. All these involve the use of deception for legitimate and lawful purposes. The key factor is that the officer does not lie about using such deception in subsequent case filings or testimony. For example, telling a suspect in an interview that a co-suspect has implicated him when this is not true is legal and allowed by the courts. Ignoring this fact in case notes and testimony and denying it occurred is not legitimate and could amount to a *Brady/Giglio* violation.

So, what is an administrator to do about the officers who may now appear forever on a *Brady/Giglio* list? This can severely impact the ability of an officer to do his/her job and prohibit them from working criminal investigations. If the officer is allowed to continue working, the agency is jeopardizing future prosecutions. A criminal suspect may have in fact committed a crime, but because the arresting officer has credibility issues, a judge or jury may not believe the officer's testimony. The suspect may then walk free or be given a greatly reduced plea bargain.

In some cases, the officer is arrested for perjury or a related charge, making termination proceedings easier. For example, in one case a detective placed a suspect in an interview room and then came in to interview him a few minutes later. Without administering *Miranda* warnings, the detective interviewed the suspect for 80 minutes. During both a pretrial hearing and at trial, the detective repeatedly lied about the circumstances of the interview and indicated he did not question the suspect prior to giving *Miranda* warnings. Unbeknownst to the detective until he was cross-examined at trial, the suspect had recorded the entire conversation on his MP3 player. The detective was charged with and convicted of perjury.<sup>3</sup>

In the case examples cited at the beginning of this article, however, it appears no charges were filed nor was there any discipline against the officers, even with the video evidence. These cases are admittedly difficult to deal with. If a chief executive officer of an agency chooses not to attempt to discipline and/or terminate the officers, then the CEO is kicking the problem down the road, where it will keep rearing its head. Proper adherence to the *Brady/Giglio* rule would at the very least require disclosure to your district attorney.

## AGENCY CULTURE, DOCUMENTATION AND HIRING PRACTICES

Agencies that take no action to terminate officers who have been proven to be dishonest are placing themselves at risk. Failure to disclose this information could create both potential liability and a public relations nightmare. The officers' duties will be severely limited as they will not be able to testify in court. I do not know of many agencies that can afford to create administrative positions for officers who placed themselves in this situation by making the decision to lie.

The best way to avoid *Brady/Giglio* issues is to create a culture where officer dishonesty never occurs in the first place. You should make clear to your members that there is no piece of evidence in any car, on any person, or in any house worth the officer compromising their integrity or the integrity of the agency. Accept that mistakes will be made and encourage and reward officers for telling the truth about them. Make it clear that most transgressions may lead to some type of discipline—but *lying* about them will elevate the situation to one where you will need to seek termination.

When an officer chooses to lie, file false or fabricated paperwork, or otherwise exhibit clear evidence of dishonesty, then your investigation and documentation must be complete and thorough.

Termination of the officer, who has effectively made him/herself useless as a police officer, should be sought. Please note that I used the phrase "clear evidence" to categorize the interpretation of the available information. If there is video applicable to the interpretation the officer's statements or testimony, then that video must be reliable and accurately interpreted.<sup>4</sup> In addition, administrators need to understand and consider that officers under stress may have imperfect memories and their recall of an event may not be consistent with other evidence.<sup>5</sup>

Placing an officer on a *Brady/Giglio* list can effectively end their career and doing so should not be taken lightly. But when an officer clearly states, as in the example cited earlier, that certain things happened in a public hallway, and the video shows those things did not happen, then you have an issue that must be dealt with.

I will conclude with one final word of caution regarding hiring practices. It is difficult to confront the possibility that one of your own officers may commit an act worthy of being placed on a *Brady/Giglio* list. Then why would you want to hire someone who brings that issue with them from a previous agency? Any administrator who hires an officer from another department without doing a complete review of that officer's personnel and discipline files deserves what they get. It should be standard practice to obtain a release from the officer allowing an inspection of those records from the prior agency, especially when the officer has already separated from the prior agency.

(Endnotes)

<sup>1</sup> *Betton v. Knowles*, 2018 WL 4404073 (D. South Carolina 2018); *adopting report and recommendation* 2018 WL 3744957 (D.S.C. 2018); *aff'd* *Betton v. Belue*, 942 F.3d 184 (4<sup>th</sup> Circ. 2019); See also an article by Ken Wallentine of Lexipol which can be accessed at: <https://www.lexipol.com/resources/blog/officers-use-deadly-force-without-identifying-themselves-as-police/>

<sup>2</sup> For more on how *Brady/Giglio* can impact an officer's personnel file, see an article by Scott Sergeant of Lexipol entitled "Brady, Giglio and You: How the Duty to Disclose Exculpatory Information Impacts Police Disciplinary Files" at <https://www.lexipol.com/resources/blog/brady-giglio-and-you-how-the-duty-to-disclose-exculpatory-information-impacts-police-disciplinary-files/>

<sup>3</sup> *People v. Perino*, 76 A.D.3d 456 (2010)

<sup>4</sup> For issues related to interpretation of video evidence, see the article "Conclusive Evidence? Some Thoughts on the Limitations and Influence of Video Evidence" at <https://www.lexipol.com/resources/blog/conclusive-evidence-some-thoughts-on-the-limitations-and-influence-of-video-evidence/> and the Lexipol on-demand webinar "Point/Counterpoint: The Debate Over Officer Viewing of BWC Video" at <https://info.lexipol.com/body-worn-camera-on-demand-webinar>

<sup>5</sup> See an article by Jason Helfer of Lexipol entitled "Imperfect Recall: How Memory Impacts Police Use of Force Investigations" at <https://www.lexipol.com/resources/blog/imperfect-recall-how-memory-impacts-police-use-of-force-investigations/>

# Law Enforcement's Role in a Public Health Crisis

BY CHIEF STUART CAMERON  
SUFFOLK COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

All photo credits SCPD

Recently another emerging virus disease with origins outside the United States has garnered a great deal of attention within our nation. Like the Ebola Virus Disease, more commonly referred to as simply Ebola did several years ago; the Novel Coronavirus has recently captured the attention of the American public. The Novel Coronavirus emerged from outside the United States in a region of China late last year; much like two other Coronaviruses, SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) did in 2003 and MERS (Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome) did from the Middle East in 2012. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that affect the respiratory system and include the common cold. While much research remains to be done on the origins of this new virus, it is clear that transmission of the virus is similar to that of the common cold, by being exposed to droplets when infected people talk, sneeze or cough. Additionally the virus may survive on surfaces so indirect exposure could also be possible from touching



*The PPE required to protect responders from Ebola Virus Disease is akin to that of a hazardous materials response and far more than would be needed for a Coronavirus.*

these surfaces. It appears as though this new Coronavirus, like the flu, can be transmitted during its incubation period, before an individual exhibits any systems making efforts to contain the virus more challenging. Accordingly screening people for fever as they enter the county may not be as effective of a control measure as it was with Ebola. The incubation period for the Coronavirus could be up to fourteen days, meaning seemingly healthy people could be moving around and potentially spreading the virus to others without being aware that they are ill. A handful of cases of the Coronavirus had emerged in the United States as of January; however an important milestone was crossed when a human to human transmission occurred within our county.

Fortunately initial indications are that the fatality rate for this newly emerging Coronavirus is considerably lower than other Coronavirus that have recently emerged, such as MERS or SARS. MERS kills roughly one third of those who become infected with it, and SARS about one in ten of those infected. Initial estimates for the lethality of the Novel Coronavirus are from one to three percent of those who become infected. This compares to about one death in one thousand for the seasonal Flu and about a forty percent lethality rate for Ebola virus.

Like Ebola, MERS and SARS, the Novel Coronavirus is believed to be Zoonotic, meaning that the disease can be transmitted from non-human animals to humans. In the case of all four of these diseases the origin is believe to be from bats. Recently there has been an increase in emerging infectious diseases in the world. The majority of these illnesses are classified as zoonotic. Many scientists blame this rise on man's increasing disintegration of natural ecosystems through hunting, logging and other activities. These actions expose humans to new organisms, some of which can cause disease. When combined with the ease of worldwide

travel the impact of these newly emerging infectious diseases may increasingly affect wider areas of the globe.

While clearly any public health crisis is primarily a task relegated to our public health system, it also impacts directly upon law enforcement in a significant way, especially if the law enforcement agency provides any type of medical support or response. Law enforcement personnel must remember that the public may react based more upon fear than upon science. Fear will likely be exacerbated when the virus causing the illness is an emerging infectious disease that the public has little knowledge about or experience with. Fear can be heightened due to the widespread media attention devoted to any emerging illness. Few Americans fear influenza although it is the eighth leading cause of death, when combined with the deaths caused by flu related pneumonia, resulting in over 53,000 deaths in 2010 alone. Concern about influenza is so low that less than half of all Americans even bother to get a flu shot each year. This is most likely

due to the fact that people have become accustomed to the flu, clearly understand how it is spread and are aware of the potential consequences involved in becoming infected. Many people may have even had the flu and successfully recovered from it or know someone who has. People tend to fear that which they do not understand. In many cases the consequences of a disease outbreak may be dwarfed by the epidemic of panic that it causes.

Most law enforcement agencies train their members to help prevent them from exposure to blood borne pathogens. This training usually includes the use of personal protective equipment (PPE) including gloves, masks and eye wear. It is incumbent upon law enforcement agencies to do their utmost to prevent their staff from becoming ill. Disease is spread through a variety of mechanisms which are unique to each individual illness. Like the common cold the Novel Coronavirus spreads fairly easily through exposure to airborne droplets, either directly or from surfaces upon which they have been deposited. These droplets are created when infected people talk, cough or sneeze. Ebola on the other hand is spread by exposure to the bodily fluids of infected people or the infected deceased. Selecting the proper PPE to prevent infection is a key consideration. While Ebola is not an aerosolized hazard like the Coronavirus, certain bodily fluids can readily infect people, even in minute quantities, if they enter the body. Therefore Ebola is not very contagious, but it is highly infectious, while the Coronavirus is both highly contagious and infectious. Much like a hazardous materials response, the PPE recommended for potential Ebola exposure called for completely covering all skin surfaces, with fluid impervious material, and that multiple pairs of gloves be worn. The type of full body protection is unnecessary for Coronavirus. Knowing what PPE to Purchase is only one step in protecting personnel, promptly placing orders to obtain an



**Health, EMS, fire and police are briefed in preparation for a Point of Distribution exercise in Suffolk County.**

**Suffolk County Police Officers prepare to take their posts during a Point of Distribution exercise in Suffolk County.**

adequate amount of PPE is another concern. When masks, gloves and other protective equipment come into high demand, obtaining adequate amounts can become challenging.

In order to provide sufficient protection personnel must be trained in how to properly put PPE on, a process calling donning and also how to take it off, known as doffing. Training to properly don and doff PPE is part and parcel to the preparation for medical care and hazardous material workers. In the case of Ebola however, the level of PPE required was extremely stringent for health care workers. This level of PPE can also take a toll on those wearing it, which may translate into the need for increased staffing levels when compared to normal patient care.

Clearly it can be challenging to train and equip large numbers of first responders to properly don and doff PPE and the initial training is just step one in the process. Regularly scheduled refresher training is necessary to maintain proficiency, as is monitoring to ensure compliance. Sending someone into a potentially dangerous environment without adequate preparation is not a good idea.

Once identified personnel have been equipped and properly trained to utilize PPE, how will they know when to deploy it? Will these select infectious disease responders patrol continuously wearing this garb? Many 911 public safety answering points, PSAPs, have tools called Emerging Infectious Disease Systems. These tools provide a prescribed series of questions to assess the potential that someone calling for medical care may be at risk of being infected with a given emerging disease. This interrogation is comprised of two main lines of questioning, inquiry about symptomology and the potential for exposure. The questions regarding symptomology are designed to see if the patient may have any of the common symptoms of the infectious disease in question. The exposure questions generally inquire about recent

travel to the impacted area or potential exposure to an infected human or non-human animal. Certain animals are associated with the transmission of various diseases, such as pigs with swine flu or birds with avian flu. If the proper symptoms are present, along with a potential risk of exposure, the tool can be used to alert responding personnel of a potential risk for exposure. In this case, PPE should be donned prior to encountering any potentially infected individuals. In the case of the Novel Coronavirus, maintaining a distance of at least six feet from the patient can allow a safe in-person assessment of symptoms and travel history, which could then lead to donning PPE when necessary.

Even law enforcement agencies, who desire to minimize their role in an infectious disease outbreak, and notionally leave the response to their Department of Health, may need to get involved in isolation, quarantine or the distribution of medicine or other medical supplies. Isolation separates contagious sick people from those who are not sick to prevent the spread of illness. Quarantine separates and restricts the movement of people who may have been exposed to a contagious disease to see if they become sick. Clearly the isolation of people who are already sick and who present a more well-defined risk is far more clear-cut than the quarantine of people who are in jeopardy of becoming sick. The quarantine of those who may have been exposed is likely to be controversial, but clearly valuable in a virus like the Novel Coronavirus wherein virus shedding can occur prior to symptoms manifesting. Many have heard of Typhoid Mary, but may not be aware that she was an asymptomatic carrier of Typhoid Fever who made many people sick through her work as a cook. Mary Mallon, aka Typhoid Mary, had to be forcibly isolated to prevent her from making others sick.

The need to forcibly isolate or quarantine non-compliant individuals deemed to pose a risk of spreading an infectious



**Signs announce the entry point for a Point of Distribution exercise in Suffolk County.**



**Volunteers wait in line and are medically screened during a Point of Distribution exercise in Suffolk County.**







**Trucks sit at a loading dock in Suffolk County after delivering a training shipment of the Strategic National Stockpile of medication and supplies.**



**A training shipment of Strategic National Stockpile medication and supplies are offloaded at a warehouse in Suffolk County during an exercise.**

disease may likely involve law enforcement in some capacity, much as it did with Mary Mallon in the early twentieth century. Prior to initiating this process, clear legal authority, guidelines and procedures should be developed or reviewed. For example, who can order isolation or quarantine, public health alone or would it require a court order? How would it be enforced and what violation of law would be charged? Clearly no agency would want to arrest an infectious disease carrier and bring them into a police facility. How would they be transported if they needed to be relocated? These and other practical questions need to be addressed in advance to protect law enforcement officers from unnecessary exposure.

The added responsibilities that law enforcement agencies would likely face during a severe public health crisis would be at a time when a department's staff would also likely be depleted due to illness, furthering increasing the burden. Reassuring staff members that an agency has a well throughout plan to protect them from becoming ill while they perform their duties is also critical. Staff members who are concerned with becoming ill themselves or with bringing illness home to their families will be much less effective.

Many large public health outbreaks may exceed the capacity of local health care and exhaust regional supplies. If this were to occur it is possible that the Strategic National Stockpile or SNS may be activated. The SNS is a large cache of medicines and medical supplies maintained by the Centers for Disease Control. These supplies contain enough equipment and drugs to protect the American public during a public health emergency, whether from natural origins or from a bio-terrorism attack. Since these supplies will need to be brought into the affected area from outside, security must be provided to ensure the integrity of the shipment. Once the supplies have arrived and been broken down they will be dispensed to the public at locations called points of distribution or PODs. Law enforcement will be enlisted to provide security at PODs to maintain order. One might only look toward the chaos that occurred when gasoline or food is in short supply after a Hurricane or other

natural disaster to see the necessity for this type of operation. These medical supplies may mean the difference between life and death or the public may perceive that they do. In extreme cases, large public health emergencies have the potential to generate civil unrest, especially if the public feels that there may be inadequate amounts of medical supplies for themselves or their families.

Law enforcement support may also be enlisted to track the movements of those who have been infected and determine who may have been exposed. While this is primarily the responsibility of public health, it would be hard to argue that law enforcement officers may possess unique resources to facilitate this endeavor, such as access to databases or electronic investigative tools unavailable to health agencies.

Emerging disease can also cross paths with law enforcement when the police are requested to check on the welfare of an individual or respond to an unattended death. In the case of those who have died as a result of Ebola, their corpses are highly contagious. Simply coming into contact with a body to verify if it has a pulse without the use of PPE may be enough to cause infection.

Law enforcement agencies should prepare in advance for a public health emergency just as they would for any other type of crisis. One component of this preparation is training their staff to know how they can continue to work without becoming infected or carrying infection home to their families. This type of training is crucial as it may help to mitigate work force attrition due to the fear of infection. Preparing to respond to crisis situations should include planning for all types of hazards, whether they are manmade or natural, weather related or health related. Emerging infectious diseases are but one crisis looming large on the radar screen as we live our lives in the twenty-first century. Unfortunately law enforcement agencies will no doubt play a role in them all. Implementing multifaceted, all hazard, advance planning will greatly contribute to confidence in an agency among the public and its employees.



**A training shipment of Strategic National Stockpile medications and supplies are repackaged for local delivery at a warehouse in Suffolk County during an exercise. Local deliveries may require a police escort to protect the items when they leave the warehouse.**



**A Suffolk County Police Officer assists in establishing a cordon around the county's SNS warehouse during an exercise.**

# EMERGENCY VEHICLE OPERATIONS COURSE (EVOC) FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

BY DAVID BLOODGOOD - RISK MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR-  
LAW ENFORCEMENT FOR NYMIR (NEW YORK MUNICIPAL INSURANCE RECIPROCAL)

While law enforcement officers must receive annual training in a variety of areas including firearms, use of force and arrest procedures, one important responsibility that does not typically receive the same training attention is EVOC (Emergency Vehicle Operations Course). Police agencies identify various impediments to providing EVOC training. These include costs associated with overtime, availability of training facilities, and wear and tear on vehicles to be used for the training, etc. This is compounded by a failure to prioritize this type of training and treat it with the same level of concern as use of force or firearms. However, given the significant portion of a departmental budget dedicated to police cars, not to mention the potential for liability, injury, and repair costs that often result from vehicle response calls that go badly, the cost factor is one that a Department needs to evaluate by taking all factors into account. Training on all law enforcement policies and in the use of equipment is done for reasons of safety for the officers and the public, as well as to minimize liability. The need for officers to competently handle their service weapon is unquestioned. The need to drive competently under all situations that an officer can be expected to encounter is just as important, however, because the vehicle itself can be a weapon if not handled properly. Officers may have abundant experience behind the wheel driving under general conditions, but this does not mean that they maintain any measurable standard of driving skill required by an emergency response call. Often, after a new officer has completed the academy's driver training, little attention is paid to sharpening skills behind the wheel or providing the scenario-based training that teaches effective driver judgment in stressful response situations.

Officers spend a great deal of time behind the wheel of their patrol

vehicle. They drive in all weather, under varying circumstances, from routine patrol to emergency response. The handling characteristics of large, powerful patrol vehicles are quite different from those of the small and mid-sized, front wheel drive family vehicles frequently defining a young officer's prior driving experience. When officers fail to adequately understand the capabilities and limitations of both the vehicle and themselves, mistakes in judgment can occur. Court decisions over the years suggest that liability can accrue to departments which rely mainly on the initial training provided by the academy, and fail to provide regular, on-going emergency vehicle operations driver training. Opposing attorneys' assertions of "deliberate indifference" or "vicarious liability" become problematic in the absence of training records demonstrating an

effective emergency vehicle operations driver training program. A well-crafted, regularly implemented program is instrumental in reducing the potential for crashes and lawsuits. It also illustrates your department's commitment to the safety of your officers and the community you serve.

The benefits of EVOC training include:

- Better overall skills in handling the patrol vehicle
- Reduced risk to the public overall, not just when an officer is in pursuit
- Reduced risk to the officer throughout the shift and during a call response or high-speed pursuit
- Better decision-making skills on when to pursue and when not to pursue
- Reduced risk of lawsuits from accidents
- Lower repair costs for vehicles







Numerous EVOC training components can be employed alone or in various combinations. Simulator programs have the benefit of providing scenario-based training which is designed to improve judgment with exercises not easily replicated in the field. More difficult to arrange is behind the wheel training. A 2009 study by the California Commission on Peace Officer Standards & Training found that a blend of simulator and behind the wheel training yielded the biggest reduction in crashes when post training performance was measured. Interestingly, in this study, the simulator alone provided better results than behind the wheel training alone. This highlights the importance of focusing on good decision-making with simulator training and reinforcing this with solid, hands-on, behind the wheel instruction.

A rundown of best practices recommended by the Commission is as follows:

- Mandate 24-month standard for driver training component of the perishable skills program (PSP) at a minimum
- Blend simulator with behind the wheel training
- Train at speeds equivalent to emergency operating speeds
- Use interference cars to simulate traffic
- Use similar vehicle to patrol vehicle for the training
- Perform training during hours of darkness
- Incorporate emergency vehicle operations into field training program
- Use simulators to provide situational training as a regular component of in-service training.

Even if a law enforcement agency is willing to commit the financial resources mentioned above in terms of overtime and vehicles, the challenge for most remains the access to the training and equipment. Access to a suitable emergency vehicle operations course and/or a simulator is not always convenient available nearby. A suitable site for training may be as close as the nearest abandoned shopping plaza or industrial plant. Even your local high school parking lot or stadium may be available. Perhaps a neighboring agency has a site they use which could be borrowed or rented. Consider teaming up with other agencies to share such facilities and instructors. Getting access to a driver simulator to be used on the site to maximize the effectiveness of the training using both simulated and hands on exercises would be a terrific bonus. The public is typically very supportive of such training, so invite local media to cover this activity to report on the purpose and benefits of the training. As always, documentation of such training can be critical to the success of any legal defense if your agency is sued because of a police vehicle response incident. The opposing attorney will ask for your department's policy and the training



*Police Academy Director Joe Strano at EVOC training at New Era Field in Erie County.*

records for your agency and the officer(s) involved. The Osceola County Sheriff's Office in Florida conducted a study gathering information on officer involved crashes for the 6 months before and 6 months after their "aggressive EVOC training program." The results were a 38% decrease in at-fault crashes (a payoff from crash avoidance training), and a 56% decrease in deductibles paid out. By compiling information on current driver incidents as a baseline going into the training, police agencies can use the demonstrated improvement post-training as a compelling argument for additional funding for future EVOC hands-on training coupled with simulator training.

To conclude, establishing and maintaining a regular, documented EVOC program that educates on best practices and use of both simulator and hands-on training is strongly suggested for an agency's agenda. The payoffs in terms of fewer crashes, fewer injuries and lost workdays, reduced liability and property damage, lower repair costs and protecting your agency's reputation are just a few compelling reasons to make this training a part of your agency's routine.

Resources: Hendon Media Group – Law Enforcement Publications and Conferences State of West Virginia Department of Public Safety California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training.

*Pictures courtesy of Academy Director Joe Strano*



## Employing Technology to Keep Students Safe

The Suffolk County Police Department is one of the largest municipal police departments in the country and consistent with most other law enforcement agencies in America, no matter the size; school safety is of paramount concern. The Suffolk County Police Department has been working collaboratively with schools for decades to enhance the safety of students throughout the county. These efforts are challenging given that the county

concept to using even smaller entry teams to further reduce the time needed to engage an attacker.

Published studies have indicated that once a mass shooting begins someone is shot every 15 seconds. As disturbing as that statistic is, in some of the more recent mass shootings wherein attackers have employed assault rifles that time has been reduced significantly, often with victims being shot every second. Time has



*Chief Stuart Cameron points out simulated attacker within the West Babylon Junior High School during drill to test the capability of the SHARE program.*



*Suffolk County officers arrive at door to West Babylon HS which was remotely opened from police HQ over 30 miles away using the department SHARE program.*

is home to two Boards of Cooperative Educational Services and sixty-nine separate school districts, far more independent districts than in the vast majority of counties nationwide. The county has hundreds of school buildings and well over 200,000 students attending school from Kindergarten to twelfth grade.

Clearly preventing an act of mass violence in a school is the best possible outcome and therefore all threats must be fully and completely investigated. Threat assessment teams formed in conjunction with school staff can be very valuable to vet school based threats. There is no accurate profile of a school attacker, school shootings have been perpetrated by very young students, male and female students as well as former and non-students. As a result no threat can be dismissed outright and all need to be thoroughly investigated.

Once an attack begins, sadly the best that can often be achieved is to mitigate the harm caused to students and staff. One way to do this is for law enforcement agencies to adopt the rapid deployment concept wherein the first arriving officers enter to neutralize the attacker and end the violence as rapidly as possible. The rapid deployment concept has now been almost universally adopted by law enforcement agencies in the United States and many agencies have transitioned from the initial four officer diamond formation

always been a factor, but now more than ever stopping an attacker as quickly as possible is imperative.

Many schools now operate with a single point of entry or visitor entrance during school days. All other doors are locked. Quite often the visitor entrance is locked as well and only opened after people seeking entry have been vetted. Once reports of an active shooter attack in a school are received by law enforcement; rapidly responding to the school; entering the building; and locating and engaging the attacker can prevent additional students and staff members from falling victim to the attacker. Seconds truly mean lives when an active shooter is engaged in killing innocent people.

Suffolk County has now employed significant technology to assist with both streamlining the notification process that an event is on progress, as well as the subsequent response based upon this notification.

The county funded a cellular based application and made it available to all school districts that wanted to utilize it. Making a common platform available to all schools countywide vastly simplifies the adoption and operation for this type of technology. If each school had independently purchased this type of technology there would likely be no uniformity and implementation would be extremely challenging, especially given the large number



*Suffolk County Police officers seek out the simulated attacker with guidance from the department's Real Time Crime Center.*

of independent school districts in the county. Additionally, maintaining proficiency with a host of different platforms would have been extremely difficult for the police department.

The cellular based product that was selected allows school staff members, who have installed the application on their phones, to immediately notify the department that an active shooter attack is underway simply by pressing a button on their phone. A second press can connect them to the police communications section via a phone call to 911. This system complements another system that had been implemented several years prior using dedicated POTS (Plain Old Telephone Service) phone lines that bypass 911 and call directly into the department's communication section supervisor's office. This hotline ensures that these calls can never get caught in the 911 queue and that school administrators can always get through to the police department. Notification to the department via the application or the hotline also increases the credibility that the event is actually in progress, given the restricted access to these platforms solely to designated school staff members.

Lack of prompt situational awareness that an attack is underway within schools has increased casualties in prior attacks, wherein staff members were slow to implement protective measures due to a lack of knowledge that an attack was occurring. The cellular based application immediately notifies all other users of the application in the affected school building that an attack is underway so that they can take appropriate actions, such as implementing a lock down protocol. This ensures that if one staff member who has the application installed is aware that an attack is in progress, that this information can be readily and effectively shared with other users providing real time notification.

Once the department has been notified that a potential active shooter incident is occurring within a school in Suffolk County, the coordination of an effective and rapid response to stop the attacker is the overriding goal. At this point the department's newly implemented SHARE (Sharing to Help Access Remote Entry) program would assist officers responding to the scene. The department's SHARE program, as the name implies, allows schools to share their existing technology with the department to enhance the ability to assist the school during a life or death emergency. Most schools can share their existing technology at little or no cost.

Many schools already have technology installed that could

assist the police during a response to an incident of this nature. Technology such as closed circuit television cameras, electronic access control systems and public address systems, if accessible to law enforcement, could dramatically impact upon the ability to end an attack with greater effectiveness and rapidity. The SHARE program provides the ability for school districts to leverage their existing technology to assist the police in a response to a life or death situation.

Remote access to CCTV cameras enables law enforcement to remotely see into a school as soon as the department is put on notice that an attack is underway. On the department's side, SHARE access is housed in the department's real time crime center. Detectives and crime analysts from the department's Criminal Intelligence Section can remotely log into school based CCTV systems and begin looking for the attacker. In many cases accessible cameras are plotted on a schematic of the school building which is overlaid onto a satellite map of the surrounding area around the school building. This facilitates rapid access to the appropriate camera or cameras once the general location of the attacker is reported to the department. Simply rolling a mouse over the camera icon brings up that camera's view which allows precise and expeditious scanning for an aggressor within the school.

Once an attacker is located, valuable information can be relayed to responding units, such as the exact location of the suspect, the description of and the number of attackers and the type of weapon being employed. Screen shots or even live video streams can also be pushed out to responding patrol cars. Intelligence on the number and location of victims can be shared with Emergency Medical Service providers so that they can tailor their response accordingly.

Camera access can also include access to prerecorded video on DVRs within the school buildings. The vast majority of active shooter incidents involve a lone attacker; however reports of multiple attackers often slow and have stymied the response of police and EMS in prior events. Viewing the timeline of the attack in reverse can allay these concerns by confirming that only one individual was involved, thereby speeding access to medical care and allowing students and staff to be reunited with their families much more rapidly.

Reversing the video may also provide insight into the identity of an attacker if, for example, they could be followed back to their automobile. If the suspect can be tentatively identified, analysts



in the department's real time crime center can immediately begin research on the suspect, including searching social media. Some attackers have posted material on social media shortly prior to launching their attacks. Accessing this information rapidly could be useful in bringing the event to a conclusion; however it would clearly have tremendous value if the suspect was able to leave the attack site prior to being apprehended by law enforcement.

As stated earlier, most schools now operate with exterior doors locked while school is in session. In many cases this will mean that responding officers will also be locked out of the building when responding to an active shooter event. The additional time it may take officers to enter the building will likely result in additional casualties. This point was driven home dramatically when Seung-Hui Cho chained and locked the three main entrances to Norris Hall closed shortly before launching his attack on the campus of Virginia Tech back in 2007. As was his apparent intent, Cho was able to shoot additional students and staff members due to the additional time that it took for officers to breach their way into the building.

For departments with only a few schools in their area of responsibility, each officer could be provided with a key to enter the schools, however in large jurisdictions with numerous schools this solution isn't viable. With hundreds of schools in Suffolk County keys were not the answer. Another component of the SHARE program allows doors equipped with electronic access control systems to be remotely opened from the department's real time crime center. Responding officers can be directed to respond to the accessible door nearest the attacker, which can then be remotely opened, even from miles away.

Finally SHARE can allow the department to broadcast remotely on a school's public address system. This capability could have multiple uses in different stages of the response. If appropriate, instructions could be given to an attacker or guidance could be given to responding officers. In many large school buildings, especially those constructed to LEEDS (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards, radio connectivity within the building can be challenging. The low-emissivity coatings used on the windows of these buildings to save energy can also block radio transmissions. While certainly not an ideal way to address responding officers it could serve as a valuable redundancy to



*The department's helicopter downlink provides bird's eye view when the simulated attacker is stopped by a patrol car after fleeing the scene.*

radio transmissions at various stages of the response.

Perhaps the most beneficial aspect of this capability would be speaking directly with students and staff to keep them informed of the ongoing response to the event. Clearly being in a building during a shooting would be extremely traumatic. Often fully clearing a large structure could take hours and keeping those who are sheltered in place aware of the ongoing progress of law enforcement response could dramatically lessen this trauma. One of the students who survived the attack on the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School told a reporter during a media interview after the event that while sheltered in a classroom he didn't know if the next person to come into the room would be the shooter to kill him or the police to rescue him. Minimizing this type of trauma to whatever degree possible is important for the recovery of those who weren't physically harmed, but who will no doubt suffer serious consequences from the anguish of the ordeal.

As with all efforts in law enforcement, excellence is not an end state, but rather an ongoing endeavor. This is especially true when it comes to the response to life or death situations. Continuous efforts should be made to improve prevention and response capabilities for active shooter situations as lives will depend upon it, and in the case of schools the lives of the most precious may hang in the balance.

An aerial view of a large brick building complex, likely a hotel or conference center, surrounded by greenery and mountains in the background. The text is overlaid on the image in a bold, red, sans-serif font.

**—Save the Date—**  
**Annual Training  
Conference**  
**July 19-22, 2020**

An inset image showing the entrance of The Queensbury Hotel, a brick building with a black awning over the entrance and a large 'Q' logo on the awning. The text 'The Queensbury Hotel' is written in a red, serif font below the image.

*The Queensbury Hotel*



# Laissez Faire Leaders

BY CHIEF (RET.) GREG VEITCH



All leaders have a style. A general way in which they go about their business in their leadership role. Some are active and engaged, some tend to avoid their responsibilities. Some styles of leadership tend to be more effective than others. Among the least effective styles is laissez faire leadership.

Essentially, laissez faire leaders tend to avoid making decisions, do not take stands on issues and do not engage with followers. They do not emphasize results, and do not follow up with employees or give feedback about performance. Laissez faire leaders have an attitude of, “whatever you want to do is fine with me.”

This is not to say that laissez faire leaders have any ill-intent or do not understand what good, effective leadership is. Sometimes the laissez faire leader avoids making decisions because they are not sure what their boss thinks about an issue and they do not want to be at odds with the administration. Laissez faire leaders may not enforce standards of conduct or address mediocre performance because they do not want to be the “bad guy.” Often, laissez faire leaders avoid engaging with followers or making decisions because other leaders in the organization are not doing so either.

From a performance standpoint, we will often find disciplinary breakdowns where we find laissez faire leaders. Evidence rooms that are not squared away, poorly written reports, uniform standards that slip, lax officers safety practices and officers that find their own

short cuts and work arounds that may or may not be within policy, are all outcomes that tend to be the result of laissez faire leadership.

Followers that have a laissez faire leader will sometimes think, “this is great, the boss leaves us alone to get the job done!” In the long term however, followers will come to resent a laissez faire leader who leaves followers to make decisions that properly belong at a higher level. They will become frustrated by the lack of direction and accountability within the group. Sadly, when a laissez faire leader fails to give feedback on performance, followers often have no realistic idea of where they stand regarding their own performance.

How many times have we seen someone who is shocked when they did not get a promotion, and had no idea that their performance has been sub-standard, maybe even for years? Often, we find that someone in that situation has had a laissez faire leader who wanted to be the good guy and did not address mediocrity or care enough to push that subordinate to higher levels of performance.

All of us, at one time or another and for any number of reasons, have acted like a laissez faire leader. But real leaders have the courage to engage with followers even when they don’t feel like it. Effective leaders take on the responsibility to make decisions and hold people accountable. Good leaders do not shy away from giving appropriate, realistic feedback to employees. There is no question where true leaders stand on important issues. The best leaders choose not to take a laissez faire approach to their leadership role.

The question all leaders need to ask themselves is this, have I been acting like a laissez faire leader?

## Patch History

This is an image of the newly designed City of Auburn Police Department shoulder patch. It was the idea of Deputy Chief Roger Anthony, with assistance and input from members of

our Department. The new patch incorporates part of the old patch, that being the City of Auburn Seal with the Latin phrase “Pax et Labor” or Peace and Work, as well as our new department motto, “Expect Excellence” and a patriotic symbol being the flag. We feel the patch encompasses a new refreshed symbol of a progressive department.



The patch has remained relatively unchanged for approximately 50 years. It is in the shape of a keystone, as the Town of Tonawanda, meaning “swift waters” was once named the “Keystone of the Niagara

Frontier.” This was due to the town’s location on the Niagara River, the Erie Canal, and the Buffalo-Niagara Railroad, and its’ significant agricultural production and industrial base. Within the larger keystone, is a circle that was made to resemble the official Town of Tonawanda seal. The center keystone inscribed with “1836” represents the year the Town of Tonawanda was incorporated.



# OpOverwatch

BY DAVE BUDZ

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF OPOVERWATCH



Law Enforcement is an incredibly difficult profession that, by its nature, places officers face to face with some of the darkest elements of society, along with some of the most historically tragic events. Over the last four years, the number of reported Law Enforcement Officers who have taken their own lives has exceeded the number of on-duty deaths. According to Blue Help ([bluehelp.org](http://bluehelp.org)), in 2016, 143 suicides were reported. In 2017, there were 168 suicides reported. In 2018, 172 suicides were reported to Blue Help, and in 2019, the number of suicides climbed to 228. These numbers paint a serious problem in law enforcement and one that OpOverwatch is designed to address.

OpOverwatch seeks to join the battle for those who wear the badge and provide an outlet of hope that will improve the lifestyle of all officers who deal with the daily effects of accumulated trauma that is inherent to the job.

OpOverwatch is a nonprofit ministry, headquartered in Western New York. We are a unified group of Christ centered Law Enforcement Officers (LEO) and Chaplains striving together in order to minister to all those who wear the badge. Our group is made up of law enforcement officers and chaplains from across New York State, with representatives in other states as well. We draw our members (active and retired) from the New York State Police, sheriff's offices, various federal agencies, and many local law enforcement agencies.

OpOverwatch was founded in 2019 with the vision of providing all LEO's with the opportunity to hear about a new identity that is greater and more fulfilling than an identity that is built on the badge. In March of 2019, local officers and chaplains organized an initial vision casting, attended by approximately 75 chaplain and LEO representatives. Soon after, an OpOverwatch communication platform was developed on WhatsApp that reflected a loose membership in OpOverwatch. This platform was used for informative purposes, as well as encouraging and exhorting one another. In less than one year, more than 100 chaplains and LEOs joined the OpOverwatch communication platform.

Leadership of OpOverwatch has a proven track record of working with numerous local, county, state, and federal law enforcement agencies, as well as churches, ministries, and benevolent organizations. Relationships have been built and exercised over the hundreds of combined years of law enforcement and chaplaincy experience found in our organization members.

OpOverwatch leadership has established, and is currently building, community partners that include the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police, Word of Life Ministries, Kingdom Bound Ministries, Crawford Broadcasting, as well as multiple local, county, and state law enforcement agencies.

Since March of 2019, OpOverwatch has organized two fellowship events, and we are in the process of planning and leading the LEO Identity Conference & Retreat, hosted by Word of Life Lodge in the Adirondack Mountains, Schroon Lake, NY. A link to Register can be found at the end of this article.

OpOverwatch has a clear plan to help our fellow LEO in need

and our approach is unique, in that we desire to help our hurting brothers and sisters through leveraging the relationships of those whom already work in the same profession. OpOverwatch will supplement this mission by remaining obedient within four distinct strategic paths. The four paths are as follows:

**EDIFICATION** – This is the building up of those who make up our membership. Members engage in a variety of fellowship activities that are centered on an understanding of our identity as taught in the Bible. This peer focus includes men's groups, women's groups, as well as time spent together as couples.

**BENEVOLENCE** – OpOverwatch is devising tangible ways in which we can reach those who have been through trauma on the job and provide that knowledge that they are loved and not alone. Benevolence will manifest itself in various ways, such as meals provided by fellow law enforcement families.

**OUTREACH** – Our outreach program will foster relationships, and create environments, at which all LEO's can gather with one another and expand their peer relationships. These outreach events will be hosted in various venues across Western New York. They will always be designed around food, fun, and encouraging testimonies from fellow officers. These events will be organized and led by law enforcement officers serving their fellow officers.

**TRAINING** – We will use the God given skills & assets within OpOverwatch to raise up the absolute highest level of chaplains and chaplain liaisons. These men and women will be properly equipped to bring hope into every department/barracks in which they are assigned. We are currently writing a chaplaincy curriculum that will be offered to those who qualify as potential OpOverwatch chaplains. Additionally, our leadership personnel have years of classroom experience and field service experience in law enforcement in the areas of trauma health, trauma recovery, trauma response, trauma stress, peer counseling, Biblical counseling, post shooting/critical incident counseling, crisis Intervention, and a variety of field training instruction.

The problem of hopelessness in the ranks of Law Enforcement is getting worse. The law enforcement officers and chaplains that make up OpOverwatch have one resolute desire: To bring relief, identity, and hope to those who are lost in their pain, among the ranks of Law Enforcement.

About the author

Dave Budz is a 17 year veteran of the FBI, is an ordained minister, and is the Executive Director OpOverwatch. He can be contacted at [OpOverwatchministry@gmail.com](mailto:OpOverwatchministry@gmail.com).

To register for the Conference and Retreat, visit:  
<https://camps.wol.org/retreat/law-enforcement-retreat/>  
<https://www.facebook.com/Phil127/>

# Buffalo Police Department Gun Violence Reduction Strategy

## Mini Notifications to Custom Notifications

BY JOSEPH A. GRAMAGLIA, DEPUTY POLICE COMMISSIONER FOR OPERATIONS/HOMELAND SECURITY

**A**s 2018 was ending, the Buffalo Police Department noticed a disturbing trend in our community throughout that year. There was an increase in shooting homicides compared to the previous year. We also noticed that our nonfatal shootings remained consistent from prior years.

All shootings and violent crimes are unacceptable at any level and when we identified any increase or fail to notice a decrease in these crime categories, we recognized there was a need for further action

**We needed to alter our course of action and be more preventative through procedural justice interventions.**

to drive those numbers down. In police work we tend to dwell on numbers. However, these numbers are not abstract, but rather reflect real people affected by real violence. We recognized that our goal must be to reduce the number of victims of gun violence and thereby save real lives in our community.



Overall the police officers of the Buffalo Police Department work very hard day in and day out making arrests for guns and gun crimes. Over the years, their efforts have been rewarded by removing a significant number of guns from the streets of Buffalo. For example, in 2019, our officers removed 949 guns from the street; in 2018 we seized 823 guns; and in 2017, 709 guns were recovered. However, we recognized that something had to change. We needed to alter our course of action and be more preventative through procedural justice interventions.

In January of 2018, Byron C. Lockwood was appointed Police Commissioner and made it known that his focus was to increase

**We discovered that rebuilding trust in neighborhoods is a marathon, stopping gun violence was a sprint and we needed to get running with immediate action.**

community policing by making every officer a community police officer. It is his mission to connect with the very people we serve so we can work together to build trust. That was the basis behind the

creation of a new unit, the Neighborhood Engagement Team (NET). This was a dedicated unit of police officers that had a different mission, to work with youth and communities, get imbedded into the communities and develop a level of trust that has not been achieved before. They started a soccer clinic that went on weekly for the entire summer on a street corner. They took kids fishing, to Buffalo Bills football and Sabres hockey games, started an after school tutoring/homework help program, food and clothing drives and many other things. This dedicated unit is having a very positive impact in the communities plagued by violence over the years.

However, despite our best efforts throughout 2018, we were plagued by gun violence across the city. As part of our enhanced community policing efforts, there is a regular process of self-evaluation where we take a hard look at violent crime numbers and how best to adjust our community efforts and enforcement strategies. It was imperative that we discover an effective method to stop the violence that was occurring on our city streets. The current strategy of targeted enforcement actions alone was not the answer.

We discovered that rebuilding trust in neighborhoods is a marathon, stopping gun violence was a sprint and we needed to get running with immediate action. Based on this concept, we added another component to our strategy and that was the Ceasefire Concept of Custom Notifications.

The Ceasefire Concept of Custom Notifications was something that we had previously used on a small scale. It involved our officers and community advocates visiting those vulnerable group members prone to violence. During those visits, the officers would tell the individuals that we knew what they were doing, warned them to stop the violence, and offer a way out for them. District Police Chief's along with community members would visit the homes of group members at risk for gun violence and convey a message that we know about their criminal activities and criminal associates. The community advocates in the team would also share their prior life's story on the streets with the goal of generating trust and understanding of our process to the group member. Team members would then advise on how to get back into school or GED program and offer to assist with finding employment or counseling. However, we realized this was not adequate for the results we hoped to achieve. We had to do more! ▶



Driving home from Albany, N.Y. in October of 2018 from the Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) Gun Involved Violence Elimination (GIVE) symposium, BPD Chief of Detectives Dennis J. Richards and I were discussing this topic and our concern about the increase in gun violence and an idea came to mind: Vastly ramp up our notifications to at-risk group members using the grant funds supplied by DCJS for gun violence. Our plan was simple; direct our police officers to start knocking on the doors of at-risk group members and associates based on the following criteria:

- Information revealed by social media posts provided by the Erie County Crime Analysis center (ECAC);
- Identify persons known to officers who are in the identified at-risk groups;
- Persons who have been shot or shot at; and known shooters.

These visits would be made by the police only, without community partners. The officers would show up at their homes unannounced to notify the individual that we were aware of their criminal activities,

### Our increased notification effort commenced in November 2018 and was met with resistance by some officers.

we were actively watching them, and encouraged them to stop any criminal or violent activity. The individual was also advised that if necessary, there would be future visits! We called these police-only visits “Mini-Notifications” as opposed to Custom Notifications, which included community partners.

Our increased notification effort commenced in November 2018 and was met with resistance by some officers. They thought we were giving up valuable intelligence information by making the at-risk group members aware that we see their social media posts and pictures posing with guns. Part of our procedures when visiting the homes would be to show the individual and their family members these social media posts to prove the veracity of our information. We had to educate our officers that this was about proactively saving lives through immediate intervention, not collecting pictures. The

### The strength of this program is volume and repetition.

more visits at individual homes, the more the word traveled that we were serious about stopping the violence. Once we discuss the intelligence we gathered and convinced the person they were under surveillance by the police, we transition into our outreach program where offers were made for educational assistance, counseling and/or assistance in getting a job. If there is no desire on the part of the individual for our help, they at least know we are still watching and will become a fixture in their lives. The hope is that, regardless if our offer for assistance is accepted, our message is quite clear – stay away from guns!

The strength of this program is volume and repetition. If necessary, there will be multiple visits to individual homes. Discussion would center, not only with the targeted individual, but their families as well. If we miss the identified person but get to spend some time with their families, we consider that a positive outcome for our visit. There were several families that had no idea what their loved one was doing and were shocked by what they learned.

Our officers have gone to homes that traditionally have received visits of an enforcement nature and the occupants wouldn’t open the door. However, with our Mini Notification visits, our officers would convey that they weren’t there to arrest anyone or search anything.

Instead the message was that we were there to help and would like an opportunity to have a face to face discussion to help keep their family member from being injured or killed by gun violence. Once that message was received, the doors would open wide!

Mini Notification visits are planned prior to the start of each patrol shift. In some visits, officers were joined by FBI Safe Streets Task Force Officers which includes Buffalo Police Detectives. We generally target more hardened and violent offenders for these visits. Having FBI personnel in attendance at a group member’s door sometimes makes a bigger impact than a more traditional visit. As an example of how the process works, the Mini Notification team made a quick change on who they were visiting that day after identifying a person who was the target of a shooting earlier in the day. The person was not injured but during their visit, the team made him aware that he was at future risk of being shot and injured if he didn’t change his ways. The team message also included a stern warning that retaliation by him or any of his friends to the most recent shooting would guarantee a swift reaction by the police. The next day, the team returned to the person’s home armed with information that he flashed a gun at someone and fired a shot in retaliation for the shooting the day before. This visit engendered a longer talk with both the suspect and his mother. During the talk, he shed tears knowing that his life had to change, and he turned over a .357 caliber handgun to the officers. He was not charged with the gun based on his cooperation. This incident is a perfect example of the overall goal and the effectiveness of the Mini Notification program: Immediate response to gun violence, interrupt the violence, and in the end save lives.

Over the course of the program, Mini Notifications have increased from 81 documented contacts in 2018 to 452 notification in 2019, an increase of over 2400%. When you add in the community partner Custom Notifications, which are still occurring, we logged over 500 visits to at-risk group members. In those 500 notification attempts, we visited approximately 300 different people, some as many as 5 times with the majority receiving 1-2 visits. During this process of visits, we are actively tracking how many of the people we visit are arrested, are injured by gunfire, or are (uninjured) shooting victims, after our notifications. Out of those 300 people, 5 were shot post notification and 15 were arrested for gun possession.

The effects of increased community outreach and mini notifications are evident; YTD numbers from January 1 through December 22 since 2014 are as follows;

Year	Shooting Victims	Shooting Homicide Victims
2019	181	34
2018	229	43
2017	232	32
2016	293	33
2015	239	32
2014	239	46

Overall the Mini Notification Program has been a great success. This is due to the level of support and dedication of the officers of the Buffalo Police Department! Thanks to their efforts the Mini Notification program has made significant inroads in saving lives and reducing gun violence in our community. I would encourage other police departments that are experiencing a problem with gun violence, to examine our program and build off our success.

Deputy Commissioner Gramaglia can be reached at [jagramaglia@bpdny.org](mailto:jagramaglia@bpdny.org)



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# Police Suicide: Taking Care of Our Own

## Confronting Stress, Reducing Risk

BY CHIEF PATRICK PHELAN, PRESIDENT NYS ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE  
AND CHIEF (RET.) MARK A. SPAWN

### Cops Taking Their Own Lives – A Global Tragedy

The headlines are chilling – NYPD Mourning Again After Off-Duty Officer Takes His Own Life<sup>1</sup>, Sergeant is 10th NYPD Officer to Die By Suicide this Year<sup>2</sup>, Chicago Police Officer Takes His Own Life On West Side<sup>3</sup>, Ottawa Robbery Detective, 35, Dies by Suicide in Headquarters<sup>4</sup>, Worrying Rise in Police Suicides Leaves France Confronting Taboos Around Mental Health<sup>5</sup>. The number of incidents where police officers have died by suicide is upsetting, and as you can see from these headlines – all from 2019 – it is not only prevalent in the United States. Even more concerning, the numbers that cause our alarm are inevitably larger. For those who have spent time researching this area, there is consensus on one main issue – there is an underreporting of suicide. Also, there is no single definition of what a ‘law enforcement suicide’ is. What about the police officer who retired days, weeks, months or years following their years as a cop? Beyond the semantics and technicalities, one thing is clear: this is a real problem in our profession and we have to do something about it.

Cops witness firsthand the pressures, tragedies and trauma of our world, things that other people just don’t want to know about – a car load of teens killed in a car crash; mangled bodies; shootings, knifings, homicides, suicides, predators who victimize children, babies, and the elderly; and then there are internal and external

**This is a real problem in our profession and we have to do something about it.**

pressures to solve crimes; unrealistic caseloads, lack of support from administrators, municipalities and communities; distrust in our work and ethics because of anti-police rhetoric; Monday morning quarterbacking in the news and even from our own when you had to make a decision in a matter of seconds with limited information, only to be judged by uninformed people and groups with unrealistic expectations. Add to all of this the amount of time when an officer is “on”, with a heightened sense of awareness, watching for conflict, being alert to danger, it can compound the stress we are already feeling.

The way we cope with stress depends on a number of factors – the amount and type of stressors we encounter, our support systems (family, friends and colleagues, supervisors), the stigma of seeking out help, and our physical health. With a progressive mindset to the topic of the mental health of law enforcement officers, along with appropriate outlets to de-stress, people to talk to, colleagues to share common experiences, and mental health professionals to assist, we can all make a difference.

### Traditional Culture of Law Enforcement

Because we are a paramilitary institution, the traditional law enforcement culture has been to just “deal with it”, or to “keep it to yourself”. We do ask our officers to be many things – helpers, defenders, de-escalators, negotiators, and at times, warriors. For

**...we have cleared a path to encouraging officers to learn about stress, talk about stressful incidents, and get help.**

those of us who began our careers more than ten or even twenty years ago, you may not have considered seeking help. You kept it to yourself, or perhaps were told to keep it to yourself. But it is also a common tenet in law enforcement operations that we always “have each other’s back”. This needs to apply to not just field ops, but behind the scenes when dealing with the physical and mental health of police officers. We all need to take care of those who take care of our communities. With a vision toward helping our own, including enlisting employee assistance programs, peer support, and stress debriefings, we have cleared a path to encouraging officers to learn about stress, talk about stressful incidents, and get help.

### Changing the Culture – Wellness Programs and Resources

Today there are peer support programs, critical incident stress debriefing teams, and wellness programs within police departments to help officers stay healthy and deal with stress. Revisions were made during 2019 to the Basic Course for Police Officers in New York State, requiring a 16 hour segment on officer wellness.<sup>6</sup> Beyond recruit-level training, several officers have also received a specialized course called Trauma Resources and Unified Management Assistance (T.R.A.U.M.A.) Training. The program is for police including corrections, parole and probation officers, family members, and service providers. The objectives of this training include post-traumatic stress disorder treatment, suicide prevention, support services for stress management and critical incident stress, peer support programs, and executive training for dealing with the death of a police officer.<sup>7</sup>

### Recognizing the Signs and Symptoms – or the Absence Thereof

If we as law enforcement administrators are going to try to help those under our command, one thing we need to do is recognize the signs of an officer in distress, and then to provide him or her services.

While there can be a variety of signs or symptoms of stress, one



**Listen to an interview with President Patrick Phelan about Law Enforcement Suicide – visit the Podcast library at [nychiefs.org](http://nychiefs.org)**



survey<sup>8</sup> indicated that “Depression and trauma emerged as strong themes across all branches of public safety. Almost one in four respondents said they felt depressed as a result of their work. Both depression and trauma also showed strong associations with suicidal thoughts.”<sup>9</sup> Some of the common reactions to trauma in that study were listed as:

- Shutting down or feeling withdrawn
- Avoiding reminders of critical events
- Flashbacks or nightmares
- Lack of sleep
- Feeling hypervigilant or overly watchful<sup>10</sup>

Cops develop mechanisms to shield themselves from adversity. The ability to cover our emotions is a valuable skill to have in the field, but potentially detrimental when the accumulation of stress is adversely affecting our state of mind and help is needed. In an article written for the International Journal of Emergency Mental Health, O’Hara and Violanti wrote, “... law enforcement officers often develop considerable skills in masking signs of distress or trouble, they are less likely to display many of the standard signs and symptoms related to impending suicide.”<sup>11</sup>

### What Can We Do?

Administrators should take a fresh look at mental health within our ranks, making officer wellness a priority; Use existing programs such as T.R.A.U.M.A. training, peer support, and employee assistance programs; Ensure that those programs along with crisis and suicide hotlines and other resources are prominently displayed in the workplace; Start wellness and stress awareness programs at the academy level and continue them throughout an officer’s career. This investment will result in healthier officers and make for a stronger and more productive institution.

Supervisors should be alert for the signs and symptoms of stress and crisis, while being aware that cops are expert at masking pain. They should also monitor the types of high stress calls that can be triggers, watching for changes in behaviors, making referrals, and being persistent.

Finally, we all need to break the stigma of mental health disorders, realizing that the way we think about our problems can be a roadblock to getting competent and perhaps lifesaving care.

As mentioned previously, the scope of the problem is not known, although BlueHelp<sup>12</sup> has been a frequently cited source for recording verified cases involving police suicide. Most recently, it was reported that the U.S. Department of Justice will begin collecting national data on police suicides.<sup>13</sup> With a comprehensive system to collect and analyze information on police suicides, our hope and expectation is that we will learn more in order to prevent future tragedies.

There are so many external factors that we as law enforcement officers deal with daily. Some things are beyond our control, but there are things we can change. There are several programs, resources and trainings that are already focusing on this problem.

This is our culture, we all have to buy in to it, and that mean executives, too.

Many officers are suffering in silence. If you are that officer who is struggling, please tell someone who you trust. You are not alone. When you think of all of the pressures, the negativity and stressors we deal with, you should know that we all struggle, and it is okay to ask for help.

<sup>1</sup> QNS, Queens Courier; “NYPD Is In Mourning Again After an Off-Duty Officer Takes His Own Life in Laurelton”; Aug. 15, 2019; [qns.com/story/2019/08/15/nypd-in-mourning-again-after-an-off-duty-officer-takes-his-own-life-in-laurelton](https://qns.com/story/2019/08/15/nypd-in-mourning-again-after-an-off-duty-officer-takes-his-own-life-in-laurelton); accessed Jan. 18, 2020

<sup>2</sup> CBS News; “Sergeant is 10th NYPD Officer to Die By Suicide this Year”; Oct. 16, 2019; <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/nypd-suicide-sergeant-apparently-10th-member-die-by-suicide-this-year>; Accessed Jan. 18, 2020

<sup>3</sup> Chicago Sun Times; “Chicago Police Officer Takes His Own Life on West Side, Police Say”; Mar. 11, 2019; <https://www.fox32chicago.com/news/chicago-police-officer-takes-his-own-life-on-west-side-police-say>; Accessed Jan. 18, 2020

<sup>4</sup> Ottawa Citizen; “Ottawa Robbery Detective, 35, Dies by Suicide in Headquarters”; Sept. 28, 2019; <https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/ottawa-police-officer-dies-by-suicide-in-headquarters>; Accessed Jan. 18, 2020

<sup>5</sup> South China Morning Post; “Worrying Rise in Police Suicides Leaves France Confronting Taboos Around Mental Health”; Aug. 19, 2019; <https://www.scmp.com/news/world/europe/article/3023323/worrying-rise-police-suicides-leaves-france-confronting-taboos>; Accessed Jan. 18, 2020

<sup>6</sup> Basic Course for Police Officers; New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, 2019

<sup>7</sup> New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services training announcement; via email of Aug. 28, 2019

<sup>8</sup> Fairfax County, Va. PD

<sup>9</sup> Jayson J. Carson, Jill Milloy, and Colby Mills; “First Responders Inform Wellness Practices – Multi-Agency Survey Reveals Mental Health Trends and Officer Needs”; Focus on Wellness, Police Chief 86, no 12 (Dec. 2019):18-20

<sup>10</sup> Ibid

<sup>11</sup> Andrew F. O’Hara and John M. Violanti, “Police Suicide – A Web Surveillance of National Data”; International Journal of Emergency Mental Health 11, no. 1 (2009); 17-23

<sup>12</sup> BlueHelp.org

<sup>13</sup> New Hampshire Union Leader, Nashua, NH; “Months After Nashua Officer’s Suicide, Justice Dept. Given Mandate to Study National Trend”; Jan. 11, 2020; [https://www.unionleader.com/news/social\\_issues/months-after-nashua-officer’s-suicide-justice-dept-given-mandate/article\\_bb002127-cf3b-5cd1-bfac-56534600dcd1.html](https://www.unionleader.com/news/social_issues/months-after-nashua-officer’s-suicide-justice-dept-given-mandate/article_bb002127-cf3b-5cd1-bfac-56534600dcd1.html); Accessed Jan. 19, 2020;



### About the authors

Patrick Phelan is the Chief of Police for the Town of Greece, NY PD and is the President of the New York State Assn. of Chiefs of Police (NYSACOP). The focus of his presidency is on the topic of law enforcement suicide.

Mark A. Spawn is the former Chief of Police for the City of Fulton, NY PD and is the former Director of Research and Training for NYSACOP. He is a published author and consultant in various areas of public safety and public health.



# RESOURCES FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS STRUGGLING WITH THE PRESSURES AND STRESSES OF POLICE WORK

Police officers are faced with stressful, violent, and gruesome situations on a regular basis. Do you need someone to talk to? Are you in crisis? When an officer is struggling, there are resources available to help.

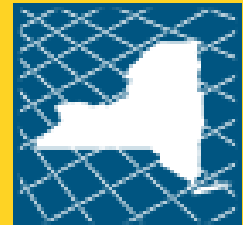
- Your agency's own Employee Assistance Program
- BlueHelp.org
- New York Law Enforcement Assistance Program at [nyleap.org](http://nyleap.org)
- Safe Call Now 206-459-3020
- Crisis Text Line – text BLUE to 741741
- 1stHelp.net
- Copline 1-800-COPLINE or 1-800-267-5463 or [copline.org](http://copline.org)
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK



Listen to an interview with Police Chief Patrick Phelan, President of the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police about the pressures faced by cops, warning signs of an officer in crisis, and resources that are available to help. Search: [nychiefs.org/](http://nychiefs.org/).



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PERMA

# Irvington Police Officer Recognized as Recipient of 2018 Lifesaving Award

Presented by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, the Award Recognizes Police Officers Who Perform Courageous and Unselfish Lifesaving Acts While Off-Duty



*Pictured (l-r) Irvington Police Chief Michael P. Cerone, Lifesaving Award recipient Officer Arcangelo Liberatore, DCJS Comm. Michael Green.*



*Syracuse Police Department Officer of the Year Award*

*Pictures courtesy of the Office of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo*

## Officer Arcangelo Liberatore Was Off-Duty When He Saved Child from Rabid Coyote in a Town Park

Irvington Police Officer Arcangelo F. Liberatore today received the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services' 2018 Lifesaving Award for his efforts in saving a child attacked by a rabid coyote in 2018. DCJS Executive Deputy Commissioner Michael C. Green presented Liberatore with the award during a ceremony this afternoon at the Irvington Justice Court in Westchester County.

"This award is a reminder of the danger police officers face in the line of duty," **Commissioner Green said**. "The split-second decisions they make can not only place them directly in harm's way but can also mean the difference between life and death. It goes without saying that Officer Liberatore's actions on April 29th epitomize the very meaning of a courageous and selfless act."

On April 29, 2018, Officer Liberatore was off-duty with his family at a park in Mount Pleasant, Westchester County, when he heard the screams of a 5-year-old girl. He ran to the scene and saw the young girl being viciously attacked by a coyote. He shepherded his own family to safety and, without hesitation, wrestled and pulled the animal off the girl, restraining it until local police officers arrived and put the animal down. During the struggle, Officer Liberatore and the girl both suffered injuries that required immediate medical treatment at a local hospital and follow-up care, when it was later determined that the coyote was rabid.

**Irvington Police Chief Michael P. Cerone said**, "Officer Liberatore invoked the selfless spirit of humanity by coming to

the aid of another in a time of a crisis. His heroism in taking on a rabid coyote barehanded was an amazing deed and exemplifies the true meaning of being a police officer, protecting society from all kinds of predators."

The Division of Criminal Justice Services coordinates the work of the Governor's Police Officer of the Year Award Selection Committee, which recognizes a single police officer or team of officers for an exceptional act of valor. The Police Officer of the Year award has been presented since 1984. The Committee established the Lifesaving Award in 2016 because it had consistently received nominations involving officers who performed heroic acts during life-threatening emergencies and wanted a way to recognize them for their efforts.

This year, the Selection Committee received nominations from nine agencies for the 2018 Police Officer of the Year award, which was presented in September to Lieutenant James Milana and Officers Victoria Losurdo and Travis Rheinheimer of the Syracuse Police Department for their apprehension of a gunman on Feb. 4, 2018. Other officers nominated for the Police Officer of the Year Award, including Officer Liberatore, also receive a Certificate of Exceptional Valor from Governor Cuomo.

Earlier this year, Officer Liberatore also received the Carnegie Medal from the Carnegie Hero Fund, established in 1904 by Pittsburgh steel magnate Andrew Carnegie to recognize individuals in the United States and Canada who risk their lives "to an extraordinary degree while saving or attempting to save the lives of others."



# Policing is a relationship-driven business

BY CHIEF RICK MYERS, CITY OF NEWPORT NEWS (VA.) POLICE DEPARTMENT



Somewhere along the journey of providing our officers with better tools, better training, increasing their safety and protection and access through advanced technologies of real-time information, we forgot about a basic reality: All policing is done through relationships.

It is just as important that we provide training and tools to maximize relationship building as it is the many other facets of policing.

Relationships cannot be developed without direct human interaction.

At a time when it seems folks are more adept at communicating through thumbs on a phone's keyboard than looking eye-to-eye, it falls on police leadership to recognize skill deficiencies that we can train and improve.

In the past few years, we've begun taking our academy recruits out of the classroom, occasionally and having them knock on doors in neighborhoods probably unaccustomed to seeing officers in a friendly, proactive interaction. This results in a learning experience for both the police recruits and the residents. It is the beginning of a relationship that we hope will carry over as they transition from recruits to new officers working the beat.

I believe the most important work that police officers do is when they're out of their police cars when NOT on a call for service.

Engaging someone from the community in conversation is almost always a great starting point for relationship building.

Another lesson for officers: every conversation does not have to and shouldn't start with "...show me your I.D." Successful veteran officers are often adept at engaging in polite and friendly banter with citizens, yet still manage to learn their identity and place of residence along with the person's knowledge of what is going on in their neighborhood.

As it is with most person-to-person dialogue, it is incumbent on the authority figure to put everyone else at ease to ensure a free exchange of ideas and information.

There is a full continuum of policing styles, ranging from "combat policing" that is highly enforcement driven to COP/POP which is centered in police and citizens mutually engaged in problem solving and improving quality of life. No matter where on the continuum an agency lies, however, nothing gets done absent relationships. Perhaps it would be simpler for our officers to embrace our overall mission if we de-emphasized "flavor of the day" policing, with the many labels we tend to attach (COP, POP, intelligence-led, hot-spot, evidence-based, zero-tolerance, et al) and simply emphasized the positive outcomes that result from strong relationships throughout the community.

I'm a strong believer in police officers taking "ownership" of their assigned beat. In this context, ownership means really getting to know who lives, works, plays, goes to school, runs the shops, and the predators within one's assigned area.

An officer will not know and be known by the people of his beat without regularly engaging citizens in conversation. This requires exiting the confines of the patrol car, being approachable, and even engaging folks in conversation who may not initially be eager to have contact with a police officer.

Each time an officer demonstrates respect, empathy and fairness in their interaction with citizens, they are building trust with that person.

Eventually, a neighborhood will "own" the officer back in return; this often manifests when citizens begin referring to "their" police officer.

Officers who have successfully developed ownership in their beat will receive more cooperation, more information, and more support throughout the neighborhoods they patrol.

Of utmost importance to the officers, they'll also be safer! A neighborhood that has a relationship with "their" officer is far more likely to help protect that officer from harm, yielding more officer safety and fewer injuries to both citizens and the police.

The benefits of relationships extend across the entire range of policing styles. In an enforcement-centered style of policing, officers can rely on relationship-based sources to quickly identify offenders, drug house locations, and who is carrying guns. Reactive investigations that rely on witnesses to augment the physical evidence benefit from a more engaged and trusting population, resulting in "stop snitchin'" yielding to "you didn't hear this from ME, but..." Information need not be the exclusive domain of Confidential Informants; everyday citizens who know and trust their local police officers WILL provide invaluable information, and often before crimes have occurred.

I recall years ago hearing a former superintendent of the London Metropolitan Police (aka The Met, or Scotland Yard) tell the story of how The Met cracked a major terrorism case involving planned mass bombings throughout London. The case was made because a neighborhood constable had a strong and trusting relationship with a Mosque within his beat, and the Imam and other Mosque representatives had expressed concerns about an increasingly radicalized attendee. The resulting raids and prosecution of conspirators was not soft on crime, but a swift and decisive blow against terrorism. Some of the most aggressive and successful drug and gang units rely on relationships to secure awareness, officer safety, intelligence and planning.

It is easy to hate someone that we don't know. We tend to resist the unknown, and mistrust anyone we haven't yet met. We are in an era when the police are under extraordinary scrutiny, are subject to recording from the ubiquitous phone videos, and when controversial police behaviors are broadcast non-stop on worldwide media and social media. There has never been a greater need for the term "police-community relations" to mean more than a program or a strategy. The gap that exists between the police (both as an institution and individually) and the public (both as a society and individually) can only be diminished through the building of stronger and trusting relationships.

In our personal relationships, we know that there are ups and

downs, periods of conflict, and periods of relative peace. It is unrealistic to expect a complete absence of conflict between the police and members of the community.

But the time to work on developing a relationship is NOT at the onset of conflict! As the saying goes, exchanging business cards for the first time when it hits the fan is not an effective strategy. Some of the widely reported conflicts between police and community may have been triggered by singular events as a catalyst, but the source of the fuel is the ongoing lack of trust and relationships.

One of my favorite metaphors to live by is an old gardener's rule: The best day to plant a tree was 50 years ago; the second best day is today.

We may not be able to go back in time and artificially make up relationships, but we can begin today at building and strengthening authentic relationships built on honesty, respect, and fairness. This is as important a lesson for a new police officer as knowing how to use their radio, gun and ticket book.

#### About the author

*Chief Richard W. "Rick" Myers has served as Chief of Police in the City of Newport News, Va., since January 2014, leading*

*a total staff of 445 sworn officers. Chief Myers received his bachelor's and master's degrees from Michigan State University and has been admitted to the MSU Criminal Justice Alumni Wall of Fame. He is a graduate of all three of the FBI's leadership programs: The FBI National Academy-156th Session; the FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Seminar-26th Session; the FBI National Executive Institute-31st Session. Chief Myers is in his 9th year as a Commissioner on the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) and currently Chairs the Commission. He is a Life Member of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), Past Board Member of the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), and a Past President of the Wisconsin Chiefs of Police Association (WCPA) and the Society of Police Futurists International (PFI).*

Myers, Rick. "Policing is a relationship-driven business." *OnPolicing*, National Police Foundation, May 19, 2017. <https://www.policefoundation.org/policing-is-a-relationship-driven-business/>

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# Special Olympics New York

ED LAWLESS (AUTHOR)

As I stand here, I feel I have come full circle with 2 important pieces of my life, Law Enforcement and Special Olympics, and the life changing encounters I have had with both.

Days before my second birthday, two law enforcement officers came to my home, scooped me up and kept me safe until Child Protective Services came for me. I was in rough shape, badly abused and malnourished.

On that day, my life was saved. I was never able to thank those officers. Now, as a Special Olympics New York athlete, I have had the opportunity to at least thank their peers. So today, I want to say "thank you" to all of you, for giving me back my life, and for the lives of all of the children you have saved.

Over the next couple of years, I was shuttled in and out of three foster homes. I was finally placed in my forever home and was adopted on January 25, 1999; I was 5 ½ years old.

At that time, my development was severely delayed. My new family worked with me, as well as many professionals, to gain an understanding of my needs. Over time I was diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, an Intellectual Disability, ADHD, and Epilepsy.

I tried to participate in our town sports programs, but my disabilities separated me from the rest of the team. I participated in the local Challenger Sports programs, but I soon grew frustrated in the fact that they did not play by the rules, and even I knew that EVERY GAME DID NOT END IN A TIE!

Then we found Special Olympics. Special Olympics New York



***Pictured: Jenn Frame, Special Olympics New York, Capital District Region Director of Development, Ed Lawless, Special Olympics New York, Capital District Region Athlete Anthony W. Geraci, City of Watervliet Chief of Police***

has given me a place to showcase my talents, expand my athletic skills, meet new people, laugh, and have fun.

I now participate in Special Olympic New York sports throughout the year. I have competed in Unified Basketball, Track and Field, Bowling, Softball and most recently in Unified Football with the University at Albany. I had to change things up a bit for the past year due to some heart issues, but after four surgeries in the last 20 months, I am back.

I have learned a great deal from Special Olympics. Not just how to play the game, but things like Physical Fitness, Strength, Confidence, Determination, Competition, Sportsmanship, Pride, Independence, Acceptance, Friendship, and Courage.

It is no secret to anyone that I have a deep fascination with Law Enforcement. Each year, I share my story with the graduating class at the New York State Police Academy. When I speak about Special Olympics New York and the Law Enforcement Torch Run, I can hardly contain myself.

I take great pride in the relationship that has been established with them, and I hope that as the cadets enter their proud new careers, their connection with Special Olympics New York continues to grow.

Thank You all for your generosity and support of Special Olympics New York.

For more information or to become more involved with Special Olympics New York, please contact Rebecca Hoffman, Statewide Director of Development, Law Enforcement Torch Run Liaison @ 631-458-1579.



# Why Do People Become Cops?

BY RICHARD R. JOHNSON, PH.D.  
MATT DOLAN, ATTORNEY

July 2019

**M**any law enforcement agencies today are struggling to recruit enough quality applicants to fill the officer vacancies they currently have or will have soon. As a result, **law enforcement agencies need evidence-based information about how to increase the effectiveness of their recruiting efforts to attract more qualified applicants.** Unfortunately, many agency leaders have been forced to rely on anecdotal stories of what drew a particular individual to law enforcement as the basis for formulating recruiting strategies. This approach is far from evidence-based and, instead, relies on the experience of a small group of decision-makers who may, or may not, represent the qualified applicants agencies are seeking. **How do we determine that what drew you to law enforcement is what drew others? An extensive nationwide study would be a very good start.**

In recent years, several studies have examined the motivations or interests in seeking a law enforcement career among members of the general public, college students, and police academy applicants. Studies of these populations can prove useful, but they also suffer from a notable limitation—not all of the participants may have had the qualifications, skills, and abilities to successfully become law enforcement officers. Furthermore, these studies involved samples of a few hundred participants.

Dolan Consulting Group (DCG) sought to overcome these limitations by conducting a large-scale survey of existing law enforcement officers from across the nation to determine what factors influenced them to pursue a law enforcement career. **By focusing on existing law enforcement officers, we explored the experiences of individuals who had the necessary skills and temperaments to successfully gain employment as law enforcement officers. We surveyed 1,673 law enforcement officers from across the nation to determine what factors most influenced them to choose their current profession.**

## The Sample

Sworn law enforcement officers who attended the various training courses offered by DCG between August 2018 and March 2019 were given the opportunity to participate in our DCG Police [Recruiting and Hiring Survey](#).

A total of **1,673 sworn personnel took the survey**, of whom

286 (17.1%) were female and 1,387 (82.9%) were male. The racial composition of the respondents was 83.4% White (non-Hispanic), 6.8% African-American, 5.4% Hispanic, 1.4% Multiracial, 1.0% Native American, 0.4% Asian, and 1.6% all other groups. In terms of highest education level achieved, 30.8% had less than an associate's degree, 18.2% had an associate's degree, and 51% had a bachelor's degree or higher. A total of 52.8% of the respondents held the rank of officer, deputy, or trooper, while another 10.0% held the rank of detective. About 23% held first-line supervisory ranks (corporal or sergeant), 4.5% held middle-management ranks (mostly lieutenants), and the remaining 9.7% held command staff ranks (captain or higher). Approximately 65% of the respondents were assigned to the patrol division of their agency, 14% to investigations, and 14% to command administration. The remaining 7% indicated other assignments such as training, community policing unit, or media relations. These respondents came from 49 different states and agencies ranging in size from less than a dozen officers to agencies with thousands of officers.

## Reasons for Selecting a Law Enforcement Career

**The survey respondents were presented with a list of 17 factors that might have influenced them to pursue a career in law enforcement.** The respondents were asked to reflect on their own lives and indicate if each of these factors played a role in shaping their decision to become a law enforcement officer. For each of these 17 factors, the respondents indicated their level of agreement (from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*) regarding the extent to which each factor influenced their career choice. The survey results are displayed in Table 1 on the next page, showing the percentage of respondents who answered *agree* or *strongly agree* with each statement.

The results in Table 1 reveal several common themes. First, **a sizeable proportion of the sample chose a career in law enforcement because of the excitement associated with the career** as almost 78% wanted a career with interesting or exciting work, 45% watched the police at work in their communities, about 27% were drawn by popular entertainment media portrayals of the career, and 7% selected the career after seeing it first-hand through a ride-along or college internship. Second, **a great proportion of the respondents wanted to help people in society** (68%), wanted to address injustice in society (41%), or wanted to fight back after having been a victim of crime (8%).



The third theme that was evident in the responses was **the importance of personal relationships in one’s life on deciding to pursue a law enforcement career**. Approximately 45% were influenced to pursue a law enforcement career by personally interacting with officers who were at work in the community, 43% were influenced by knowing an officer personally (family member, friend, neighbor, etc.), 35% had a friend or family member recommend the career, 16% had a teacher, professor, or coach recommend the career, and 8% had interacted with officers in a police-sponsored youth program (camp, police athletic league, explorers program, etc.).

**Table 1. Reasons for Selecting a Law Enforcement Career**

Reason	Percent Agreed or Strongly Agreed
Wanted a career with interesting or exciting work	77.90%
Wanted to help people or serve society	68.00%
Saw the police at work in my community and interacting with citizens	44.60%
Knowing an officer personally (family, friend, neighbor, etc.)	42.80%
Seeing injustice in the world and wanting to correct it	41.30%
Having a friend or family member recommend the career	35.00%
Seeing popular media portrayals of police work (TV, movies, etc.)	26.70%
A teacher, professor, or coach recommended the career	15.80%
Having a lack of other job opportunities at the time	13.80%
I wanted / needed a steady job / career	11.40%
Was a victim of crime and wanted to fight back against crime	8.20%
Being part of a police-sponsored youth program (PAL, explorers, etc.)	8.00%
Participating in a ride-along or law enforcement internship in college	7.00%
A police recruiter recommended the career	5.40%
Saw television or internet advertisement about the career	5.20%
Saw advertising brochures, posters, or billboard signs about the career	3.80%
An aptitude test recommended the career	3.70%

The final trend evident in the results was the **relative insignificance of formal recruiting activities in effecting the respondents’ decisions to pursue a law enforcement career generally**. (Please note that this *does* not indicate that formal recruiting and advertising were necessarily ineffective in attracting a particular individual to a particular department within the law enforcement profession). Less than 6% of the respondents credited a recruiter or formal advertising of any kind as having influenced their decision to become a law enforcement officer. In fact, a simple lack of other job opportunities (14%) was more than twice as strong an influence as were formal recruiting activities.

**Conclusions**

These results suggest that most individuals who are drawn to law enforcement are drawn as a uniquely exciting and honorable profession in which they can help people. In spite of high profile instances of officer misconduct accompanied by overwhelming media coverage, the law enforcement profession remains one of the most highly respected institutions in American life (See the DCG research brief [The Public’s Confidence in the Police Might Be Higher Than You Think](#)). **Anything that a member of law enforcement can do to maintain the public trust is, in and of itself, a recruiting strategy.**

The most effective police recruiting efforts appear to involve all members of the department developing personal relationships with people in the community on and off the clock (family members, neighbors, students, and average people on the patrol beat). People

on the department need to talk to members of their community about how noble, rewarding, and exciting a law enforcement career is. When officers personally advertise the nobility of their profession, in both word and deed, people who desire an exciting career that involves helping people and fighting injustice are drawn to the profession.

**The most important steps any law enforcement agency can take in order to improve recruiting efforts include:**

**Protect the public’s trust in the police.** In whatever capacity you find yourself within an organization, do what you can to minimize the misconduct, unnecessarily hostile community interactions, and viral videos that steer people away from law

enforcement those individuals drawn to an exciting career in which they can help people. These same efforts serve to maintain the help of the many advocates in communities across the country—parents, family, friends, coaches and teachers—who encourage those they mentor to join law enforcement.

With this broad view, it becomes clear that anything that weakens the relationship between the police and the public hurts recruiting. Poor supervision hurts recruiting. Failure to mentor young officers who are struggling hurts recruiting. Failures by command staff to heed the warnings of front-line supervisors *before* poor performance escalates to newsworthy police misconduct that hurts recruiting.

**Seriously embrace the idea that every member of your department is a recruiter—for better or worse.** Empower and encourage all personnel to engage in recruiting efforts, both on and off duty. Emphasize upon your personnel that the qualities of the individuals *they* attract to the department will determine their type of future coworkers and work

environment. Encourage them to seek out people in the community with qualities and skills they would like to see in their coworkers, and recruit these people.

Unimpressed with the number or quality of applicants? Concerned about the prospect of working with the applicants walking through the door? Then do something about it. Utilizing citizen interactions as an opportunity to vent frustrations about the profession doesn’t help. Take the same steps that we ask of

**How to Connect with Potential Applicants**

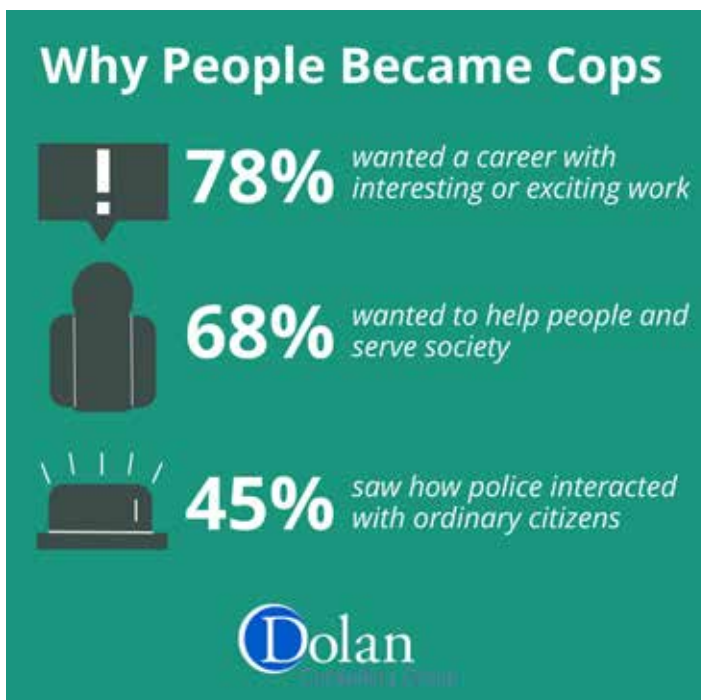
- 1 Leave your car and get to know average citizens.
- 2 Sponsor youth sports, explorer, and internship programs.
- 3 Develop a citizen police academy and ride-along program.





community leaders critical of recruiting efforts—become part of the solution and personally invite men and women of character to the profession.

**Create opportunities to connect with potential applicants and potential advocates.** Create as many opportunities for personnel on your department to develop personal connections with individuals who might someday become law enforcement officers, as well as the parents and mentors who might someday recommend the career to others. During unassigned time on duty, encourage officers to be out of their cars, and supervisors away from their desks, in order to get to know average citizens. Get law enforcement officers into the schools as much as possible for the purposes of fostering positive interactions between youths and officers. Sponsor youth sports, explorer, and internship programs to further foster these contacts. Develop a citizen police academy and promote a ride-along program for qualified individuals, to expose average citizens to the realities of the career and the people on the department. Lastly, invite people to participate in the ride-along or citizen police academy programs.



### Make personal invitations.

Policing tends to be an insular career that often makes non-law enforcement officers feel like outsiders. Many law enforcement officers are also family members, thus further strengthening the impression to outsiders that the career is an exclusive club. Many of the respondents in our survey, however, indicated that someone in their lives had personally recommended the career to them as individuals. This reveals the power of the personal invitation. When a member of your department finds a good potential applicant, **it may not be enough just to share information about the department or the career. Personnel should personally invite the person to complete the application process or do a ride-along, also telling the individual specifically why he or she might make a good police officer.**

**Tone down the negativity.** Because law enforcement officers often see the worst of society, it is easy to become negative, jaded, and cynical. However, few people want to join a profession or organization that seems full of negativity. What is particularly damaging is when law enforcement officers argue—privately and in sometimes in public—that they would discourage their own children from becoming officers. If we would not want our sons and daughters to become officers, how can we expect other people’s sons and daughters to join our ranks?

Lastly, media interviews should not be viewed as an opportunity to publicly vent about the downsides of a law enforcement career and explain why you’re not surprised that people aren’t applying. If we want to attract quality applicants, and draw more good people to this career field, then we need to speak positively about the profession when interacting with the public.

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For a more in-depth discussion of ways to improve your agency’s recruiting efforts, you can learn more about our *Recruiting and Hiring for Law Enforcement* classes at the link below:

<https://www.dolanconsultinggroup.com/event/recruiting-hiring-law-enforcement/>

### CONTACT US

Want to host Dolan Consulting Group at your event or conference? Need more information about one of our classes? Contact us today - we’ll be glad to point you in the right direction!

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# Settle or try? 5 factors to help you decide when facing a public safety lawsuit

BY RICHARD SPIERS

While our instinct is often to fight the allegations, there are serious ramifications when a case goes to trial and results in a large verdict against your agency

## Why should we settle this case, instead of taking it to court?

That's a loaded question and one that carries a significant potential price tag. In a public safety lawsuit, there are many aspects to consider when deciding whether to go to court or settle.



*If you choose to try the case and it results in a large verdict for the plaintiff, you will face even more negative publicity. (Photo/Pixabay)*

The easy answer: If you can resolve the case faster and more economically without a trial, settlement may be the best option. However, there are times you need a court to make the decision as to who was responsible for the alleged damages and the ultimate value of the case.

A trial may be the best alternative in a public safety lawsuit when:

- The case investigation shows there were no findings of extreme negligence in the case.
- The claimed amount is small, but injuries or other damages sustained could drive up the eventual verdict.
- The plaintiff attorney makes extremely large demands and is unwilling to reduce them. Today's attorneys normally start by making initial demands of well over a million dollars to try to intimidate the defense into making a large settlement offer.
- The alleged damages seem out of line with the incident or not directly related to the incident.
- The plaintiff attorney has presented unclear information or made claims the subsequent investigation has proven unfounded – something we often see when bystander or security camera [video footage](#) goes viral before an investigation is complete.

Assuming one of these factors doesn't lead you straight into the courtroom, you face the question, *Should we settle or try?* Following are five factors to consider:

## 1. THE AGENCY'S REPUTATION

[Media reports](#) regarding public safety incidents often begin before all the investigative details are known. If the agency has been involved in previous similar events, reporters will link the stories, especially if earlier incidents generated negative publicity. Such coverage can have a negative impact on your agency's reputation.

[Social media](#) can also generate a large negative response. It is always worth reviewing social media posts and monitoring comments posted in reaction to local news stories. These comments can compound the negative effects of press coverage – all of which can spell trouble in court.

It is not only the agency's reputation that can hurt your case. If your town is experiencing political or financial issues that have generated anger, you may face a jury of people upset about raised taxes or other issues – who may, in turn, punish the town with a negative verdict.

Another factor to consider about reputation: If you choose to try the case and it results in a large verdict for the plaintiff, you will face even more negative publicity, which in turn can have an economic impact on your municipality.

## 2. THE REPUTATION OF INVOLVED COUNSEL

Some plaintiff attorneys are minor celebrities, familiar to jurors from their TV and internet commercials and backed by the reputation they deliver big money for their clients. Many plaintiff firms are now focusing on negatively publicized cases, such as fatal shootings and wrongful incarceration. Some of these firms pursue such cases all over the country, not just in their local area.

Cases involving well-known attorneys drive news headlines and garner increased public interest. If you're facing a well-known plaintiff attorney, a trial becomes more complex. The defense attorney will have to work hard to make sure the jury respects them, too.

## 3. THE VENUE WHERE THE SUIT IS FILED

It's always important to research your venues to determine where the case may end up being filed. Plaintiff attorneys will often choose to file public safety lawsuits in federal court, alleging a civil rights violation, due to the possibility of being awarded large payments for attorney fees. Even on a verdict as low as \$1, the attorney can file a request for more than \$1 million in attorney costs. The court may not grant them the entire amount, but the award is generally significant.

Federal cases pose another challenge: The jurors may come from communities very different from yours in terms of demographics, economics and political views. If you live near a liberal jurisdiction, the plaintiff attorney will likely push to file there.

In contrast, if the state/county venue where you are located is known as a liberal, plaintiff-friendly jurisdiction, the suit will be filed in state court because state and local courts have a record of generating larger verdicts than federal court.

## 4. EXPENSES

There are several economic aspects to consider. Trials do not normally get scheduled right away and the cost of defending the case for more than a year can add up. Defense costs include more than just the defense attorney's fees. Sometimes experts



are hired to examine the case, provide their evaluation and attend depositions requested by the plaintiff attorney. These experts can generate large fees. Agency employees may also be required to provide depositions, initiating overtime or backfill costs.

## 5. IMMUNITIES AND TORT CAPS

Immunities and tort caps differ by state. Some states are known to have stronger immunity laws than other states, but they do not always hold up when a case is tried. Juries can determine the immunity and tort cap don't apply due to a level of extreme negligence – something that happens frequently on most of the highly publicized cases. To ward off this possibility, consider filing an immunity motion to get the judge's opinion, which in turn can open the door to get the plaintiff to consider a settlement discussion.

## OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

There are many other issues to consider that may not be part of the lawsuit filed but can have a strong impact on a jury decision.

For example, if the damages claimed include emotional distress or trauma to the plaintiff's family, it could affect the jury's evaluation of a case. Or, if you're involved in a case that shares similarities with other high-profile cases that have generated large verdicts, you may wind up facing a similar verdict.

Still not sure? Bring in a mock jury or a focus group – a group of local, uninvolved people who can help you learn what parts of the case are going to resonate the most with jurors.

## SETTLEMENT STRATEGIES

If after reviewing the above factors you choose to pursue a settlement, there are several strategies to consider. Putting money on the settlement table can get the plaintiff more willing to settle. They will be able to obtain the settlement dollars within a few weeks of the agreement. Make sure the plaintiff understands that even if they win at trial, the defense will appeal the verdict and it could take over a year for that to be resolved.

If the plaintiff agrees to attend a mediation, ensure the mediator

chosen for the case does not have a reputation of siding only with the plaintiff. Learn what you can about the plaintiff and the family ahead of time. Are they planning to spend the settlement money on something specific? Are they hoping to achieve a change to agency policy or training? Know what requests you're willing to accommodate.

In addition, try to obtain a demand from the plaintiff's counsel before the mediation to learn their case analysis. Prior to the mediation, determine the amounts for your initial offer as well as the highest amount you're willing to offer during the mediation session.

A structured settlement can often help resolve a public safety lawsuit and generate an agreement that benefits both parties.

## NO EASY ANSWERS

The question of whether to settle or try a case isn't an easy one. While our instinct is often to fight the allegations, there are serious ramifications when a case goes to trial and results in a large verdict against your agency, including negative publicity and bad precedent for any future similar cases. Would you rather explain to the media a \$500,000 settlement or a multi-million-dollar verdict?

The bottom line: Look beyond the lawsuit papers to determine whether it is better to settle or try a case.

## About the author

*Richard Spiers, a market ambassador for Lexipol, started in the insurance industry in 1980 and has been a claims executive in the reinsurance and excess marketplace since 1985. He was with Genesis Management and Insurance Services, a subsidiary of General Reinsurance, for more than 20 years, until the end of 2017. Rick has extensive experience handling the wide array of claims faced by public entities, K-12 school districts and the higher education sector.*

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# Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics



Joe Peters & Athlete

I am a police officer with the Cortland City Police Department. I first got involved with Special Olympics New York through the Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics, in 2013 when I was asked to help with my first Torch Run. I had no idea at the time that my decision to assist in getting law enforcement participation in this seemingly small event would change my life in many ways. I was quickly asked to join the LETR Statewide Committee here in New York, another great decision on my part. The involved law enforcement, Special Olympics Staff, and volunteers all have something in common. We want what is best for the Special Olympics athletes and to do everything we can to see persons with intellectual disabilities grow and succeed through sports.

As a part of the LETR I have had many opportunities to get to meet and know some of our Special Olympics athletes. I met this young athlete for the first time a couple summers ago at the Regional Track Competition held yearly in Broome County. I had the opportunity to meet a lot of athletes, hand out medals and take a lot of pictures with these wonderful people. This athlete in particular, like other athletes doesn't seem to know how to do anything more than smile. On this day she had a good reason to smile, she won herself a gold medal. I have attended this event every year doing the same thing since that day. I look forward to handing this athlete a medal and taking a new photo with her each summer.

# Maureen's Hope Foundation

**R**osie Snowden was diagnosed with a rare cancer called rhabdomyosarcoma in July of 2018 and after 10 months of treatment she rang the survivor bell at Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital on May 7, 2019. Three months later, they found out Rosie's cancer had returned. In September Rosie had surgery and began a 43-week regimen of chemotherapy, that will also include radiation.

Baldwinsville based Maureen's Hope Foundation, whose mission is to offer practical support and assistance to people facing the challenges of a cancer diagnosis or other life altering disease, connected with the family when Rosie was first diagnosed and has been by their side with support throughout their journey, alongside the community. Susan Bertrand, Founder and Executive Director of Maureen's Hope received a message from Arianna, Rosie's mom, asking her if she knew any police officers that Rosie could meet. Arianna said Rosie "talks about becoming a "weese" officer when she gets older every day." Susan reached out to Michael Lefancheck, the Police Chief of Baldwinsville, and within a short time, Chief Lefancheck and his fellow officers had arranged making this little wish of Rosie's come true and went beyond the expectations of their ask.

On Monday, November 25th, 2019 at 10:30 AM, at the Baldwinsville Village Hall, Rosie was inducted and sworn into the Baldwinsville Police Department as an honorary police officer. Chief Lefancheck said that "Rosie has all the courage and bravery it takes to fill those shoes". She was given her own police uniform as well as a miniature police car, with its own siren so she can go on "patrol".

"The little things in life can make a big difference and healing and hope can be found in many different ways," said Susan Bertrand of Maureen's Hope. Feeling the army of support in your community surrounding you is a priceless gift. "Goodwill can go a long way and is certainly the meaning of the season."

Rosie is also in the Beads of Courage program, which is sponsored by Maureen's Hope and some officers will be wearing Hero Carry a Beads that will then be given to Rosie and other children at Upstate Golisano to let the children know they are not in this fight alone. The Beads of Courage program is a tangible way for children to record, share and tell their story through meaningful beads they receive for every milestone and treatment endured.







# New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services announces creation of Missing Person Cold Case Review Panel

In New York State alone, there are currently more than 1,300 missing persons cases that are more than three years old. To assist local law enforcement agencies with resolving missing persons cases that have gone cold, the Missing Persons Clearinghouse at the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services recently created a Missing Person Cold Case Review Panel.

The Cold Case Review Panel aims to provide agencies with a fresh look at cases by peers with diverse perspectives, knowledge and experience. The panel features subject-matter experts from local, state and federal law enforcement and criminal justice agencies and only accepts cold cases submitted by lead investigating agencies.

Along with Clearinghouse staff, representatives from the following agencies serve on the panel: the FBI, New York State Police (Special Victims Unit, Bureau of Criminal Investigations, and State Intelligence Center), Washington County Sheriff's Office, Saratoga Springs Police Department, Niagara County District Attorney's Office, National Center for Missing & Exploited Children and the National Missing and Unidentified Persons System.

In addition, staff from the state-supported network of Crime Analysis Centers will assist with reviews of cases from their regions. The Centers, which operate in partnership with local law enforcement agencies, are located in Albany, Broome, Erie, Franklin, Niagara, Monroe, Oneida, Onondaga, Orange and Suffolk counties and serve 31 counties statewide.

The panel accepts cases that have been unsolved for at least three years and have the potential to be solved through new information or technological advances in evidence analysis. The panel also may consider cases where all leads were exhausted at the local level,

and those with compelling factors indicating criminal conduct that may benefit from additional resources.

There is no cost for the review. The panel has already received requests and is working on selecting a case to review. Reviews will be scheduled periodically according to the number of qualifying requests received and selected.

Agencies must make the request for a review in writing. If the panel accepts a case, Clearinghouse staff will schedule a meeting so representative(s) from the investigating agency can present the case to the panel. Investigating agency are asked to submit case materials two weeks before that meeting to allow panel members time to review pertinent records. Upon completion of the presentation, panel members and agency representative(s) discuss the case with the goal of providing recommendations to generate possible leads. Clearinghouse staff also will summarize those recommendations in a report to agency that submitted the case.

Visit [bit.ly/2sEie2A](http://bit.ly/2sEie2A) to request a review. For more information, please contact the Clearinghouse at [missingpersons@dcjs.ny.gov](mailto:missingpersons@dcjs.ny.gov) or call 800-346-3543 (Option1).

**MISSING**

 Christopher Cassidy DOB: 08/28/87 Missing From: Boscawen, NY Date Missing: 5/18/1999	 Bonnie Richard DOB: 01/29/1988 Missing From: Tonawanda, NY Date Missing: 7/17/1973	 Chelise Conzo DOB: 11/28/1985 Missing From: Boscawen, NY Date Missing: 3/22/18
 Yan Young Tsai DOB: 2/27/94 Missing From: New York Park, NY Date: 8/28/1999	 Ivory Green DOB: 10/27/1986 Missing From: Onia, NY Date Missing: 2/20/06	 Tawana McCornick DOB: 1/9/1972 Missing From: Geddes Springs, NY Date Missing: 4/24/1999

NYS Missing Persons Clearinghouse  
1-800-346-3543  
[www.criminaljustice.ny.gov](http://www.criminaljustice.ny.gov)  
Division of Criminal Justice Services  
Rev. Jan. 1/18/20



MPC Search Training



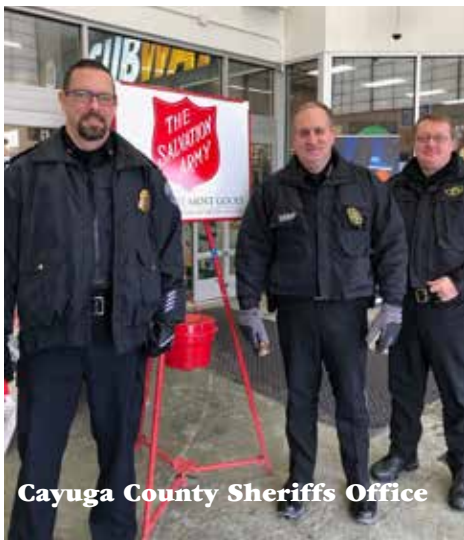
First Place Poster



# Salvation Army Bells and Badges

**A**s many of you know, the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police partnered with the Salvation Army in 2019 for their annual Red Kettle Campaign. Dozens of police departments from across the state participated in “ringing the bell” outside local businesses and raised much needed funds for The Salvation Army’s mission throughout New York State. All money collected during the Red Kettle drive stays in the local community and is used for Salvation Army programs, such as food distribution, rent assistance, emergency housing, Code Blue sheltering during freezing weather, afterschool programming, summer camp, and other worthwhile community programs. As

members of law enforcement, we have all met The Salvation Army’s clients. They are the people we wish we could do more to help on every domestic violence call, child neglect case, or human trafficking case. It is the thief who was just trying to get some food or the addict who just can’t quit. They are the people we interact with in the community every day. Together, we helped The Salvation Army raise thousands of dollars that will be used to try and transform these lives. Thank you to all the agencies that took part in that effort in 2019! We are already in the planning stages for the 2020 campaign and, with your help and support, it will be an even bigger success!







The Queensbury Hotel is centrally located between Saratoga Springs and Lake George, has been a focal point of the Glens Falls region for close to 100 years. The Queensbury Hotel, according to local historians, is named after the British Queen Charlotte. The parcel of land that is now Glens Falls was granted in 1762. The hotel's name was given to honor that grant. That is one theory. Another theory, regarding the hotel's name, is that "Queensbury" sounded elegant. The English-sounding name had a broad appeal regionally.



**—SAVE THE DATE—**  
**Annual Training Conference**  
**July 19-22, 2020**

