

# Training the Guardians of Democracy

*Transforming the Culture of Policing in Washington State  
Civil Service Conference September 2017*

## Overview

- Who we are and what we do
- Highlights of the changes made in recruit training in Washington State beginning in 2012
- How the recent high profile events have created momentum for change in Washington State
- What lies ahead...

## Training the Guardians of Democracy

### *Mission:*

The Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission establishes high standards and exceptional training to ensure that criminal justice professionals in Washington State have the knowledge and skills to safely and effectively protect the life, liberty, and property of the people they serve.

## History of WSCJTC

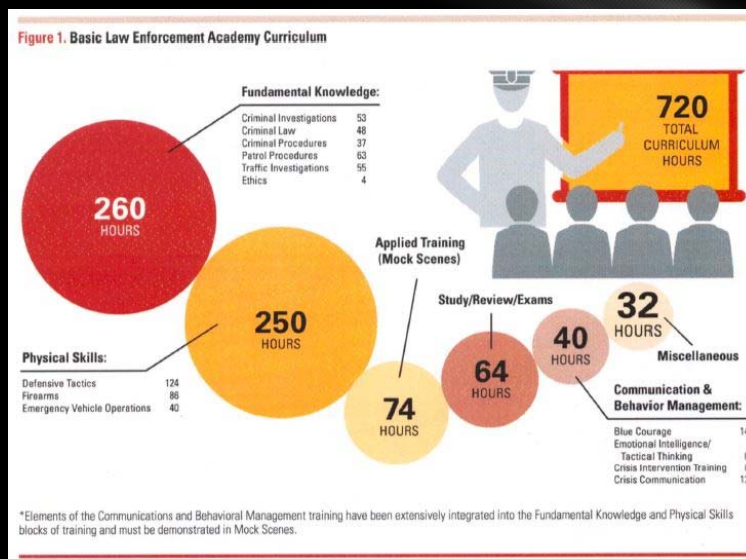
Established by state law in 1974 – RCW 43.101.020

- One of very few states that teaches both Police and Corrections
- Fourteen members appointed by Governor
  - Police Command, Staff, WSP Chief, AG, Prosecutor, FBI, Citizen at Large
- Academy was 440 hours until 1991, extended to 720
- Reciprocal agreements with most states for equivalency of lateral employment

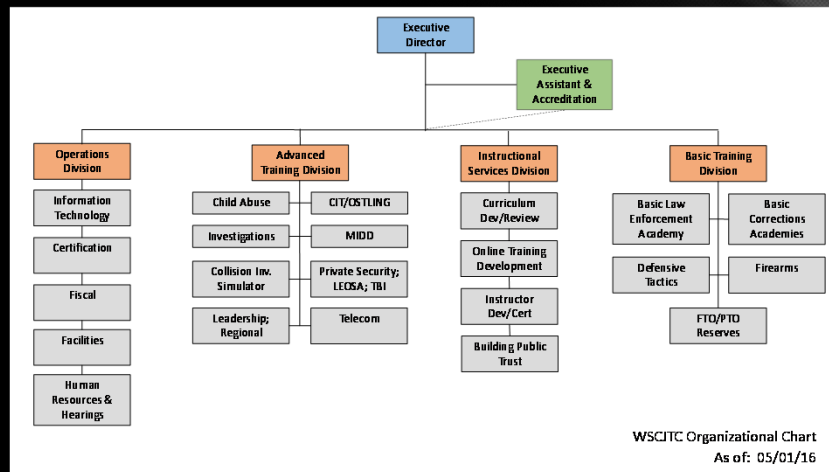
# Training Model = L.E.E.D.

- **Listen:** Allow people to give their side of the story. Give them a voice, and let them vent. Listening is the most powerful way to demonstrate respect.
- **Explain:** Explain what you're doing, what they can do, and what's going to happen.
- **Equity:** Tell them why you are taking action. The reason must be fair and free of bias, and show that their side of the story was considered.
- **Dignity:** Act with dignity, and leave them with their dignity. Treat every person with basic human decency

# Basic Academy Curriculum



# Organizational Structure



## News report from Seattle @ 2014

- Brief setup
  - Series of events in the news that were “negative graphics”
  - About the time Department of Justice came to SPD with a consent decree
  - A lot of Chief’s said “glad it wasn’t us”, but any agency is one bad story away...



## Why change the training model?

- Create a more effective learning environment
- Develop critical thinking and decision-making skills
- Instill values that that lead to ethical self-regulation in the use of power
- Improve public trust

....all of these improve officer safety



# Why did we adopt the term "*Guardians*?"

*"In a republic that honors the core ideals of democracy, the greatest amount of power is given to those called the Guardians. Only those with the most impeccable character are given the responsibility of protecting the democracy."*  
-Plato



## Serving a higher purpose...

- Improves job satisfaction, retention
- Increases self-regulation in a profession that relies on personal discretion
- Provides greater motivation for “doing the right thing”
- Better matches the mission of policing in a democracy (it’s not just a job, it’s a calling...)

Back to the 4 reasons for changing the training model...

## More effective learning

Research about adult learning does not support the “boot camp” model for police training. Fear and humiliation do not build confidence. They do interfere with learning.



*We seek the right combination of  
Pete Carroll and Chesty Puller!*



## Better decision-making

We need a training environment that supports the development of critical thinking, confident decision-making, and the ability to manage human behavior.

- *Memorizing checklists and procedures distracts from critical observations and effective assessment of behavior*



## Need to instill values



Instilling deeply held values is a more effective way of ensuring legal and honorable behavior on the street.

- *Compliance based of fear of punishment is short lived, breeds resentment and is hard to monitor.*

## Public Trust

After decades of falling crime rates, and improved tools and training, public trust and support of the police has not improved.

- *Our recruits will be **safer** and more effective if they are supported by the public. Long term health and job satisfaction will improve.*

## What Changed?

- Bracing protocol replaced with requirement to initiate a conversation
- “Tune Up” during orientation replaced with coaching
- TAC officers act as role models rather than intimidators

- Scholarship emphasized and rewarded
- New symbols and rituals introduced
  - Constitutions handed to each new recruit
  - Trophy case replaced by mural of Constitution
  - Posters about honor and nobility integrated with officer safety posters



## What changed? (cont.)

- Behavioral and Social Science programs infused into curriculum
  - “Blue Courage”
  - Crisis Intervention Training (CIT)
  - Procedural justice principles – (LEED)
  - “Tactical Social Interaction” (from DARPA project)
  - Bias and Perception
  - Cognitive Command (“NeuroCop”)
- Mock scenes “re-engineered”
  - Scenes are designed to test critical thinking, decision making, and accurate assessment of behavior
  - Physical skills tests are focused in the gym

## What *didn't* change?

- The physical and mental stress is still high
- Rules and code of conduct strictly upheld
- Defensive tactics standards tightened up, increased drills, integration with communication, de-escalation
- Firearms training enhanced with SIRT pistols, more integration with defensive tactics and de-escalation, focus on combat shooting rather than targets

It's not guardians instead of warriors...

We have not abandoned the warrior...

- The officer's role in the community is defined as a guardian, with the skills and ability to switch into warrior mode in a split second, without hesitation or apology.

*The warrior is just one dimension of the guardian.*

## Nobility in Policing

What is it and how do we  
get there?





What happens when they hit the street and begin Field Training?

If the home police agency culture does not support a guardian mindset the impacts of this training philosophy will fade.

*"So the station, so the street"*

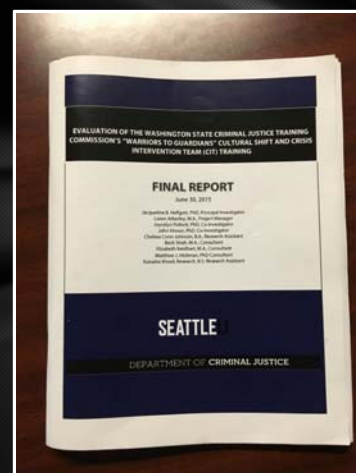
## Making it last in the state...

Recent high profile events have created momentum in the WA state legislature and in local jurisdictions

- Funding for Crisis Intervention Training
- Funding for the "Building Public Trust Initiative" (culture change program)
- The Blueprint Project

## Will it last?

We are three years into a 5-year longitudinal study to measure the long-term impacts – preliminary data is promising...



## Why is the culture so important??

Trust is built one interaction at a time.

The decision an officer makes about how to handle each interaction is heavily influenced by the culture.

## Cop Math!

Not to be confused with **Fire Math...**

750,000 Cops in America

-365 Days in a year

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749,635 Doing right daily

## Understanding Perceptions and Bias

- Leave your preconceived notions about “bias” training at the door.
- Think and reflect about what it means to be an effective police officer.
- Recognize the life experiences and expertise that you bring to this room.
- Participate, be present and feel free to address questions at the end.
- This is not your Grandfather’s Bias Course... not just race based nor designed from an “all cops are bad” perspective.

## Understanding Perceptions and Bias:

- Implicit Bias
- Differentiated from Explicit Bias
- Identifying Implicit Bias in Self and Others
- Adapting to Implicit Bias in Self and Others
- Organizational Impacts
- Community Impacts

This is a difficult topic, raising sensitive, yet critically important, issues...



## Main Topics for the Course:

- Implicit Bias
- Differentiated from Explicit Bias
- Identifying Implicit Bias in Self and Others
- Adapting to Implicit Bias in Self and Others
- Organizational Impacts
- Community Impacts

This is a difficult topic, raising sensitive, yet critically important, issues...

## Why should POs and Leaders care?

- **Organizational Perspective:** Litigation, Liability, Consent Decrees
- **Officer Safety Perspective:** Policing influenced by implicit biases is unsafe and ineffective
  - Blue-on-Blue Shootings
- **Personal Perspective:** Your liability and professional future
  - **The Philosophical Perspective:**
    - Why did you want to be a police officer?
- What is the role of police in a democratic society?

## Recent Events Have Left:

Police officers and organizations feeling besieged, unfairly castigated, painted with a broad-brush and undermined.

The discussion of biased policing has also been misinterpreted and misunderstood by BOTH police and community members.....

## Rethinking Biased Policing

As leaders, we must combat the narrow public view that only ill-intentioned, bad, "racist" officers exhibit biased behavior.

The science based research shows that:

- *Even the best officers, because they are human, might exhibit biased behavior.*
- *Even the best agencies, because they hire humans, will have biased policing.*

## Fundamental Concepts of Human Bias

- Bias is a normal human attribute—even *well-intentioned* people have biases
- Biases are about survival mechanism and chemical reactions
- Biases are often unconscious or “implicit”
- Implicit biases manifest even in individuals who, at the conscious level, reject prejudices and stereotyping
- Implicit biases can influence our actions
- Understanding how implicit bias can affect our perceptions and behavior is the first step to “override” implicit bias

## Differentiating: Implicit v Explicit

- Need to recognize our unconscious biases or **“IMPLICIT BIASES”** so we can implement bias-free behavior
- Implicit biases are not **EXPLICIT BIASES**
  - A person with explicit biases (e.g., racist) has conscious animus towards groups, is unconcerned, will tell you about it.
  - Implicit biases can become explicit biases if one acts upon them once they’ve recognized the bias exists.

## Basis on Which People May Stereotype and Treat Others Differently

- Income
- English language abilities
- Race
- Gender
- Age
- Regional differences
- Religious affiliation
- Profession
- Sexual orientation, identity
- Etc.

## Malcolm Gladwell: Popular Version of Implicit Bias

- “Blink”: About our snap judgments about people and things
- “Thinking without thinking”
- About choices that seem to be made in an instant-in the blink of an eye-that actually aren’t as simple as they seem
- Key for acting without bias - what you do with those instant assessments?
- Replace it with objective (bias free) judgments



## Fair and Impartial Police Officers are More Likely To...

- Be effective at solving crimes and handling disorder problems
  - Review facts and evidence impartially to solve crimes and handle disorder
- Stay safe and go home at the end of the shift
  - Review facts/evidence to assess danger ....
- Enhance/promote trust on the part of the people they serve and enhance the legitimacy of the police.
  - When we do our jobs well...
    - F/I are essential for maintaining our legitimacy.
    - Live up to the values of the profession.

## Key Point

Policing based on biases is unsafe,  
ineffective, and unjust.



## Reducing Implicit Bias: Contact Theory

- In criminology, psychology, and sociology, the contact hypothesis has been described as one of the best ways to improve relations among groups that are experiencing conflict.
- Positive effects of intergroup contact occur in situations characterized by four key conditions:
  - Equal status,
  - Intergroup cooperation
  - Common goals
  - Support by social & institutional authorities
- Positive contact with other groups reduces both conscious and implicit biases
- ON BOTH SIDES

## Counter-Stereotypes

Can weaken our biases through exposure to "counter stereotypes"

- If repeatedly exposed to women who are dangerous ...
- If repeatedly exposed to professional persons of color...
- If repeatedly exposed to successful youths...
- If repeatedly exposed to supportive citizens in the community...

Correspondingly, community stereotypes of police can be improved

- If repeatedly exposed to positive stories
- If repeatedly exposed to helpful, friendly, empathetic officers
- If repeatedly exposed to staff at community functions
  - Kiwanis, Rotary, School functions, community events, HOA, Citizen's Academy, NNO, & more

## The Impact of Biased Policing on the Organization

Explore this through.....

- Police Legitimacy = The public view that the police are entitled to exercise authority.

Community members who have trust and confidence in their police and recognize them as legitimate are more likely to:

- Accept police decisions
- Cooperate with the police
- Comply with the law
- Serve as witnesses
- Believe an officer who is testifying

## Threats to Police Legitimacy

- History of police and community conflicts
- Views of police that immigrants bring with them
  - Immigrants from nations in which the police are tyrannical and abusive
  - Immigrants may be hesitant to trust police officers—based on their experiences in their home countries
  - May be difficult to build trust in such communities
- Disrespectful, abusive and/or biased interactions with community members

## Understanding Our History

- You personally did not create our history
- But you police within the context of it
- With certain individuals, it is even harder to produce police legitimacy



# Understanding Perceptions and Bias

All Humans have biases – Implicit and Explicit

Cops are human



## Procedural Justice

The procedures used by police officers where community members are treated with respect, dignity and fairness.

Three components of Procedural Justice:

- **Respect and Dignity:** Treating people with dignity
- **Voice:** Allowing people to tell their side of the story
- **Neutrality:** Decision-making based on facts, not personal biases



## Take a Closer Look... Respect and Dignity

- **Action:** Officers treat ALL individuals—regardless of status—with dignity and respect
- **Skill:** Checking cynicism; Developing respectful communication and relationships
- **Result:** Validates the individual as a human being

## Taking a Closer Look: Voice

- **Action:** Allow community members to voice their point of view
- **Skill:** Active listening
- **Result:** Having a voice makes people feel that they are a part of the process and that they are being respected.

## Take a Closer Look...Neutrality

- **Action:** Exhibit a fair and impartial approach to community members
- **Skill:** Officer recognizes his/her biases and chooses to override biases in actions
- **Result:** Fair and impartial policing AND the perceptions of it

## Practically Speaking...

To be a fair and impartial officer, you need to:

- Recognize your implicit biases and implement “controlled (unbiased) responses”
- Avoid “profiling by proxy”
- Analyze options with a fair and impartial policing lens
- Reduce ambiguity: (a) slow it down, and (b) engage with the community.

## Executives and Supervisors are Human Too!

- Be aware that your decisions may be influenced by your own biases.
- Be aware that some directions that you give could:
  - Be interpreted through the biases of your officers
  - Produce perceptions of biases, racial tension.
- Who you promote
- What your department culture demonstrates
  - What is measured
  - What is rewarded, recognized and ignored

Once again, this is a HUMAN issue

## 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing Task Force Report

- Building Trust and Legitimacy
- Policy and Oversight
- Technology and Social Media
- Community Policing and Crime Reduction
- Training and Education
- Officer Safety and Wellness

WASPC has adopted these pillars as principals

## So, what's next?

Newly funded initiatives:

- Further **De-escalation** tactics
  - De-escalation is 90% proper patrol tactics.
- **Disabilities** – More information about responding to calls for people with a variety of disabilities
- **Firearms Simulator** – Training for decision making on both when to use lethal force or transition to less-lethal options
- **Sexual Assault Investigations** – Adult victims
- **21 CPL** – The full package of leadership



So, how easy is this?



Market your PDs success! Social Media







Maya Angelou

People will not remember what  
you said or what you did,

but they will remember how  
you made them feel.

Questions?

*Thank You!*

**Samantha Thomson-Daly M.P.A.**  
**Operations Division Manager**  
**Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission**

Samantha has served in the law enforcement profession for the last 20 years. She entered as a police officer with the Lee's Summit Missouri Police Department, working in patrol, as an FTO, an Advanced CIT officer, a trainer, a Master Police Officer (1<sup>st</sup> level supervisor) and had the opportunity to work in several units within the agency such as the professional standards unit conducting hiring, as a public information officer and as a community interaction officer; starting many programs for the agency.

She also worked as a detective with the Lee's Summit Police Department in the Investigations Division in the Special Investigations Unit. In this capacity, she achieved her most notable award for being the originating/lead investigator that won the FBI's Criminal Case award in 2012 for taking down a major drug trafficking organization, which also solved several homicides. The case involved 14 US states and 3 countries.

She relocated to Seattle Washington after nearly 17 years with the Lee's Summit Missouri Police Department. She took a position with the Criminal Justice Training Commission. She has worked as the Advanced Training Division Manager for more than 3 years. This division contains many programs that develop and deploy training for many different Law Enforcement disciplines, including Leadership, Crisis Intervention, and Telecommunications programs just to name a few. She is also a trainer in the Leadership and Building Public Trust programs. She is currently the Operations Division Manager for CJTC, overseeing all operations organization wide along with the multi-million dollar budget. She enjoys serving with the Law Enforcement professionals in the State of Washington.

She has a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice/Psychology earned from the University of Central Missouri and a Master's Degree in Public Administration (Cum Laude) earned from Park University. She is an active cyclist and rowing crew with Mount Baker Crew in Seattle, WA. She volunteers with Youth Care and loves spending time with her loving and supportive family.

Please feel free to connect with her on Facebook and LinkedIn

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