

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



By now, you should have reviewed the National SWAT Study that was conducted by the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP). Due to

the onslaught of criticism on the use of SWAT from the media, government officials and some communities, the NTOA's Board of Directors decided to conduct a national survey of SWAT in America. To be unbiased in the research, the NTOA hired the IACP and the University of Chicago's National Opinion Research Center to do a quantitative and qualitative study. The information collected from the study will contribute to a better understanding of the purpose, structure and operations of SWAT practices across the country (see article on page 7 of this issue.)

As we announced in the last issue, the NTOA Academy will be open for registration this July. We are very excited about this new and innovative learning opportunity for our members. The curriculum is based on best practices and designed to ensure that graduates are prepared to meet the dynamic challenges of modern policing. The NTOA Academy takes the professionalization of SWAT to the next level by providing for the certification of SWAT team leaders and commanders.

This year you will notice some significant changes for our 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Tactical Conference and Trade Show, which will be in Louisville, Kentucky. We listened to our attendees and will offer several new pricing formats this year. This will accommodate those students who want to attend the full week or only part of the conference. We have also doubled our number of

seminars and workshops. Please go to our website and look for the exciting debriefs and activities at this year's conference.

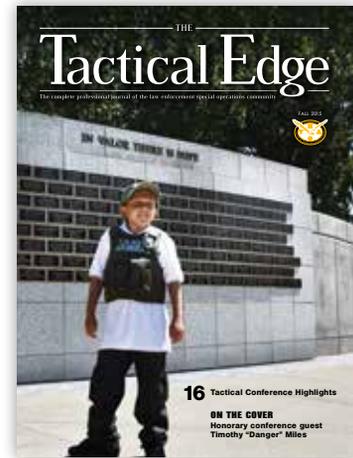
Membership benefits have been updated, as well. You can now access individual training records online. If you ever took an NTOA course as an individual member, you can now log on to our website, access your training history, and view and print your training certificates.

Finally, we are pleased to announce our new digital individual membership. In today's high-tech world, consumers demand timely information and want to access that information on the go. Therefore, we now offer a discounted individual membership that will provide our award-winning journal, *The Tactical Edge*, in a digital format, along with all the other individual member benefits. The digital membership will allow members to get the journal much more quickly than the mailed version and view it on various mobile platforms.

We appreciate your commitment and dedication to the NTOA and want to ensure that we are providing you with quality services and benefits. Let us know how we can better serve you. I look forward to seeing you in Louisville this August! ■

Be safe and God Bless,

Mark Lomax



Our thoughts and prayers are with the family of Timothy "Danger" Miles, who passed away in March 2016 after a lifelong battle with a genetic disorder.

Heroes come in all sizes, and we dedicated the cover of our fall issue to Timmy, who was the honorary guest at our 2015 tactical conference in Salt Lake City. One of his greatest wishes was to spend time with a real SWAT team, which was granted when he was welcomed as the NTOA's newest honorary member at the conference in front of more than 1,000 law enforcement officers.

We hope that he knew that he was a young hero who inspired us all. He will be remembered and missed by the NTOA community.