



# ROLL CALL

A Leadership and Ethics Publication

FALL 2019



## Editor's Update

by Richard N. Holden, PhD  
Scholar in Residence

It has been another successful year for ILEA thanks, in large part, to the support we have received from you, our constituents. The supervisor school was phenomenally successful with record breaking enrollment. The Tarrant County edition of SPS was hosted by Southlake PD and they did a stellar job in their support, for which we are very grateful. Our upcoming Tarrant County school will be hosted by the Ft. Worth Police Department in their new training facility. We are looking forward to what we believe will be an outstanding experience.

ILEA's School of Executive Leadership also continues to flourish. We had a large class with representatives from as far away as Alaska. We also experimented with something new with our class project. One of the teams was given a multiagency assignment requiring both phone interviews and an extensive literature review. The topic addressed police hiring problems and best practices. They did an excellent job and the results can be seen in this publication.

Our partnership with the Texas Municipal League continues to evolve. The Texas Sergeant's Academy, a by-product of this relationship, is in great

demand. We are receiving inquiries from other states concerning our willingness to export this program to their jurisdictions. Jay Six, a new addition to the ILEA staff as Executive in Residence, is managing this program and doing an excellent job.

The Ethics Train the Trainer program continues to grow. The ILEA staff and course instructors met in the Spring for a two-day workshop to revise the curriculum. We are pleased with the results of that effort and believe that you will be as well.

We want to thank all of you for your continued support and friendship. You and your agencies are the reason ILEA exists. It is our goal to help you in your efforts to serve your communities.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

### Contemporary Issues and Ethics Conference



December 2-3, 2019

Focusing on "Ethical Accountability and Leadership in Today's Policing," this conference promises a top flight cast of presenters addressing an A-Z assortment of discussions and workshops from leading from the front to building good followers.

Active members of the ILEA Alumni Association attend FREE!

[bit.ly/ILEA0225639](http://bit.ly/ILEA0225639)

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## Post-Traumatic Stress in Law Enforcement

by Jeremy Scharlow, MA

### Abstract

Due to the nature of law enforcement, traumatic injury events are common and often involve both physical and psychological injuries. After the physical injuries heal, in many cases, the psychological injuries remain. We examine the lives of three officers injured in the line of duty, all of which suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Through this examination we demonstrate limitations in our current workman's compensation systems, the effects of the "police culture" as it relates to traumatic injury, and the failings of our disability systems in properly aiding officers who suffer non-physical injuries in the performance of their duties. Due to these failings, reformations including legislation aimed at making funds available for research, legislation mandating education programs for all officers, and national recognition of PTSD as a work-related injury associated with the performance of an officer's duties are necessary.

### Introduction

Law enforcement officers throughout the United States go to work each night knowing the risk of injury is always present. Unfortunately, there is no way to mitigate all risk of injury. In 2017, 60,211 officers were assaulted and 17,476 received injuries (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2017).

When an officer is the victim of an assault it is easy to see the injuries sustained. They are usually tangible and require some form of treatment. Other injuries however, such as mental health injuries like Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), often go unnoticed and in some cases are disregarded altogether.

Every police officer goes to work with the understanding their departments or agencies will aid them and their families should they fall victim of to an on-duty injury. All too often, this is not the case when dealing with officers suffering from PTSD.

Through this writing we shall examine the climate of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder as it relates to the law-enforcement community. To do this, we shall examine three first-hand accounts of traumatic events which lead to a diagnosis of PTSD, and the long-term effects on the officers' mental health, families', lives', and careers. Finally, we will compare these accounts to literature on the subject and make recommendations based on these compari-

sons on how to better offer aid to our first responders after they experience a traumatic injury.

### Literature Review

Research on the topics of job-related stresses and the handling of traumatic and/or painful experiences is bountiful. According to two articles, one appearing in the Huffington Post (Lohr, 2019) and the second appearing on PoliceOne.com (Police One, 2019), the authors suggest police suicides outnumbered line-of-duty deaths for the third straight year. These sources indicate, in 2018 alone, at least 159 officers took their own lives.

Blue H.E.L.P., an organization whose mission is to, "... reduce mental health stigma through education, advocate for benefits for those suffering from post-traumatic stress, acknowledge the service and sacrifice of law enforcement officers we lost to suicide, assist officers in their search for healing, and to bring awareness to suicide and mental health issues" claims to have verified 35 police suicides in just the first two months of 2019 as well as 160 suicides in 2018, 159 in 2017, and 140 in 2016 (Blue H.E.L.P, 2018).

In a 2013 paper titled, "*Police suicide: prevalence, risk, and protective factors*", Mark Chae and Douglas Boyle argue five factors central to an officer's duties lead to an increased risk of "suicidal ideation" (Chae & Boyle, 2013). Further scholarly writings found in the *Mental Health Law & Policy Journal* suggest "... PTSD diagnosis remains very much in vogue" leading to "pejorative labels such as *compensationitis* and accident victim syndrome" (Young & Drogin, 2013).

These writings illustrate a troubling trend within the law enforcement community. This trend is indicative of untreated mental health issues and an unwelcoming cultural proclivity toward PTSD within the ranks of our police departments across the nation.

In addition to these untreated mental health issues, we see other troubling trends leading to higher mortality rates within the profession. James M Vicini Jr., author of *Officer Stress Linked to CVD: What We Know*, writes "... law enforcement officers suffer higher morbidity and mortality rates than those of the general population, with a reported prevalence of cardio vascular disease 1.7 times higher." The author continues, explaining a correlation between stress, sudden physical exertion, PTSD, and CVD, arguing the correlation leads to shortened life span (Vicini, 2013).

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"A boss has the title, a leader has the people."

Simon Sinek



Institute for  
**LAW ENFORCEMENT  
ADMINISTRATION**

**Continuing Education Opportunities will help Law Enforcement Executives Meet Challenges of Modern Policing**

Leaders in law enforcement face an increasingly complex and challenging job as they work to build positive relationships and keep their communities safe. An agreement between two Texas training organizations will open up new opportunities for executives and administrators in the law enforcement community to enhance their leadership skills and strategies.

The Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (TEEX) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Institute for Law Enforcement Administration (ILEA), which will expand the reach of both organizations and increase the number of courses offered to the sworn and non-sworn law enforcement personnel they serve.

“For 60 years, ILEA has been one of the most highly respected providers of police executive development programs in the nation,” said Dr. John Ray, Division Director of TEEX’s Institute for Law Enforcement & Protective Services Excellence. “We couldn’t ask for a better partner as the division works to expand its services by providing training and technical assistance to sworn and non-sworn law enforcement administrators.”

“This agreement will expand the services of both organizations,” said Gregory Smith, Director of ILEA



*ILEA Director Gregory Smith, left, with Dr. John Ray, Division Director of TEEX’s Institute for Law Enforcement & Protective Services Excellence*



*Class photo of participants in Internal Affairs and Professional Standards, which was hosted by TEEX in College Station, TX*

and Vice President of the Center for American and International Law. “We both focus on serving the law enforcement community and this partnership will be extremely powerful and has great potential for growth. ILEA is uniquely positioned to provide continuing education for leaders, supervisors and administrators in law enforcement. This agreement allows TEEX to expand their reach in that arena, and allows us to reach new markets and a broader audience for our services.”

ILEA recently partnered with TEEX to offer one of its most popular courses at TEEX headquarters in College Station. The Internal Affairs and Professional Standards course drew 20 participants from across Texas and Oklahoma.

The next program offered by ILEA in collaboration with TEEX will be the Civilian Leadership development program for non-sworn personnel working in a law enforcement agency, scheduled for later this fall.

ILEA’s Center for Law Enforcement Ethics has trained 10,000 ethics instructors worldwide. In addition, ILEA recently conducted its 56<sup>th</sup> School for Executive Leadership for mid-level and senior executives to prepare them for a position as Chief, Sheriff or CEO.

“Other cornerstone programs include our 120-hour School of Police Supervision and our two-week Texas Sergeant’s Academy for rural law enforcement agencies throughout the state in partnership with the Texas Municipal League Intergovernmental Risk Pool,” said Smith.

**“There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest.”**

**Elie Wiesel**

## Best Practices for Recruiting and Retention

by Lt. Brenda Alvarado, Lt. Sean Barnwell and Sgt. Donald English

*The following paper was the final result of a Capstone Project from the 56th School of Executive Leadership held March 4-April 26, 2019. Team members on this project were Lt. Brenda Alvarado, Euless Police Department, TX; Lt. Sean Barnwell, Branson Police Department, MO; and Sgt. Donald English, Wylie Police Department, TX.*

### Executive Summary

There are approximately 7.6 million job openings in the United States (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019). According to a study by the National Association of State Chief Administrators, the number of applicants for positions in the public sector decreased by 24% from 2013-2017 (Barrett & Greene, 2019). There are numerous reasons and studies discussing why this is occurring.

The study by NASCA revealed that law enforcement experienced the highest decline in applicants at 63% (Barrett & Greene, 2019). The job of a police officer presents many unique characteristics that may contribute to the decreasing number of applicants. The number of sworn police officers has dropped by 23,000 since 2013 (Barrett & Greene, 2019). When you combine the decrease in officers and the decrease in applicants to fill those positions, there has become an officer shortage that has been referred to as “a quiet crisis in policing” (O’Neil, 2019).

Recruitment and retention of officers is an ever-present topic in policing. Law enforcement is on the cusp of a large wave of attrition. The baby boomer generation is reaching retirement age and beginning to retire. The number of Baby Boomer retirees is expected to grow over the next several years (Wilson, Dalton, Scheer & Grammich, 2010). These vacancies will need to be filled.

Retention is not only an issue with the generation getting ready to retire. It is also an issue with the younger generation. Millennials have less organizational commitment than their predecessors and change careers more frequently; averaging four jobs before age 32 (Gasior, 2018).

There are many factors that hinder police recruitment. Some of the factors that have been identified are unfavorable demographic and social trends, lack of diversity in some police departments, com-

petition among candidates, and burdensome personnel regulations (Wilson et al., 2010).

Strategies such as offering lateral transfers should be considered and weighed against how they contribute to the overall decline in police applicants. While this may be an effective strategy for an agency to obtain applicants, this is still a method of “robbing Peter to pay Paul.” When an officer transitions from one agency to another, the vacancy at the former agency still needs to be filled. Therefore, while this strategy may be effective for one agency, it does not do anything to increase the applicant pool applying for police positions. It fails to build upon the number of people seeking a job in law enforcement.

Economic conditions also affect retention. In a relatively good economy, other careers might appeal to officers due to higher salaries and easier work (Wilson et al., 2010).

Recruiting and retention are issues that every police department faces and will continue to face into the near future. Recruiting and retention go hand in hand. Many of the issues that challenge recruiters are the same issues that affect an agency’s retention. There will always be a need to fill positions as police departments grow with their population or as officers retire. It is crucial that we continue to re-search our procedures and practices to address the current dilemma and carry us into the future.

To address this issue, a research team was formed at the Institute for Law Enforcement Administration in the 56th School of Executive Leadership. The team was selected by instructors and given a research paper with the following assignment:

### What are the most effective strategies for the recruitment and retention of officers?

Within these strategies the following issues should be addressed:

1. Are there specific approaches to effectively address diversity within the organization?
2. How do generational issues affect recruiting and retention?
3. What are the organizational barriers to effective recruiting and retention?
4. What strategies successfully overcome these barriers?

This research team will attempt to address these issues. A review of the current literature addressing

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“A man who wants to lead the orchestra must turn his back on the crowd.”

Max Lucado



**Texas Sergeant Academy Brings Quality Supervisory Training to Small Departments**

By Gregory Smith, MA  
Director

The promotion from colleague to supervisor is more challenging in police work than in nearly any other profession. To go from chasing a suspect with your partner to evaluating whether your former partner's chase was justified requires a significant shift in perspective. Chiefs of police know the importance of training in a new supervisor's understanding of the accountability and responsibility that comes with their new role. Yet few small rural departments have the budgets to send their supervisors to an urban center to attend a quality multi-week supervisor's training program.

In Texas, an innovative partnership is bringing high-quality new supervisor training to rural areas of the state. Targeting sergeants, corporals, lieutenants, and dispatchers, the two-week Texas Sergeant Academy reaches out to small- and medium-sized agencies across Texas with limited training budgets. The program is improving police services and reducing liability claim payments.

The Texas Sergeant Academy was conceived by the Texas Municipal League, a collaborative of 1,158 Texas municipalities. The Texas Municipal League Intergovernmental Risk Pool (TMLIRP) covers 789 smaller Texas police departments that don't carry their own insurance. The pool insures 21,000 police officers with workers comp and professional liability insurance.

"Considering the current challenges facing law enforcement in the U.S.," says Irvin P. Janak, TMLIRP Loss Prevention Manager, "TMLIRP considers officer safety to be of utmost concern, as is the protection of officers and member agencies from liability exposure caused by officer action or inaction." Because TMLIRP pays claims related to officer-involved chases that result in injury to bystanders and, the organization has a vested interest in well-educated supervisors, according to Janak.

In 2016, now former Loss Prevention Manager Les Horne and Chief Tim Ryle envisioned a more in-depth educational opportunity for newly promoted law enforcement supervisors, as they transitioned from officer positions, than they were getting at the time. After considering several education providers,

Horne and Ryle selected the Institute for Law Enforcement Administration in Plano, Texas to be TMLIRP's partner in this effort. Founded in 1957, the Institute for Law Enforcement Administration (ILEA) offers a well-regarded four-week School of Police Supervision in Plano, Texas, among other programs.

TMLIRP Executive Director Jeff Thomson and Deputy Executive Director Bob Haynes embraced the Texas Sergeant Academy and have committed significant funding and personnel time. The organization has committed to cover half of the cost per attendee from its member agencies. A TMLIRP representative attends every day of instruction and follows up with each participant to receive feedback for continuous improvement.

ILEA developed the Texas Sergeant Academy with a commitment to providing participants a balance of theory and practical content. The mobile Texas Sergeant Academy focuses on Ethical decision-making; Diversity through Ethical Leadership; Case Law and Supervisory Responsibility; Employee Motivation and Counseling; Risk Management; and more. The Texas Sergeant Academy uses interactive techniques to equip and inspire new supervisors and reinvigorate senior supervisors for the challenges of the fast-paced and fluid world of law enforcement leadership. The course meets the basic requirements established by the state for the preparation of new supervisors for their supervisory role.

ILEA recently named Jay Six the Coordinator of the Texas Sergeant Academy. Jay has attended numerous ILEA training programs over the last 20 years while employed at the Arlington Police Department and then the Tarrant County Sheriff's Department.



*Graduates of the Texas Sergeant Academy hosted by San Marcos Police Department May 6-17, 2019.*

**"People who try hard to do the right thing always seem mad."**

**Stephen King**

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*Graduates of the Texas Sergeant Academy hosted by Texas City Police Department February 4-15, 2019.*

Tarrant County supervisors began attending ILEA courses during his tenure as Tarrant County Chief Deputy. Because of that training, Jay says he began to see more thoughtful and more capable supervisors willing to embrace responsibility, work hard, and take time to listen; supervisors who considered themselves stewards of their organization and community. "I've learned that the main reason people leave their jobs is the way they are treated by their immediate supervisor," says Jay. "We help our students not to be the kind of supervisor who runs people off."

After attending an ILEA program in Plano, Sergeant Pete C. Dehlinger was enthusiastic about bringing the Texas Sergeant Academy to his West Texas department of Midland. While many officers might not select training as the best way to spend two weeks, Sergeant Dehlinger says his group "thoroughly enjoyed and was impressed by the program." He says about half of the Midland sergeant corps attended the session, and he plans to bring the program back next year to get the other half trained. Sgt. Dehlinger also promoted the program to other West Texas departments.

ILEA contacts smaller departments across Texas's 254 counties to introduce them to the Texas Sergeant Academy. Once ILEA secures a host agency, departments from the area are encouraged to send their sergeants, corporals, lieutenants, and dispatchers. The first Texas Sergeant Academy was hosted by Harlingen in May 2017. League City, Hill County, Schertz, Midland, Laredo, and Edinburg also have hosted academies, with about 25 additional nearby departments sending participants. As of September 2018, 208 individuals have graduated the program. The mobility of the program has allowed ILEA to double the number of supervisors educated by the organization each year.

While TMLIRP will be contacting every agency a year from their academy date to assess the benefits of the program to their operations, initial feedback has been positive across the board. The goal is to hold three academies per year, and the program is fully funded by TMLIRP for the upcoming fiscal year. The organization will add sessions if there are special requests, as the budget allows.

## **"What I said to the boys who called my son gay"**

by Patty Bates-Ballard, BA

One day after school, my 6th grader approached me as I sat waiting for him in the carpool lane. He was fuming. Just before I arrived, his classmates had formed a circle around him, yelling "Gay! Gay! Gay!" As I listened to him tell me what happened, I took a breath and decided I needed to go talk to his classmates. I asked him if he wanted to go with me to talk with them, and he adamantly declined. So, I got out of the car and walked toward two of his friends who have been to many a party and sleepover at our house.

I was glad I had a few yards to walk so I could gather my thoughts. I help teachers practice how to respond in these situations, so I hoped to embody the curiosity I encourage in others. As I walked, I mulled over how to respond with curiosity to a bunch of 'tween guys, awkwardly vying with each other to be the manliest 12-year-old in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade. It was not lost on me that they were reenacting a scenario that in other schools has resulted in children taking their own lives. For context, my son identifies as heterosexual, but I think I would have responded in much the same way if he identified as LGBTQIA.\* He has given me permission to tell this story.

I started out with a simple question to my son's friend, Joe (not his real name). "What's up between you and Kaden? Are y'all having some problems?" I asked. Joe answered, "No, we were just kidding with him." "Oh, you weren't serious?" I clarified. "Nah," he said.

I wanted to check my understanding of what my son had told me. "Did you call him gay?" I asked. Joe answered again, "Yeah, we were just kidding around." Then Chris offered up: "Yeah, it's funny."

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**"Leadership is not about titles, positions, or flow charts. It is about one life influencing another."**

**John C. Maxwell**

I was tempted to say, “Hey, that’s not funny at all, and you need to stop!” But I knew if I did, they’d see me as just another judgy adult who is disconnected from their world. As Arthur Brooks says in his new book, my lecture probably would not have changed their behavior.

In this increasingly judgmental time in their lives, I wanted to show them there is another way. I asked, in the most curious tone of voice I could muster, “Oh, what’s funny about it? I’m not sure I get it.”

Chris said, “I don’t know, it’s just funny. I know I’m not gay, so I just think it’s funny.” Again, I was tempted to swerve off into an opinion. But I stayed curious. “Hmmm, I’m still not getting it.” There were some girls nearby. “Hey, girls, is it funny to call someone gay?” I asked.

Crystal, who has been to our house many times, said, “Well, it depends. If they’re joking, yeah it’s funny.” They all thought it was funny, but no one could explain why.

I checked for feelings. “So, you’re just having a laugh, feeling playful.” They nodded.

Then I began clarifying their answers by exploring what else might be funny. “Let me see, is it funny to make fun of someone’s skin color?” They all immediately answered, “No.”

This group of kids knows I have an older son with a disability. “Okay, is it funny to kid around about someone’s disability?” They all answered, “No.”

In asking a slew of curious questions and clarifying their answers, I was trying to open a window of communication between us. I hoped my curiosity and interest in their perspectives would increase their willingness to listen to my viewpoint.

“Well,” I said, “I’m just not sure it’s funny to call someone gay either. You know, if you look around, I bet there is someone around here who *is* gay. Or maybe they’re wondering if they’re gay. And if they hear people making fun of being gay, then they may feel like they can’t be who they are. I feel sad about that because I believe everyone should have a chance to be who they are. Do you believe that?”

They all nodded. After having expressed my feelings and beliefs, I closed with what I wanted. “So, I’m going to ask you not to call people gay as a joke, okay?” They all answered, “Okay.”

I went back to my son and asked him how he was feeling. I shared with him how the exchange with his friends had gone. I told him that their behavior had nothing to do with him, and everything to do with

their own insecurities. I asked him what I could do to support him. I told him he is a wonderful person and that I am so glad he is my son, whatever his sexuality might be.

In the days that followed, I wondered what one brief conversation between a few kids and a random friend’s parent could even do to change behavior, or if I had wasted my effort or embarrassed my kid. So I asked him. He told me that, actually, the targeting of LGBTQIA people had dissipated. That was last year.

He’s a 7<sup>th</sup> grader now (replete with the intensity and hormonal changes that confront 7<sup>th</sup> graders), and he continues to report that gay jokes have all but evaporated from the kids’ conversations. His analysis of how the change happened? He credits the conversation I had with his friends that one day in the schoolyard, and his ability to stand with another girl to say that being gay is okay.

The basic ACE-ing Conflict skills I used -- Ask, Clarify, and Express -- seem so simple, but they’re so rarely used in day-to-day communications. In real life, we are very quick to judge. As a teacher of the ACE-ing skills, I’ve seen countless students, educators, and employee teams listen to the explanation of the skills and then when it comes time to practice them, skip right over the first two steps and go straight to judgment.

That’s because being curious is not natural or easy when we feel hurt or angry. It took me years to learn how to check my own judgy-ness. Even though I teach the skills, it’s still hit-and-miss for me as I try to ACE a conflict in the heat of the moment.

I told this story to 150 educators recently, and one later told me the same situation arose in her classroom after my talk. She said she would not have known how to respond if she had not attended my learning session, but she was able to respond effectively after hearing the story.

ACE-ing Conflict requires commitment and practice. But being curious and opening the window of communication can change everything.

\*lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex, and asexual or allied

Patty Bates-Ballard is Creative Director and Owner of WordSmooth, co-author of the book *Navigating Diversity*, and developer of the Harvesting Respect communications education program. Previously the Diversity Director for the Greater Dallas Community Relations Commission, she has worked in the field of multi-cultural relations for more than 20 years. She coordinates the student Culture Club at Dallas Academy and is a volunteer docent at the African American Museum of Dallas.

**“Whatever is my right as a man is also the right of another; and it becomes my duty to guarantee as well as to possess.”**

**Thomas Paine**



**The Ethics of Paper Towels**

by A. Jay Six, Jr., BS  
Executive in Residence

In a world of increasing automation, there are few places in our daily routine that aren't automated in some way. A trip to the restroom is no exception what with self-flush toilets, automated sinks, soap dispensers, and paper towel machines.

I worked in a building where the facilities manager had a thing about paper towels. I imagine it was a combination of trying to cut costs and having control, but he would set the paper towel dispensers to provide the minimum amount of towel with the longest delay possible between cycles. This was apparently true in virtually every restroom in the seven-story tower. Employees routinely joked or complained about how the paper towel machines seemed to be stingy to the point of being infuriating.

In defiance, someone would find a way to open the machine and set the controls to longer towels and shorter cycles. Not to be outdone, the facilities manager had the controls set back, and then superglued them so as to defeat the rebels. The whole circumstance took on an artificial importance, and became a struggle between employees and "the man".

Of course, rather than reducing the amount of paper used, the result was an increase. Employees took more paper by repeatedly cycling the dispenser. Some of that was surely an effort to get back at the antagonist who made going the restroom a call to arms. One colleague told me, "I take the number of towels I need, and then one more for good measure."

So, what's the ethical point here? The facilities manager was so engrossed in self-importance and control that he failed to consider the stakeholders in the equation. He demonstrated a lack of caring and respect, and he used the excuse of saving money to override the idea that the employees would demonstrate self-restraint. His desire to control the behavior of hundreds of employees created a sense of frustration that led to a degree of civil disobedience. He may have even discour-

aged some from taking the time to wash their hands. Going to the restroom became a "thing".

Ultimately, the facilities manager was replaced, and the new manager was besieged by requests to undo the controlling, infuriating things the previous manager had put into play (there were more than paper towels). After a while, the paper towel issue was a humorous memory. It is interesting to think that a little thing like dispensing paper towels in the restrooms could become a significant problem that has ethical implications, and an impact on employee morale. As we know, ethics is about what we do, and how we treat other people. Before we use whatever power we happen to possess, we should ask ourselves what are our motives, what are our alternatives, and what are the consequences that may come from our exercise of power? Most importantly, remember that it isn't just about the price of paper towels.

**"We cannot lead anyone farther than we have been ourselves."**

**John C. Maxwell**

**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS**

**GARY W. SYKES AWARD**

ILEA is continually accepting nominations for the Gary W. Sykes Award for Professional Achievement in Law Enforcement and the Ethical Courage Award.



Criteria: Recipient must be a criminal justice professional for at least 10 years, has been instrumental in bringing about significant organizational change for the good of the profession; is significantly involved in community service and civic activities; and is a role model to law enforcement

officers, support personnel, criminal justice professionals, and citizens.

**ETHICAL COURAGE AWARD**

Given each year since 1998, this award is intended to recognize an individual or an organization for especially meritorious leadership or courage related to law enforcement ethics and integrity.

This award is given during the Contemporary Issues and Ethics Conference.

**Please forward all nominations and questions to [gsmith@cailaw.org](mailto:gsmith@cailaw.org).**

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The above articles paint a clear picture regarding physical and mental health related factors within the officer's profession. Officers deal with higher levels of stress, traumatic injury, and obesity, in addition to mental health issues such as PTSD.

With extensive documentation supporting increased risk factors affecting the lives of our public servants, why are we not offering our officers more aid? Allen Copenhaver and Richard Tewksbury suggest it may not be as simple as making treatment available to an officer in need. In their article titled, "*Officer Willingness to Seek Help*", the authors suggest self-perception and public stigma may negatively correlate with an officer's willingness in seeking treatment for mental health issues. Although aid may be available, the perception of mental health and/or physical deficiency remains a significant factor explaining why officers do not seek help (Copenhaver & Tewksbury, 2018).

This should not be surprising given the hiring processes and training involved in becoming a police officer. The testing process ensures one has a "Type-A" personality, one in which they are confident in themselves and their abilities. When this confidence wanes due to physical issues related to the job or mental health issues related to the profession, should we be surprised when the officer's psyche becomes affected?

Literature focusing on job-related stressors indicate negative health implications are vast, most echoing the same sentiment. Job-related functions, stresses, and activities negatively affect an officer's mental health. Unfortunately, they also recognize an officer must understand their own need for help. In addition to systematic structural issues such as the failure to recognize PTSD as a work-related injury, an officer's pride may be inhibiting factor. Scholars offer many different forms of treatment once an officer recognizes their issue however; success is not guaranteed. As shown by the steadily increasing suicide rates within the profession more needs to be done to combat the mental health injuries associated with PTSD.

### **Methodology**

On May 7, 2016, I was involved in an officer-involved shooting. Since this time, I suffered the

symptoms associated with PTSD. Due to my own suffering, my research on the topic of PTSD originated through my own treatment. My doctors explained the symptoms and treatment methods, medications, and options available to treat my illness. While this helped me understand what was happening to me and why, I did not feel it was enough.

I began reading, starting with the American Psychological Associations manual titled, "*The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Health Disorders, 5<sup>th</sup> ed.*" with the intent of finding a comprehensive definition of PTSD to better understand my situation. As my research continued, I found many writings all acknowledging the exaggerated mental-health stressors associated with employment as a law enforcement officer.

I began reaching out to see if others shared my experiences. My advocating for awareness of PTSD in the law-enforcement community offered me the opportunity to speak with many former officers across our country all dealing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. In doing so, I learned of Officers Joe Moore and Pete Tanzilli. Upon making contact, both agreed to speak with me for this writing.

### **Analysis**

On the night of my shooting I saw a truck driving with no headlights. I turned my squad car around and by time I had caught up to the vehicle, it had turned into a driveway.

As the vehicle was already parked, I felt there was no longer a danger to other drivers on the roadway and decided to let the driver know his lights were not operational. At this time, I heard a person yell an obscenity and my last name. As I exited my squad car, a male ran toward me. He struck me in the head, neck, and shoulders repeatedly. I fought back but was unable to push him away. I was able to grab my taser and deployed it into his chest. The taser probes were not effective. I tried to radio for help, but nobody answered. I continued to fight back as I pushed the taser into his chest. As I retreated, my attacker drew a gun from his pocket and shot me in my right arm. I drew my weapon with my injured arm and returned fire.

My attacker retreated into a house as I looked for cover and reloaded. I notified my dispatcher I that I had been shot, while I tried to set up a pe-

**"I am not a product of my circumstances. I am a product of my decisions."**

**Stephen R. Covey**

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rimeter. I saw him exit the residence with an AK-47, which he shot in the direction of my vehicle. This started a week-long manhunt that involved multiple police agencies, which ended in a shootout with an FBI tactical team.

While the precipitating incident only lasted a week, it set in motion a larger sequence of that led to my termination and eventual medical pension related to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

According to the American Psychiatry Association, multiple criterion must be met for one to be diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (American Psychiatry Association, 2017):

1. The individual must have been exposed to a violent stressor, either directly, as a witness, or through a relative or close friend.
2. The individual must persistently re-experience the traumatic event, including but not limited to, flashbacks, nightmares, and other physical reactions.
3. The individual presents with an exaggerated avoidance response as related to the trauma.
4. The individual presents with exaggerated negative thoughts or feelings stemming from said trauma.
5. The individual presents with multiple trauma-related arousal responses stemming from their specific event.
6. The symptoms last for more than one month.
7. The symptoms impair one's functional ability.
8. The symptoms are not due to substance abuse or other illness.

My symptoms were magnified due to the extreme financial situation caused by my termination, pending litigation, and my inability to provide a means of income. My doctors would not allow me to return to work, and the workman's compensation insurance company denied my claim of PTSD as a work-related injury. I reached out to my department for help but was told to be patient, to wait for a medical disability retirement, and offered no further aid. To make matters worse, many of my inquiries were met with hostility. I felt I had lost my career, my identity, and my life. This is when I planned my own suicide.

For reasons unknown, I decided I could not become a statistic. I quit drinking alcohol, began exercising, and looked for further mental health treatment. After

some time, I started speaking out via social media, advocating for PTSD awareness in the police community. By sharing my experience in the aftermath of an officer involved shooting and provided a safe place for others to share their experiences, I began my own healing process.

This led me to an opportunity to speak at a rally in Washington D.C., another event in Kentucky, multiple radio interviews, as well as editorials published in trade magazines. Through these connections, other officers found me, and they shared with me their stories.

On March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016, Officer Pete Tanzilli located two men near a vehicle he understood to be stolen. He approached the vehicle and drew his weapon. One of the suspects ran while the second followed orders to lay on the ground. As Officer Tanzilli approached, the prone suspect drew a weapon from his waist, fired, and struck the officer in the pelvis.

In the aftermath of his shooting, he experienced much of the same troubles as I. He felt constant anxiety, unreasonable fear, nightmares, and crippling depression. Compounding his traumatic experience was the department's failure to aid in his healing. The city's workman's compensation insurance cut him off, and the city ended his health insurance. They stopped paying his wage and did not communicate further until April of 2019 when they told him he could no longer be a police officer.

Officer Tanzilli's identity was tied to his being a peace officer. He liked the job and he was good at it. He took his oath seriously and believed he was doing the best he could to protect those who were unable to protect themselves. As time went on, people from the department stopped talking with him all together. He was unable to understand the abandonment he experienced from those who once called him brother (Tanzilli, 2019).

This feeling of abandonment resonates. It affects one to their core, making them question who they associated with, who they called friends, and what they believe. According to psychologist Barbra Plant in an article entitled, "*Psychological trauma in the Police Service*", chronic conditions arising from trauma experienced in one's role as a police officer, "... can cause great suffering and are costly and difficult to treat, especially if complicated by secondary problems such as broken relationships, substance misuse and/or loss of employability." (Plant, 2000).

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**"A genuine leader is not a searcher for consensus but a molder of consensus."**

**Martin Luther King, Jr.**

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I found it hard to fathom a situation where evidence suggests Officer Tanzilli's and my reaction to our shootings were not only normal, but predictable. Further, if this reaction was predictable, why was nothing done to mitigate the further traumatic experiences involved in litigation, criminal investigation, and the withholding of monetary, medical, psychological aid, and the loss of the human element? Questions like this asked through social media posts allowed me the opportunity to speak with Officer Joe Moore.

On April 19, 2012, Officer Moore was extricated from his police vehicle which had caught fire after an accident. The accident left him injured. When asked, Joe admits he has had flashbacks and experienced other symptoms associated with PTSD, but he says he does not want to be labeled a victim.

What did he mean, "a victim"? Officer Moore explained he understood the processes within his brain forced him to experience certain things, like isolation, anxiety, depression, flashbacks, and the like. He, however, had the ability to fight his inner demons and returned to work some time later (Moore, 2018).

This made me pose the question, "*Why was Officer Moore's experience different and what allowed him to return to duty when myself and Officer Tanzilli could not?*" All of us met with traumatic near-death experiences, yet only Officer Moore was able to return to work.

Although the three traumatic incidents were similar in their danger and in that we each confronted our own mortality, I saw two differences between Officer Tanzilli's and my situations when compared to Officer Moore's.

First, Officer Moore spoke highly of officers supporting him on his path to recovery. He cited help from fellow officers and friends, which allowed him a proper environment in which to heal. In a study titled, "*Evaluation of a Police Debriefing Programme: Outcomes for Police Officers Five Years after a Police Shooting*", Nichola Addis and Christine Stephens note that when asked, all participants reported a positive correlation between the safe and healthy environment created for them to talk about their respective traumas and their emotional well-being. Talking with others who experienced similar traumatic events allowed them to feel "normalized" (Addis & Stephens, 2008).

Second, Officer Moore's situation was due to a traffic accident. Although horrific, it is common. Officer Tanzilli and I both experienced a horrific event in which someone actively tried to end our lives.

Although we do not understand why one may experience Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder after a traumatic event and another may not, we do know it affects the brain's ability to process stimuli in a healthy way. According to Dr. Keith White, a Clinical Psychologist practicing in Illinois, the brain is wired to protect us from danger. When one experiences a traumatic event, the brain reacts with what is known as the flight or fight response. Dependent upon the nature of the trauma, the intensity, the duration, and the individual's ability to process the trauma, negative effects may last one's entire lifetime.

Dr. White asserted that there is not an exact science behind the treatment of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. In some cases, the best we can do is try to treat the symptoms. This may allow one to live as normal a life as possible while placing mental safeguards intended to mitigate the recurring psychological episodes associated with the brain's startle response. He stressed the importance of acknowledging that one may live a happy and successful life once they learn to manage the symptoms associated with PTSD (White, 2019).

In two of the three cases examined, officers spoke of deep feelings of abandonment and/or isolation. In both cases, the feelings articulated stemmed from the lack of support from within their departments and colleagues. Officer Tanzilli explained he became very depressed, was constantly in fear, regularly suffered from anxiety, and he did not want to leave his house (Tanzilli, 2019). My experience mirrored his. Officer Moore, on the other hand, experienced a supportive workplace who aided him in his healing process. Officer Moore eventually returned to police work.

Through my experiences, the people I spoke to, and the officers who looked to me for guidance, I rarely heard of an instance where an officer was diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and found a help within their own department. Far more common, were private organizations creating virtual communities in which they offered injured officers private assistance through donated funds. The presence of these organizations alone begs the question of why? Why should these organizations exist if we do an adequate job of taking care of an officer injured in the line of duty?

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**"The only safe  
ship in a storm is  
leadership."**

**Faye  
Wattleton**

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### Conclusion

The stressful nature of law enforcement is not in debate. Trauma is a known entity within the profession. In detailing the three above experiences, we find two outcomes. One in which the officer healed and returned to work and two in which they did not.

Unfortunately, we must recognize the limitations of such an anecdotal writing. Obviously, three officers are not a representative sample of all law enforcement officers within the country. The limited scope of this anecdotal evidence does not negate the usefulness of the examination.

In comparing the three situations we identify many areas needing study. First, we must identify traits which positively correlate to a healthy mental state and mitigate symptoms associated with PTSD and others which do not. As shown in all three narratives, officers developed PTSD due to an experience related to a traumatic event. Both myself and Officer Tanzilli continue to suffer with debilitating symptoms associated with PTSD while Officer Moore does not. Although we can identify one's access to a supportive and caring environment as a possible explanation for one's healing, the limitations of this study cannot state this absolutely, necessitating the need for continued research.

Second, in acknowledging the exaggerated mental health effects of a career in law enforcement, we must enact legislation recognizing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder as a common work-related injury in this field. In doing so, we create the presumption that an otherwise healthy officer who develops PTSD through the course of their career, suffered a compensable work-related injury. This should have the effect of alleviating some of the financial stressors experienced when an officer loses income while they heal from a work-related injury.

Finally, we must mandate a national education effort focusing on healthy stress management, recognition of PTSD symptoms, reducing the negative stigma commonly associated with a diagnosis of PTSD, and the availability of counseling and suicide prevention assistance should an officer need it. In combination, these steps may allow us to better understand the costs incurred upon our society due to an officer suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. Our end goal must be to reverse the rising suicide trend in the law-enforcement community.

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**“Lead from the back and let others believe they are in the front.”**

**Nelson Mandela**

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these topics will be shared. A method of interviewing and polling agencies of varying size and geographic location was developed to learn what agencies are doing right now to address these issues.

In conclusion, the research team will share strategies for recruitment and retention. These strategies are best practices discovered by the varying agencies polled and what was learned from previous research.

While some agencies may benefit from a particular best practice method, that same method may not work for a different agency. This could be for various reasons such as budget constraints, size of the agency, or even what type of applicants they are hiring such as retirees. When evaluating what methods to employ, an agency should take into consideration their unique characteristics and which best practices apply to them.

## METHODOLOGY

When looking at recruiting and retention, it is important to gain a broad perspective of the challenges faced by agencies. Larger agencies may have different issues than medium-sized or smaller agencies. Different areas of the country may also present different challenges. For the purposes of this research and the time constraints to complete it, our team made a concerted effort to contact agencies of varying sizes and in different parts of the country.

This research team personally contacted 11 different agencies. We also used material found online for the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Attempts were made to connect with more agencies than are represented in this article, but due to time constraints and other various reasons by the agency, we were unable to collect information from all of them. Several departments have previously been researched in articles that were reviewed by the research team. The information shared here represents the information received from those agencies willing to participate and those that were already documented in the literature.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME BARRIERS/BEST PRACTICES DISCOVERED

Many books, articles, and research projects have been done over the past several years regarding best practices for recruiting and retention of police officers. This research paper will attempt to summarize many of the best practices found in literature.

The research team will also share those strategies that our polled agencies found success with.

**Recruiter.** At the top of the list for any good recruiting strategy must be the person who is responsible for recruiting. While an agency may not be able to change many of their organizational barriers, they can overcome many challenges by careful selection and attention to the person in charge of recruiting.

A recruiter in a police agency should be in a position of prestige. This is the person or people with the awesome task of sharing the agency's message in the community. They must be a community-oriented person. A recruiter must be willing to engage with people at hiring events and be active in the community. Every community event is also an opportunity to recruit.

An effective recruiter should be able to communicate that their agency is the best agency there is and the reasons why. Their attitude should reflect that nothing compares to their department.

Officers throughout the agency should be utilized as recruiters at recruiting events. Every employee should also understand that they can recruit at any time. They can share the message of the agency and refer people they contact and consider good candidates for the agency.

### **Branding through Website and Social Media.**

The current generation, minority, and female applicants have all been shown through research to be drawn to policing because they wanted to make a difference in the community and help people. People tend to research the internet to learn about an agency before they ever make a phone call or attend a recruiting event.

By branding through social media and showing more images of diverse police interacting with kids and going to community events, law enforcement agencies can more effectively reach these applicant pools. Images of hard-charging police or officers in SWAT gear are less likely to draw in this group of potential applicants. It is important for agencies to communicate their mission and commitment to the community. They should display their departmental values prominently on all websites, forms of social media, and agency materials.

A consistent theme in the agencies that were polled and what was found in literature is that the police organization should promote diversity within the organization from the chief through the ranks to offic-

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**“The word “good” has many meanings. For example, if a man were to shoot his grandmother at a range of 500 yards, I should call him a good shot, but not necessarily a good man.”**

**G. K. Chesterton**

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ers. The message from the chief and the organization should be that diversity is desired. Minorities and females should be able to see that they are welcome by the agency and capable of promoting or being selected for specialized units.

Web-based content should provide as much information as possible to potential applicants about the hiring process. It has been recommended that an agency have their own independent website, so they have more control over the content and their image. A webpage dedicated to recruiting that easily directs potential applicants through the process is a necessity.

**Advertising Qualifications and Disqualifications.** Agencies would benefit from listing their unique qualifications and disqualifications on their websites and recruiting materials. These requirements vary from agency to agency. If an applicant can visit a website and see if their situation is or is not a disqualifier, they may learn that they are an eligible candidate. This also creates an environment that allows the applicant to not feel compelled to hide something that may not have otherwise kept them from being eligible.

**Recruiting for Diversity.** To recruit more diverse and female applicants, success has been found with the use of social media, YouTube, and online ads. Even radio ads have shown to be effective with the 23 to 36-year-old age range (Beer, 2018).

It is beneficial to include a diverse group of officers in recruiting. Applicants are more comfortable talking to someone who is like them and who may have a similar background. Hosting Women's Recruitment events has shown a positive increase in recruiting female applicants.

**Building Relationships in the Community.** Agencies should build relationships with diverse groups within their community. A few examples of these type groups would be minority churches, Latino Outreach, all female clubs, or African American and Hispanic Chambers of Commerce. Community leaders can help overcome the barrier that exists between police perceptions from minority community members.

Hosting community events such as Coffee with a Cop, Open House events, community forums, and Town Hall Meetings allows officers to build relationships. The more positive presence the police department has in the community, the more potential they have to reach applicants.

While agency image has already been discussed as it relates to diversity, it should also be shared that a strong stance on hate crimes is important for recruiting diversity. Hosting community forums on hate crimes or for the LGBTQ community can positively share the message that the agency is inclusive of all its community.

**Recruiting Millennials.** Millennials are attracted to jobs that give them a purpose. Social media is a well-known strategy to target this group. All types of social media should be utilized to reach the broadest spectrum of people. Vlogs, video blogs, are an important tool to reach a new group of applicants. When an agency uses vlogs of diverse police officers telling their story, applicants can learn how someone like them views the profession. An agency has another opportunity to share its message and appeal to an applicant's desire to serve the community. These types of videos are also important for recruiting diverse applicants.

**Effective Recruiting and Retention Strategy.** Promotional opportunity and ability to transfer to specialized units have been found to be an important characteristic sought by millennials and minorities. Smaller agencies cite this as a barrier to recruiting, but they can still find ways to increase opportunities for their officers and provide them with career development training.

**Recruiting for the Future.** In order to prevent this decline in police applicants from carrying over into the future, agencies must start building relationships with the younger generation now. Community-based activities targeted at youth, police summer camps, Police Explorer and Cadet programs are all ways that an agency can interact with younger members of their community. Agencies can find any number of creative ways to interact with the youth in their community and start planting the seed that law enforcement is a worthwhile and meaningful career.

**Thinking Outside the Box at Career Fairs.** Many of the agencies shared ideas that had helped their agency connect with people. A few of those strategies will be discussed here.

A recommendation from a recruiter while attending a career event was that the recruiter walked through the crowd and talked to people rather than sitting at a table and waiting for people to approach. Recruiters should consider their uniform attire when attending career fairs. Law enforcement academies or colleges with a major interest in Criminal Justice

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**“The mark of a great man is one who knows when to set aside the important things in order to accomplish the vital ones.”**

**Brandon Sanderson**

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degrees would be appropriate events to recruit while wearing a police uniform. Those applicants are already drawn to the profession and would appreciate seeing the professional appearance that they relate to policing.

However, at career fairs that are not specifically geared toward law enforcement, a recruiter might consider wearing a plainclothes uniform. The uniform itself can create a barrier to open communication with citizens who may see the command presence appearance as intimidating.

When attending career events that include professions other than law enforcement, police agencies should still target people who think of themselves as healthcare professionals, educators, psychologists or financial experts and relate those career fields to the varied roles police officers can fill in the agency.

Career fairs should be carefully planned to reach the appropriate pool of candidates. Visiting minority colleges or hosting Women's Career Fairs is a sensible approach to reach those candidates desired by the agency.

**Updating the Hiring Process.** The need to review practices is ever present. Agencies should review their current testing procedures especially as it relates to the written and physical assessments. Some agencies have high failure rates with certain portions of their test. With the written, it may be failures over a scenario-based exam or an extensive math exam. In the physical, agencies may have a portion that limits, for example, their female applicants due to the upper body strength portion of their test. For any high failure rate over a portion, agencies should carefully evaluate the relevance for that particular assessment as a police officer. If it appears to be something that is not a real means to assess whether a person may be a good candidate, then the process should be changed.

The duration of the hiring process is repeatedly cited as a barrier to recruiting. Agencies should look for ways to cut down on the time it takes to process a candidate. An effective method to reduce the process is for an agency to prioritize those steps in the process that they find the most important when looking for a viable applicant. They should begin with those steps to narrow down their pool of applicants early on. This allows the time and discretion to review the candidates most desired by the agency.

**Final Review of Applicant.** Before disqualifying a candidate for a hard and fast rule or a set standard,

an agency should conduct a final review. The idea was to be open-minded and not rule a person out based on what a paper trail says. Just as the very job of a law enforcement officer requires objectivity and discretion, agencies should be able to use the same objectivity and discretion when determining if an applicant is a good fit for their agency. Standards are standards, but there are exceptions and agencies must be willing to carefully evaluate their applicants based on the individual's own unique set of circumstances.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

Each agency that participated in this research paper advocated finding meaningful ways to positively impact recruiting and retention in their department. It appeared that the same strategies that would affect recruiting and retention were also strategies that would improve the image and perception of policing across the nation. Building community relations, sharing strong departmental values, and giving the community insight into police agencies through varied social means are all appropriate strategies to restore the public's trust in police.

The men and women that participated in this project were excellent representatives for their department and displayed the character and integrity the public is seeking in a community-based policing style. Each department was actively pursuing the means to address the dilemma of recruiting and retention. This research team believes that with a continued commitment to utilizing and improving upon these strategies, law enforcement agencies can effectively begin to bridge the gap not only in recruiting and retention but in reshaping the perception of police in America by bringing our communities and police together.

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**“You don’t need a title to be a leader.”**

**Mark Sanborn**

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