

UNDERSTANDING MARSY'S LAW // P. 36

# FOP



# JOURNAL

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FEBRUARY 2024

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Shift into a positive mindset this winter season by practicing self-care.

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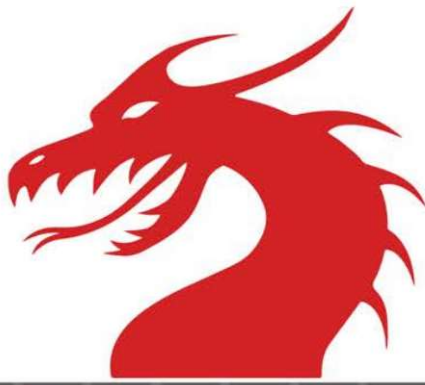


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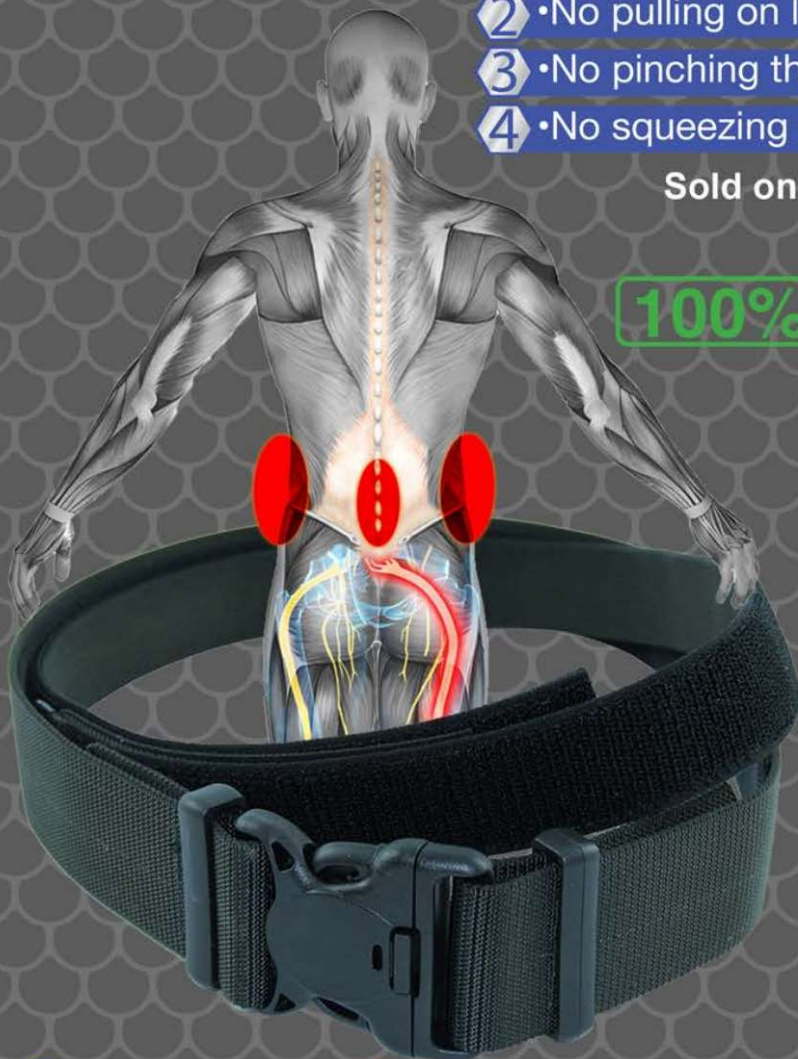
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# Addressing Injustice: A Call to Action for FOP Members



// **WRITE TO US!** If you have further questions, contact Patrick Yoes at (504) 234-4300, or [pyoes@fop.net](mailto:pyoes@fop.net).

**A**s devoted champions for the rights and well-being of our esteemed law enforcement community, we find ourselves facing a significant challenge that directly impacts the retirement benefits of our fellow public servants — the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO). Despite setbacks with H.R. 82, the Social Security Fairness Act, during the previous Congress, we stand undeterred and have achieved remarkable progress with over 304 co-sponsors in the House and 50 co-sponsors in the Senate within the first 11 months of this Congress.

This year's Legislative Day on the Hill represents a remarkable turn of events as the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) and the

International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) join forces for the first time. Simultaneously hosting our legislative days in Washington, D.C., both organizations will unite law enforcement officers and firefighters, aiming to make a powerful statement by holding a Red and Blue Rally on the U.S. Capitol grounds.

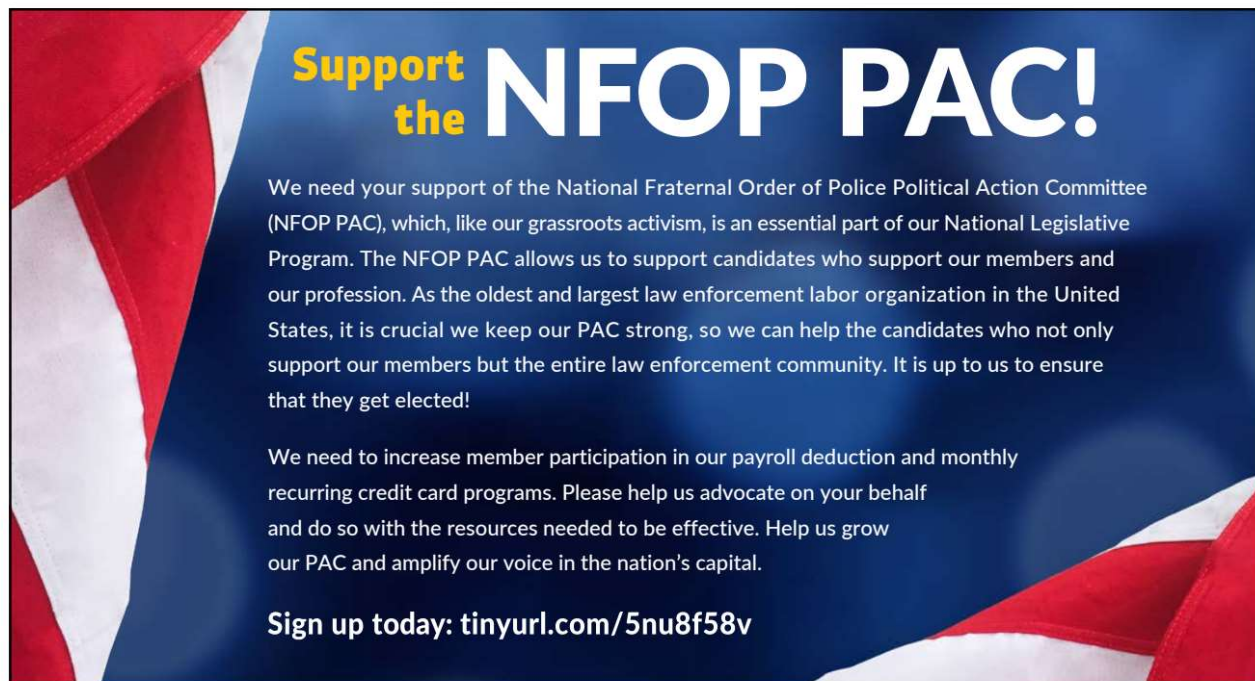
While each organization pursues its unique legislative initiatives during our respective congressional meetings, the focal point of our collective effort will be urging Congress to take immediate action on H.R. 82/S. 597, addressing the critical issue of WEP/GPO.

## Red and Blue Rally: A Powerful Display of Unity

Mark your calendars for March 5 at 11 a.m. on the lawn of the U.S.

Capitol. The Red and Blue Rally will serve as a powerful display of unity, emphasizing the need to address the adverse effects of WEP and GPO. Side by side, law enforcement officers and firefighters will rally on the Capitol grounds to make our voices heard. The Red and Blue Rally will showcase a powerful demonstration of solidarity as members from both organizations, alongside supporters, stand together to address the pressing need for change. The collective voice of law enforcement officers and firefighters will echo through the Capitol grounds, emphasizing the urgency of rectifying the injustices faced by our colleagues in retirement.

*Continued on page 12 >*



**Support the NFOP PAC!**

We need your support of the National Fraternal Order of Police Political Action Committee (NFOP PAC), which, like our grassroots activism, is an essential part of our National Legislative Program. The NFOP PAC allows us to support candidates who support our members and our profession. As the oldest and largest law enforcement labor organization in the United States, it is crucial we keep our PAC strong, so we can help the candidates who not only support our members but the entire law enforcement community. It is up to us to ensure that they get elected!

We need to increase member participation in our payroll deduction and monthly recurring credit card programs. Please help us advocate on your behalf and do so with the resources needed to be effective. Help us grow our PAC and amplify our voice in the nation's capital.

**Sign up today: [tinyurl.com/5nu8f58v](https://tinyurl.com/5nu8f58v)**



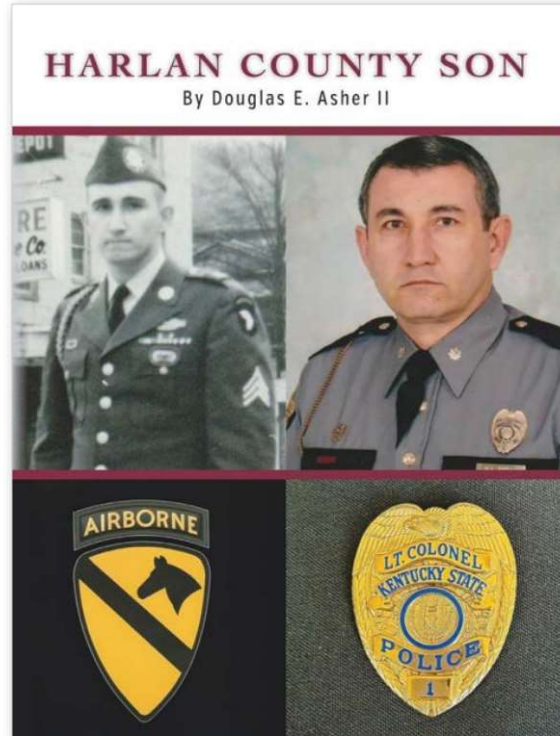
# ORDER YOUR COPY OF *Harlan County Son* TODAY

Crafted with precision and passion by Douglas E. Asher II, *Harlan County Son* isn't merely a biography – it's an anthem to the human spirit's ability to overcome, adapt and flourish. Step into a world where each challenge is a lesson, each setback is a stepping stone and every triumph is a testament to the enduring power of determination.

Nestled in the heart of Appalachia, the rugged terrains of Harlan County, Kentucky, birthed a story of resilience, honor and unwavering spirit. *Harlan County Son* reveals this narrative, taking readers on an evocative journey that transcends time and emotion. A young boy's life in Harlan County echoes the timeless adventures of Tom Sawyer but is also pierced by real-life traumas. Suffering abject poverty, witnessing the tragic killing of his father and enduring a near-fatal accident, he faces challenges most can only imagine. Yet, the trials of childhood pale in comparison to what awaits him in young adulthood.

Joining the Army paratroopers at the age of 17, he confronted the brutal realities of the Vietnam War, facing battles that tested not just his physical mettle, but his very soul. Every gunfire, every life-or-death decision, is described in visceral detail, pulling the reader into the thick of the action. But war is just one chapter. Returning home, he joins the ranks of the Kentucky State Police, dedicating three decades to the pursuit of justice. His illustrious career in law enforcement brings to light heart-pounding cases and profound insights into the criminal justice system.

Douglas Asher Sr., the life of which is the subject of the book *Harlan County Son*, has been a charter member of the Russell FOP Lodge #45 in Flatwoods, Kentucky, since 1977. He served a 30-year career with the Kentucky State Police, rising to the rank of lieutenant and colonel and becoming the director of the agency's Operations Division before his retirement in 1999.



## HOW TO PURCHASE

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# Remembering

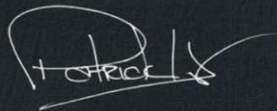
## Georgia State Lodge President Jeff Wiggs

It is with a heavy heart that I inform you of the unexpected passing of Georgia State Lodge President Jeff Wiggs.

Jeff was a remarkable leader who devoted his time, energy and passion to our organization. He was an inspiration to us all and played a crucial role in the growth and success of his local and state lodges. His dedication to our mission and his unwavering commitment to serving our Order will always be remembered.

Please keep Jeff's family, friends, and loved ones in your thoughts and prayers as they cope with this tremendous loss.

**Patrick Yoes,**  
FOP president



*The following is a statement made by the Georgia State Lodge:*

### **The State Office Is Sad to Announce the Sudden Passing of President Wiggs**

It is with profound sadness that we inform you of the untimely death of Georgia FOP President Jeff Wiggs. We were notified on January 29 around lunch by Secretary Alan Blaisdell of the Dekalb FOP Lodge. It appears to be some type of unforeseen medical event that led to his untimely passing at his residence.

For those of you who knew Jeff personally, we ask that you celebrate his life and his commitment to this organization for which he dedicated so much of his professional life to. Jeff was the embodiment of a selfless leader who served as the Dekalb FOP president for over 10 years, as well as the current Georgia State Lodge president. He will be remembered as a tireless advocate for law enforcement officers in Dekalb County and the state of Georgia.

One of Jeff's passions was "My Brother's House," which is a home near Atlanta where FOP members and/or their families can stay at no expense while they have an injured officer in Atlanta-area hospitals. The home is owned by the DeKalb County Lodge, where Jeff was also the president. Contributions to My Brother's House can be made in Jeff's memory to the Georgia State Lodge Foundation through PayPal (@stgaynor@fop.net). Any contributions will be sent to the DeKalb Lodge. **FOP**

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

*Continued from page 10 >*

### **Your Active Participation Is the Key to Success**

As we move forward, your continued support and engagement remain pivotal. Advocacy is an ongoing process, and your involvement makes a significant difference. With your help, I believe we can make real progress on the FOP's legislative agenda in the House and Senate. However, our success comes down to **you!**

We will need your help at the grassroots level to ensure our message gets through. Your participation in Day on the Hill and the Red and Blue Rally are only a small part of our advocacy program. If we are to succeed, we need all our members to build, strengthen and sustain their relationships with their senators and representatives. Members of Congress need to know that FOP members are active voters in their states and districts, and will be watching them carefully this election year. Make it clear to them that you and your members will hold them accountable.

Our future success and our legislative agenda depend on our ability to motivate and mobilize our grassroots to make sure our message gets through — which will get increasingly more difficult as we get closer and closer to the election. Participation in this event is just a part — but an important part — of the FOP's advocacy strategy. We need our members to build, strengthen and sustain their relationships with their senators and representatives. Members of Congress need to know that FOP and IAFF members are active voters who will hold them accountable and expect their support on the issues important to our respective rank and file.

### **Hotel Information and Registration**

The National FOP will be organizing a block of rooms at a special rate for these dates. Be sure to register today by clicking the link below and check back for information. Visit [tinyurl.com/44zzrhshu](https://tinyurl.com/44zzrhshu) for more information.

The challenges we face require a collective effort. By standing together, we can navigate the complexities of legislative advocacy, drive positive change and ensure the well-being of our law enforcement community. Please make plans to join us for Day on the Hill ... in unity and strength. **FOP**



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## Rest in Peace, Brother Jeff Wiggs

// **WRITE TO US!** If you have further questions, contact Jimmy Holderfield at (904) 813-0067, or [jholderfield@fop.net](mailto:jholderfield@fop.net).

**G**reetings, my brothers and sisters. I hope this February edition of the *Journal* finds you safe and healthy. I am deeply saddened by the loss of our dear friend and brother, Georgia State Lodge President Jeff Wiggs. Brother Jeff was the face of the FOP in the South. He was friendly and kind. He also put the needs of his sisters and brothers before his own. One of his favorite projects was promoting "My Brother's House," which is a home used to accommodate FOP members and their families who need a place to stay in the Atlanta area, whether it be for medical issues, disasters or other emergencies. Brother Jeff will be missed but never forgotten.

In this edition, you will see information on the upcoming event in Washington, D.C., concerning the repeal of the Social Security Windfall Elimination Act. President Yoes has arraigned this event in conjunction with the International Association of Fire Fighters. We need a strong showing at this event, and I encourage everyone to attend. Let's make our voices heard.

The new Association Management System is still being designed. This new system will help the local, state and national lodges better manage membership and will be more user-friendly. We anticipate the rollout to be this spring. Please be patient as the engineers do their work. It will be a fantastic new system.

As distasteful as it is, it's sometimes necessary to take disciplinary actions against members. Our discipline/grievance system is designed to be handled at the local/state lodge levels, and only in extreme situations does the National Lodge impose discipline on a member. Every member should know their Constitution, By-Laws and Ritual, and should follow them to be good members of the Order. Lodge officers must know their Constitution and By-Law requirements for administering discipline. The key element in administering discipline is providing the accused with due process.

Lodges must have in their disciplinary provisions a process in which a grievance is brought forward. An example is that a

grievance or complaint must be in writing and signed by a member in good standing naming the accused and detailing the violations of the Constitution, By-Laws or Ritual. This should be delivered to the lodge secretary, who will acknowledge it and send it to the president. The president must forward it to an investigating committee for a determination of the validity of the grievance or complaint. The committee must allow the accused to present a defense, including documents and witnesses. The recommendations of the committee must be reported to the membership for action. The accused member shall have the right to appeal any adverse actions brought against them to the State Lodge and, ultimately, the National Lodge. The role of the National Board of Trustees in hearing an appeal is to determine if due process was afforded to the aggrieved member.

A lodge secretary, president or other lodge officer should never summarily dismiss a grievance presented to them. Rather, they must send it to a committee for consideration. If the grievance or complaint is against a lodge officer, that officer should not be involved in the process of assigning or hearing the complaint. Additionally, timelines must be kept, and the accused should be given consideration of the hearing date and time based on the accused work schedule or other commitments. Being fair and open is the key. Also, the question of allowing the accused to have an advocate or attorney comes up from time to time. I don't see an issue with allowing for such, but there are no requirements that mandate it.

In closing, by now, you should have received your 2024 National FOP membership card. If you have not, please contact your local lodge secretary. My staff stands ready to assist you and your local lodge in any way we can.

Please be safe and take care of yourself, and I will see you at our next meeting. **FOP**

## SHARE YOUR STORY!

So many of us learn from the experiences of others, especially others with whom we share things in common. Do you have a story to tell of overcoming adversity in your own life? The National Officer Wellness Committee would like to hear it!

Whether you would just like to share your story privately with peers on the Committee or are willing to share with readers so that all can learn from it and celebrate with you, we want to hear from you! Contact us confidentially at [officerwellness@fop.net](mailto:officerwellness@fop.net).





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 <p>85360</p> <p><b>\$839.99</b></p> <p><b>930 SPX SHOTGUN</b></p> <p>CALIBER: 12GA CAPACITY: 7+1 SIGHTS: GHOST RING BARREL LENGTH: 18.5" STOCK: SYNTHETIC</p>	 <p>13716</p> <p><b>\$374.99</b></p> <p><b>LCP MAX</b></p> <p>CALIBER: 380 AUTO CAPACITY: 10+1 SIGHTS: NIGHT SIGHTS BARREL LENGTH: 2.8"</p>	 <p>13614</p> <p><b>\$629.99</b></p> <p><b>M&amp;P 9 M2.0</b></p> <p>CALIBER: 9MM CAPACITY: 17+1 SIGHTS: NIGHT SIGHTS BARREL LENGTH: 4.25"</p>	 <p>HC9319F0SP-FL</p> <p><b>\$520.00</b></p> <p><b>HELLCAT OSP FDE</b></p> <p>CALIBER: 9MM CAPACITY: 11+1/13+1 SIGHTS: NIGHT SIGHTS BARREL LENGTH: 3"</p>

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# Navigating Trajectory for Long-Term Success



// **WRITE TO US!** If you have further questions, contact John Hoyt at (267) 251-5575, or [jhoyt@fop5.org](mailto:jhoyt@fop5.org).

**A**s an organization, understanding the importance of trajectory versus position is integral to strategic planning, adaptability and long-term success. I spoke about this recently at the Labor Coalition Conference in Deerfield Beach, Florida. First, I want to say thank



you to New York State FOP President Mike Essig and his entire team at the Labor Coalition for organizing such a great event. It was great to see so many friends and, even more importantly, to see so many new faces. I encourage you to attend next year and to try and get new people in leadership positions within your local FOP to attend as well. Everyone who attends gains a wealth of knowledge from it.

What do I mean when I say “trajectory versus position”? Position is very important. Our position as an organization is very clear. We are the No. 1 law enforcement organization in the world. I don’t know how an argument can be made otherwise, not just in our membership numbers, but in what we do. No one has a greater presence in Washington, on television and traditional media outlets, and on social media.

Being No. 1 is great, and we got here together with a lot of hard work from everyone, both past and present. But being No. 1 isn’t the most important thing. If our “trajectory” is trending down to No. 2, then we are failing as an organization. That is why our “trajectory” is so important.

Understanding trajectory involves predicting the future path based on current trends, political dynamics and internal capabilities. This foresight is crucial for developing long-term strategies. Being aware

of our current position helps in immediate decision-making, but relying solely on it may lead to a reactive rather than proactive approach and strategies.

Anticipating our trajectory allows us to proactively adapt to upcoming changes, emerging trends and potential challenges. It fosters a culture of innovation and resilience. Focusing solely on our current position as an organization may limit our growth opportunities and our power as an organization. Understanding our trajectory encourages the FOP to explore new opportunities to serve our membership, innovate ideas and services, and position ourselves strategically for the future. It’s about envisioning where the FOP could be.

Also, as important — if not more — assessing current risks to our organization and our members is crucial, but it may not cover unforeseen challenges. Analyzing trajectory helps identify potential risks on the horizon, allowing the FOP to implement risk mitigation strategies and ensure long-term sustainability for us and our members.

Understanding the trajectory involves predicting future membership needs, enabling the FOP to stay ahead in meeting evolving expectations.



In essence, while position provides a snapshot of the present, trajectory empowers the FOP to navigate the future strategically. Balancing both aspects ensures a dynamic and forward-thinking approach, fostering resilience and sustained growth.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Nashville this month. Our Officer Wellness Summit and Leadership Matters Conference are vitally important events. If you have or have not attended, I encourage you to attend this year. There will be new, worthwhile material in both. I encourage you to get as many members as possible to attend, learn and enjoy the camaraderie of our brotherhood and sisterhood. Afterward, take back the important information you’ve learned to your fellow members and share. Let’s all be stronger together. **FOP**





# BENEFITS OF FOP MEMBERSHIP

The National Fraternal Order of Police is the world's largest organization of sworn law enforcement officers, with over 373,000 members in more than 2,200 lodges. We are committed to improving the working conditions of officers and the safety of those we serve through education, legislation, information, community involvement and employee representation. Here's a quick overview of the wide variety of services and benefits that the FOP offers to its members.

## Legislative Office

The office on Capitol Hill lobbies on issues important to rank-and-file law enforcement officers. The National Legislative Program is the most active and comprehensive of any law enforcement organization in Washington.

## Legal Defense Plan

This self-funded plan is available to eligible FOP groups and individual members to cover law enforcement exposures, including administrative, civil and criminal legal coverage; H.R. 218 coverage; and the Moonlighting Liability Insurance Program.

## Labor Services Division

Comprehensive resources and services designed to ensure that no officer goes to the bargaining table alone. Labor Services stands ready to provide the people and resources you need for contract information, experienced legal experts, training seminars, personalized labor research and more.

## National Peace Officers' Memorial Service

This solemn event is held every year during National Police Week to honor those who have given their lives in the line of duty. Open to the public, it brings together the expanded law enforcement family and national leaders, pays tribute to the fallen and offers words of comfort to their surviving family members.

## FOP Journal

Published digitally 12 times a year, the *FOP Journal* is the official publication of the National FOP. Each issue contains reports from the Executive Board, updates on law enforcement legal and labor issues and so much more!

## Disaster Relief

As part of the NFOP Foundation, the Fraternal Order of Police Disaster Relief Fund (a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization) relies on the generosity of individuals, organizations and corporations and is always prepared to assist our members in distress.

## Charity Partnerships

- **Easter Seals:** Helping children and adults with disabilities live better lives is at the heart of Easter Seals' mission, and the FOP, as a long-standing Easter Seals National Corporate Partner, has helped raise more than \$15 million. Donate online at [www.easterseals.com](http://www.easterseals.com) and be sure to indicate your FOP affiliation when donating!
- **Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics:** The FOP is committed to helping people with intellectual disabilities learn to become self-reliant and contributing members of our communities.

## Service Providers

The National FOP list of Service Providers currently includes Liberty Mutual insurance, Avis and Enterprise car rentals and a variety of licensed products from HALO, the official FOP merchandiser.

## Education Services

The Education Services Committee develops and implements professional law enforcement training programs and events to equip members with the skills needed to enhance their careers, and has established a training schedule covering a wide spectrum of leadership, labor and legal issues. The National FOP also provides scholarships to eligible applicants.

## National Fraternal Order of Police University (NFOPU)

Recognizing that four-year and graduate degrees are increasingly important for law enforcement career advancement, the FOP collaborates with a select consortium of universities willing to offer members the education they need with a flexible schedule and reasonable cost. **FOP**



For more information on all of these programs, visit [www.fop.net](http://www.fop.net).



## NFOP LABOR COALITION

# Major Success at NFOP Labor Coalition's Annual Training

JIMMY HOLDERFIELD / NATIONAL SECRETARY

**T**he National Labor Coalition once again held its annual labor training in Deerfield Beach, Florida. The program was well attended by over 100 members. The annual business meeting ran smoothly, with Coalition Chair Mike Essig, Vice Chair Bob Gries and Treasurer George Kline being reelected. Coalition Secretary Rick Inglima chose not to seek reelection, and Louisiana State Lodge Secretary Ron Labarriere was elected unanimously. The position of sergeant-at-arms was created, and Pennsylvania brother Chris Eiserman was appointed to that position.

The educational component started off with the attendees being divided into two groups, one representing management and the other representing the union. Each group was coached by experts in labor relations. The groups





formulated bargaining strategies and, ultimately, met for a mock negotiation session. This program was especially beneficial to those who are new to collective bargaining or have never experienced the process.

We also received instructions on grievance filings and arbitrations from the executive director of the New Jersey Labor Council and his general counsel. Chair of the Trustees, Rob Pride, gave an update on the National FOP Insurance Trust. We also had a special presenter who gave us an in-depth account of going undercover and infiltrating the New York mafia in the 1970s. **FOP**



## FOP Celebrates Black History Month

As we enter the month of February, the Fraternal Order of Police takes great pride in recognizing and celebrating Black History Month. This annual observance serves as an important reminder of the invaluable contributions made by Black officers throughout history, including within the FOP. One example came on August 17, 2023, when the FOP proudly welcomed the first Black woman National trustee, Sherrice Carpenter of Prince George's County Lodge #89 in Maryland.

Black History Month serves as a time to not only reflect on the achievements of the past but also to look forward to a future of continued progress and positive change. The Fraternal Order of Police is committed to supporting initiatives that promote diversity, equity and inclusion within the Order, recognizing that a more representative union leads to safer and stronger communities. **FOP**

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

# Clyde Boatwright

JIMMY HOLDERFIELD / NATIONAL SECRETARY  
CLYDE BOATWRIGHT / MARYLAND STATE LODGE PRESIDENT

One of the Fraternal Order of Police's most dynamic leaders hails from the great state of Maryland. Not only does he serve as president of the 20,657-member State Lodge, but he also serves on the National Labor Committee, the National Rapid Response D.C. Area Legislative subcommittee, and the newly created National Healthcare Trust Committee.

This brother keeps extremely busy helping his sisters and brothers in legislative, labor and benefit issues at the local, state and national levels. He is the symbol of fraternalism, always offering a hearty handshake and a beaming smile. The National Fraternal Order of Police is proud to introduce you to Maryland State Lodge President Clyde Boatwright. Here is his story.

My name is Clyde Boatwright, and I am entering my 24th year of service as a police officer across two different law enforcement agencies in the state of Maryland. At my current agency, I serve as a police sergeant with the Baltimore City School Police Force, where I have been for the last 21 years. In 2020, I was given the honor of my professional life by members of the Maryland State Lodge (MSL) by being elected to the Office of the State FOP President. Prior to, and concurrent with my role of leading the MSL, I also served as president of Maryland FOP Lodge #5, representing the Baltimore City School Police Force. During my tenure with Maryland FOP Lodge #5, I also served as vice president and trustee.

After being elected president of the MSL, I knew it was important to hit the ground running. I wanted to build on the successes of my predecessors and chart a new path for the MSL. I did not have to reinvent the wheel, as I had the great benefit of learning from leaders like Ralph Ryland, Bill Bates, Daryl Jones, Rodney Bartlett, Vince Canales and Earl Kratch, to name a few. Much like FOP lodges from across the country during the winter months, we faced an upcoming legislative session where police reform was the primary objective. I wanted to ensure the MSL took the fight to our state capital of Annapolis.

During the 2021 Maryland legislative session, the MSL tracked over 100 bills aimed at "reforming" a law enforcement disciplinary system in Maryland that was not broken. We quickly learned that while "police reform" was a catchy phrase that took hold of the country, our legislators were out for "police revenge."

During that session, several of the bills introduced would have stripped officers of any semblance of employment rights, but the MSL was up for the challenge. Despite meeting with dozens of legislators, presenting them with indisputable facts about our disciplinary process, and testifying in opposition to bills that were only designed to punish police, many of our legislators were hell-bent on repealing Maryland's 40-year-old Law Enforcement Officers Bill of Rights (LEOBOR). Quite







literally, many legislators were out for blood, and Maryland's cops were categorized as "thugs," "criminals" and "murderers" during testimony before Maryland's legislative chambers. Relying again on top-notch legal advisors, lobbyists, members and our grassroots campaign, we mobilized our families, friends and communities to lead a charge toward protecting our rights. While the LEOBOR was ultimately repealed, it was replaced with the Maryland Police Accountability Act of 2021 — legislation which, while far from perfect, continues to provide officers due process in the state of Maryland.

Looking forward, perhaps our most important objective, aside from ensuring the safety and well-being of our over 20,000-plus members, is ensuring that our officers will always have a seat at the table. I've always subscribed to the motto: "If you aren't at the table, you're on the menu." With that in mind, ensuring that the FOP remains the standard bearer for public safety unions across the country is a top priority for me and the MSL. **FOP**





## ILLINOIS

## O'Fallon FOP Lodge #198 Comes Through for Special Olympics

**LARRY CROSMAN** / TORCH RUN  
COMMITTEE CHAIR

For many years, the brothers and sisters of O'Fallon FOP #198 in O'Fallon, Illinois, have been strong supporters of the Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) movement and the athletes of the Special Olympics. Over the years, they have sponsored and organized countless Polar Plunges, Tip-a-Cops and other great events for Special Olympics. Over the years, the local Special Olympic athletes who also take part in their events have become like family to the members of Lodge #198. "These events not only build awareness and educate the public, but they build a bond between the athletes and our officers that can't be explained," says Sergeant Brian Gimpel of the O'Fallon Police Department.

Two such athletes were Tony Hill and Jim Morgan. They both have volunteered at countless LETR events put on by the O'Fallon FOP Lodge. Members of the lodge found out that Tony and Jim's Special Olympics coach had retired, and they couldn't find a new coach to help them. In the metro east area, there was another parent- and teacher-run organization that was larger than the program Tony and Jim were in before. FOP members reached out to the Parent Teacher Organization for Exceptional Children (PTOEC) to see if Tony and Jim would be a good fit. PTOEC was very positive about having Tony and Jim join their team, but there were some major stumbling blocks that would be challenging. Tony is confined to a wheelchair 100% of the time, and Jim uses walking sticks and a wheelchair. PTOEC's handicap-accessible van wasn't in the best condition and was also older. That's all the members of the O'Fallon FOP Lodge had to hear!

The O'Fallon FOP Lodge had been doing a great deal of fundraising over the past years, and they began saving money and investing it for larger projects. During 2022, the O'Fallon FOP Executive Board discussed finding an organization that they could make a significant impact with a considerable donation. Members of the lodge were asked to think about



local worthwhile causes that they could help. This is how the idea of donating a handicap-accessible bus was born!

Luckily, members of the O'Fallon FOP Lodge have built strong relationships with local businesses over the years. They didn't really know what type of vehicle would be best for the situation. They finally decided on a short bus with a handicap lift. Jimmy Ford of Southbeach Motors stepped up to help them find a few buses to choose from at the auction. They compared mileage and condition, and they finally found one that fit their needs. The only problem was that it was in Iowa. That didn't stop Ford from flying up to Iowa and driving it back to O'Fallon. The O'Fallon FOP Lodge reached out to some of their other partners, Moreland Auto Body, United Ink and Mission Accomplished Tire and Auto, as well as Southern Bus and Mobility out of Breese, Illinois. All were glad to get involved when they found out what it was for. After the bus had body work done, new tires, new graphics and all the needed inspections and certifications, the bus was ready to be revealed!

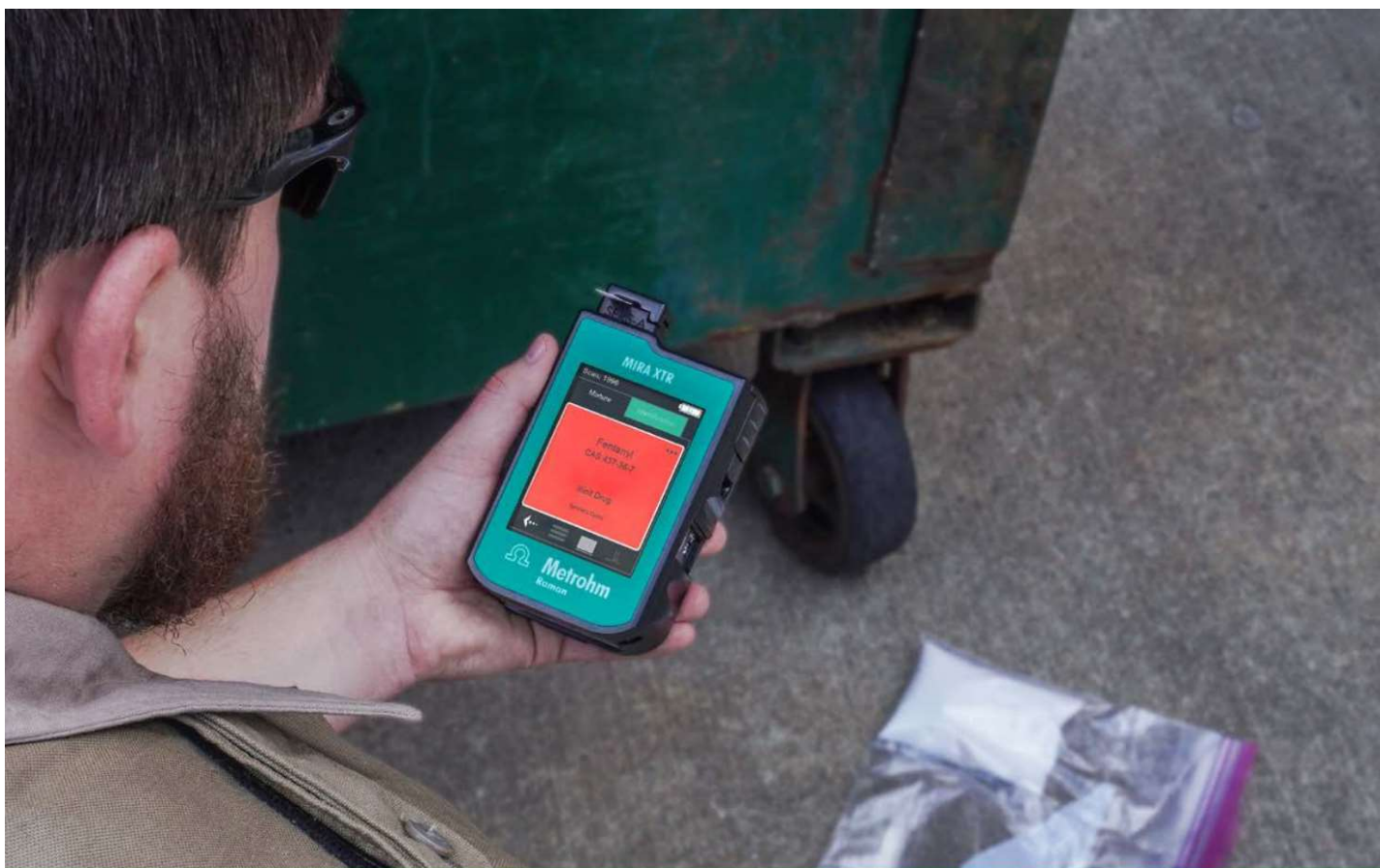
After speaking to the PTOEC board of directors and letting them know what the O'Fallon FOP Lodge and partners

had done, it was decided that they would surprise the athletes and families at the monthly family night event, this time held at the O'Fallon Police Department.

The O'Fallon FOP Lodge members organized and had the event catered. The athletes were excited that they were going to be able to get a tour of the police department! The police department tour ended just outside the sally port. The sally port door was raised to reveal the new PTOEC 14 passenger handicap accessible bus. Sergeant Brian Gimpel said, "The athletes' and officers' looks of joy, happiness, excitement and tears made this a success that we could never have imagined. I would encourage all FOP lodges to get involved and make a difference in their community. Maybe you can't afford this type of project, but sometimes, just spending time with the community is worth more than any money we can donate."

O'Fallon FOP Lodge #198 is a great example of how the members of FOP are supporting Special Olympics and LETR by spreading the word about inclusion for individuals with intellectual disabilities. We hope to spotlight the involvement of other FOP members and lodges in future editions of the *FOP Journal*. **FOP**





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## ILLINOIS

## The Next Generation in Corrections: Are We Doing Enough?

JENNIFER WARD / IL FOP  
CORRECTIONS LODGE #263

The next generation of the corrections workforce is right in front of us — current and retired correctional officers could be the best recruitment tool that there is. But is enough being done to support them so that their voices alone could almost single-handedly fill vacancies, or is the harsh environment such that their voices alone discourage the future generation?

By the time we retire, often, our kids are ready to step up and enter the profession, but will they? Historically, corrections/law enforcement runs in a lot of families. Have our lives, attitudes, and stories encouraged or discouraged them to follow in our footsteps? Will they try something else before later realizing the benefits of the career — a career in which their parents were able to afford them financial care and benefits that just can't be beaten, even in today's negative climate?

Some of the answers to those questions are dependent on their view of how that career had an impact on their lives, namely, how that career impacted their parents' lives and how that bled over to them as the child and family life of a LEO.

A close family that communicates the good and bad, has discussions at a dinner table and inquiries about each other's day, offering support and also sharing in activities, a family that has hobbies outside of work, will have a much different perspective and outcome than the officer who comes home and doesn't communicate, or who doesn't come home at all. Then there is the officer who works so much overtime that they feel the family should just be appreciative of the money and see that as a replacement for time. Regardless of where one may fit into those or other scenarios, they have an impact on choosing the career or not. This communication impacts what type of officer and person they may become if they do choose the profession.

Sometimes, we fail to realize that we are a voice for the profession, and the

words we choose and actions we take may make a bigger impact than we think. When we make a statement like "I hate my job; I can't wait to get out of there," is that actually how we feel or what we mean? Or is it better described as a dislike for a current policy, societal social justice pressures or administration? We actually do like the job and all the benefits it has afforded us — it is a calling, a way to serve. Often, we do not take the time to elaborate or explain. We assume someone understands the complexities of the system in which we work.

Recently, hearing someone getting encouraged to take advantage of an opportunity in corrections and hearing the response, "Why would you want me to do it if you hated it?" You see, despite the communication, the funny and crazy stories that people enjoy and just can't believe about your day aren't what stands out — it's the negative that was seen, heard or misunderstood. There is so much to be said for the impact our words and actions have.

Are we doing enough to support our current correctional officers that would, in turn, recruit and retain the next generation? Starting with candid conversations with current officers and those involved in the field, a resounding **no** would be a common theme.

So, where do we go from here? Those same individuals, if given the opportunity, would be able to guide anyone willing to listen and, better yet, anyone who has the ability to make changes to the answers. **Answers**, as a plural word, is emphasized. There is not one simple answer to a complex system. However, laws, policies, and administration that support officers, specific law enforcement organizations' representation that can speak on their behalf, and having the resources to get things done do.

It seems that it would make sense to invest in the future generation of correctional officers by starting from the beginning, at the academy. This could have the biggest impact at the right time for the officer and their family or future family. Realizing that the stress of the job

may start to manifest while at the academy, not even officially on the job.

- The pressures of being away from home are real — single parents who have left their kids in someone's care all week, not getting a paycheck for a period of time (regardless of the job they left, they had one), and the need to get through the academy. Some also struggle due to the anxiety of test taking and/or learning better one way than another since the academy is set up as one-size-fits-all.
- When an officer is starting at the academy level, it's important to invest in them and imprint that this is a career, giving them the tools to navigate what will undoubtedly be a stressful and challenging experience, but also rewarding as well.
- Academy programming that includes sessions, education and therapeutic services **for the officer as well as the family**. Assistance in identifying and building a system of support. The ability to identify things individually and the ability to communicate with and listen to others we care about around us may make or break us. In turn, the lack of communication and investment in correctional officers we have now or upcoming may make or break the retention of officers in general.

All the hype in the recent few years has been regarding wellness teams and wellness programs available. It is about time and much needed. However, we must shift our focus, or better, find a balance in incorporating prevention and support from the beginning. Lower levels of care and support as an option rather than being on the defensive is needed.

Again, the question is posed: Are we doing enough to support our current correctional officers, who would, in turn, recruit and retain the next generation? Are those who have expertise, experience, research and information worth sharing being utilized to support the profession and its officers? **FOP**



## NEW JERSEY

### Congratulations, Officer Vitale

New Jersey's FOP Lodge #168 is proud to announce that Police Officer Lily Vitale was recently selected from among 170,000 civilian employees as the Air Force Civilian Employee of the Year for 2023.

Lily recently won a separate award for her work in a motor vehicle accident that kept an injured motorist from having a leg amputated. Officer Vitale is also an FOP Lodge #168 board member.

Lily formerly served in the active-duty Air Force Security Forces, then transitioned over to the Department of Air Force Civilian Police on Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst. **FOP**



## There Is ALWAYS Another Option

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# Turning Winter "Blahs" Into "Ahas!"



SHERRI MARTIN / DIRECTOR OF WELLNESS

If you're like me, the cold weather and fewer hours of daylight team up to affect your mood during the winter months. While many of our friends may enjoy colder temperatures and winter sports, research has long shown that weather changes can negatively affect mental health for many people. With limited sunlight, our circadian rhythms are affected, and metabolic changes that result can significantly affect our well-being.

As far as the brain science underlying this, during the winter months, the neurotransmitter serotonin, which is often called your body's natural "feel good" chemical, is at decreased levels. At the same time, the neurotransmitter melatonin, which is associated with sleepiness and depression, is at **increased** levels. Other things may affect our mood during this time, too. With less hours of daylight, people may spend more time indoors and isolated from others. While this may not be true for those of us who must work outdoors 24/7/365 as a

function of our jobs, we may spend more of our off time more isolated than normal.

It's essential to practice self-care at all times, but it may be even more critical in the darker months in order to ensure that we emerge healthy — physically, mentally and spiritually. So, what is self-care, and does it just mean indulging and pampering yourself? At its roots, the aim of self-care is to reduce anxiety and stress and to increase self-esteem and elevate mood. When we think about self-care, we should think about activities that always produce a positive outcome. Instead of letting the slow and "blah" times of the season get you down, self-care means shifting into a positive mindset about how we can continue to grow and really investing some attention toward ourselves. Self-care should provide you with insights for self-improvement, greater productivity and improved relationships, among other positives.

I recently saw an article that gave some tips for self-care, with one small task listed on each day of a calendar. That's a great key to



remember; increasing our self-care practices doesn't have to mean anything time-consuming — lots of little things can add up to great steps forward. Here are some of our favorite ideas:

1. **Call your people.** There may be no more opportune time than during the quiet days of winter to spend time with a friend. This is a great time to take in a movie together or sit and have a coffee while catching up. Bonus if it's a friend you haven't connected with in a while.
2. **Try a new exercise.** Everyone can do this. Whether you are 18 or 108, a workout buff or a couch potato, physical movement has been shown by science to improve mood. For those who are new to exercise, start simple. YouTube has plenty of ideas that you can do right in your living room. Seasoned exercise pros: step outside your comfort zone and try an exercise you've never done. Dance class, anyone?
3. **Cook a new meal.** Search the internet for some new recipes and find one you have never made before. (I think I'll do this for tonight's dinner!) Extra bonus if you

can cook a meal with the foods you already have in your house. If not, though, think of the extra health benefit (calories burned!) you get from getting off the couch to head to the grocery.

4. **Cross something off your bucket list.** Get to that museum you have always meant to visit. Watch the movie your kids have been telling you is a "must see." Take that road on the other side of town that you've always wondered where it leads, but you never made time to find out.
5. **Recreate your space at home.** The silver lining I find in every "trapped inside" season is that I have a chance to get organized. I get my desk cleaned off, purge the clothes I no longer wear and get a literal head start on spring cleaning. It can be a great time to redecorate a room you've been wanting to change or simply fill your space with the things you love the most, making your home as comfortable as possible.
6. **Set goals.** This is a great time for looking ahead at how we want to

grow in the coming year. Thinking about our financial, work and health goals may be easy. Take up the challenge of identifying spiritual, physical fitness and social goals. Then write them down!

Things are more likely to get done when they are written out for us to refer back to. Think about breaking each goal down further into micro-goals; that way, the steps to achieve them are clearer and more manageable. Every success will propel you to the next!

7. **Start a journal.** I know you may think you don't have time or may even think it sounds hokey, but we have heard from many of our members that journaling has really helped them. Not only does it provide a means to organize your thoughts, but it can be an outlet for things that you aren't comfortable sharing with another person. How many times have you thought to yourself that you could write a book about the things you have seen in your career? No better time than the present to get a start! **FOP**



## BLUE VIEW

### TUNE IN TO THE FOP PODCAST

Listen in every week to hear from law enforcement experts, elected officials and other notable leaders to gain insight into the issues and current events surrounding the law enforcement community.

Available now on **FOP.net**, FOP's YouTube channel, Apple, Google, Spotify and Amazon Music.

## LOVE YOUR HEART: THE HARDEST-WORKING MUSCLE IN YOUR BODY

**H**eat disease has been the leading cause of death for people in America for decades. We can't control some of our risk factors for heart disease, like age and family history. But there are things we can do to help keep our hearts healthy and strong.

You don't have to make all of these changes at once. You can make a small change, then another and another. Over time, these small steps can lead to a big difference in your heart health.

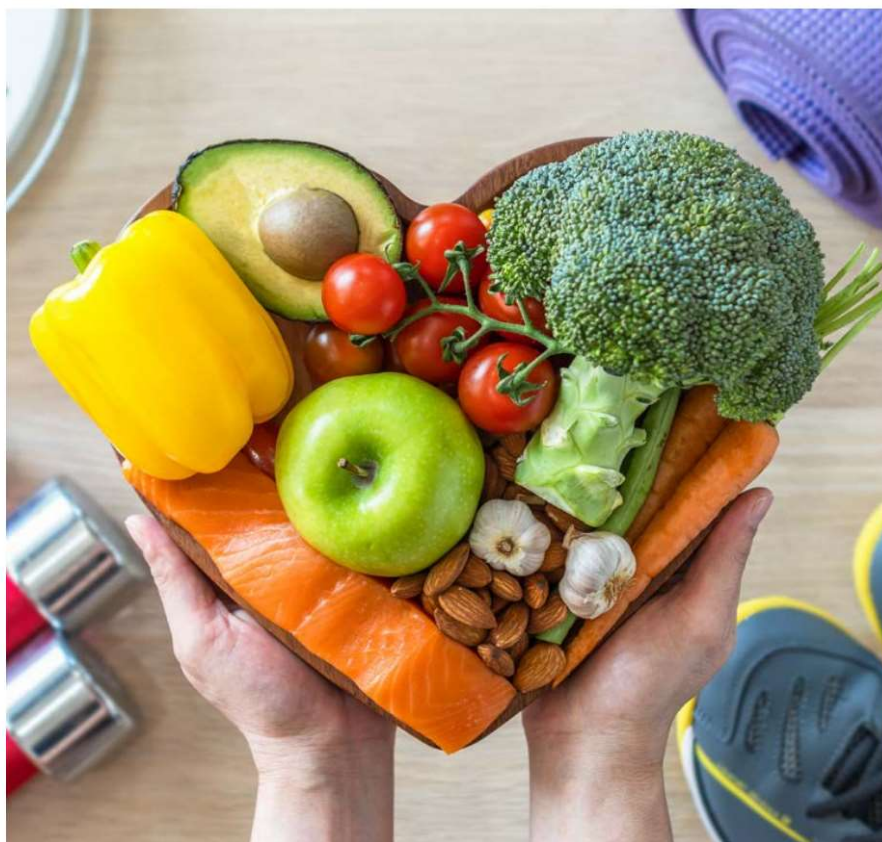
- **Exercise regularly.** Try to be more physically active. Start by doing activities you enjoy — walking, dancing, bowling, bicycling or gardening, for example.
- **Quit smoking.** It's never too late to get some benefit from quitting smoking. Quitting, even in later life, can lower your risk of heart disease, stroke and cancer over time.
- **Eat a heart-healthy diet.** Choose foods that are low in trans and saturated fats (animal fat), added sugars and salt. Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables.
- **Maintain a healthy weight.** Some ways you can maintain a healthy weight include limiting portion size and being physically active.
- **Take care of yourself.** Keep your blood pressure and cholesterol under control. Follow your doctor's advice to manage these conditions and take medications as directed.

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**Editor's Note:** The FOP is dedicated to helping all of its members and their families thrive and improve their standard of living. That's why the FOP has teamed up with Aetna to offer four Aetna Medicare Advantage PPO plan options that provide members with comprehensive medical, prescription, hearing and vision benefits. As part of this partnership, Aetna will be sharing helpful information about its plans, wellness-related news and more in each issue of the FOP Journal.







## **Hiring for Basic Police Officer Trainee, Lateral Officer & Lateral School Resource Officer**

- Must be at least 21 years old
- No maximum age restriction

### **Benefits**

- Education incentive pay: 3% increase for Associate's Degree; 6% increase for Bachelor's Degree
- 20 vacation days, 3 personal days, 12 holidays per year
- Earn 1 sick day per month (accumulate up to 120 days)
- 20 paid Military leave days
- Up to 30 days paid family sick leave
- \$800 state-supplemented in-service pay per year
- Endless overtime opportunities
- Longevity pay
- 100% Metro-funded pension
- 457 MetroMax Deferred Compensation plan
- Vested for service pension after 10 years
- Vested for medical pension after 10 years
- Use of Montgomery GI bills and Post 9/11 GI bills in first year of training
- Domestic partner benefits
- \$1000 uniform allowance per year

### **Insurance**

- BlueCross BlueShield or Cigna health insurance (75% premium paid by Metro)
- Life Insurance
- Dental Insurance
- Vision Insurance

### **Basic Police Officer Trainee**

- Police Academy pay (18 weeks) \$54,900 salary
- Pay during Field Training Phase \$60,501- \$64,131
- Pay upon completion of training \$66,185- \$70,156

### **Qualifications**

- Must have high school diploma or GED and 60 credit hours with a 2.0 GPA from an accredited education institution; or
- Must have a high school diploma or GED and 3 years of responsible, full-time work; or
- Must have a high school diploma or GED, 2 years of active service with an Honorable Discharge from any branch of the United States Armed Forces

### **Lateral Officer & Lateral SRO Officer**

- Starting Lateral pay \$70,215- \$74,428 (Must have 2 years of POST (or state equivalent) certified law enforcement experience)

# **JOINMNPD.COM**



# Ashland University

### People

**A**nne Strouth is the program director for AU's online criminal justice and homeland security degrees. She has a wealth of experience in law enforcement and emergency management, so she understands what your life is like. Anne is a 30-year police officer, Ohio Peace Officer Training Academy commander and instructor, and the EMA director for Ashland County. She's also a member of the Ohio Police Juvenile Officers' Association and the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. She's made sure that AU's degree programs will fit into your life and enhance your skills.

### Programs

AU offers associate and bachelor's degrees in criminal justice and homeland security. Completing these degrees is:

#### Fast

- AU offers generous transfer credit.
- You can receive up to 30 credit hours for work experience.
- You can finish in less than two years with prior credit.
- Classes are only eight weeks long.

#### Flexible

- Every course in these degree programs is 100% online.
- You can access courses anytime, so you can complete them when it's convenient for you.
- With two terms each semester, you can start your degree every eight weeks or adjust your course load when you need to.

#### Affordable

- With our 15% first responder discount, AU is less expensive than other nearby programs.
- Veterans who served in the armed forces for at least 36 months after September 10, 2001, have the Federal Yellow Ribbon program available. AU matches funding provided by the Veterans Administration up to a total of \$11,000.

### Career Opportunities

If you're already in law enforcement, a degree in criminal justice can prepare you for promotion within your current agency or for advancement to a specialty position.

And if you're new to criminal justice, the Bureau of Labor Statistics expects jobs to grow 7% through 2030.

### Not Ready for a Degree?

If you're not ready to commit to a degree program, Ashland University also offers a five-course Criminal Justice Administration certificate you can complete in one year. The certificate program focuses on leadership and decision-making as it relates to criminal justice agencies, as well as program and policy development skills for criminal justice administrators.

### Special Training Event

Join us on February 19 for "High" in Ohio; Preparing for Unintended Consequences of Legal Adult Use of Marijuana. This will be a free online event where Jared Rosenberger, Herb Homan and Anne Strouth will share their insights about legalized marijuana based on their professional experience.

Jared Rosenberger, Ph.D. is an Ashland University faculty member who teaches courses in sociology and criminology. He also studies the relationship between media consumption, public opinion of crime and criminal behavior.

Herb Homan is a visiting professor at Ashland University. He has previous experience as a civil service commissioner, court-appointed special advocate and as a captain with the Ohio State Highway Patrol. Herb is currently finishing his doctorate degree in organizational development and change.

Learn more and register at [tinyurl.com/rw7akpvj](https://tinyurl.com/rw7akpvj). **FOP**



Herb Homan



Jared Rosenberger, Ph.D.



Anne Strouth



The National Fraternal Order of Police University (NFOPU) has successfully paved the way for hundreds of FOP members to pursue higher or continued education. For more information on the NFOPU Consortium, go to [fopconnect.com/education-connect/about-the-consortium](http://fopconnect.com/education-connect/about-the-consortium).



Charles Town, WV



Montreat, NC



Cincinnati, OH



Fayette, IA



Ashland, OH



La Jolla, CA



Arlington, VA



Minneapolis, MN



Orange Beach, AL



Olivet, MI



Adelphi, MD



Washington, DC



Rosemont, PA



San Diego, CA



Romeoville, IL



Tiffin, OH



Williamsburg, KY

# FOP and IAFF to Join Together for D.C. Grassroots Event



## Joint “Day on the Hill” Set for March 4–6 in Washington, D.C.

For the first time, the nation’s oldest and largest organization of law enforcement officers — the National Fraternal Order of Police — will be joining forces with the nation’s oldest and largest union of professional firefighters — the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF).

Rank-and-file law enforcement officers and firefighters will come together in our nation’s capital to highlight the important issues facing our public safety organizations. We will be talking about the challenges and the needs of our memberships, including recognizing the right of public safety officers to collectively bargain, protecting due process for officers and firefighters, and repealing the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO).

This FOP-IAFF **Day on the Hill** event is a unique opportunity for our members and theirs to have face-to-face interactions with the members of Congress who represent **you** in the nation’s capital. We need to make sure that **your** senators and representatives understand **our** priorities — the Social Security Fairness Act, the Public Safety Employer–Employee Cooperation Act, and the HELPERS Act. We will also focus on the issues important to FOP members, like the Protect and Serve Act and support for local and state law enforcement fighting the national epidemic of violent crime.

On March 4, FOP members will gather at D.C. Lodge #1 ([dc-fop.org](http://dc-fop.org)) at 3 p.m. for a legislative briefing covering the FOP’s top priorities and other pending issues.

On March 5, the FOP-IAFF will hold a joint rally on the Capitol grounds

## Just the Facts:

» For the first time, the National Fraternal Order of Police will be joining forces with the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) at Day on the Hill on March 4–6 in Washington, D.C. We will be talking about the challenges and the needs of our memberships, including recognizing the right of public safety officers to collectively bargain, protecting due process for officers and firefighters, and repealing the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP) and Government Pension Offset (GPO). This FOP-IAFF **Day on the Hill** event is a unique opportunity for our members and theirs to have face-to-face interactions with the members of Congress who represent **you** in the nation’s capital.

to call for immediate congressional action on H.R. 82/S. 597, the Social Security Fairness Act, which would repeal the WEP and GPO.

Our future success and our legislative agenda depend on our ability to motivate and mobilize our grassroots to make sure our message gets through — which will get increasingly more difficult as we get closer and closer to the election. Participation in this event is just a part — but an important part — of the FOP’s advocacy strategy. We need our members to build, strengthen and sustain their relationships with their senators and representatives. Members of Congress need to know that FOP and IAFF members are active voters who will hold them accountable and expect their support on the issues important to our respective rank and file.

## Room Block

The National FOP has organized a block of rooms ([tinyurl.com/36zs2f59](http://tinyurl.com/36zs2f59)) at a special rate for these dates at the Yotel on Capitol Hill. Be sure to register today: [tinyurl.com/wfy4yk](http://tinyurl.com/wfy4yk).

For any of our members wishing to get a room with two queen-sized beds, book your reservation for the single king room using the link above, and then

contact Naushad Muthaliff (**Naushad.Muthaliff@yotel.com**) or by phone at (202) 347-0934 and ask that the reservation be changed to a double.

The cutoff date for reservations is February 6, so don’t delay; reserve your room today!

## Second Session of 118th Congress Begins

The second session of the 118th Congress began much the way the first session ended — with plenty of unfinished business and another short-term continuing resolution to avoid a partial government shutdown.

The Senate considered and passed the most recent continuing resolution, H.R. 2872, on a 77–18 vote, and the House followed and passed the measure under a suspension of the rules on a 314–108 vote. President Biden signed it into law. The bill continues the “laddered” approach by funding the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Veterans Affairs until March 1, 2024, and the remaining components of the federal government through March 8.

There is a bipartisan and bicameral agreement with the Administration



on the “top line” total for FY 2024 total appropriations. This should allow the House and Senate Appropriations Committees to finalize the remaining spending bills, but there remains a very vocal group of Republicans who intend to oppose efforts to complete the appropriations without additional cuts to the “top line” number.

### Rules and DOJ Appropriations

One of the reasons the House has struggled to pass appropriations bills is the narrowness of their majority. Before legislation can go to the floor for an up-or-down vote, the House must adopt a rule governing the debate. The rule, designated as an H. res. and a number, is first worked out and adopted by the House Rules Committee and then reported to the House. The House must adopt the rule or the underlying bill cannot be debated.

Usually, a rule passes along party lines — the majority supports it and the minority party votes against it. However, a handful of Republicans, most of whom are associated with the Freedom Caucus, have been voting with Democrats against these rules and blocking the consideration of the underlying bill on the floor. It seems likely that these tactics will continue.

For example, prior to recessing for the year, the House rejected H. Res. 869, the rule providing for the consideration of H.R. 5893, which would make appropriations for the U.S. Departments of Commerce, Justice and Science on a 198–225 vote. Nineteen Republicans joined 206 Democrats to defeat the rule and prevent debate on the spending bill. At that time, the legislation included modest increases for the Office of Community Oriented Policing Service (COPS) and state and local law enforcement assistance programs (+1.2% and 2.9%, respectively), but it reduced the funding at the U.S. Department of Justice to \$23.8 billion below the FY 2023 level and drastically reduced funding to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). If such cuts are included in a final bill, state and local law enforcement will be severely impacted as these agencies often partner with state and local agencies to combat

the opioid epidemic, gang violence and other criminal actors that cross jurisdictional boundaries.

At this writing, there have been no developments on the DOJ appropriations bill.

### National FOP President Yoes Testifies Before Senate Banking Committee on Fentanyl

Patrick Yoes, National president of the Fraternal Order of Police, appeared before the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs at a hearing entitled “Stopping the Flow of Fentanyl: Public Awareness and Legislative Solutions.” President Yoes testified in support of S. 1271, the Fentanyl Eradication and Narcotics Deterrence (FEND) Off Fentanyl Act ([tinyurl.com/bdd7dfz2](https://tinyurl.com/bdd7dfz2)), which the FOP helped develop. The bill would direct the resources of the U.S. government to target the fentanyl supply chain in several ways.

The FEND Off Fentanyl Act would address the ongoing fentanyl crisis by requiring the federal government to impose and enforce sanctions on criminal actors and organizations, increasing the likelihood that those who are engaged in the illicit fentanyl trade will be caught and prosecuted. We also support the use of the lawfully forfeited assets of these traffickers to further law enforcement efforts to combat these criminals.

National President Yoes told the committee:

“The measures and tools proposed in S. 1271 will reduce the number of Americans who suffer and die from fentanyl, fentanyl analogs and other deadly and illicit opioids — and that should be our No. 1 goal. We must reduce the loss of life through vigorous interdiction of the drug supply train, relentless pursuit of the dealers, cartels, and suppliers, and greater availability of naloxone to law enforcement and emergency responders, as well as passing the FEND Off Fentanyl Act.”

You can watch the hearing here: [tinyurl.com/bddzux2r](https://tinyurl.com/bddzux2r).

### Legislative Update: H.R. 82/S. 597, the Social Security Fairness Act

The House Ways and Means Committee has not yet filed its report

on the field hearing it held in Baton Rouge last November, but it is expected to be published soon. We want to thank the more than 300 FOP members who submitted statements and letters to the committee for inclusion into that record.

The House bill now has 304 co-sponsors in the House and 49 co-sponsors in the Senate, which is now the focus of our legislative staff in Washington, D.C. **We are urging all FOP members to contact their senators and ask them to co-sponsor S. 597 or thank them for doing so!** Visit [tinyurl.com/3usv3fb9](https://tinyurl.com/3usv3fb9) to see if your senators are co-sponsors. These offices must hear from their constituents on this issue if we're to successfully get these provisions repealed!

Write and call your senators and ask them to co-sponsor this bill. If they are already supporters of the bill — thank them and let them know how important this is to you

### Legislative Update: H.R. 743, the Protect and Serve Act

As of the end of 2023, there have been 378 officers shot in the line of duty, which is the highest number the FOP has recorded. Thankfully, because of dramatic improvements in medical trauma science and anti-ballistic technology, the lethality of these attacks has been reduced, and only 46 of the officers shot in the line of duty were killed. There were 115 ambush-style attacks on law enforcement officers this year, which resulted in 138 officers shot, 20 of whom were killed. You can read the National FOP's year-end report here: [tinyurl.com/32z4c68k](https://tinyurl.com/32z4c68k).

The D.C. legislative staff has focused on building support for the legislation among Republicans on the Committee on the Judiciary, several of whom blocked the bill's scheduled consideration in May 2023. We continue to lay the groundwork to have the committee mark up the bill this year and have added five additional co-sponsors — four Republicans and one Democrat in the last weeks of 2023.

We urge all of our members to contact their Representative and ask them to support H.R. 743!



## Top Priorities in Brief

### H.R. 82/S. 597, the Social Security Fairness Act

**House:** 304 co-sponsors (102 R, 202 D)

**Senate:** 49 co-sponsors (39 D, 7 R, 3 I)

Urge Congress to pass it:  
[tinyurl.com/ycxk6pay](https://tinyurl.com/ycxk6pay)

### H.R. 1322/S. 1658, the Law Enforcement Officers' Equity Act

**House:** 72 co-sponsors (19 R, 53 D)

**Senate:** 1 co-sponsor (1 R)

Urge Congress to pass it:  
[tinyurl.com/37afz34h](https://tinyurl.com/37afz34h)

### H.R. 3539, the Public Safety Employer-Employee Cooperation Act

**House:** 44 co-sponsors (10 R, 34 D)

**Senate:** Not yet introduced

Urge Congress to pass it:  
[tinyurl.com/5h6mtmvt](https://tinyurl.com/5h6mtmvt)

### H.R. 354/S. 1462, the LEOSA Reform Act

**House:** 35 co-sponsors (35 R)

**Senate:** 3 co-sponsors (3 R)

Urge Congress to pass it:  
[tinyurl.com/3w4br4sj](https://tinyurl.com/3w4br4sj)

### H.R. 743, the Protect and Serve Act

**House:** 92 co-sponsors (79 R, 13 D)

**Senate:** Not yet introduced

Urge Congress to pass it:  
[tinyurl.com/3uzdafpk](https://tinyurl.com/3uzdafpk)

### H.R. 3170/S. 1514, the Homes for Every Local Protector, Educator, and Responder (HELPER) Act

**House:** 107 co-sponsors (33 R, 74 D)

**Senate:** 15 co-sponsors (3 R, 12 D)

Urge Congress to pass it:  
[tinyurl.com/48vxkdp4](https://tinyurl.com/48vxkdp4)

To see a full list of legislation supported by the FOP, please visit [tinyurl.com/ycy5k5rv](https://tinyurl.com/ycy5k5rv). Members should continue to monitor the FOP's social media platforms and our website for the latest legislative news! To send a message to your members of Congress asking them to support FOP priority legislation, visit the FOP Action Center at [votervoice.net/FOP/home](https://votervoice.net/FOP/home).

## WASHINGTON REPORT

Continued from page 33 >

### Other Legislative Activity and New Bills

The National FOP and IAFF have also joined forces and sent a letter to congressional leadership calling on Congress to include relief from limitations on deductions for state and local taxes (SALT) as part of any tax package it considers this year. Under current law, there is a \$10,000 cap on SALT deductions, which uniquely and unfairly penalizes firefighters, law enforcement officers and other public safety employees, who are often required to live within a certain distance of the jurisdictions they serve. The arbitrary SALT deduction cap also places unnecessary pressures on local budgets, which could result in the reduction of vital public safety services. Our membership urges Congress to pass legislation that repeals or, at the very least, significantly increases the SALT deduction cap.

Since the last issue of the *Journal*, the FOP has supported the following legislation:

- **H.R. 7040**, legislation that would reauthorize the Undetectable Firearms Act for another 10 years; and
- **S. 3522**, the Improving Law Enforcement Officer Safety and Wellness Through Data Act, would expand the data collected by the federal government on attacks and aggressions against law enforcement officers to augment the information collected through the Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted (LEOKA) program, the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) and the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) to capture "aggressive actions, conduct or other trauma-inducing incidents" aimed at officers.

### Are You Reading the Weekly Update to Get the Latest News?

Each week, the *Weekly Update* is sent straight from Capitol Hill to your inbox. It helps to keep you and your members up to date with the latest news from Washington, D.C. If you aren't getting this important information, go to [tinyurl.com/bdhfu29d](https://tinyurl.com/bdhfu29d) to sign up.

We ask all members to visit all of our social media platforms, as the daily posts are the best way to keep up with the National FOP's daily activity. Follow the National FOP on:

- Facebook (@GLFOP)
- X (@GLFOP)
- Instagram (@FOPnational)

Do your part! Please **share**, **comment** and **like** our content.

### Check out the FOP's YouTube Channel and the Blue View Podcast!

The FOP's YouTube channel ([youtube.com/GLFOP](https://youtube.com/GLFOP)) hosts every episode of the FOP's podcast, entitled the *Blue View*, as well as news clips, interviews and our FOP Facts videos on Social Security fairness and qualified immunity.

National President Patrick Yoes hosts the *Blue View*, which has featured guests from Capitol Hill and within the FOP, as well as law enforcement experts and leaders from around the country to gain better insight into the issues and current events in the law enforcement community.

On one of the recent episodes of the *Blue View*, National President Patrick Yoes is joined by Hugh T. Clements, Jr., director of the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), to discuss the current state of policing, the resources the COPS Office provides, as well as the partnership the two organizations have.

The *Blue View* podcast can also be found on **Apple Podcasts**, **Spotify**, **Amazon Music** and **YouTube**.

### Election 2024 Will Be Here Before You Know It!

**We need your help! The next election is less than a year away!** The National Fraternal Order of Police Political Action Committee (NFOP PAC) needs more of our members to contribute to ensure that our PAC has the resources to support candidates who will fight for our officers and the issues that are important to them. **We are asking all FOP members to find a way to contribute to the National FOP PAC. Our profession depends on having well-informed lawmakers who listen and understand the challenges facing law enforcement today.**



We are urging members (and lodges) to sign up for recurring, monthly contributions using their credit card. This is the most effective and reliable way to contribute and to strengthen our PAC.

These contributions need not be for hundreds or thousands of dollars (though these are also very much appreciated) — but every dollar helps! If every FOP member gave just \$1, we could raise \$373,000! If 10% of our members gave just \$5 this year, we would raise \$183,500. We can and need to do better raising funds for our PAC!

To donate online, please go to [nfop-pac.firstresponderprocessing.com](https://nfop-pac.firstresponderprocessing.com). If you would like to donate via check, please make it out to the National Fraternal Order of Police Political Action Committee and mail it to 328 Massachusetts Ave. NE, Washington, D.C., 20002. For inquiries about our effortless payroll deduction program or to sign up for our recurring monthly credit card donations, please contact the Steve Young Law Enforcement Legislative Advocacy Center at (202) 547-8189 or David Taboh at [dtaboh@fop.net](mailto:dtaboh@fop.net).

Thank you to all of you who have supported and continue to support our PAC with regular contributions! **FOP**



## Upcoming National FOP Training



### Officer Wellness Summit:

February 19-20, 2024 | Nashville, TN |

For more information, [click here](#).



### Leadership Matters:

February 22-24, 2024 | Nashville, TN |

For more information, [click here](#).

For more information email:  
[ssimpson@fop.net](mailto:ssimpson@fop.net)

## WELLNESS PROVIDERS

### Chateau Recovery

Midway, UT

[chateaufrecovery.com/programs/first-responders](https://chateaufrecovery.com/programs/first-responders)

### FHE Health: Shatterproof Program

Deerfield Beach, FL

[fhrehab.com/services/first-responders](https://fhrehab.com/services/first-responders)

### First Responder Wellness by Simple Recovery

Costa Mesa, CA

[firstresponder-wellness.com](https://firstresponder-wellness.com)

### Harbor of Grace First Responder Program

Havre de Grace, MD

[harborofgracerecovery.com/first-responders](https://harborofgracerecovery.com/first-responders)

### Transformations Treatment Center:

#### Help for Our Heroes Program

Delray Beach, FL

[helpforourheroes.com](https://helpforourheroes.com)

### Warrior's Heart

Bandera, TX

[warriorsheart.com](https://warriorsheart.com)

Find more vetted and approved wellness providers and programs at [fop.net/officer-wellness/providers](https://fop.net/officer-wellness/providers).

# Marsy's Law: The Difference Between "Identifying" and "Locating" Victims

States have enacted protective measures to safeguard the rights of crime victims, often referred to as Marsy's Law. Named in memory of Marsy Nicholas, who was stalked and murdered by her ex-boyfriend, these laws seek to give crime victims meaningful and enforceable constitutional rights equal to the rights of the accused. Although specific provisions may vary across states, common provisions include ensuring victims receive reasonable notice, have the right to be present and heard at all court proceedings, are informed of the release of the offender, experience a prompt conclusion of their case, and are shielded from the disclosure of information or records that could be used to locate or harass the victim or their family.

A recent case from Florida is instructive. In *City of Tallahassee v. Florida Police Benevolent Association*, two Tallahassee officers claimed self-defense and invoked the protections of Marsy's Law contained in article I, section 16(b)-(e) of the Florida Constitution to prevent disclosure of their names.

The case involved two separate incidents where each officer used lethal force to defend themselves. First, on May 19, 2020, a man rushed at one of the officers with a hunting knife, and the officer defended himself by fatally shooting the assailant. Second, on May 27, 2020, the other officer responded to a crime where the perpetrator, having just stabbed a man to death, aimed a gun at the officer. The officer defended himself by shooting and killing the man. A grand jury investigated both shootings and determined that the shootings were lawful and justifiable uses of force.

However, reporters sought disclosure of the officers' names from the city of Tallahassee. The City proposed to release

## Just the Facts:

» In *City of Tallahassee v. Florida Police Benevolent Association*, two Tallahassee officers claimed self-defense and invoked the protections of Marsy's Law. The case involved two separate incidents where each officer used lethal force to defend themselves. Despite the officers' claims of self-defense and being victims of crimes, the Supreme Court of Florida refused to extend Marsy's Law's protections to them. This case serves to resolve that Marsy's Law does not confer a categorical right to withhold a victim's name from disclosure and draws the distinctions between "identifying" and "locating" individuals.

the two officers' names to the public. The officers argued that, as Marsy's Law victims, they were entitled to prevent the release of their personal identifying information, including their names. Because the City did not agree with the officers' position and wanted to publish this information, the Florida Police Benevolent Association (FPBA) sued the City on June 12, 2020, seeking to stop the City from releasing the two officers' names.

The circuit court denied the FPBA's petition and ordered the names to be released. The FPBA appealed. The officers' names were not released while the appeal was pending. The Court of Appeal reversed the circuit court's decision, finding that "[n]othing in article I, section 16 excludes law enforcement officers — or other government employees — from the protections granted crime victims," and article I, section 16(b)(5) "includes records that could reveal the victim's ... identity, in this case the officers' names." Subsequently, the City petitioned the Supreme Court of Florida to reverse the Court of Appeal's decision.

The Supreme Court of Florida held that Marsy's Law **does not** contain a right for victims to remain anonymous. The Court ruled that Marsy's Law guarantees to no victim — police officer or otherwise — the categorical right to

withhold his or her name from disclosure. Meaning, in this case, Marsy's Law does not preclude the City from releasing the names of the two police officers whose conduct is at issue.

In interpreting the Florida Constitution, the Court found that the relevant words in the Constitution, specifically "information or records that could be used to locate or harass the victim or the victim's family, or which could disclose confidential or privileged information of the victim" (art. I, § 16(b)(5), Fla. Const.), do not encompass the victim's identity.

The FPBA argued that a victim's name could be used, along with other information, to locate or harass themselves or their families, therefore, justifying its inclusion as protected under Marsy's Law. The FPBA reasoned that unless a situation arises where having a victim's name could not assist in locating the victim or their family, Marsy's Law requires concealing the victim's name upon their request. The Court disagreed with FPBA's interpretation, differentiating between "identifying" a person and "locating" them. The Court emphasized that one's name alone does not provide information about their physical whereabouts. Specifically, a victim's name, standing alone, does not fall under the



category of information that could be used to locate or harass a victim or their family. In contrast, exposure to a crime victim's location poses a threat of physical danger. The Court emphasized the legislative intent behind laws protecting victim identities, stating that the Florida Legislature has been particular in using different words like "locate" and "identify" in statutes, indicating that these words have distinct meanings and are used intentionally.

The Court also balanced a victim's right under Marsy's Law and a defendant's right to confront an adverse witness at trial. The Court found that, by reading section 16(b)(5) to shield only information that can be used to locate or harass, rather than identify a victim, protects a defendant's right to confront adverse witnesses while still giving effect to Marsy's Law. The Court wrote that the right to confront adverse witnesses at trial "would be drawn into doubt if we found that section 16(b)(5) categorically secured a victim's right to anonymity in all criminal cases."

Lastly, the Court examined the public records provision in article I, section 24(a) of the Florida Constitution

in relation to Marsy's Law. The case involved a public records request with the police department for "any incident records" related to information about the identity of the officers involved in the shooting. The Court stated that section 24(c) provides an alternative method to shield certain public records through legislation, requiring a two-thirds vote and specificity in justifying the exemption's public necessity. Additionally, some Florida statutes, like section 119.071(2)(j) 1, already exempt documents revealing the identity of crime victims from public records requirements under section 24(a). The Court clarified that its decision does not weaken existing exemptions of certain information from public disclosure nor prevents the Legislature from expanding these exemptions. "Our decision instead is limited to the determination that Marsy's Law does not guarantee to crime victims a generalized right of anonymity."

Therefore, despite the officers' claims of self-defense and being victims of crimes, the Supreme Court of Florida refused to extend Marsy's Law's protections to them. This case serves to resolve that Marsy's Law does not

confer a categorical right to withhold a victim's name from disclosure and draws the distinctions between "identifying" and "locating" individuals. The Court adopted a nuanced approach in interpreting Marsy's Law in an attempt to recognize the specific intent behind Marsy's Law provisions while also preserving the broader principles of transparency and safeguarding the integrity of the adversarial trial process within the criminal justice system. **FOP**

## FOP GENERAL COUNSEL

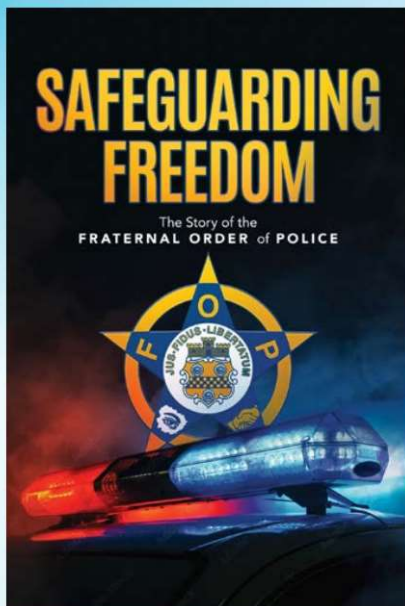
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## SAFEGUARDING FREEDOM: The Story of the Fraternal Order of Police

The National Fraternal Order of Police History Committee and the National Board of Trustees are excited to present you with a new book, *Safeguarding Freedom: The Story of the Fraternal Order of Police*. This literary work is the result of reviewing historical documents, combing through thousands of photographs and conducting interviews to give the reader a comprehensive history of how the Fraternal Order of Police has impacted policing in America. Author Max DiLallo, co-author with James Patterson on numerous books, along with the direction of National History Committee Chair David Stevens, has worked tirelessly over the past year to reveal the journey of the FOP.

This fantastic book is available from the National Office for \$25 plus tax, and the proceeds benefit our National FOP Foundation. Call (800) 451-2711 or email Lori at [lharris@fop.net](mailto:lharris@fop.net).



# CRI-TAC Exceeds 1,000 Technical Assistance Engagements



You have often heard me speak about CRI-TAC. I often write about the benefits CRI-TAC has delivered to our members. In early January of this year, the Justice Department announced that the Collaborative Reform Initiative Technical Assistance Center (CRI-TAC), has achieved a major milestone in providing more than 1,000 technical assistance engagements to state, local, tribal and territorial law enforcement agencies across the country. The following are some excerpts from their recent press release.

Developed by the Justice Department's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office), the Collaborative Reform Initiative helps law enforcement agencies and the communities they serve identify and implement organizational improvements and reforms through training, consultation, peer-based learning, analysis and in-depth assessments. The initiative is structured as a continuum of services offered to law enforcement agencies on a strictly voluntary basis.

"The CRI-TAC Initiative has been a key component of the expanded Collaborative Reform Initiative relaunched almost two years ago," Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta said. "The response we've seen — now over 1,000 engagements on everything from de-escalation training to officer wellness and countless other topics — speaks to the demand for, and utility of, this form of technical assistance provided 'by the field, for the field.' The Justice Department is grateful for the extensive engagement and partnerships with law enforcement and community groups as we continue to enhance and expand our technical assistance offerings to support public safety and police-community trust."

Some of the areas of technical assistance requested most by agencies include de-escalation techniques, active threat response, public sector coordination and partnerships, school and campus safety, and officer safety and wellness. Specific topics have included the following:

- Using a public health approach to address violent crime
- Strengthening proactive youth engagement within a transit agency
- Improving safety and wellness programming throughout an officer's career

The types of technical assistance most requested are training and resource referrals; virtual and on-site consultations are the next most frequent forms of technical assistance delivered. Other forms of technical assistance included policy reviews and in-depth briefings from subject-matter experts.

In the evaluations submitted following their engagements, agencies uniformly praised all aspects of the program — from the delivery of services and the subject-matter experts provided to the quality of the information received, to the gains in their level of knowledge and the ability to make positive changes in their agencies based on the training and technical assistance received.

"This is a big milestone for the COPS Office's technical assistance efforts, and I am extremely grateful that so many law enforcement agencies across the country have been able to get the help they need through the Collaborative Reform Initiative," COPS Office Director Hugh T. Clements Jr. said. "When law enforcement agencies reach out for help, communities are the ultimate beneficiaries. We look forward to building on this success by helping many more agencies in the months and years ahead."

Through CRI-TAC, the COPS Office partners with the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) and eight other leading law enforcement organizations to deliver tailored technical assistance that meets the needs of law enforcement agencies in a "by-the-field, for-the-field" approach.

Partner agencies include:

- FBI National Academy Associates
- Fraternal Order of Police
- International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators
- International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training
- National Association of Women Law Enforcement Executives
- National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives
- National Sheriffs' Association
- National Tactical Officers Association

Applications to request assistance from CRI-TAC are accepted on a rolling basis, and the technical assistance is delivered at no cost to your agency. If you are interested in CRI-TAC assistance, you can learn more at [cops.usdoj.gov/cri-tac](https://cops.usdoj.gov/cri-tac). For some personal assistance, contact me at [Kturney@fop.net](mailto:Kturney@fop.net). The full DOJ press release can be accessed at [tinyurl.com/4hyukepc](https://tinyurl.com/4hyukepc). Until we meet again, God bless you, and God bless the FOP! **FOP**

## FOP DIVISION OF EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

If you have further questions, contact Director Keith Turney at [kturney@fop.org](mailto:kturney@fop.org), or (815) 482-5620. For more information on CRI-TAC, visit [cops.usdoj.gov/cri-tac](https://cops.usdoj.gov/cri-tac).



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# Upon Further Review

As we move into the NFL playoff season, many more people tend to tune into the “win-or-go-home” games than the regular season. The games are more important, the teams are the best in the league, the players and coaches tend to be better, and the sudden-death nature of the games tends to be more exciting. This does not necessarily mean that the games will be close. However, some of the calls made by officials may be very close. Some are reviewable and subject to reversal, and some are not. Of course, that can lead to controversy and much discussion for at least a full week.

Replay review is a big part of our sports today. There is also a mindset that a call gets reversed because it was a “bad” call. Often, however, the play upon which the initial call was made happened so fast, or the official did not have a good view during the live action, and additional information is needed from a different angle or at a different speed. In other words, video replay is not necessarily better, it’s just different. The technology offers additional or different information upon which a different conclusion can be reached. That’s it.

Law enforcement officers’ decisions and actions happen in real-time at the speed with which real life occurs and are made from a single perspective with life and death potentially hanging in the balance and cannot be replayed or slowed down. Even with body-worn and dashboard cameras, there is simply no way to recreate an accurate picture of what happened at any given moment. Life does not happen in a stadium with dozens of cameras capturing every angle. Even the NFL, a multibillion-dollar entity, does not

## Just the Facts:

» Replay review is a big part of our sports today. There is also a mindset that a call gets reversed because it was a “bad” call. Often, however, the play upon which the initial call was made happened so fast, or the official did not have a good view during the live action, and additional information is needed from a different angle or at a different speed. Law enforcement officers’ decisions and actions happen in real-time at the speed with which real life occurs and are made from a single perspective with life and death potentially hanging in the balance and cannot be replayed or slowed down.

always have enough cameras and technology to discern the full picture of any given play.

After an incident takes place, highly trained and experienced

**Life does not happen  
in a stadium with  
dozens of cameras  
capturing every angle.**

investigators collect evidence, interview witnesses and take the time to arrive at the clearest possible picture. Granted, some investigators bring bias into an investigation and maybe even favor evidence that supports their pre-determined conclusion. However, that is rare.

What is becoming less rare are citizen review boards (CRB). Generally created by a statute or ordinance and appointed by politicians, CRBs are often given the authority to review internal investigations and the resulting disciplinary decisions. This is done

in the spirit of transparency. Done well and within legal limits such as confidentiality and without the authority to change the outcome of an investigation or resulting discipline, CRBs can serve a legitimate purpose. Being able to cool the temperature that can sometimes exist between hostile and suspicious citizens and police through an added layer of accountability is a good thing (again, when done correctly — meaning, when the review is focused on police policy and executive decision-making and not on individual cases or individual officers). In other words, when the department is under review, not the officers. It is a fine line, and it makes a big difference.

If you are working in a jurisdiction that has a CRB or is considering creating one, it is vital that you read the enabling statute or ordinance and ensure that the CRB does not exceed its authority and that the enabling ordinance or statute does not violate any constitutional, statutory or contractual rights of officers. If you need support, please do not hesitate to contact the Labor Services Division. Our staff have the experience to ensure you know what you need to know. Stay safe. **FOP**





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