



# 13<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL CRISIS NEGOTIATIONS CONFERENCE

By Jan Dubina

The Mesa (AZ) Police Department hosted the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Crisis Negotiations Conference, our most heavily attended CNT event ever with more than 260 negotiators coming from around the U.S. and Canada for three-and-a-half days of seminars and incident debriefs.



Keynote Speaker Robert Douglas, Baltimore PD (ret.)



SA Vince Dalfonzo, FBI



(l) Officer Nick Wolfenden, Phoenix PD, Rob Ashcroft, Mesa PD, (r) Officer Ben Gruner, Phoenix PD



Seminar students

Our keynote speaker was Robert Douglas, a retired Baltimore police officer and founder of the National Police Suicide Foundation. Douglas has devoted his life to raising awareness of police suicide and officer mental illness. He spoke at the conference on “Breaking the Silence: Law Enforcement Officer Suicide and Mental Health.”

FBI Special Agent Vince Dalfonzo, a popular returning speaker, presented on the Alabama Bunker Hostage Incident which occurred in Midland City in February 2013. The nation watched as the suspect, Jimmy Lee Dykes, held a 5-year-old boy hostage in an underground bunker during a six-day stand-off.

Dalfonzo gave a riveting account of how the negotiators, tactical team and command from the local agencies and the FBI worked smoothly together and successfully rescued the boy from the bunker on the sixth day of the event.

Shannon Meyer, FBI, did an excellent job explaining different personality types that she referred to as “the Mad, the Sad and the Bad.” Her lecture provided negotiators with an understanding about the various types of individuals that they may encounter and guidelines on dealing with these personality types. (Meyer’s PowerPoint presentation is available to view in the File Sharing section of our website.)

Special Agent Ben Perez gave a presentation on kidnapping trends in Mexico, highlighting the unique differences in negotiation techniques and the extreme violence and disregard for human life observed when dealing with kidnapers in Mexico.

Det. Joe Allen of the Glendale (CA) Police Department addressed the unique aspects of dealing with negotiations and social media. He listed numerous sites that can assist officers during a barricade/hostage incident. Allen’s PowerPoint presentation is also available on the NTOA website.

Daniel Johnson of the Hillsborough County (FL) Sheriff’s Office presented on an incident that was



unique because of its location on a shooting range. The suspect entered the gun range and held the employees hostage. The incident lasted 10 hours, ending with the suspect surrendering and the safe release of the hostages.

Tom Moyer of the Las Vegas Metro PD discussed two incidents in which the subjects threatened to jump from high profile locations throughout Las Vegas, one on top of the Stratosphere and the other on the MGM Grand Hotel. Both incidents were resolved peacefully.

Officer J.D. Byas of Dallas Police Department SWAT presented an incident debrief on the difficulty of dealing with a suicidal subject on

top of a crane threatening to jump. Continuing with the theme of suicidal subjects, Officer Mark Garera of Mesa PD spoke about his experience talking with a young man threatening to kill himself. The young man decided to live and some time after the incident, Garera contacted the young man. He played the recording of their conversation for the audience, and it was insightful to listen to the steps to recovery the young man had made since threatening to take his own life.

Phoenix Police Department Officers Ben Gruner and Nick Wolfenden gave an incident debrief about the consequences and risks when

decisions are based upon miscommunication and action imperative.

Matthew Miller of the San Diego Law Enforcement Coordination Center spoke about the January 2013 terrorist attack and hostage crisis in Algeria at a remote gas facility. Terrorists seized the large facility and four days of complex hostage negotiations followed. Negotiations were complicated by international pressure and the mass killing of hostages.

Lt. Matt Hardesty from Seminole County (FL) SO presented a block on the response of Seminole SWAT to two separate armed barricaded suicidal subjects and contrasted the two deployments.



Special thanks to the Enforcement Technology Group for sponsoring the conference and to Mesa Police Department for hosting an outstanding conference and cohost event. Also, for all of our attendees, we hope you left the conference with new insight and contacts, and that you are planning to attend our 14<sup>th</sup> Annual CNT Conference in Scottsdale, Ariz., on Nov. 10-13, 2014. Watch [ntoa.org](http://ntoa.org) for an agenda and online registration, coming soon. //



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