

The New York State Chief's Chronicle



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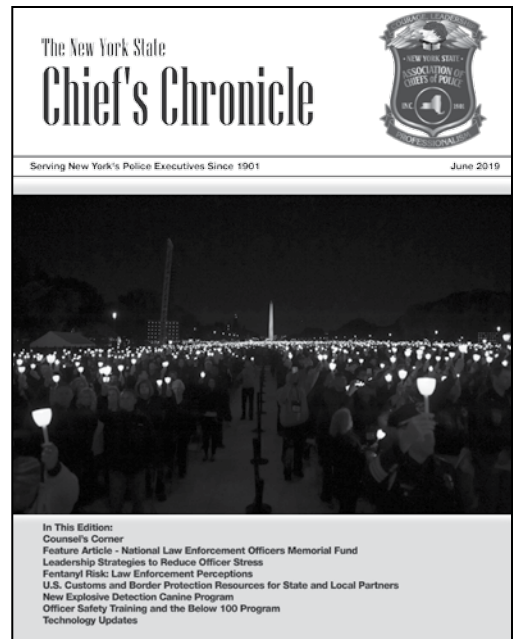
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On the Cover:

Held every May 13th, survivors, law enforcement officers, and citizens alike attend the annual National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund's Candlelight Vigil on the National Mall.



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Counsel's Corner



What About the Person at Risk? Balancing the Rights of the Suspect and Victim in a Use of Force Incident

Chief Mike Ranalli (Ret.) Glenville Police Dept.;
Lexipol Program Manager



BY CHIEF (RET.) MICHAEL RANALLI, ESQ.

In the March 2019 Counsel's Corner, I discussed issues relevant to the limitations and influence of video evidence when understanding and explaining a police use-of-force incident. If you have not read that article, you may wish to do so before reading this one. While this article does stand alone, reading the previous one may give you a better understanding of the relevant issues discussed here.

In the prior article I modified the facts of a 2018 decision of the United States Supreme Court, *Kisela v. Hughes* (138 S.Ct. 1148 (2018)), to include the impact of video. For purposes of this article, I will revisit the *Kisela* case and stick to the facts cited within it.

Kisela v. Hughes

Officers responded to a call of a woman, Amy Hughes, acting erratically and hacking at a tree with a knife. Upon arrival, officers saw Sharon Chadwick standing next to a car in a driveway. Hughes then came out of the house carrying a large kitchen knife down at her side, with the blade facing to the rear, and walked toward Chadwick. Hughes stopped no more than six feet from Chadwick. The officers had their guns out and were separated from the women by a chain-link fence. They commanded Hughes at least two times to drop the knife, but she kept it in her hand. Believing Hughes to be a threat to Chadwick, Officer Kisela fired at Hughes four times. The entire incident took about a minute.

Hughes survived her injuries and sued the department and the officers. The majority of the Supreme Court *did not* rule on whether Kisela violated Hughes' Fourth Amendment rights. Instead they ruled Kisela should have been granted qualified immunity since, under all these circumstances, Kisela's actions did not violate any clearly established law. Hughes was behaving erratically, possessed a large kitchen knife, moved within just a few feet of Chadwick, and refused commands to drop the knife. Kisela had to quickly assess the potential threat to Chadwick based on the available information known to him at that time.

Two judges issued a strong dissent, ruling that a jury could find Kisela violated Hughes' Fourth Amendment rights. They relied heavily on the fact that only one of three officers fired, while the other two subsequently stated they felt they still had time to attempt verbal techniques. The dissenting judges also pointed out Hughes made no aggressive or threatening movements, nor did she even raise the knife; she was just close to Chadwick, holding a knife

she would not drop. The opinions expressed in the dissent were mirrored by the media in numerous articles reporting the decision.

Again, the Supreme Court did *not* rule that the shooting of Hughes was justified under the Fourth Amendment, instead limiting its ruling to the question of qualified immunity. The Court granted qualified immunity to Officer Kisela because there was no clearly established law that would cause a reasonable officer to know that deadly force under these circumstances would constitute a violation. Similarly, this article isn't meant to suggest that shooting a person under similar circumstances would always be justified or the best course of action.

Without being there it would be impossible to definitively state that Officer Kisela's perceptions justified the use of deadly force one way or another. Since Hughes's actual intent never manifested itself, whether she would have attacked Chadwick will never be known. As discussed in the March article, the fact that the attack never took place creates a bias against the officer for not knowing the intent of the suspect at the time. Reasonableness requires, however, consideration of whether the suspect was in fact intent on stabbing the victim. If that was the case, then Officer Kisela probably could not have stopped it without use of deadly force.

What is learned after the shooting should be irrelevant to determining whether the officers' actions were reasonable, but too often this knowledge becomes a factor in how officer-involved shootings are perceived by the media and the public. Police leaders need to be familiar with the following concepts when preparing to explain a use of force to the media and public.

THE SPEED OF LIFE: ACTION VERSUS REACTION

A person can act faster than another person can react.¹ The typical training example given is that a person who has a gun in their hand at their side will be able to shoot it before an officer with a gun, already pointing at the suspect, can fire in response. The time it takes an officer to respond to a threat, also known as the perception-reaction time, can be summed up as follows:

Mental Sequence (reaction time) + Physical Sequence (movement time) = Response Time

Reaction time is further broken down into essentially three components:

1. Stimulus identification (see what is happening)
2. Response selection (interpret what is happening and choose)
3. Response programming (send signal to body to react)

The officer, reacting to the action of the suspect, is at a tremendous disadvantage since he or she must move through all three components. The suspect does not, since they have already assessed the situation and decided on an action, all without the officer's knowledge. All the suspect must do is complete the physical action of firing his weapon. In the *Kisela* case, this would mean closing the remaining distance and stabbing the victim.

In a complex environment such as our scenario, the officer's response time can range from .7 to 1.5 seconds.² During that time the suspect may be moving. In the time it takes the officer to complete the response (from identification of the stimulus to the physical sequence), the suspect may end up in a completely different location or facing a different direction. Then we must add more time for the same process to occur in reverse—meaning it will also take time for the officer to perceive the movement of the person and respond. This process is why some suspects are shot in the back. In such cases, when the officer started the process of firing his or her weapon, the suspect was facing them, but in the time it took to fully respond, the suspect had turned. Officer Kisela fired four rounds at Hughes. Was it possible that one round may have been enough to render her incapacitated? It is possible, but by the time Kisela would have perceived this he could have easily fired the remaining rounds.

This is the reality of human performance and response. Reactions to changes in stimuli do not occur instantaneously. Consider a couple simple examples: You are ending a phone call and are reaching for the end button when the other caller says, "Oh, one more thing" but your finger hits the button, ending the call. You heard it, it registered in your brain at some level, but your brain could not catch up to the motor program already being executed to stop it. Another example is a basketball player going up on a layup, but the ball is rejected by a defender. The shooter's hands still complete the motion of the shot, even though the ball is no longer in his or her hands. It takes time to register the change in stimuli and generate a response.

IMPLICATIONS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

The implications of these concepts place officers in potentially unwinnable situations. Where is the priority of life in such situations? If the officer had waited, and Hughes had attacked Chadwick, she could have closed the short distance and stabbed Chadwick before Kisela could have effectively reacted. The angle and positioning of the people involved could also then be an issue, with the victim at risk of being unintentionally shot as well. Obviously with excessive force cases the focus is on the rights of the person bringing the lawsuit. But we must also ask, what about the rights of innocent persons?

If a person is posing a potential threat to someone with a knife or other type of weapon, and ignores commands to drop the

weapon, at what point do the rights of the person at risk rise to a greater priority than the person causing the risk? This is what objective reasonableness is all about (and why the standard should not be changed).

In a domestic case in a jurisdiction near mine, a man held a knife to the chest of his partner and was increasing the pressure as he told officers to leave. Attempts at communicating with him failed and he ignored all commands to drop the knife. One officer was able to get into a position where he could fire his weapon without risk to the victim. He did so and the victim was safe and relatively uninjured, but the suspect died from his wounds. In my subsequent conversation with the district attorney regarding the case, I indicated that the right of the victim to live overcame the criminal actions of the suspect. It was the suspect creating the risk, not the victim. Waiting for a clear signal that the suspect would stab the victim is untenable. Audio from the in-car camera system revealed that the officers had given more-than-sufficient warnings, which were ignored by the suspect. In fact, my initial reaction was that they had waited longer than necessary as they clearly did not want to shoot the suspect.

While justification in this case is obviously clearer than the facts of the *Kisela* case, the principle remains the same. Officers must assess risk in situations where whatever choice they make can lead to a tragedy. Therefore, it is important for officers to understand the priority of life and, if necessary, the risk must fall back upon the person who is creating it.

In my last article I concluded with a list of considerations for police leaders to use when preparing to explain a use of force incident. The concept of action versus reaction and its possible application to a situation should also be included in that list.

(Endnotes)

¹See generally: Blair, J., Pollock, J, Montague D. et al (2011) Reasonableness and Reaction Time. *Police Quarterly*, 14:323 DOI 10.1177/1098611111423737; Lewinski, W. & Hudson, B. (2003) Reaction Times in Lethal Force Encounters: Time to Start Shooting? Time to Stop Shooting? The Tempe Study. *Police Marksman Vol 28 No. 5 Sept/Oct. P. 26-29.*; Schmidt, R. A., & Lee, T. D. (2011). *Motor Control and Learning: A Behavioral Emphasis* (5th ed.). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

²Lewinski, Supra; Lewinski, W. & Hudson, B. (2003) The Impact of Visual Complexity, Decision Making and Anticipation: The Tempe Study Experiments 3 & 5. *Police Marksman Nov/Dec. P. 24-27.*; Helfer, J. (2018) Why So Many Shots Fired? Understanding Police Officer Reaction Time to Stop Shooting, <https://www.lexipol.com/resources/blog/understanding-police-officer-reaction-time-to-stop-shooting/>

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Leadership Strategies to Reduce Officer Stress

BY DAMON SIMMONS, PHD, C.S.M.C.



What can leaders, managers and supervisors within a law enforcement agency do to mitigate work-related stress experienced by officers?

As the landscape of police work evolves, so do the men and women who lead, supervise and manage law enforcement agencies. One thing that remains constant is that law enforcement is regarded as one of our nation's most stressful occupations.

Work-related stress, overall, has a devastating impact on our economy and our health:

- Researchers estimate that companies in the United States lose approximately \$300 billion annually because of work-stress related issues.
- Half of American workers feel they need assistance in managing work-related stress.
- Health issues prompted by work-related stress cost U.S. businesses an estimated \$68 billion and cause a 10 percent decline in profits annually.



- \$700M is spent annually by organizations in the United States to hire and train new employees to replace those aged 45-65 who die of cardiac-related disease. Approximately 1 million American workers are absent from work each day because of work-stress related issues, equating to approximately 550 million days per year of employee stress-related absences.

- Forty percent of job turnover is a product of work-related stress.
- Ten of the world's leading causes of death, to include cardiovascular disease (which is the leading cause of death for men and women), are linked to work-related stress.

CAUSES OF OFFICER STRESS

In a recent study I conducted, I found that law enforcement officer's stressors can be divided into three categories:

- Operational stress (e.g., exposure to traumatic events, shift work and work-related injuries);
- Organizational stress (e.g., bureaucratic hurdles, administrative battles and career ambitions);
- Personal stress.

The operational and organizational stresses officers experience can reach beyond that of each officer, the uniform and the organization. People who have relationships with officers, especially intimate relationships, often experience the byproduct of an officer experience with work-related stress.

Work-related stress experienced by officers is linked to posttraumatic stress symptomology, anxiety and depression. High levels of anxiety and depression in law enforcement officers and exposure to hazardous situations are linked to high levels of alcohol use among law enforcement officers. Stress is also linked to a higher tendency to develop illnesses that are a result of deficiencies in the immune system and the development of sleep disorders in officers. A decrease in commitment to their assigned duties and attitude toward their colleagues is linked to occupational and organizational stress. Intimate partner violence or domestic violence has also been linked to operational and organizational stress.

What can the leaders, managers and supervisors within a law enforcement agency do to mitigate the work-related stress experienced by officers within their agency? This battle must be fought in three essential areas:

- Organizational structure: How labor is divided and managed within an organization.
- Organizational context: The social and environmental background of an organization. ▶

- Organizational control: The direction and control of tasks in an agency.

Through these three areas listed above, leaders have the ability and opportunity to establish and promote supportive work environments that reduce stress experienced by officers. Below are a few suggestions related to each of the three areas that may help police leaders reduce stress experienced by officers:

1. Organizational structure: How labor is divided and managed within an organization.

- Researchers have found that 10-hour shifts are most beneficial for officers. Officers working 10-hour shifts get more quality sleep, experience less fatigue and report higher overall work satisfaction. Officers working eight-hour shifts report less sleep in a 24-hour period and work more overtime. Officers working 12-hour shifts are less likely to perform self-initiated tasks.
- Researchers have shown that pairing officers with a partner with similar personalities reduces job dissatisfaction and increases job performance.
- **Emphasize monotasking!** Multitasking is a myth. Humans are not effective or efficient parallel processes. Neuroscience researchers indicate that multitasking doubles the amount of time to complete a task and doubles the number of mistakes made while completing the task.
- Promote employee assistance programs (EAPs).
- Hire new officers based on individual background, coping abilities and education levels. Hiring new officers in this manner could provide your agency with individuals better suited to deal with stress.

2. Organizational context: The social and environmental background of an organization.

- Research has shown that officers who have a good working relationship with administration experience less stress.
- Relationships between administrators and police bargaining units are also important.
- Leaders can implement exercise and stress-reduction programs.
- Leaders can use anonymous stress surveys to identify sources of stress in the workplace.
- Leaders can take efforts to increase job meaningfulness.
- Lead by example, practicing self-care. If employees observe their leadership engage in wellness activities, such as staying physically fit to reduce stress, they are more inclined to participate in wellness activities.
- Show gratitude and practice empathy and compassion.
- Make wellness convenient by offering healthy meal and snack options at your agency.
- Train employees to deal with chaos.

- Focus on employee personal growth and development to promote creativity and increase productivity.
- Practice mindfulness, which can create mental habits that promote resilience and productivity.
- Include both officers and their families when developing stress-related policies, procedures and training.
- Understand the importance of race and gender when establishing policies and training. Researchers have shown that African American officers feel their job performance is viewed more critically. Researchers have also shown that male officers feel they must maintain masculine personas, while female officers feel that the male officers do not want them on a traditionally male-dominated job.

3. Organizational control: The direction and control of tasks in an agency.



- From a leadership perspective, middle managers hold the key to changing the workplace culture that supports wellbeing and reduces workplace stress, as employees most frequently see and communicate with middle managers.

Stress has an immense psychological and physiological effect on officers, their families and their friends, not to mention a devastating financial and operational effect on law enforcement agencies. Effective leadership, supervision and management are essential in preserving the well-being of every officer within a law enforcement agency.

About the Author

Damon Simmons is currently a patrol sergeant with the Spokane County Sheriff's Office (WA). He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology from the University of Great Falls, a Master of Science Degree from the University of Phoenix, and a Doctor of Philosophy Degree in Criminal Justice from Walden University. Damon owns and operates LEO Firstline, L.L.C., a company offering stress management education and training for law enforcement agencies, as well as the public.

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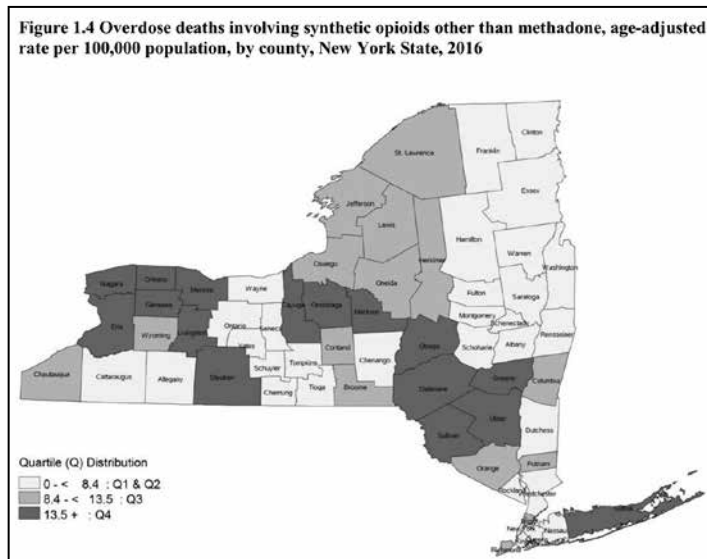
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Fentanyl Risk: Law Enforcement Perceptions

An exclusive article prepared for the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police

BY ERIC PERSAUD AND CHARLES JENNINGS

Fentanyl, a man-made or synthetic drug that has been chiefly responsible for the recent surge in opioid-related overdoses has become widespread as a primary or undisclosed ingredient in illicit drugs. In part, the emergence of fentanyl has propelled fatal drug overdoses to exceed even auto accidents as a cause of death. In 2017, there were over 70,327 overdose deaths in the United States (of all causes)¹, and the numbers appear to be increasing.



Law enforcement is on the front lines, and unintentional exposure to fentanyl-laced opioids has been identified in the media in numerous instances where officers reported ill-effects, usually following an encounter with an overdose case or during enforcement activities. While fentanyl exposure is a serious issue, its risks should be better understood by officers on the front lines.

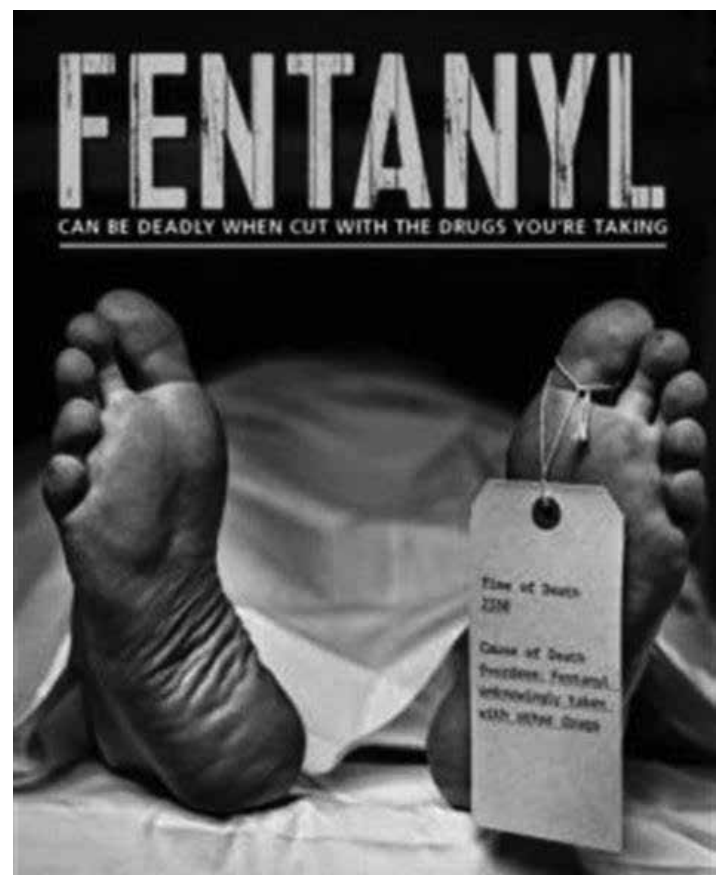
Initial uncertainty led to concerns that casual exposure to fentanyl could be deadly. While these initial warnings have been revised, press reports, often based on incomplete or unverified reports, have added uncertainty and anxiety over the hazards of fentanyl-containing substances. Unfortunately, the risk of fentanyl exposure has been miscommunicated and has allowed misinformation to spread causing confusion amongst first responders. With fentanyl being an emerging concern, lack of communication may have contributed to poor risk perceptions or how one judges their harm from occupational exposure to fentanyl.

To better understand the state of knowledge among first responders on self-protection strategies for exposure to fentanyl or suspected fentanyl-containing products, the Christian Regenhard Center for Emergency Response Studies at John Jay College of Criminal Justice (CUNY) in New York has partnered with the New York State Chiefs of Police to distribute a questionnaire addressing this public health issue. The goal was to get insight into how police view fentanyl risk so potential gaps in training may be adequately addressed. Among the responses to a national sample, 185 were from New York State with 90 being law enforcement officers.

While this number clearly cannot represent all officers, it can provide early indicators of what may need more attention as part of this pilot study. Generally within the study, New York State police perceptions and knowledge align well with expert beliefs.

The survey findings showed that police officers are mostly provided with basic safety practices, such as, protecting the eyes, face, mouth, and nose. Furthermore, officers understand fentanyl's chemical nature, for instance, being stronger than morphine and coming in many shapes and sizes, not just powder, but also as liquids, pills, sprays, gels, and adhesives. Our sample agreed that officers can recognize the signs and symptoms of a fentanyl overdose and disagreed on disturbing fentanyl without personal protective equipment, or PPE. Additionally it was agreed that gloves should be changed regularly. Officers have also stated that they understand it is not safe to eat, drink, or smoke when handling fentanyl, nor is it appropriate to touch your face when handling fentanyl. Lastly, the officers agreed that difficulty breathing could be a risk of fentanyl exposure.

The study did identify four areas for concern among those completing the survey. First, slightly over a third of responses had difficulty identifying nitrile as the recommended glove to use when handling fentanyl; instead they selected latex or stated that they were unsure of which gloves to use for handling. It can be possible





to mix up the two if there is lack of awareness of the different glove types best for different chemical exposure. For example, latex gloves can be penetrated by common substances such as vegetable oil much more easily than a nitrile glove. Selecting the right kind of PPE can make the difference between being safe or not.

Secondly, the perception of risk associated with briefly touching fentanyl has understandably been one of the more sensational topics in preparing workers, again due to informal sources spreading misinformation. The myth of briefly touching fentanyl leading to death has not been supported by scientific evidence. However, ninety-three percent of the law enforcement respondents in the survey agreed that “briefly touching fentanyl could lead to death”. Instead, it is known that briefly touching fentanyl is not harmful as long as the exposed skin surface is washed thoroughly with soap and water. Instead, the harm of touching fentanyl is more of a chronic or long term issue that is more likely to occur in people who regularly touch fentanyl or who are touching fentanyl for extended periods of time.

Third, washing the exposed skin with soap and water has been mentioned. *The use of hand sanitizer after handling of fentanyl is not safe or an appropriate alternative* to proper hand-washing. Doing so can lead to spreading the fentanyl around or getting it absorbed into the skin and exposing more of your body to something that could have been remediated with simple soap and water. The hand sanitizer may actually increase the amount of fentanyl that gets absorbed into the skin. About 1 out of every 4 responses in the survey would make this mistake based on their current perceptions.

The fourth area of concern was availability of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for first responders. Among NYS law enforcement officers, only about 1 out of every 4 of those responding agreed that they had access on their unit to appropriate PPE to address the hazards of fentanyl. This shows the clear need for additional education on this topic. Uncertainty about fentanyl exposure adds to anxiety and the possibility of ineffective protective actions in the field.

This early study was designed to understand law enforcement officers’ knowledge of self-protection against fentanyl, and we hope this article can help improve the readiness of first responders to encounter this chemical which is becoming all-too-common across the State. The opioid epidemic is not ending soon, and, therefore, we cannot hesitate in evaluating our training of first responders so that they are safe in the field. By eliminating confusion and instilling confidence, we can beat back this epidemic from harming those whose responsibility is to protect the public and enforce the laws of our communities, state, and nation.

The emergence of new hazards such as fentanyl abuse requires a constant reassessment of capabilities for self-protection. Our officers want to do the best they can to protect and serve as many people as they can. This can only be achieved by recognizing a need to evaluate our training and equip affected personnel with the tools they need so they can establish perceptions and knowledge to keep them safe and healthy in the field.

There are several recent sources for information on this topic. For more information:

National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health², U.S. Centers for Disease Control – Released a video in March 2019 specifically for first responders <https://youtu.be/T2mhmLsd79E>.

US Drug Enforcement Administration – Has a flyer that details safety for first responders. The flyer can be downloaded on the link below:

<https://www.dea.gov/sites/default/files/Publications/Final%20STANDARD%20size%20of%20Fentanyl%20Safety%20Recommendations%20for%20First%20Respond...pdf>

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¹Centers for Disease Control. “Drug Overdose Deaths.” <https://www.cdc.gov/drugoverdose/data/statedeaths.html>.

²NIOSH [2019]. Illicit Drugs, Including Fentanyl: Preventing Occupational Exposure to Emergency Responders. By Hornsby-Myers J, Headley T, Dowell, C. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. DHHS (NIOSH) Publication No. 2019-126.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection Resources for State and Local Partners

BY DAVID HAMPTON

LAW ENFORCEMENT BRANCH CHIEF, CBP INTERGOVERNMENTAL PUBLIC LIAISON OFFICE

The mission of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is to safeguard America's borders, protecting the public from dangerous people and materials while enhancing the nation's global economic competitiveness by enabling legitimate trade and travel. Although CBP is the largest component of the Department of Homeland Security with over 60,000 employees, it still relies on state, local, and tribal law enforcement partners to assist with preserving the nation's security. Through partnerships with local law enforcement agencies, CBP enhances its collective capabilities to detect and interdict threats before they reach our communities.

CBP maintains a large presence in New York state with multiple ports of entry along Lakes Erie and Ontario and the Saint Lawrence River; Border Patrol stations near the U.S.-Canada border; mail and cargo screening facilities at John F. Kennedy International Airport and the Port of New York; and air bases on Long Island, Plattsburg, and Buffalo. The state is home to three of CBP's major operational components: Air and Marine Operations (AMO), U.S. Border Patrol (USBP), and Office of Field Operations (OFO).

Due to their respective jurisdictions' proximity to CBP and the northern border, New York's police chiefs have access to a vast array of resources – including but not limited to training, intelligence and information sharing, grants, and laboratory and forensic services – to help their departments carry out their public safety and homeland security responsibilities. For example, AMO's aviation units provide enforcement and emergency services to state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies, including security, surveillance, critical infrastructure support, emergency response, and high-risk warrant executions. It is important to note these resources are not exclusively reserved for jurisdictions situated directly on the border. CBP recognizes that homeland security threats – such as human traffickers and transnational criminal organizations – don't end at the border. Consequently, resources are made available to all partners.

TRAINING

CBP's Border Patrol Academy provides no-cost training to law enforcement partners at its headquarters in Artesia, New Mexico, and when resources permit, local partners' facilities. The Border Patrol Academy's courses provide officers with unique skillsets that may not be offered locally due to resource constraints. Examples of exportable courses (i.e., those that can be administered at local police departments' locations) include:

- Individual First Aid Kit /Tourniquet: An eight-hour training program that provides skills and tools to treat traumatic field injuries.
- Survival Spanish: A 40-hour course designed to teach basic Spanish communication skills needed to perform fundamental tasks by law enforcement officers to include – but not limited to – vehicle stops, armed encounters, domestic response, and first aid.
- Tactical Medical/Combat Casualty Care: This 40-hour program deals with the three stages of combat medical care – hot zone, warm zone, and cold zone – and features combat lifesaving techniques, scenario-based active shooter training in various environments, and other practical law enforcement scenarios.



BORDER PATROL CLAYTON REGION



MAIL SEIZURES

RESCUE OPERATION



Besides formal training, CBP also conducts joint-training exercises with local partners. For example, the Swanton Sector, which covers Clinton, Essex, Franklin, St. Lawrence, Hamilton, and Herkimer Counties, collaborates with state and local law enforcement agencies to conduct joint-training, such as “active shooter response.”

In addition to the Border Patrol Academy, CBP’s Canine Training Program also provides training to law enforcement partners in Front Royal, Virginia, and El Paso, Texas. Training is offered for handlers and instructors in narcotics detection, search and rescue, human remains detection, patrol, and trailing. Finally, AMO can provide subject matter expertise, joint exercises, mobility, and training on aviation and maritime operations and interdictions.

INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION SHARING

CBP’s intelligence enterprise provides analyses on a variety of topics, including – but not limited to – counterterrorism, counterintelligence, alien smuggling, narcotics trafficking, transnational criminal organizations, and illicit trade. CBP shares critical information and is integrated through partnerships with the state and local law enforcement community in many ways.

The Buffalo Sector, responsible for securing every county in Western New York and portions of Northern and Central New York, is home to the Border Intelligence Center (BIC). The BIC is a law enforcement fusion center composed of federal, state, and local partners geared toward gathering information to identify real and potential threats to the United States that can be interdicted at or near the border. The BIC monitors and shares intelligence on potential threats to New York state’s communities, including ongoing transnational criminal organization activity in the region, human trafficking, and transnational narcotics. All New York state law enforcement agencies are encouraged to collaborate with the BIC, from sharing information related to suspicious activity with a foreign nexus (e.g., human smuggling, drug trafficking) to joining a cooperative task force. Local agencies intercepting packages containing illicit substances (e.g., narcotics, counterfeit medications) are strongly encouraged to share shipping label information with CBP as it can be used in the targeting of future shipments.

On a national level, CBP’s Laboratories and Scientific Services hosts a monthly Scientific Trends Online Network Exchange call through the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas program for the purposes of exchanging drug trend information among law enforcement partners, drug chemists, toxicologists, medical examiners, and coroners.

Partnerships in local task forces and Border Enforcement Security Task Forces provide a conduit for information sharing, joint operations, and collaboration. Local agencies interested in joining a local or national task force should contact their sector to discuss ongoing operations in their region.

GRANTS

The Department of Homeland Security’s \$90 million Operation Stonegarden grant program supports joint efforts to secure the United States’ borders along routes of international entries. Under this program, participating law enforcement agencies on or near an international border – including bodies of water – are eligible to receive grant funding that can be used to pay for equipment (e.g., small unmanned aircraft systems, narcotics detection equipment), overtime, training, and other allowable expenses in accordance with the operation’s regulations. In general, law enforcement agencies

supporting USBP operations that are located in counties situated directly on the border (referred to as Tier 1 entities), those that are adjacent to counties situated on the border (Tier 2), and those adjacent to the latter counties (Tier 3) are eligible for Operation Stonegarden funding.

LABORATORY AND FORENSICS ASSISTANCE

The Laboratories and Scientific Services Directorate is CBP’s forensic and scientific arm, providing forensic and scientific testing in the area of trade enforcement, weapons of mass destruction, intellectual property rights, and narcotics enforcement. Located in Newark, New Jersey, the New York laboratory provides traditional forensic support services, such as illicit narcotic analysis and latent print examination to law enforcement agencies. Additionally, the directorate has the capability to enhance, authenticate, duplicate, and recover video and audio recordings for its law enforcement customers, as well as perform digital media extraction and analysis on a wide variety of electronic devices. If needed, the directorate can provide Tier 3 level support to include advanced forensic unlocking capabilities and device repair to other law enforcement agencies. Although priority is given to CBP and other federal law enforcement agencies, the directorate may also provide forensic assistance to local law enforcement agencies.

The directorate also conducts pollen analyses to determine geolocation or travel histories of interdicted drugs. The information gleaned from these analyses assists with the development of intelligence and targeting efforts that “connects the dots” between country of origin and narcotics seized and/or drug trafficking organizations. If any state, local, or tribal law enforcement department in New York has a large fentanyl seizure, agencies are encouraged to send 1 kilogram to CBP for testing. For more details about this program please contact AFIPINFO@cbp.dhs.gov.

In addition to the New York laboratory, CBP uses a variety of cutting-edge technology to identify and interdict packages containing narcotics and other dangerous substances. At the JFK international mail facility, where 60-65 percent of all incoming international mail is processed, CBP officers utilize advance electronic data (e.g., origin, destination address) to detect packages and mail that potentially contain illicit substances (e.g., fentanyl disguised as oxycodone tablets). If CBP intercepts a package destined for an address in the New York area, CBP officers may collaborate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement and local law enforcement agencies to conduct a controlled delivery. Intercepting illicit packages not only removes dangerous substances from the postal system, it also identifies individuals who may be involved in the trafficking of illicit goods within their communities.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS AND REQUESTING CBP’S ASSISTANCE

CBP values the role of local law enforcement partners in preserving homeland security and looks forward to future opportunities for partnership. Police chiefs with questions about CBP operations, policies, or programs are encouraged to contact the Intergovernmental Public Liaison office at cbp-intergovernmental-public-liaison@cbp.dhs.gov. Besides answering questions about resources, the liaison can connect agencies with CBP leadership (e.g., USBP sector chiefs, OFO directors, and AMO branch directors) in their area, so local partners can establish these contacts and relationships. CBP looks forward to collaborating with New York police departments to protect the people of New York and the United States.

Profile: The New York State Preparedness Training Center's New Explosive Detection Canine Program

BY: MEGHAN DUDLEY & JAMES TURLEY

LAUNCHING JUNE 2019, "CANINE WEEK" BRINGS TOGETHER EXPLOSIVE DETECTION CANINE TEAMS FROM ACROSS NEW YORK TO PARTICIPATE IN FOUR DAYS OF SCENARIO-BASED TRAINING.

Acknowledging the threat improvised explosive devices (IEDs) pose, New York State established a robust explosive detection canine (EDC) program built on funding, coordination and training approximately ten years ago. Today, EDC teams are a critical component of New York State's strategy to prevent and deter acts of terrorism. The state's Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services (DHSES) plays an important role in securing the funding for EDC teams, coordinating information-sharing among the nearly 200 teams in the state, and holding scenario-based training events for teams at the State Preparedness Training Center in Oriskany, NY.



Canine Week builds on a popular existing annual training event at the SPTC called the Excelsior Challenge. This week-long event brings together bomb technicians, EDC handlers and tactical team operators to participate in scenarios based on the current threat environment.

Given the complexity of today's threats, the integration and coordination of these three types of law enforcement specialty teams is critical. Excelsior Challenge participants (bomb, EDC, and tactical) are grouped together regionally to assist in building and reinforcing relationships after the training ends. In 2018, nearly 120 law enforcement officers participated in the Excelsior Challenge, including many EDC teams from across the state.

These training efforts are actively supported by local, state and federal partners, including the New York Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Police Department, which has the largest EDC program in the nation. "The MTA finds the canine training opportunities at the SPTC top notch," says Kerwick. "We provide a cadre of expert instructors to support these training events and we also send our newest EDC handlers to participate. The training we conduct at the SPTC is cutting-edge and evolves each year to meet the most current threats we face."

In addition to world-class training, funding and coordination play integral parts in New York's EDC program. Early on, DHSES recognized that many local police departments needed financial support for their EDC teams. EDC programs can result in significant overhead for local departments, including purchasing and training the canine, miscellaneous expenses, a vehicle to support the canine and other related equipment expenses.

Accordingly, in 2009, DHSES launched a targeted grant program to support this community. Using funding provided by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), DHSES created the "Explosive Detection Canine Targeted Grant Program." Under this competitive program, local law enforcement agencies can request funding to build or sustain an EDC capability. The DHS funding has allowed DHSES to distribute 126 awards totaling \$4.4 million to nearly 50 law enforcement agencies to help them expand their EDC capabilities.



To enhance its support of EDC teams, DHSES will launch a new event in June called "Canine Week" to bring together the EDC teams from across the state to participate in four days of scenario-based training. EDC teams will rotate through eight core lanes of training on a variety of topics, including dignitary protection, a vehicle-borne IED with a large explosive hide, socialization with helicopters and drones, and tactical emergency casualty care for canine partners.



To receive funding, local agencies must have their EDC assets certified and re-certified annually, based on standards provided by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services. They must also complete a detailed capability assessment, using a methodology provided by the DHS Office for Bombing Prevention (OBP). Moreover, EDC teams that receive funding must report their calls for service in the “Bomb Arson Tracking System” (BATS), a national system which is maintained by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms.

In addition to targeted grant funding, DHSES also supports information-sharing and networking opportunities within the canine community through its annual “Explosive Detection Canine Handlers Conference” in Saratoga Springs, NY. This conference was created in 2011 and brings together local, state, federal and international experts to share lessons learned and best practices.

Funding, coordination, and training have combined to provide New York State’s EDC program with a stable base from which to grow. State, local and federal partners continually work together to ensure the state’s EDC program can safely and successfully meet the complex and evolving threat environment.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Meghan Dudley is an Intelligence Analyst with DHSES and oversees Training Administration at the State Preparedness Training Center.

James Turley serves as the Law Enforcement Coordinator for the DHSES Office of Counter Terrorism. He is a 27-year veteran of the Albany, New York, Police Department, where he retired as Chief in 2005.

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<https://www.officer.com/tactical/swat/explosives-detection/article/21056194/a-profile-on-the-new-york-state-preparedness-training-center-explosive-detection-canine-program>

How Effective Leaders Make Us Feel

BY DR. CYNTHIA L. LEWIS

“The role of a creative leader is not to have all the ideas; it’s to create a culture where everyone can have ideas and feel that they’re valued.” -Ken Robinson¹

Take a moment to think about your leaders, both past and present. How do these individuals make you feel? Do positive or negative emotions top your list? What are these leaders’ strengths? Weaknesses?

Some leaders have no rank in their agency, yet they inspire others to follow them. Even if you do not currently hold a formal position as a leader, your peers may think of you as an informal one. What would they consider your strengths and weaknesses? Which feelings do they have when they think of your leadership abilities?

Many employees probably would agree that leaders should have certain identifiable traits, including effective communication, problem-solving, and decision-making skills; a clearly articulated mission and vision; and the ability to inspire their people. Unfortunately, some personnel have experienced times when their leaders demonstrated such destructive attributes as arrogance, excessive pride and ego, and a lack of empathy and flexibility. If we specifically try to remember how particular leaders impacted our feelings, we may better emulate those who did so positively. Similarly, we can avoid replicating destructive actions of former leaders who made us feel bad.

By going one step further than listing characteristics of our leaders,

we can delve deeper into how those specific traits made us feel. We can bridge the gap between just understanding those feelings and considering an important component of leadership: Those we lead should feel good too.

Take time to remember the positive feelings you had while flourishing under leaders you admired and respected. Focusing on those individuals’ traits may help improve your effectiveness and result in your employees’ high performance while you feel good at the same time. Law enforcement often can be an isolated profession in which members are uncomfortable sharing feelings and only reluctantly open up to their colleagues. Leadership entails building relationships and influencing others; we progress toward these goals when our employees feel safe, trust us, and are inspired to complete their mission.

Dr. Cynthia L. Lewis, an instructor with the Executive Programs Instruction Unit at the FBI Academy, prepared this Leadership Spotlight. She can be reached at cllewis@fbi.gov.

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Endnotes

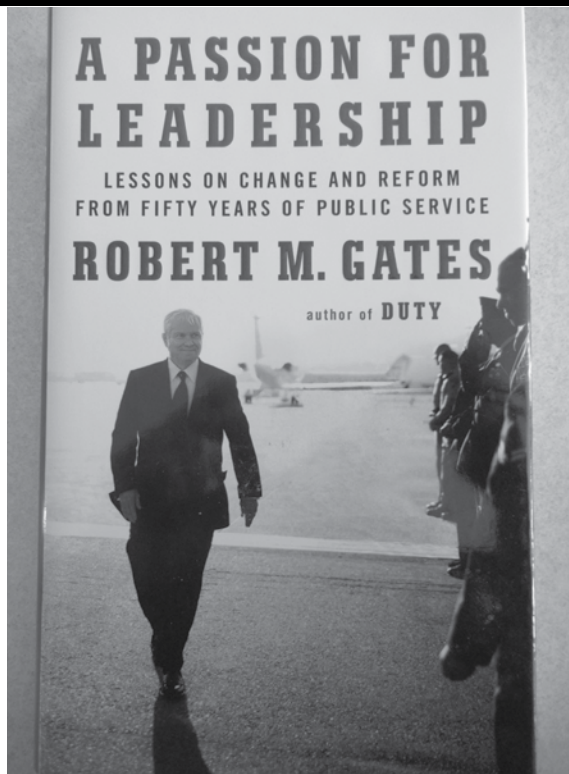
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BOOK REVIEW



Having led change successfully at three sprawling, monumental organizations—the CIA, Texas A&M University, and the Department of Defense—Robert M. Gates offers the ultimate insider’s look at how leaders can manage and implement change in organizations and companies. For many Americans, bureaucracy and corporate structure are code words for inertia. Gates knows that it doesn’t have to be that way. With stunning clarity, he shares how simple plans, faithfully executed, can cut through the mire of bureaucracy to reform organizational culture. And he shows that great leaders listen and respond to their teams and embrace the power of compromise. Using the full weight of his wisdom, candor, and devotion to duty, he empowers leaders at any level to effectively implement his leadership strategies.

The book is an easy read with good flow of information and descriptions of hard lessons learned in leadership and management. The leadership style of Secretary Gates is apolitical and dedicated to always putting what is best for the country over political expediency. In his book, Secretary Gates discusses being the only government official who, in his job as Secretary of Defense, transitioned from the administration of George Bush to the administration of Barack Obama. In my view this ability to maintain an apolitical stance while still being effective is a valuable lesson for any police administrator struggling with how to exist in the sometimes very political world of law enforcement. Part of the strength of this book is also how the author effectively uses personal stories to highlight leadership ideas and strategies, which lends strength and understanding to the topic.

Overall, I would recommend this book to anyone interested in the study of leadership. It is very readable and relatable to law enforcement.

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Abating the Green Rush

BY JAMES P. KENNEDY

UNITED STATES ATTORNEY WESTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK



In 1849, the California Gold Rush produced a rapid influx of fortune seekers willing to throw caution to the wind as they hastily set out to stake their claim to a lifetime of wealth. Nearly 170 years later, we are witnessing a similar phenomenon—this time a Green Rush—as scores of private individuals and public officials push ahead headlong with efforts to legalize the recreational use of marijuana.

Despite this growing perception that the decriminalization of marijuana is a *fait accompli*, what has become profoundly clear to me during my tenure as the United States Attorney and the nearly three decades I have spent as a federal prosecutor is how scarce the evidence is regarding marijuana’s impacts on individual health and societal wellness.

As a prosecutor, I look for evidence and facts, and I ask questions. The dearth of reliable evidence and facts regarding the actual effects that marijuana has on us, individually and collectively, is highly concerning to me and makes me question whether proponents of the legalization of recreational marijuana have sufficient evidence to carry their burden of making a responsible and informed decision. On January 12, 2017, the National Academy of Science released a 468-page study entitled, “The Health Effects of Cannabis and Cannabinoids: The Current State of Evidence and Recommendations for Research.” One thing that the study makes clear is that the health effects of marijuana remain, largely, a mystery.

As far as marijuana’s potential health benefits, the Study determined that there was “substantial evidence” of the efficacy cannabis and cannabinoids in only a few areas: treating chronic pain in adults, helping reduce chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting, and improving patient-reported multiple sclerosis spasticity symptoms. Aside from the fact that these are all medical and therapeutic uses, the study also noted that “there are no good-quality randomized trials investigating” these options and that “very little is known about the efficacy, dose, routes of administration, or side effects of commonly used and commercially available cannabis products in the United States.” Such limited evidence hardly compels the conclusion that sweeping legislation legalizing the recreational use of marijuana is warranted. Instead, it suggests that to the extent that “substantial evidence” of marijuana’s benefits exists, those benefits lie exclusively in its medical uses, though further studies regarding medical marijuana’s efficacy, dosing, methods of administration, and side effects are required.

This more limited and cautious approach to the legalization of marijuana finds further support when one considers the areas for which there is “substantial evidence” of marijuana’s health harms. Specifically, the Study found a statistical association between cannabis smoking and the following: worse respiratory symptoms and more frequent chronic bronchitis episodes; increased risk

of motor vehicle crashes; lower birth weight in children; and the development of schizophrenia or other psychoses, with the highest risk among the most frequent users. How can it be sound public policy to legalize recreational marijuana when the evidence suggests it will lead to more people suffering respiratory issues, dying in car accidents, having less healthy babies, and developing certain forms of mental illness? Oh, by the way, on that last harm for which there is substantial evidence—mental illness, while there is conflicting evidence whether those who suffer mental illness are more likely to commit violent crime, there is strong evidence that those who suffer from mental illness are far more likely to be the victims of violent crime. Again, how can it be sound public policy to legalize recreational marijuana when the evidence suggests not only that it may lead more people to commit violent crime, it will lead to more people being victimized by violent crime?

Beyond the foregoing, there is no other substantial evidence of marijuana’s health impacts. As to every other potential impact that marijuana has on our health as humans, the study found: moderate; limited; insufficient; or no evidence. Does it impair academic achievement and educational outcomes? Limited evidence says yes. Does it increase rates of unemployment and/or low income? Limited evidence says yes. Does it impair social functioning or engagement in developmentally appropriate social roles? Again, limited evidence says yes. How can it be sound public policy to legalize recreational marijuana when it very well may make us dumber, poorer, and less social, and when, in the end, we really do not know what it is going to do to people?

Finally, the Study found “moderate evidence” of a statistical association between cannabis use and the development of substance dependence and/or substance abuse disorder for substances including other illicit drugs. In 2017, there were 72,000 fatal drug overdoses in America. Even if the “moderate evidence” establishing recreational marijuana’s role as a gateway drug is ignored, how can it be sound public policy to push for the legalization of recreational marijuana, when the very most that can be said is that we have no idea whether legalization will lead to an increase or a decrease in the number of overdose deaths?

As with health costs and benefits, when it comes to social costs and benefits, there is again a dearth of solid evidence. Further, the overwhelming evidence from states, such as Oregon and Colorado, which have legalized recreational marijuana, demonstrates that legalization does not eliminate the illicit black market for marijuana. To the contrary, with legalization comes overproduction. My colleague Billy Williams, the United States Attorney for the District in Oregon and Chairman of the Attorney General’s Advisory Committee’s Marijuana Working Group, estimates that Oregon’s annual marijuana production capacity is up to 10 times its annual marijuana consumption demand. That overproduction of marijuana leads to a glut of marijuana on the black-market, where illicit

—OPINION ARTICLE, continued on page 26

We are honored to remind the great state of New York's Law Enforcement Community that the exciting new National Law Enforcement Museum at the Motorola Solutions Foundation Building is now open. This immersive new Museum offers visitors an interactive, one-of-a-kind, "walk in the shoes" experience of what it's like to be a law enforcement officer.



National Law Enforcement Museum
at the Motorola Solutions Foundation Building

Law enforcement officers and civilians alike will get the chance to experience the many facets of American law enforcement through educational interactive exhibits and workshops that delve into everything from the meticulous and messy world of forensics and DNA analysis to how law enforcement is portrayed in pop culture.

Participants will hear real-life, first-hand accounts of what it's like to be an officer in our *Officers' Stories* exhibit, perhaps take part in an officer Training Simulator or determine what it's like to make split-second, life-altering decisions in a *9-1-1 Emergency Ops* simulation. *Take the Case* lets visitors test their analytical and critical-thinking skills by weighing the evidence and role-playing in an interrogation room.

The Museum features a world-class collection of more than 20,000 artifacts that depicts American law enforcement, historic events and pop culture. Each object helps illustrate the important role American Law Enforcement plays in society, as well as its invaluable contribution to American history. With a mission of helping strengthen the relationship between law enforcement officers and the communities they serve, the Museum also offers a host of educational and community programs for visitors of all ages.

The *Witness to History* program provides visitors with a first-hand account of significant, history-making events from those who were there while *Leaders in Law Enforcement* takes visitors behind the badge with first-hand narratives from distinguished and notable law enforcement professionals. Intimate and engaging

forensics camps foster Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) skills, while the Museum's activity carts, online educational resources and virtual classrooms make the Museum a destination for educators.

Just a few hours' drive from New York City, and located in the heart of the nation's capital, the Museum is ideally situated for sightseeing in Washington, DC. Just steps from the National Mall and some of our country's most noted landmarks, the Museum is a must-do stop on any visit to Washington, DC. The 57,000 square foot facility is adjacent to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial. Fallen heroes, including the 1,610 law enforcement officers from the state of New York who have made the ultimate sacrifice, are remembered inside the Museum in the beautiful *Hall of Remembrance*, a reflective space where visitors can leave a tribute to a fallen officer.

Law enforcement officers receive a 20% discount off the regular admission price. Want to save even more? Join Stand With Honor, our membership program for law enforcement officers. Individual membership starts at just \$100. To learn more about the National Law Enforcement Museum and sign up for the *Museum Insider* newsletter, visit: LawEnforcementMuseum.org

Immerse Yourself – "Walk in the shoes of a modern-day law enforcement officer. Be a 911 operator/dispatcher in the *911 Emergency Ops* exhibit, learn about different law enforcement specializations in *Being an Officer* or become a detective and learn about the forensic techniques used to solve cases in *Take the Case*."



Simulator Training – "Participate in an immersive training scenario and experience the split-second decisions that officers make on the job."

Discover the History – "Explore the history of law enforcement in America through numerous artifacts that demonstrate major milestones and pivotal turning points for the profession in the *History Time Capsules* exhibit."



Experiencing the Calling – "Start your experience with the *Signature Film* in the *Main Theater* as an introduction to the work of law enforcement in the United States and its relatively unique role. Watch three short documentary-style films about officers serving and protecting their communities in *To Serve and Protect*, and engage with the Web of Law Enforcement to learn how the complex web of some 18,000 agencies works together to keep us safe."

National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund's Destination Zero Program – Saving Law Enforcement Lives Moving Forward!



Have you ever desired to start or improve an officer safety or wellness program at your agency and just been overwhelmed at the prospect of that kind of ground up effort? Maybe you have even been to some of the outstanding law enforcement resiliency conferences that are at long last trending mainstream across the country but have come away with so many disparate program ideas and resource contacts that frustration is the main result! Well we have good news for you. The National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund's Officer Safety Wellness and Research Division wants to assist you in finding that magical place where, as Granny used to say, "the silverware is all in the same drawer"!

The Destination Zero Program is a joint effort by the US Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance and the Memorial Fund. We work together to create a platform that provides all U.S. law enforcement agencies with the ability to research successful officer safety and wellness programs and identify the resources necessary to begin or enhance with their own risk management initiatives – all in one place.

You read that right. Our mission is to seek out and identify the best officer safety and wellness programs across the country and make information about them available to all agencies via the entirely free Memorial Fund Destination Zero website, which also serves as a searchable database specifically for your use! After all, if there is an effective template already in place at another agency,

or a resource being used successfully that is saving law enforcement lives, there are likely few or no reasons why with minor adjustments the same methodologies can't be utilized with great affect in your jurisdiction as well.

Serving as a clearing house for the nation's best officer safety and wellness initiatives is just the start of the Destination Zero program. The program nationally recognizes agencies that have acted and implemented initiatives, policies, or programs that proactively increase overall officer safety and wellness. Each year, during National Police Week in Washington DC, the coveted National Officer Safety and Wellness Awards are presented in four identified safety categories. Both, winning and runner-up agencies in each of those categories are acknowledged. The categories are as follows: General Officer Safety, Officer Traffic Safety, Officer Wellness,



Comprehensive Safety.

While the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund is certainly dedicated to memorializing the officers across our nation that have made the ultimate sacrifice, we are equally dedicated to making it safer for those who serve.

So, there's no need to feel overwhelmed with information. You can now get immediate assistance and results by visiting www.nleomf.org/programs/destination-zero/

About the author: Matt Clements served the citizens of Jacksonville, FL as a police officer for 25 years. He is currently the Project Manager of the Memorial Fund's Destination Zero Program.



Access to and mandated wear of body armor is an integral part of a good **General Officer Safety** program.



A good example of **Officer Traffic Safety** principles, an officer uses his MDC while stopped and out of traffic.



Many agencies are implementing or augmenting **Officer Wellness** programs, assisting officers in the pursuit of both physical and mental wellness.



Conspicuously marked patrol vehicles are a good inclusion in an agency's **Officer Traffic Safety** program.



The Lockport Blue Police/Community Support Initiative

BY MARY BRENNAN TAYLOR AND ELLEN MARTIN



For the past three years, the City and Town of Lockport have hosted and promoted a tribute to law enforcement that we call “Lockport Blue”. Lockport Blue is a grassroots initiative held each November and designed to engage with and show visible sustained support and appreciation for our local law enforcement community. During the month of November, we encourage people in the community to install blue lights on the front of their homes. Signs are also distributed proclaiming “Thank You” and “Be Safe Tonight”. The signs are located on the front lawns of homes throughout the city and town. Electric signs and billboards in front of local schools, businesses, and churches throughout the community offer thanks and expressions of gratitude to members of the City of Lockport Police Department, the Niagara County Sheriffs Department, and the New York State Police – “A” Troop.

This program was launched in the Fall of 2016 following a rash of fatal attacks on law enforcement across the country. Over the past three years the Lockport Blue campaign has exceeded the expectations of organizers Ellen Martin and Mary Brennan-Taylor. An estimated 12,000 people, from preschoolers to senior citizens have taken part in one or more of the 62 events held to date with 30 additional events and activities added for 2018.

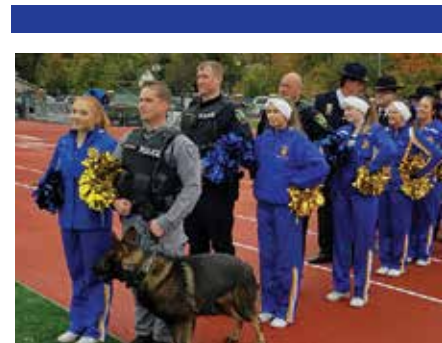
Each year hundreds of decorated grab and go bags are designed and filled by elementary school students and Assisted Living Facility residents for law enforcement to receive during shift changes. The hand decorated bags are filled with water bottles, granola bars, apples from local farms, gum, hand sanitizer, and energy drinks. School assemblies, football halftime shows, “Coffee with a Cop” events and “Reading with a Cop” story times have filled the calendar of events each year.

This past year Ms. Martin and Ms. Brennan-Taylor have organized a few new twists on an already popular campaign. With the assistance of retired Lockport Police Chief and current Alderman at Large Larry Eggert, a thin blue line was painted on Niagara Street in front of Lockport Police Headquarters as a symbolic and permanent reminder to the community that local law enforcement keeps them safe in their homes, businesses, and places of worship. Retired Lockport Police Officer Mike Wasik, who owns a striping business installed the blue line. Future events in our busy month-long itinerary of events include a lunch with senior citizens, a breakfast with middle schoolers and “pizza with police” with local high school students. As part of Lockport Blue and to build support for the law enforcement profession, a 3-part panel discussion exploring various aspects of law enforcement careers is scheduled for Lockport High School. Plans in the works for the month include a series of basketball games between the Lockport Blue Law Enforcement team and students at multiple schools. We are also planning a school-wide event honoring current and fallen law enforcement officers from the Lockport community at Emmet Belknap Middle School and a breakfast for all law enforcement at Eastern Niagara Hospital in the City of Lockport. A valuable partner in our Lockport Blue program has been our local newspaper – the Lockport Union Sun & Journal, which lend their support and significant local outreach to publicize all our events throughout the month.



In addition to our public outreach initiatives, as part of Lockport Blue, we also focus on assisting law enforcement officers and their families deal with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. As such, we provide recruits in the Niagara County Law Enforcement Academy literature on the subject and sponsor an appearance by nationally recognized PTSD expert Cattaraugus County Sheriff Tim Whitcomb on the impact of PTSD on law enforcement, which will round out the month’s events.

According to Lockport Blue co-founders Mary Brennan-Taylor and Ellen Martin, “this is a campaign that was introduced a few years ago not knowing what to expect, but it has become a program that has



been adopted and owned by the community. From residents to businesses, schools to churches, sports teams to senior centers, the response has been overwhelming! We would encourage any community that is looking for a method of recognizing the efforts of their local law enforcement community to adopt a program like our Lockport Blue program. It is a simple, low cost, yet very effective way for a community to say thank you.”

About the authors: Co-founders Ellen Martin and Mary Brennan-Taylor are long-time community activists who spearhead numerous initiatives to improve the quality of life in the Lockport Community. Ellen is a retired attorney and founder of the Lockport Public Arts Council and a member of numerous community boards. Mary Brennan-Taylor is the mother of two Niagara County Sheriff’s Deputies and serves on multiple boards in the Niagara County area. For more information on the Lockport Blue program, contact Mary at: marybrennantaylor@gmail.com



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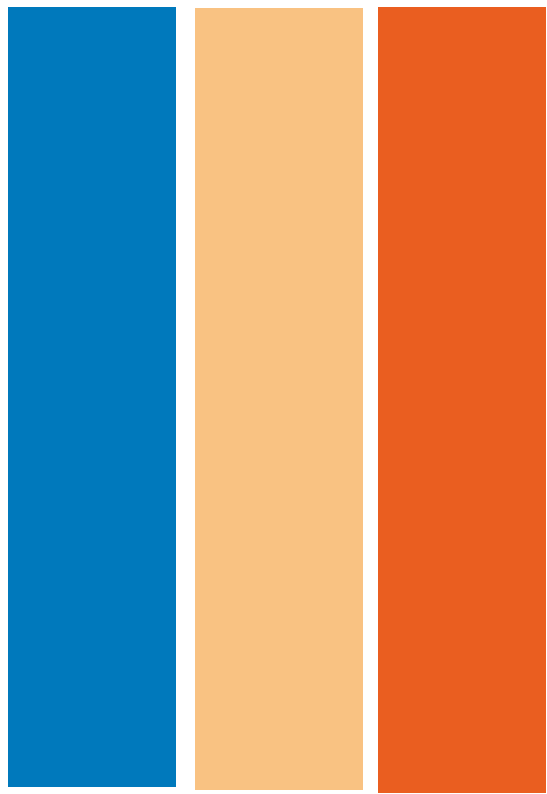
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Persons with Disabilities

BY CHIEF (RET.) MARK SPAWN

A few years ago I produced a podcast series that included tips for first responders when interacting with people with disabilities. Dave Whalen who heads up the First Responder Disability Awareness Training (FR-DAT) program at Niagara University in New York was interviewed as part of that series (details at the end of this article). We spoke about some of the guidelines in the publication, “People First: Communicating with and About People with Disabilities”¹ which offers tips and advice for assisting and communicating with persons with disabilities.

...for first responders, it's okay to ask someone if they are disabled.

One tip that I specifically remember Dave Whalen offering is that, for first responders, it's okay to ask someone if they are disabled. In a social setting that question might be offensive or rude, but for a police officer, firefighter or EMS responder, it is necessary and acceptable so that we can determine how we are going to help a person and assess their safety. For our newer police officers I think this is great advice. We always want to help people, but we need to do it with sensitivity and respect. Sometimes a disability is apparent such as when you see someone in a wheelchair or on crutches. But other times the disability may not be noticeable, for example, a person who is deaf or hard of hearing, or someone who

When we are talking about people with disabilities, realize that some of the terminology you may have heard 30 years ago is not only outdated, it is insensitive.

has a visual disability. One of the first recommendations is that, if you are going to help someone, wait for them to accept your offer and then ask for instructions.¹ The principle here is *People First* – focus on the person, not on their disability. In the past you may have heard of someone who “suffers from” or is “afflicted” with a particular disability. *People First* steers away from the negative connotations and instead focuses on the person as a human being, not on the condition or diagnosis.

So when you are speaking with a person with a disability, address them at eye level, don't look down on them. Use your normal tone of voice – don't shout. When we are talking about people with disabilities, realize that some of the terminology you may have heard 30 years ago is not only outdated, it is insensitive. No longer should we hear the terms “deaf and dumb”, or “mental retardation.” If those words are still in your vocabulary, you owe it to yourself and those you serve to learn more. (I will share a great resource with you at the end of this article.)

Be personable. A handshake is a great way to start a conversation. Not only is it a social custom, it directly implies a helping hand. How would you approach a person with a disfigured or artificial arm? I still find it very appropriate to offer to shake the hand, or to offer a left-handed handshake. Try to imagine yourself in the



(photo: Pond5/yacobchuk)

position of the person with the disability – how would you want to be treated? You certainly wouldn't want to be demeaned or made to feel ashamed.

I've had several cases during my career when a person with a disability was gathering documents for a burglary report, accident report, or trying to describe something to me. It may take more time than usual, but patience is necessary. I remember one instance working with an elderly woman who had limited mobility and speech due to a stroke. A family member repeatedly intervened, trying to guess what their relative was going to do or say. I could only imagine the woman's frustration. But I continued to wait for her responses, ignoring the interference from the other family member. To this day I am certain that I saw the gratitude and comfort in the eyes of the elderly lady for giving her time and tell me her story in her own way, and at her own pace. And that is the reward – not for me, and not for us, but the reward in what we can do for people who cannot do certain things, or who are unable to communicate, see, speak, walk, or learn in the way that most of us do.

Audio podcasts for law enforcement are available on the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police website. To Publications, then click Podcasts:

Disability Awareness for Police (APB095)

Disability Awareness for Police – Tips (APB096)

Communicating with the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (APB097)

A booklet titled, “People First: Communicating with and About People with Disabilities” is available from the New York State Department of Health website at <https://www.health.ny.gov/publications/0951.pdf>

¹People First: Communicating with and About People with Disabilities, New York State Department of Health; Publication 0951. October 2008.

About the Author: Mark A. Spawn is the retired Chief of Police for the City of Fulton, New York and former Director of Research, Development and Training for the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police. He is the CEO of The Spawn Group, LLC in Costa Mesa, California.

Albany Police Memorial Parade May 2019



President John Aresta with Suffolk County Chief of Department Stuart Cameron.



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NYSACOP Update – IACP Division Midyear Meeting

BY CHIEF MICHAEL LEFANCHECK



I recently had the pleasure of representing the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police (NYSACOP) at the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Division Midyear meetings that were held in Austin, TX in March. I serve as NYSACOP's representative to the IACP's State Association of Chiefs of Police (SACOP) Division and wanted to take this opportunity to provide feedback to the NYSACOP members on what was discussed and learned at the meetings.

The Midyear meetings were comprised of three separate Divisions within the IACP: The Midsize Agencies Division, (NYSACOP Past President, Chief Dave Zack from Cheektowaga PD, serves as the Northeast Regional Chair of this Division); the State & Provincial Police Division, and the State Association of Chiefs of Police.

Our agenda began with the keynote speaker, Secretary Kirstjen M. Nielsen, from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS). During her remarks, Secretary Nielsen spoke about the many partnerships that the DHS has forged with local law enforcement, along with the successes of those relationships.

After her prepared remarks, both Secretary Nielsen and IACP Executive Director, Vincent Talucci held a more informal discussion regarding many of the issues DHS is facing today. Questions from attendees were limited to only three individuals, but I am pleased to say that I was selected to speak for SACOP. My comments to the Secretary concerned the increased and constant "media attention" on the southern border of the country and the apparent lack of attention to the "northern border". I spoke specifically about the number of problems and obstacles faced by law enforcement at the New York State borders and that we should not be forgotten by the federal government. The Secretary agreed and indicated that the northern border was also a concern to DHS, requiring different resources than were required at the southern border.

Following the Secretary's remarks, I had the opportunity to meet with David Hampton, Law Enforcement Branch Chief of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection. We spoke in greater detail about my comments to Secretary Nielsen. After further discussion I am pleased to notify you that NYSACOP members will be receiving an instructional block at our Conference in July from Customs & Border Patrol on their capabilities and available resources that CBP can provide to New York law enforcement. In their presentation at the Conference, they will also be discussing their enforcement along the Northern border, as well as efforts to combat MS-13 and other gangs that have been responsible for some very serious violent crime on Long Island and other parts of New York State.

During the Midyear meetings, there was a very interesting presentation regarding the Impact of the Legalization of Marijuana, which was very informative. As many of you know, this issue has been at the forefront of the legislative agenda for the New York State Legislature and the NYSACOP Board of Governors (BOG) continues to take the strong stance against the legalization of marijuana. The opinion of the Board is that legalization would

have a negative impact on public safety; especially in the area of traffic safety. The presentation I heard reinforced my belief that the position of the NYSACOP Board is the correct one to take.

During the regional SACOP meetings, I attended the North Atlantic session, which is now Chaired by Director Fred Harran, from Pennsylvania. There were many topics discussed during our time together and I am pleased to report that several of these important topics have been forwarded to the IACP for their review. The need for a unified message promoting the law enforcement profession was deemed by our group as a top priority by our discussion group. Our thought process was that while many of our departments across the country were utilizing recruitment techniques focused on their own agency, having a coordinated message, led by the IACP to better promote and identify the best attributes of our profession would be helpful in garnering and maintaining support from citizens.

Another significant topic of discussion was on the importance of addressing school safety. The speaker for this discussion was Undersheriff Mark Spitzer, who serves as the SACOP representative for New Jersey. His region has spent a great deal of time and effort developing a "Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management" process. The North Atlantic Region has recommended to the IACP that a working group be established to determine Best Policy & Best Practices" in this critical area.

Another item of concern was the issue of legalized prostitution. This issue has been discussed recently in many states, including New York State. I am confident that members of law enforcement are fully aware of the effect of human trafficking on prostitution along with the many other social issues linked to this "profession". A resolution will be forwarded to the IACP from the North Atlantic region to stand squarely against these legalization efforts. This proposed resolution will be voted upon by the members at the IACP Conference this fall.

I also had the opportunity to attend meetings of many of the Executive Directors from Chiefs of Police Associations from across the country. I enjoyed the opportunity to interact and obtain thoughts, ideas and advice on how NYSACOP can best serve our members. I have forwarded many of these to the NYSACOP Board of Governors for review and possible implementation.

I appreciate the opportunity to serve NYSACOP as the SACOP representative and think that this conference was very beneficial to our association. New relationships were established with representative from across the country and old partnerships were made stronger. It was apparent to me that New York law enforcement has a significant voice and our membership is a critical part of the overall law enforcement effort at the national level.

Michael Lefancheck is presently the Chief of Police for the Baldwinsville Police Department, where he has served his entire 32 year career; spending the past 11 years as Chief. He is the Immediate Past President of the New York State Association of Chiefs of Police, having served as President from 2017-18. He also represents the NYSACOP membership at the IACP's Division of State Association of Chiefs of Police. Chief Lefancheck holds a degree in Criminal Justice and is a graduate of the University of Arkansas Rural Executive Management Institute.

“New York Governor’s Traffic Safety Committee Embraces Officer Safety Training and the Below 100 Program”

Today’s policing environment finds our nation’s law enforcement agencies under intense public and media scrutiny. Police agencies are routinely understaffed and regularly asked to perform tasks outside of the traditional job description. So often, a police officer’s health and wellbeing are an afterthought and viewed as a risk of the job. As of May 1, 2019, 36 law enforcement officers have lost their lives in performance of their duties; of those 36, 17 officers have died in traffic related incidents. This represents just a fraction of the those physically and emotionally scarred by the traumas of policing.

safety. The event challenged agency leaders to focus on cultural and policy changes that can virtually eliminate preventable line-of-duty deaths and injuries and encourage officers to become highway safety role models.

The nearly 60 attendees learned how law enforcement leaders have built successful safety programs that have resulted in a significant reduction in officer crashes and injuries, improved morale and realized substantial operational cost savings. The goal of the Best Practices Symposium was for each law enforcement executive to come away with an action plan to implement a program and become a leader in highway safety.

As Below 100 founder, Dale Stockton stated, *“It doesn’t take money, it takes commitment”*

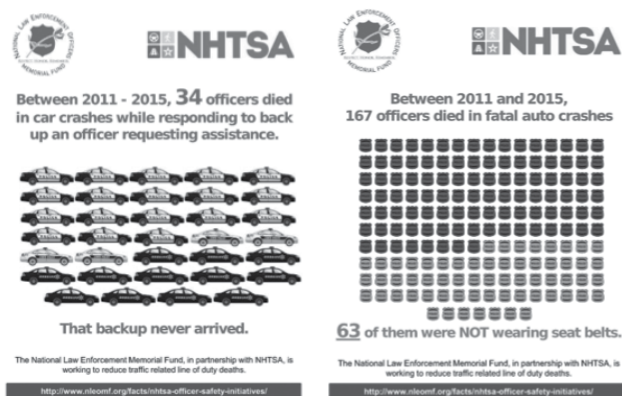
In the spring of 2019, the GTSC has scheduled 3 Below 100 Intensive Training & Instructor Courses. The Below 100 Intensive Training & Instructor Course is an officer safety and survival course

focusing on the initiative to reduce police line-of-duty deaths to fewer than 100 LODD per year. This training covers the real facts of how line-of-duty deaths are occurring across the country and what can be done to address the problem. The course is led by an experienced law enforcement professional, who describes how the Below 100’s Five Tenets are designed to change police culture and save lives.

The 8-hour training day begins with the morning’s Below 100 Basic Course and is followed by the afternoon’s instructor course. The Instructor course provides presenters with the knowledge, skill and ability to take a look at their organization and effectuate change by: (1) conducting a risk assessment; (2) by examining policy and making changes if necessary; (3) by presenting the Below 100 course to their agency personnel; (4) by offering guidance and support on methods of elevating awareness and reinforcing the Below 100 message and (5) by providing materials such as posters, banners and distributing articles and other forms of media.

The first course was held on March 13th, 2019 and was hosted by the Allegany and Steuben County Sheriff’s Offices at the State University of New York at Alfred. Nearly 50 attendees were instructed by Lieutenant Collin Davis, New York State Police.

On April 16th, 2019, a Below 100 Intensive Training & Instructor Course was held at the Erie County Law Enforcement Training



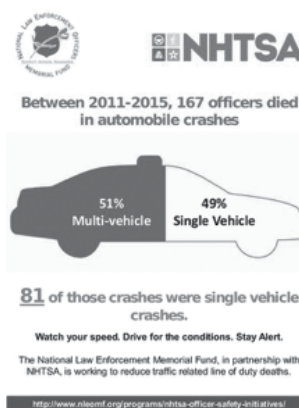
The New York Governor’s Traffic Safety Committee (GTSC) has taken the alternate view of their law enforcement partners and has made the health and wellbeing of New York’s finest a priority. To that end, the GTSC has made a concerted effort to reduce the number of line of duty deaths and injuries to New York’s law enforcement community by following the National Highway Traffic Safety Administrations lead and endorsing the Below 100 program.

The Below 100 Mission is simply: “Reduce line-of-duty deaths to fewer than 100 per year”. 100 is the number LODD that has not been seen since 1943. The Below 100 Vision is to: Eliminate preventable line-of-duty police deaths and serious injuries through compelling common-sense training designed to focus on areas under an officer’s control.

The Below 100 program influences law enforcement culture by providing innovative training and awareness through presentations, social media, and webinars on identifying the leading causes and current trends in preventable line of duty deaths and injuries”.

The Below 100 program consists of Five Core Tenets: “Wear Your Belt”; “Wear Your Vest”; “Watch Your Speed”; “WIN – What’s Important Now?”; “Remember: Complacency Kills”.

In 2018 the GTSC hosted a “Below 100 Hundred, Best Practices Symposium” that brought presenters Dale Stockton, Gordon Graham, & other national Below 100 instructors and champions to Syracuse, NY. This symposium was specifically designed for law enforcement officials who serve in a command-level, managerial or administrative capacity and who are truly committed to officer



Academy in Williamsville, NY. This event was sponsored by the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee in conjunction with the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services, Erie County Law Enforcement Foundation, Inc., United States Attorney's Office Western District of New York, Erie County Law Enforcement Training Academy, and the NYS Association of Chiefs of Police. Approximately 100 attendees representing county, municipal, state, and university law enforcement agencies and additional New York government entities and NHTSA were instructed by Lieutenant Collin Davis, New York State Police.

Attendee's with various years of experience described the course in the post event evaluation as, *"impactful"*, *"powerful"*, *"emotional"*, *"eye opening"*, *"a must training for all law enforcement"*

The third GTSC sponsored Below 100 Train-the-Trainer Program is scheduled for May 22nd at the Rensselaer County Sheriff's Office in Troy, NY (Rensselaer County).

By taking the lead in the area of officer safety and wellbeing, the NY GTSC has significantly enhanced their relationship with the NY LE community. The GTSC has reinforced the vital role that law

enforcement plays in GTSC's highway safety plan and the overall wellbeing of the motoring public. The GTSC's continued support of the Below 100 program, by spreading the Below 100 message and hosting workshops around the state demonstrates their unyielding commitment and support for their law enforcement partners. This is a great step in the effort to reduce the line of duty injuries and deaths of New York's finest.

GTSC Law Enforcement Liaisons have taken the lead role in coordinating these regional trainings; for more information on attending or hosting a Below 100 training please contact:

LEL Nick Macherone, dominick.macherone@dmv.ny.gov
 LEL Todd Engwar, todd.engwar@dmv.ny.gov
 LEL Anthony D'Agostino, anthony.dagostino@dmv.ny.gov

National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund: <https://nleomf.org>
 Below 100: www.below100.org
 NHTSA: <https://www.nhtsa.gov/>
 Officer Down Memorial Page: <https://www.odmp.org/>

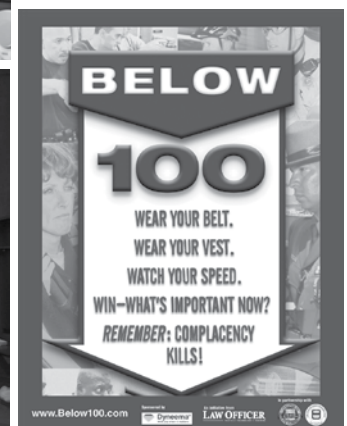


The group at the Below 100 display are as follows (left to right)

- Maureen Qualey – Senior Instructor - Erie County Law Enforcement Academy
- Chief Michael Morris, Ret. – NHTSA Region 2 Law Enforcement Liaison NJSACOP
- Lieutenant Collin Davis – New York State Police and Below 100 Training Instructor
- Bert Bouchey – Senior Training Technician – New York Department of Criminal Justice Services
- Retired Chief Samuel Palmiere – Law Enforcement Coordinator – US Attorney's Office Western District of New York & NYS Association of Chiefs of Police Liaison
- Rob Lopez – Governor's Traffic Safety Committee Program Representative



Classroom training at the Erie County Police Training Academy for the Below 100 training program.



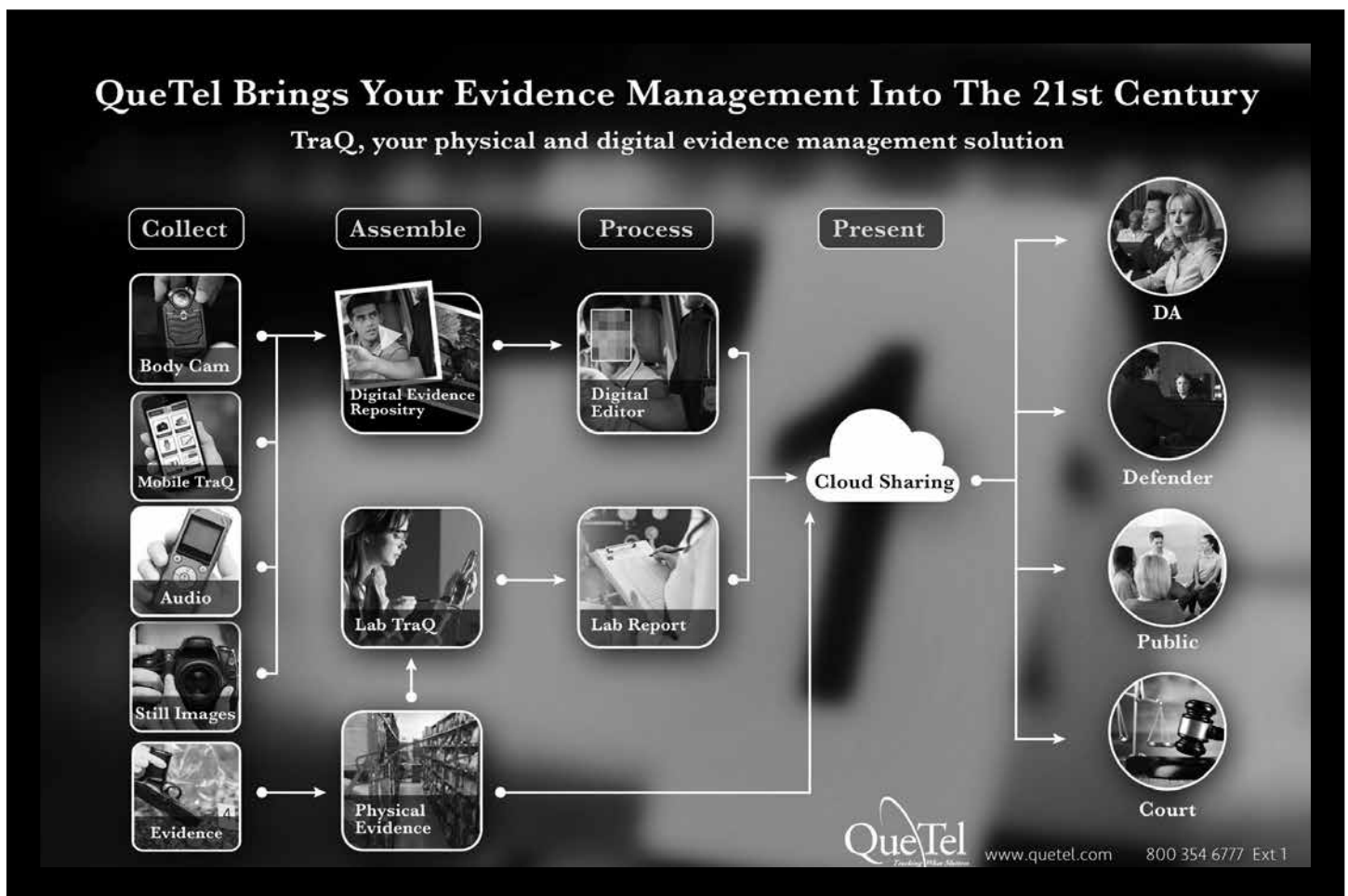
Evidence Management

The flood of images, videos, and audio recordings has posed new issues for law enforcement. While they have found it easy to capture digital files in devices scattered hither and yon, managing digital evidence from officer's still cameras; smartphones; surveillance cameras (public and private); in-car and body worn-devices; interviews systems; drones and helicopter footage is another story. Vulnerable silos of electronic files lack back up. DVDs are time consuming for officers to burn and for property custodians to copy for detectives and prosecutors.

Limited storage capacity means officers may be carrying around critical evidence on thumb drives. Loose control procedures are in danger of tampering and falling into the wrong hands.

Bringing it all together in a single, easily-accessible repository that is secure, with expandable storage, and protected from failure must be the goal of effective prosecution and by reference important to the agencies that gather, store, and assemble the digital files—evidence that is becoming ever more important.

QueTel began helping agencies manage digital files in 2006 and



has integrated both ways from merely storing and safeguarding digital evidence on agency servers. On the front end, its smartphone software records images, videos, interviews and officer notes, as well as capturing documents as PDFs. On the back end the software allows enhancing images and videos, even employing AI, sharing digital evidence electronically on the cloud with prosecutors and, even, allowing DAs to employ that capability for strictly controlled eDiscovery with the defense. If the entire Digital TraQ app is stored

on the cloud, a department enjoys scalable and encrypted storage, and it unburdens IT from managing the software.

The Chiefs Chronicle magazine attempts to keep our membership informed of new products that may be of interest to the New York State law enforcement community. These informational articles are based on news articles and news releases supplied by manufacturers and distributors. The articles are in no fashion an endorsement of any product by the NYSACOP.

VeroVision Threat Detector



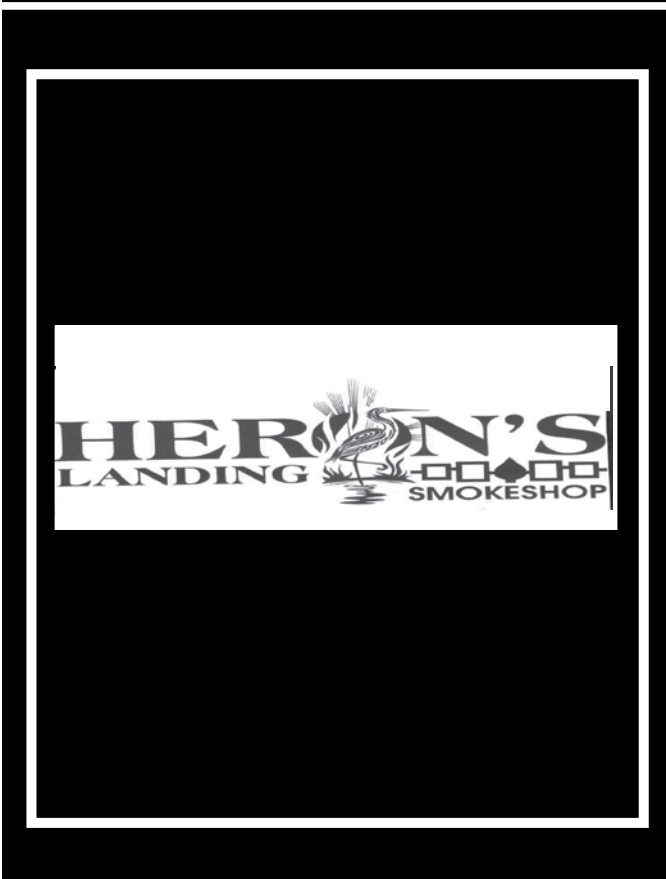
ChemImage has introduced a unique technology to detect the unseen. **The VeroVision®** Threat Detector can detect explosives, chemicals and narcotics at a standoff distance. Safety and security professionals face a variety of threats in their day-to-day activities and ChemImage's technology offers agencies and organizations a unique opportunity to detect potential threats at a standoff distance of up to 20 meters. Implemented as part of a layered security approach, the Threat Detector can alert you to a threat faster and further away from the target. Faster detection allows more time to consider options and responses before engaging additional resources.

The proliferation of bomb-making knowledge and the widespread opioid epidemic has intensified, which has increased exposure to dangerous materials for law enforcement. The VeroVision Threat Detector works in a variety of applications

such as event security, fixed and temporary vehicle checkpoints and crime scenes. One-click detection allows the user to quickly scan and detect potential threats on the surface of a stationary target. Detections of potential threats are then displayed in a simple interface that also allows the user to generate a report. This is a safe, passive operation for users and bystanders without the need for lasers or chemical reagents.

ChemImage is in the business of helping to make the world healthier and safer. By partnering with defense, law enforcement, government and private organizations on the cutting edge of security, we continue to develop technology to drive next-generation threat detection solutions.

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dealers—free from state regulation, taxes, cultivation, and supply chain logistics inherent in the legal manufacture of marijuana—can sell marijuana much more cheaply than those who are regulated. Demand for their illicit marijuana persists because most users are not inclined to pay premium prices just to avoid committing a very low-level transgression—a transgression that police are increasingly being asked to ignore. As with all drug dealing, with increased competition between illicit dealers comes increased violence.

While there is, as I noted previously, no solid evidence to show whether marijuana legalization increases violent crime rates—one unassailable fact is that none of the states that have legalized marijuana have experienced a net reduction in violent crime. Moreover, during my tenure as a federal prosecutor here in Western New York, we have prosecuted numerous gang members for murders and acts of violence tied directly to the marijuana trade and turf wars between gangs competing for their market share of the illicit marijuana business. How can it be sound public policy to legalize recreational marijuana when we know not only that it has not led to a reduction in violent crime in any jurisdiction in which it has been tried but also that it will not end the illegal distribution of marijuana by organizations who have a demonstrated history of violence in our community?

In the end, I see this Green Rush as pioneered by two factions in pursuit of two very different types of green. For one, their

motive is marijuana. For the other, their motive is money. As U.S. Attorney, I can offer overwhelming evidence to demonstrate that people motivated exclusively by either of those things—drugs or money—invariably fail to act in anyone's best interest but their own, and as such, their actions are, by definition, antithetical to the public interest.

Finally, I would be remiss in my role as U.S. Attorney if I did not remind proponents of the Green Rush in New York of two important and unassailable provisions of current federal law. First, it remains a federal crime to possess, distribute, or manufacture marijuana. Second, any property used to facilitate the manufacture or distribution of marijuana remains subject to federal seizure and forfeiture, as does any property that directly, or indirectly, constitutes proceeds derived from the manufacture or sale of marijuana. With both the dearth of evidence and the current state of federal law providing appropriate cautionary markers along the way, I think we owe it to ourselves and to future generations to slow down and to proceed with great caution. Otherwise, we may well find ourselves at a place at which the only question left to ask is “how in the world did we end up here?”

JAMES P. KENNEDY, JR.

United States Attorney Western District of New York

Patch History

The New Windsor Police Department shoulder patch contains depictions of historical events of the past. It also portrays an original story of principles and patriotism that are consistent with life in New Windsor.

The main themes embodied in the patch are freedom, the new democracy, exploration, commerce, pride and peace. The Town of New Windsor was incorporated in 1763. Since that time there has always been some form of police presence in the community. The role of the early constabulary was to provide service and to keep the peace.



New Windsor, New York is a town that is rooted deep with significant history. Revolutionary war General George Washington stationed his troops at the New

Windsor Cantonment just north of the present day Vails Gate. These Continental Army Troops were at this encampment from 1782 until the cessation of hostilities in 1783. These troops endured and fought for liberty, honor and highly held beliefs.

The American Revolution ended in 1783 with a peace treaty between the thirteen colonies and England. New Windsor is situated on the western shore of the majestic Hudson River. The shore at Plum Point is an area where the river bay has been home to sailboats, triple masted sailing barks, steamboats and shipbuilders. The Hudson River has been a long standing passage for those involved in exploration and commerce.

On the top of the patch above and to the right of the Continental Soldier is the rising sun. This rising sun represents freedom and the birth of a new nation.

On both sides of the soldier are the mountains of the Hudson Highlands, Breakneck Mountain is on the left. On the right is the Storm King Mountain. Bannerman island sits just below Breakneck and behind the Continental soldier.

Tucked behind the mountain is the American Flag. The thirteen stars represent the original colonies that fought in the revolutionary war. This early flag symbolizes patriotism and independence.

The Continental Soldier is shown standing on the shoreline near the river bay at Plum Point. He stands tall in defense of his country. He represents principle and pride.

The ships traversing the bay represent exploration and commerce. To the left of the soldier is a ship that represents the half moon. This ship was piloted by the English explorer Henry Hudson. The ship to the right of the soldier is a triple masted sailing vessel that represents commerce. These types of ships disembark from the Port of New Windsor. They transported goods and raw materials to points south and New York City.

The wreaths on both sides of the patch are symbolic of the olive branches that appear on many seals and crests. In 1783 General George Washington gave a powerful speech to his soldiers at the Cantonment. He strove to impress upon them the importance of principle, patriotism and patient virtue. He spoke of dignity, honor, justice, the rights of humanity, veracity, gratitude of peace. These core values have set the foundation for the mission and purpose of the Town of New Windsor Police Department.

Historical perspective of the Town of New Windsor Police Shoulder Patch provided by Retired Sergeant Gregory Gaetano.

To feature a shoulder patch and a brief history of your police department in future issues of the “Chief’s Chronicle”, please send to leggert@nychiefs.org

Using Sports as a tool to help “Bridge the Gap” between Law Enforcement and the communities they serve.

“Bridge the Gap” Sports is the brainchild of Doug Rifenburg, Executive Director of Victory Sports Global Outreach (VSGO) which is a 501c3 nonprofit based in Buffalo, NY. The main mission of VSGO is to help under-resourced schools, leagues, teams and athletes obtain the sports equipment they need to play, compete and be active.

Studies show that students who participate in sports achieve better grades, have increased attendance rates and higher test scores. They also make healthier life choices and are 60% less likely to join a gang or to use drugs. Kids that stay afterschool for practices and games are not out on the streets causing trouble or committing crimes.

In just their first year of operation, Victory Sports partnered with more than 50 youth sport organizations and impacted the lives of more than 6000 young athletes across Western New York and in 8 countries around the world.

Rifenburg believes that the legacy of Victory Sports will reach far beyond the sports field. He hopes to even make a positive impact on some of the major social issues facing communities today. With that in mind BTG Sports Outreach Program was born, which is a program created by Victory Sports in partnership with the Buffalo Police Department and their Neighborhood Engagement Team (NET) with financial support from the Buffalo Bills Foundation.

BTG stands for “Bridge the Gap” and its goal is to help improve relations between law enforcement and the communities they serve, which seems to currently be at an all-time low. Victory Sports equips officers and patrol cars with sports equipment that they can use

as a tool to interact with and build relationships with the youth in their neighborhoods. Officers have access to basketballs, footballs, soccer balls, etc. that allows them to play with kids and can even give the sports equipment away to kids that are in need. VSGO offers this program at no cost to the BPD and looks forward to working with other police agencies across NY State and eventually growing this into a national program.

“As the head of Community Outreach for the Buffalo Police Department, we are always looking to partner with community organizations to create a better environment for the residents and children of Buffalo. Victory Sports Global Outreach is a valued partner of the Buffalo Police Department...Sometimes relations between police and our youth can be strained. Through these kinds of programs our Officers build relationships with the young kids that hopefully will help them grow into responsible, productive members of our society who value community and quality of life, and who are willing to share in the responsibility of keeping our neighborhoods safe.”

~ Captain Steven J. Nichols, Community Policing/ Special Events, Buffalo Police Department

To learn more about the Bridge the Gap Sports Outreach program and how your department can get involved, please contact Doug Rifenburg from Victory Sports at 716-523-4210 or doug@victorysports.org. You can also learn more on their website at www.VictorySports.org.



—Photos, continued on page 28



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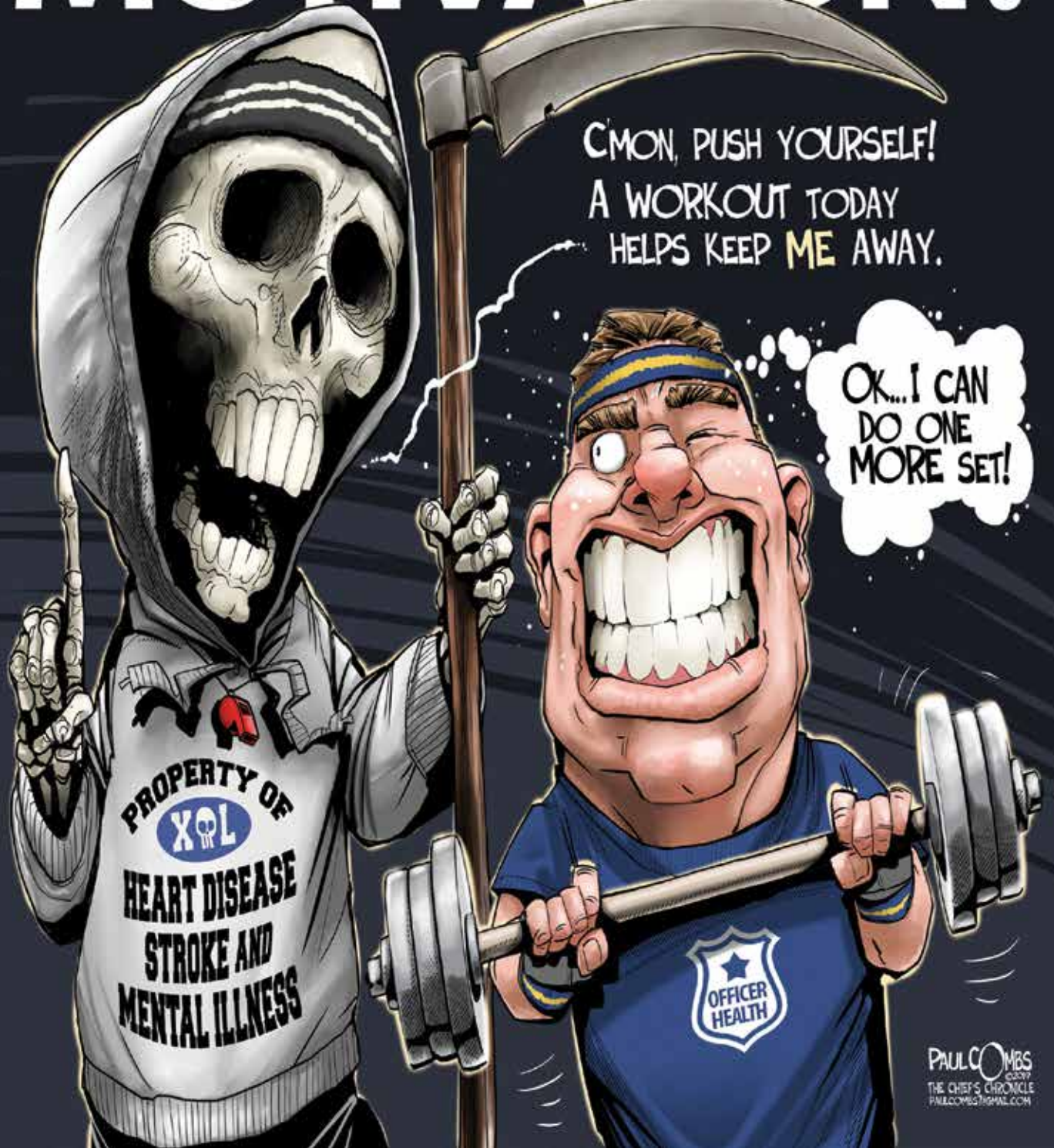


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The wicked flee when no man pursueth but the righteous are as bold as a lion.

