



2026 HTOA Annual Conference

March 2nd-3rd, 2026 (8am – 5pm)

EMBASSY SUITES CONFERENCE CENTER

10401 S. Ridgeview Rd., Olathe, KS (K-10 and Ridgeview)

Sponsored by

First Spear



**BUILT
FOR THE X**
FIRST-SPEAR.COM



Incident Debriefs and Presentations
2 Day Vendor Show
Award Presentations
Educational Scholarship Awards
HTOA Board of Directors Elections

\$100 per person includes lunch on Day 1

Registration at www.htoa.us by February 20th, 2026
No refunds for cancellations after February 1st, 2026

Due to venue size there is a strict limit of 630 attendees

A block of rooms has been reserved at the Embassy Suites for \$174 which includes the made to order breakfast.
Copy the link below

<https://www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event/heartlandtacticalconference/> for this special rate by January 31st, 2026

Direct any questions to admin@htoa.us

Incident Debrief

On November 17, 2023, members of the Pierce County Sheriff's Office surrounded a residence known to be occupied by a male homicide suspect who was wanted by law enforcement. While the female occupant of the property complied with initial commands from the police, the male suspect refused to cooperate. As the Pierce County SWAT team worked to de-escalate the situation, the suspect opened fire on the officers with a rifle from an unknown concealed location. SWAT Command coordinated assistance from Kitsap County SWAT and the Washington State Patrol SWAT teams. When the mutual aid agencies arrived, they combined their resources to influence the suspect and work toward his apprehension. After attempting to flee the residence in a vehicle, the suspect barricaded himself inside the garage. As the teams continued to manage the barricade and considered options for a handoff with relief teams, a female individual re-entered the scene, prompting a crisis hostage rescue operation in a vehicle.

Joel Anderson has worked his law enforcement career with the Washington State Patrol, where he began in 2004. Throughout his career he has worked in rural and urban locations throughout the State of Washington. His assignments have included working patrol and investigations as a Trooper until promoting to Sergeant in 2019 and then to Lieutenant in 2025. Joel started instructing early in his career and continues to instruct in topics that include firearms, tactics, and leadership. Joel began his time on the Washington State Patrol SWAT team in 2012 as a part-time team member, holding positions as an Assistant Team Leader, Team Leader, and left the team as the Tactical Commander in October of 2025. Joel began teaching for the Washington State Tactical Officer's Association in 2015 and is currently the Vice President of the Association. Joel is currently a Lieutenant at the Washington State Patrol Academy, overseeing the Basic Training Section as an Assistant Division Commander.

Bob Shaw started his career with the Rolling Meadows, IL Police Department in 2001. During his time with RMPD he spent 3 years assigned to NIPAS EST, 2 of those years assigned to the sniper element. Bob lateraled to the Pierce County Sheriff's Department in 2007. Bob joined the SWAT team in March of 2012. He served for a short time as an entry team member until moving into a sniper role and ultimately spent time as the sniper team leader. In 2022 he became the senior entry team leader. In his time with the Sheriff's Department Bob has served as a rescue diver on the METRO Dive team, a gang deputy, a peer support team member, a narcotics detective, and spent 4 years cross commissioned as a Federal TFO with the Tacoma DEA Task Force. Bob was promoted to a patrol Sergeant in 2022. Since 2022 Bob has been a Cadre member of the Washington State Tactical Officers Association. Bob recently lateraled from the Pierce County Sheriff's Department to the Tacoma Police Department as a Patrol Officer.

Presentation

In this powerful presentation, Kim Pastore shares her emotional journey after the tragic loss of her husband, Jorge Pastore. Jorge was a dedicated law enforcement and SWAT officer with the Austin Police Department, who sacrificed his life during a hostage rescue operation on November 11, 2023. Kim's story is one of resilience and inspiration. She bravely recounts that fateful day when she received the devastating news and discusses lessons learned from the notification, week of the funeral and aftermath. Her perspective sheds light on topics not typically thought about or discussed by officers, teams and administration. Don't miss this powerful conversation that celebrates love, sacrifice and the indomitable human spirit while also outlining best practices and protocol that is sure to benefit agencies and officers alike.

Watch the incident debrief podcast before attending the conference. Copy and paste this link:

<https://youtu.be/bmHhKg71eSE?si=XMKojwIoKEFT1J1q>

Kim Pastore is the founder of the Jorge Pastore Foundation, created to honor the legacy of her late husband, Jorge, who was tragically killed on 11/11/23 during a SWAT hostage rescue operation in Austin, TX. Jorge lived a life of service — from his career as a firefighter and paramedic in Florida to his dream role on the Austin SWAT team. His passion for training, improvement, and helping others are the pillars on which JPF is built.

The foundation provides no-cost training and grants for first responders, along with wellness programs for both first responders and veterans. Kim brings her background in business development, leadership, and philanthropy to drive the mission forward, turning her pain into purpose by improving the lives of the men and women who selflessly serve and protect.

Presentation

Advanced Hostage Rescue Theory provides SWAT operators and commanders an advanced understanding of hostage takings and modern response strategies, drawing on academic research and numerous case studies. The entire spectrum of hostage takings will be reviewed, including criminal events, domestic and workplace violence, delusional offenders, ideologically motivated events, and kidnap for ransom. Attending this course will enable participants to make better, faster, more defensible decisions, which will improve outcomes in hostage rescue operations.

Kevin Cyr served for 25 years with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police on patrol, narcotics, and homicide, in addition to experience on both collateral duty and full-time Emergency Response Teams. He finished his career as the commander of a 63-officer full-time ERT responding to over 340 calls per year. He has a law degree and has been published internationally in law and criminology journals. He has taught Incident Command at the Canadian Police College and writes extensively for the NTOA and other policing publications.

Incident Debrief

In February 2024, the Independence Police Department responded to a request for assistance regarding an officer down. Upon arrival, Officer Cody Allen and two assisting officers were met with gunfire while attempting to rescue a Jackson County process server who had been shot inside the residence. Officer Cody Allen and process server Drexel Mack were both mortally wounded during the incident. Independence Police Department SWAT was deployed in an effort to conduct a rescue under active threat conditions. This debrief examines the tactical response, challenges encountered, and lessons learned from this critical incident.

Chad Stetzler is the full-time sergeant assigned to the Independence Police Department SWAT Team. He brings 26 years of law enforcement experience, including 23 years of service on three separate tactical teams. Sergeant Stetzler began his law enforcement career with the United States Coast Guard, serving on Pacific Tactical Law Enforcement Counter-Narcotics Teams. He later transitioned to the Blue Springs Police Department and currently serves with the Independence Police Department. Sergeant Stetzler is an instructor in CTRT, search warrant service, CQB, vehicle fighting, low-light operations, vehicle containment techniques, and gas munitions. He is the proud father of two children, Alexis and Justin, both of whom are serving their country. Alexis serves as a Corpsman in the United States Navy, and Justin serves in the United States Air Force Special Warfare community.

Nate Ledezma is currently assigned to full-time SWAT with the Independence Police Department. He has been a police officer for 10 years, all with IPD. Throughout out his career, he has been assigned to the uniformed patrol division for 3 years and SWAT for 8 years. Nate currently instructs patrol officers and SWAT team members in the topics of less lethal and gas munitions, high risk vehicle stops, ballistic shield and CTRT. Nate enjoys his time off traveling with his wife and spending time with their four-legged kid, Guinness.

Kyle Ford is a full-time SWAT operator with the Independence Police Department, where he has served for seven years, including five years on the SWAT Team. He currently instructs operators and patrol officers in CQB, Night Vision, Low Light, and Vehicle CQB. Prior to joining Independence PD, Kyle served with the Lee's Summit Police Department for two years. He is a graduate of the KCPD Regional Academy and holds a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from the University of Central Missouri. Kyle maintains a strong foundation in faith and family and is supported by his wife and two young sons.