

**WESTERN STATES HOSTAGE NEGOTIATORS' ASSOCIATION  
39<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL TRAINING SEMINAR**



**2025 Featured Presenters - April 27, 2025, to April 30, 2025  
Sunriver Resort, Sunriver, Oregon**

***THE CENTRAL OREGON EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM WELCOMES YOU TO SUNRIVER***



**Doctor Andy Young**

Dr. Andy Young is a retired Professor of Psychology and Counseling after 26 years and has been a negotiator and psychological consultant with the Lubbock Police Department's SWAT/Negotiator team since 2000. He has been on the negotiating team at the Lubbock County Sheriff's Office since 2008 and is on the team at the Texas Department of Public Safety (Texas Rangers, Special Operations Group, Region 4 & 5). He is the author of, "Fight or Flight: Negotiating Crisis on the Frontline" and "When Every Word Counts: An Insider's View of Crisis Negotiations." He was recently added as a third author for the 6th Edition of "Crisis Negotiations: Managing Critical Incidents and

Hostage Situations in Law Enforcement and Corrections". He has spoken internationally at law enforcement and hostage negotiator conferences since 2014 and has had his research and writings on negotiations and critical incident response widely published.

**Presentation Synopsis**

This 2-hour presentation will review a callout in which the presenter was the coach/secondary for a new negotiator negotiating with a psychotic person who had just killed our SWAT team leader and shot three other officers. The learning points for this presentation include: 1) how to coach a new primary during a very challenging negotiation with someone who is not in touch with reality, 2) strategies for negotiating with a psychotic person and active shooter with particular attention given to verbal containment, 3) how to navigate a negotiation that affects negotiators in a personal manner, 4) how to do risk assessment and communicate this effectively with SWAT and command, 5) how to navigate the challenges associated with a multi-agency response, and 6) how to personally navigate the aftermath of such an event.



**Sergeant Aaron Dahl & Detective Josh McCarthy**

**Aaron Dahl** - With an extensive background in law enforcement and a passion for crisis negotiation, Sgt. Aaron Dahl serves as the Team Leader of the Crisis Negotiation Team at the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office in Tampa, Florida. Since 2016, he has held the title of Negotiator and has been involved in several significant incidents involving barricaded suspects, potential hostages, and critical incidents that require empathy, strategic decision-making, and impeccable communication skills.

Sgt. Dahl runs the Bay Area Negotiator Group, a pivotal network connecting all crisis and hostage negotiation teams across the Tampa Bay area. Each year, he coordinates a conference and competition with Crisis Systems Management

focused on crisis negotiation, which has successfully expanded on a national scale, setting a benchmark for training and operational excellence in the field.

Beyond his professional commitments, Sgt. Dahl owns and operates Blue Line Studios, a commercial photography and cinematography company.

On the personal front, Sgt. Dahl is a dedicated family man, married with two children who are the center of his world. His leisure time is often spent losing golf balls on the course or losing fish in the bay, activities that allow him to unwind and relax.



**Josh McCarthy** - With over 20 years of law enforcement experience, Detective Josh McCarthy currently serves as the Assistant Team Leader of the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office Crisis Negotiations Team. Since becoming a negotiator in 2013, he has participated in over 100 callouts, demonstrating expertise in high-stakes situations. His roles at HCSO have included patrol, field training officer, Street Crimes Unit, and latent detective duties.

Prior to his tenure at HCSO, Det. McCarthy began his career as an airport deputy at the Rockingham County Sheriff's Department in Manchester, New Hampshire, followed by over four years as a uniformed trooper with the New Hampshire State Police.

Since moving to Florida in 2011, Det. McCarthy has enjoyed the state's sunny climate alongside his wife, a schoolteacher, and their two daughters.

### **Presentation Synopsis - The Frenchy Call Out - Strippers, Guns, Alcohol, and a Hot Tub**

On March 14, 2019, a female called 911 to report her a man shot her and her friend. The females required an emergency tactical rescue while the crisis principal barricaded himself with a firearm. This session explores negotiating with a person facing significant prison time, who is now suicidal. Whether you are a seasoned negotiator or new to crisis negotiations, this case study from Hillsborough County will equip you with insights into the complexities of negotiation under extreme pressure. Don't miss hearing recorded negotiations and navigating unique challenges this event presented.

### **Learning Objectives**

- Apply Active Listening Skills to build rapport with a suspect facing long-term imprisonment.
- Continuously assess suicidal risk throughout the negotiation process.
- Identify deception cues during negotiations.
- Manage interactions with family or friends who engage with the suspect at the scene.
- Utilize Third Party Recordings and live Third Party Intermediaries effectively during negotiations.
- Understand and apply the principle of anchoring in negotiations.
- Gather intelligence from the suspect without revealing intent.



### **Doctor Jeff Thompson**

Jeff Thompson, PhD, is a research psychologist and scientist working in the Psychiatry Department at Columbia University Irving Medical Center. Dr. Thompson retired from the New York City Police Department (NYPD) in 2022 after serving for more than 20 years including as a detective, their first-ever mental health and wellness coordinator, and as a hostage negotiator.

Dr. Thompson's research, work, and consulting includes with government agencies across the world including the FBI, NYPD, New Zealand Police, NASA, the Canadian Border Service Agency, as well as with medical students and professionals, business executives, and others. Dr. Thompson has been

published in multiple research journals and book chapters, he writes for PsychologyToday.com, and he published a book on resilience, *warr;or21*.

### **Presentation Synopsis - Not 'Check Box' Training: Real Practices in Resilience for Hostage Negotiators**

The work of police hostage negotiators is tense, stressful, anxiety-filled, and is often unpredictable. When not properly handled, it can have a detrimental impact on a negotiator's emotional, cognitive, and behavioral health. Fortunately, research has also shown that certain practices can increase one's focus, calm, inner strength, resilience, and create better mental health coping strategies overall. This workshop explores the science behind a collection of resilience practices that have already been embraced by negotiators across the country and world (including the FBI, NYPD, Toronto, and New Zealand).

Importantly, these practices can increase your negotiator effectiveness in addition to personal resilience. As with real resilience, no workshop, book, podcast, or article enhances resilience. This only occurs by doing it and practicing it so come to this (very) interactive presentation where you will get to participate in many exercises, including those directly to crisis negotiation. Everyone deserves to have positive mental health and that certainly includes hostage negotiators.



### **Sergeant Sean O'Neill**

Sean O'Neill is a current Sergeant and Chief Humane Officer for the Des Moines (IA) Police Department. Prior to being promoted, he held the position of Liaison Officer for the Mental Health / Mobile Crisis Response Team (MCRT). He has been in Law Enforcement since 2013, serving with the Myrtle Beach Police Department before joining the Des Moines Police Department in 2015. He currently serves as the Assistant Team Leader of the Hostage / Crisis Negotiation Team with the Metro Special Tactics and Response (S.T.A.R) Team and has been involved in a variety of different situations including suicidal subjects, hostage situations, and barricaded individuals. Sean also has the honor of serving as the lead Verbal Judo and Tactical Communications instructor for the Des Moines Regional Police Academy and is an Associate Instructor with the Verbal Judo Institute. Sean

has had the honor to present and speak throughout the United States as well as Canada in the field of Crisis / Hostage Negotiations.

Sean graduated with honors and obtained his bachelor's degree in Sociology with a concentration in Criminology from Coastal Carolina University in 2014 and obtained his Master's Degree in Public Administration from Upper Iowa University in 2018. Sean holds a certification from the International Association of Hostage Negotiators that he obtained in 2020. He also has extensive training in the fields of

Mental Health Crisis Response, Interview, and Interrogation, as well as Behavior Analysis and Deception Detection.

## **Presentation Synopsis of ‘Stack Up’**

On a cold February night, Des Moines Police Department Patrol Officers responded to an apartment complex in reference to a man armed with a knife threatening the victims. Upon their arrival, they confronted the suspect still armed with the knife as he fled into his apartment. Contact was made with the suspect and after a brief conversation, communication breaks down and the suspect barricades himself in the apartment. Information was then received that the suspect was possibly in possession of a shotgun style firearm. Metro Special Tactics and Response was contacted, and the Crisis Negotiation Team was activated. During the incident, negotiators transitioned from phone to in-person as Metro STAR Personnel tried to bring a peaceful resolution to this tense situation.

### **Learning Objectives**

- The importance of Negotiators training regularly with SWAT Entry Teams and developing trust with SWAT Command.
- Being able to transition from Negotiations via Phone to In-Person with the help of SWAT Entry.
- Discussion on deception during Negotiations.



### **Corporal Jeffery James-Potts**

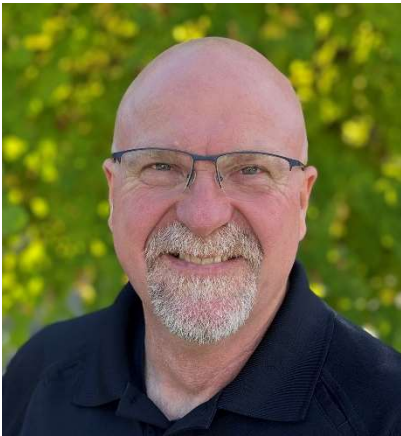
Currently a road supervisor with eight years in law enforcement. Previously had eight years of service with the United States Army and served in a patrol capacity and within the agency Narcotics and Intelligence Sections. At the time of the incident, was serving as a patrol deputy for approximately four years. I am with the Orange County Sheriff's Office in Florida.

### **Presentation Synopsis**

On March 21st, 2020, after conducting an arrest and processing a defendant at the Orange County Booking and Receiving Center – a deputy was taken hostage. Throughout this incident, the deputy was used as a human shield, beaten, and nearly executed throughout the process of this incident. However, the deputy was able to work with the defendant to reconsider killing the deputy (and himself), to release hostages, and eventually surrender the handgun and himself. (However, SWAT entered the processing room before all parties were able to walk out.) While the incident took place over the course of two hours, it has educated me in a number of lessons and experience that carry forward to this day.

The presentation is approximately an hour and a half in length (with a built-in ten-minute break) and approximately thirty minutes of questions. The presentation normally draws many questions.

Learning points are alternate perspectives of how to handle an officer/deputy being taken hostage, unique viewpoint from the perspective of a hostage, and for leaders on understanding a perspective of a sworn member returning to service (overcoming suicide and long-form mental health issues).

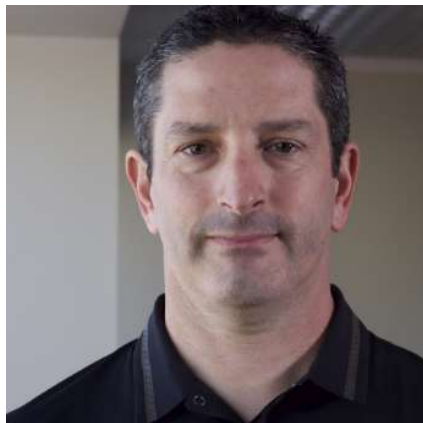


## **Troy King & Russ Corno**

**Troy King** - A law enforcement veteran of more than 30 years, nationally known presenter, instructor, inventor, and author, Troy currently serves as a consultant and instructor with Crisis Systems Management. Troy's law enforcement experience ranges from patrol officer to CNT Team Leader and includes assignments in gang enforcement, robbery detail, property crimes, patrol sergeant. Troy has worked nearly every assignment on a crisis negotiation team and has been involved in nearly 1,000 crisis incidents over the span of his 20 years on the crisis negotiation team. During the last eight years of Troy's career, he was the full-time team leader for the Portland Police Bureau's 26-person crisis negotiation team and is credited with playing a leading role in strengthening the relationship between the crisis negotiation team and the tactical team.

Troy has taught numerous negotiation, influence, and leadership-related classes across North America for regional conferences and individual teams as well as universities and private corporations. Troy is co-author of the nationally recognized crisis negotiation field manual titled *Into the Chaos*, has published articles in *The Tactical Edge* and *AC Resolution* Magazines, and is the developer of the COMTEK (Communication Team Kit), a negotiation communication device being used by hundreds of negotiators around the world.

Troy served on the board of the Western States Hostage Negotiators' Association (WSHNA) for more than eight years, serving as president for five of those years. Troy continues to be involved in WSHNA, serving as the overall facilitator for the WSHNA Crisis Negotiation Competition, a role he has filled since the start of the competition in 2013.



**Russ Corno** - Like any law enforcement officer who spent 21 years on a tactical team I have been involved in thousands of high-risk incidents. Everything from fugitive apprehension, warrant services, criminal barricades, suicidal subjects, active threat, and hostage rescues. My development as both a tactical officer and instructor is based on lessons learned from these events. I have developed programs, written policies and regularly consulted with my agencies top executives on training and policy matters. The Portland Police Bureau is a unique place to do police work, let alone tactical operations. It is a community that asks a lot of its officers and during the last 10 years we operated under a DOJ consent decree. All policy and police actions were reviewed by a court ordered monitor. With all that oversight, rarely was our team ever the focus, as we continued to operate at a very high pace, doing some of the highest liability work. This experience of navigating DOJ's expectations relating to policing in high-risk incidents gained me valuable insight and helped me develop as a trainer.

## **Presentation Synopsis**

For the past several decades the Portland Police Bureau's tactical and negotiation teams have been among the most active teams in the Pacific Northwest. For two of those decades Russ Corno and Troy King worked together, Russ as part of the tactical team and Troy on CNT. During their presentation they will describe the growing partnership between the two teams, the factors that led to this growth, and the positive impact it had on the overall response to critical incidents. Audio and video from several of these incidents will demonstrate the power of strong relationships between tactical and negotiation teams.



### ***Phoebe Mulligan***

Phoebe Mulligan, LICSW, has been providing services to trauma survivors since 2006. She previously served as Clinical Director of a mental health agency in Pierce County before opening a private practice in Tacoma, Washington. Additionally, she is currently the Mental Health Professional for fourteen local law enforcement departments and five fire departments. Ms. Mulligan is a part time lecturer in the University of Washington (Seattle) Social Work master's program where she graduated from in 2007. She is passionate about providing therapy to other professionals in the social service and first responder fields.

### ***Learning Points***

- Understanding the difference between primary and secondary trauma.
- Discuss how these impact first responders specifically.
- Identify ways to mitigate and process the impact of trauma.