

NTOA COMMAND COLLEGE STUDENT PROFILE

LT. DAVID ALLEN

OKALOOSA COUNTY (FL) SHERIFF'S OFFICE



David Allen has been a member of the NTOA since 2013. He currently serves as a lieutenant with the Special Investigations Unit at the Okaloosa County (FL) Sheriff's Office. His unit is responsible for the investigation of narcotics offenses and fugitive apprehension. Since 2011, he has also served as team leader and trainer for the agency's special response team. He is a board member and secretary for the Florida SWAT Association since 2014. Allen holds a bachelor of science degree in public service administration.

Q: YOU CURRENTLY HOLD THE POSITION OF TEAM LEADER WITH YOUR AGENCY'S SWAT TEAM. HOW DO YOU ENVISION THE NTOA COMMAND COLLEGE BENEFITING YOU IN THAT ROLE?

A: Recently I have taken on more administrative duties with our team, and my attendance at the NTOA Command College is educating me on why the administrative duties are just as important as being a good operator. This leadership training is teaching me to see the importance of "seeing the big picture," as it relates to SWAT operations and training. I feel confident that lessons I've learned will help me lead our team to perform to a high level during training and real life scenarios. Since beginning, I have focused a great deal on administrative tasks such as documentation of training, scheduled training topics and after-action reports. I know now that this preparation and documentation will better shield our agency, team and individual members from lawsuits in the future.

Q: YOU HAVE HAD AN OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE IN SEVERAL SPECIALIZED ASSIGNMENTS AND WORK FOR A VARIETY OF LEADERS. WHAT CONSISTENT TRAITS DO YOU SEE IN GOOD LEADERS?

A: The traits that I've seen in the good leaders I've worked for are consistency, accountability and courage. Consistency is important because everyone has a clear understanding of what is expected of them and there should be no question when a job is done well or not. I think leaders underestimate the importance of being self-accountable. When those who work for you see that you are just as accountable as them for mistakes it builds trust and makes people want to work that much harder for you. I have learned and I respect those that have the courage to do what they feel is right even though everyone might not agree with them.

Q: AS PART OF THE COMMAND COLLEGE PROGRAM, YOU WERE ASKED TO SELECT A CAPSTONE RESEARCH PROJECT. WHAT TOPIC DID YOU SELECT AND WHY?

A: I selected the need to put officers early in their career into leadership training. Those of us who are leaders now should work diligently in identifying early those that are potential leaders for the future. We constantly preach to members of our team the importance of being a leader and leading by example in every aspect of the job, whether they are supervisors or not. Most importantly we tell them to be approachable and be willing to teach others what they have learned at training or in missions to better prepare them for a critical incident. With the growing threat of attacks large and small, every law enforcement officer should be able to manage basic tactical concepts of a critical incident until tactical teams arrive on scene.

Q: WHAT FEEDBACK WOULD YOU GIVE OTHER NTOA MEMBERS WHO ARE CONSIDERING ENROLLING IN THE COMMAND COLLEGE?

A: The Command College takes you to another level of being a tactical leader. When you become a leader on a SWAT team your knowledge and experience is what is valued and needed the most. The Command College prepares you to pay more attention to details such as documentation, which will better prepare your team and agency when litigation happens. The NTOA is the highest standard for SWAT training in our nation and if you wish to be one of the best at what you do then you have to learn from the best. ■



NTOA COMMAND COLLEGE IS UP AND RUNNING

The NTOA Academy began accepting applications in June 2016 for its Command College series of courses. In partnership with the International Academy of Public Safety, the NTOA is now offering three levels of leadership certification through our Command College. Local, state and federal members from throughout the country are taking advantage of this unique blend of online and residency courses. Find out more about this program or apply at ntoa.org/academy.

Go to: ntoa.org/academy

■ **Eligibility Requirements** ■ **Course Curricula** ■ **Pricing** ■ **FAQs** ■ **Application**

Contact: Academy@ntoa.org