Contemporary Issues Conference is FREE!
Policing in our Century: The Emerging Issues

The upcoming Contemporary Issues and Ethics Conference, Policing in Our Century: The Emerging Issues, is FREE to all ILEA Alumni members who are current on their membership dues. This year’s conference will focus on a variety of topics that bring together police leaders and academicians for the serious dialogue that will enable the resolution of many of the issues and the challenges facing American policing today. Always thought provoking, the mix of attendees of this conference will bring valuable thought and attention to the real issues of the day.

Topics will include:

♦ Strategic Cutback Management: Law Enforcement Leadership for Lean Times
♦ Accreditation Recognition Programs
♦ The Duty of Care: Police Stress Consequences and Departmental Responses
♦ Officer Line of Duty Deaths
♦ Recruiting During the Economic Downturn
♦ Police Mentoring
♦ Psychology of Combat
♦ Recognizing the True Cost of Morale

This year we will be offering a special lunch, COPS Cooking for COPS. Instead of the usual catered lunch for Alumni members only, we are excited to provide lunch for all conference attendees which will be cooked by cops for cops. We hope you will join us to visit with friends, former classmates and take this opportunity to forge new relationships.

Please watch the ILEA website for the full agenda for this event.
In August 2011, like many parents before me, I made that long, sad drive to drop off my baby boy at college. It was the start of his freshman year and during that 4 hour drive from Dallas to San Marcos, so many thoughts ran through my head; was he mature enough, was he ready to be on his own, would he make the right choices, would he study, would he wake up and make it to class, and on and on. But I realized that there was nothing I could do to control any of that. My time to teach him right from wrong was about done.

Not that long ago, my parents made that same trip. Only mine was from Harlingen, Texas to the great Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, Texas. I still remember driving into town, finding the campus, unloading the car, checking into my dorm and then seeing my parents drive away. A couple of years later, I became a Resident Assistant and remember seeing freshman arriving in the fall, checking into their dorms, waving good bye to their parents then going crazy for the rest of the semester. Needless to say, I never saw them again in the spring due to bad choices they made.

Parents only have a finite amount of time to teach our children values, morals, principals, faith and all of those things that will carry them into adulthood and not only allow them to survive but succeed. My son would not have me there to tell him “no”, to ask permission for something. He was on his own to make his own decisions. I did however pray every day, that all I’ve tried to teach him will sustain him and carry him through life as he faces not only success but hardships.

As the Police Chief of my department, I am not out on the streets at 3 in the morning helping my officers with their decisions. I am not looking over their shoulder constantly, telling them what to do. I cannot be the only one in my department concerned about crime, disorder, quality of life issues. I need every member of my agency to be concerned about those things.

It has been argued that traditional, top-down, command and control leadership is a thing of the past and far from the most effective manner of leading. And I agree. High performance, successful organizations realized this long ago. In his book, Leadership and Futuring, John R. Hoyle states, “The traditional, top-down, bureaucratic, controlling model has gone the way of the typewriter.” The reality is, command and control leadership is not sustainable. It is dependent on the leader being present at all times, calling all of the shots, making all of the decisions, and in the end, limiting input to a chosen few and only succeeding in turning people into non-creative, shut down, cynical workers.

The past few years, I’ve had the opportunity to lead a class discussion at the month long School of Police Supervision hosted by the Institute for Law Enforcement Administration in Plano, Texas. The class I lead is entitled, “Leading from Within; Practical Applications of Servant Leadership and Problem Oriented Policing” and focuses on real strategies of creating a culture of leaders throughout any organization.

The class is attended by police supervisors throughout the United States and what is clear from talking to the students is that traditional, top-down, command and control supervision is alive and well in the policing culture. Even those organizations that have attempted to change their culture and become more of a servant led, transformational centered leaders, revert back to command and control during difficult times, crisis, or times of uncertainty. In some ways that is somewhat expected because, due to many years of training, humans usually default to the known when confronted with the unknown.

What leaders sometimes fail to see is the devastating impact the dominance of command and control is having on our organizations. During these troubled times, we don’t need more command and control, we need better means to engage the intelligence of everyone in the organization in order to better solve problems, to better meet challenges and crisis as they arise. But instead, we continue to “tell” rather than “ask”. We continue to give “orders” rather than create “dialogue” on how do we better address problems. And in the end, the result is dispirited employees and leaders wondering why no one takes responsibility or gets engaged anymore.

The damage all of this causes on police organizations is dramatic and immeasurable. If the rank and file no longer care, the entire community suffers. Robotic, cynical police officers serve no one.

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LEADing From Within
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So what’s the answer? Is there a better way? The good news is “yes”. The bad news is that it takes a great deal of work and trust.

Transformational leadership has three main characteristics:

• Empowering people
• Servants to others
• Creating a vision that inspires

The key to successfully addressing chaos and crisis in any organization is to engage as many people as possible in the problem-solving process and tap into the collective intelligence of the organization. As Jim Collins emphasized in his book “Good to Great”, it’s not just getting the right people on the bus, but it’s getting them in the right seats. I am only as good as those around me. Therefore, it is imperative that I surround myself with great people. Then I get out of their way and let them do their job.

One of my favorite movies is Apollo 13. The movie featured NASA Flight Director Gene Kranz and the life and death situation he and his team faced. Kranz knew that he did not have the answers when faced with having a crippled space craft and three American astronauts floating in space with no conceivable way back to Earth. But he did have a vision of success. And he painted that vision clearly to his team. He not only empowered his team to come up with a solution, he demanded that they do so.

As leaders, we must create learning organizations that will carry us into the future. Our world is changing at lightning speed. The only way to successfully meet future challenges is to create an organization of leaders ready and willing to take on any challenge as part of a larger team. Trust and teamwork must replace control and fear.

As leaders we must be a light for others. We must create a vision of success for our organizations and emphasize it every day, by our words and actions. Subordinates of visionaries like their jobs more, work longer hours, trust colleagues and leaders, and insist on a higher level of performance.

My son had a great freshman year at Texas State University. He excelled in his classes. He finished the year with a high GPA. He made new friends, lifelong friends. He rediscovered his faith in God and after a long summer of working back home, he is more than ready to return to college. I tried to teach him as my father taught me, “have a set of principles, and defend those principles no matter the cost”.

In the book The Traveler’s Gift, the author states, “faith will always be a sounder guide than reason because reason can only go so far – faith has no limits.”

I have faith in my son.
I have faith in my troops and my organization.

Notes:

Leadership and Futuring, John R. Hoyle
The Traveler’s Gift, Andy Andrews
Good to Great, Jim Collins
The Institute for Law Enforcement Administration, http://www.cailaw.org/ilea/

Mac Tristan is a 29½ year veteran of the Carrollton Police Department promoting through the ranks to Assistant Chief. On January 24, 2011, he was sworn in as Chief of the Coppell Police Department. It is only the second job Chief Tristan has had since graduating from college.
Police and Family Conference Goes On the Road!

Responding to a request from the Grand Rapids, Michigan Police Department, on November 10-11, 2012 the Institute sent a contingent to the GRPD to deliver a Police and Family Conference for over 40 law enforcement officers and their loved ones. At least 18 couples and several singles were on hand for two days of fun, laughs and critical information that was designed to strengthen relationships between husband and wives, partners and those involved in intimate relations with law enforcement officials.

The conference was led by three husband and wife teams: Neil and Margene Moore, Gregory and Tammera Smith (ILEA) and Catherine and Colin Nanton of Ontario, Canada.

On Saturday morning the Smith’s led a dynamic session on personality and behavior using the “Colors Method.” Following a working lunch and the Kevin Gilmartin video “Emotional Survival for Law Enforcement,” the Nanton’s led the afternoon session centered on the book, The Five Love Languages by Gary Chapman. Each couple received a book and an assessment. Individual love languages were identified and the Nanton’s explained the pros and cons of each. The class was then divided into groups by love language and allowed to present to the other four language groups how each group likes to receive love.

On Sunday morning, focus was on the financial health of a relationship. Neil Archibald, General Counsel, MEMBERS Trust Company, gave an inspiring lecture on the value of financial planning. Over lunch, Neil and Margene Moore processed the Kevin Gilmartin video using their marriage of over 40 years to “law enforcement” and each other as a starting point for group discussion. The honesty and sharing on the part of Margene and Neil was evident, as younger couples leaned forward in their seats listening and feeling free to comment.

The non-law enforcement partners then went into a private session where they shared experiences with one another, strengthened one another, cried with one another and affirmed one another. During this session, law enforcement personnel received a class on the “Love Language of Apology.” Why? Because generally cops do not know how to apologize to others in an acceptable manner. LOL!

Our conference concluded with the raffling of several gifts, group affirmations and a general joyful sense of togetherness and accomplishment.

The Family Conference is a unique program in our field. Please contact us if you are interested in scheduling a weekend for your local officers.