

Training the Guardians of Democracy

*Transforming the Culture of Policing
in Washington State*



Why are we using a label ?

Why Guardians?

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

-Plato

It's important to serve a higher purpose...

- Improves job satisfaction, retention
- Increases self-regulation in a profession that relies on personal discretion
- Provides greater motivation for “doing the right thing”
- Better matches the mission of policing in a democracy

Why change the training environment?

- Create a more effective learning environment
- Develop better decision-making skills
- Instill values that guide sound judgment
- Improve public trust

....all of these improve officer safety

More effective learning

Research about adult learning does not support the “boot camp” model. Fear and humiliation is the wrong kind of stress for learning and for building confidence.

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

Better decision-making

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

- *Memorizing checklists and procedures distracts from critical observation and assessment of situations*

Need to instill values

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

- *Compliance based of fear of punishment is short lived and breeds resentment toward supervisors and leaders.*

Public Trust

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

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

What Changed?

- **Bracing protocol replaced with conversation initiation**
- **“Tune Up” during orientation replaced with coaching**
- **TAC officers act as role models rather than intimidators**
- **New symbols and rituals introduced**
 - Constitutions handed to each new recruit
 - Trophy case replaced by mural of Constitution
 - “Blue Courage” posters integrated with officer safety posters
- **Scholarship emphasized and rewarded**

What changed? (cont.)

- **Behavioral and Social Science programs infused into curriculum**
 - “Blue Courage”
 - Crisis Intervention Training
 - “Justice Based Policing” (procedural justice principles - LEED)
 - “Respect Effect”
 - “Tactical Social Interaction” (from DARPA project)
 - “Bias and Perception” (under construction)
- **Mock scenes “re-engineered”**
 - Scenes are designed to test critical thinking and decision making, and the ability to properly assess the situation
 - Skills are tested in other ways

What *didn't* change?

- The physical and mental stress is still high
- Marching, ceremonies, and deference to rank maintained
- Rules and code of conduct strictly upheld
- Emphasis on Defensive Tactics (skills tightened up, increased drills)
- Emphasis on Firearms training (enhanced with SIRT pistols, more integration with defensive tactics, more drills outside the range)

It's not guardians instead of warriors...

We have not abandoned the warrior...

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

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

Does it work? Will it last?

We are initiating a 5-year longitudinal study to measure the long-term impacts, but...

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

"So the station, so the street"

"Culture eats training for lunch."

Making it last in your agency...

- Get your leaders on board
- Start training series
 - Blue Courage
 - Respect Effect
 - Justice Based Policing
- Look at policies, symbols, incentives, personnel practices

How do we pay for it?

“Building Trust Initiative”

- Current budget proviso pending in the legislature
- President’s Task Force Recommendation

Questions?

Thank you!