



# 2018 LAW ENFORCEMENT OPERATIONS CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW



# 35

THIRTY-FIFTH ANNUAL

The vibrant lakeside city of Milwaukee was the perfect backdrop for the NTOA's 35th Annual Law Enforcement Operations Conference and Trade Show. Working with the Association of SWAT Personnel – Wisconsin, and supported by various local agencies, the NTOA hosted its largest conference ever, with more than 1,100 attendees from 43 states and 425 agencies.

Our trade show, always a showcase for an amazing array of products and services, featured over 200 companies, more than 30 of which were first-time exhibitors. Attendees had an opportunity to see many of the products first hand that are entered into our Member Tested Program throughout the year. With food, drinks and widescreen TVs playing the games, the trade show floor offered a little something for everyone.

New this year was The Hub, an area in the center of the trade show floor offering several events and services to conference attendees. One section of The Hub featured general NTOA Q&A with conversations about membership, the Member Tested Program and other services offered by the association. An NTOA Academy representative was on hand to answer questions and provide insight into the program's curriculum. The Hub also hosted several "Tac Talks," 20-minute discussions on topics including incident response, SWAT standards and grant opportunities. While there were plenty of staff and instructors available throughout the week, The Hub provided an opportunity for attendees to have one-on-one conversations and get their questions answered in a more personal setting.

Elsewhere on the trade show floor, members had the opportunity to attend expert-led briefings and short seminars. Some of the most well-attended sessions covered topics such as Street Level Incident Command, Embrace the Suck and Dare to Be Great and an incident debrief from ATF SRT.

The conference opened Monday morning with a warm welcome from the NTOA's Executive Director Thor Eells and Police Chief Alfonso Morales of the Mil-



## CONFERENCE AND TRADE SHOW

waukee Police Department. Our keynote speaker was Clint Bruce, founder of Carry the Load ([carrytheload.org](http://carrytheload.org)), a foundation that supports veterans and first responders. Clint reminded us all that we should never settle for excellence. Attendees were reminded that the difference between excellence and elite is our commitment to always be learn-

ing and raising the bar both individually and for our teams.

Each year, the NTOA provides conference scholarships for many of our members who may not otherwise have the ability to attend. Funding for these scholarships was provided by BLACK-HAWK!, Federal Premium Ammunition and SWAT Life: Brothers for Adversity.

This year, 28 students were able to attend the conference because of these generous donations.

Back by popular demand, Sunday night's SWAT Callout Dinners provided a chance for attendees to network with other law enforcement officers from around the country, trade stories and share a good meal at a local restaurant.



- 1. Award of Valor:** Nicole Sherrard accepting the award posthumously for her husband Officer David Sherrard, Richardson (TX) Police Department. Also pictured are Det. E. Blanco and Sgt. M. Fitzsimmons
- 2. Unit Citation for Valor:** Austin (TX) Police Department SWAT team: (left to right) Sgt. Brannon Ellsworth, Officer Robert Justesen, Officer Leighton Radtke, Officer Vince Garcia and Officer Khristof Oborski. Not pictured: Officer William Jackman, Officer Eric Strnad, Officer Patrick O'Connor and K9 Murph, Officer Jon Abbott, Officer Tandy Perkins, Officer Michael Ridge, Officer Jared Hidalgo and Officer Jeff Kingsley.
- 3. TEMS Award:** Capt. Jon Pedrini, Carson City (NV) Fire Department and Carson City Sheriff's Office
- 4. K9 SWAT Deployment Award:** Officer Zachary Yasonia and his partner "Reno" (not pictured), Sacramento (CA) Police Department
- 5. Spirit of NTOA Award:** Sgt. Terry Cram, Sheboygan County Rescue Task Force



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These dinners were generously hosted by Ammo Inc., Hudson Supplies, Federal Premium, Sons of Liberty and Tactical Electronics.

Our Welcome Reception Monday night at Pere Marquette Park, on the banks of the Milwaukee River, was sponsored by First Tactical and Point Blank Enterprises. Attendees, vendors and staff enjoyed a live band, outdoor games, barbecue and drinks.

Beginning Tuesday, attendees participated in seminars at the host hotel and practical tracks at locations throughout the Milwaukee area. This year, students had access to more than 70 courses and seminars, and more incident debriefs than ever before, including the Route 91 Harvest Festival, the Sikh Temple Shooting, and the Norwegian Massacre. We thank all our presenters, many of whom told harrowing stories about incidents that will affect their lives forever.

Our annual banquet and awards presentation, hosted by NTOA Chairman of the Board Luke Sherman, took place Wednesday evening at the Wisconsin Center.

The annual presentation of the NTOA Awards recognized outstanding individuals and significant achievements that have occurred throughout the law enforcement special operations community over the past year. The NTOA is proud to have such accomplished and dedicated members who contribute to our field in so many ways, and we were gratified to be able to acknowledge and award some of these exceptional individuals. (See award winners on previous page).

Also recognized for their contributions to the success of the conference were members of the Association of SWAT Personnel – Wisconsin and various supporting agencies from the Milwaukee area. Special recognition was given to Tobie Weberg, Dan Wesolowski and Steve Pederson for their leadership during this event.

We are excited to announce that next year's conference will take place in Orlando, Florida, on August 18-23, 2019. Watch our website for updates on the conference and online registration.





## THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS CONFERENCE SPONSORS:

Ammo Inc.  
BLACKHAWK!  
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Eagle Industries  
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Sons of Liberty Gun Works  
SDI  
Tactical Electronics  
The Safariland Group

## RAFFLE PRIZES

Thank you to the over 100 companies who donated prizes to be raffled off at our conference to help raise funds for various scholarships offered by the NTOA.



THIRTY-SIXTH ANNUAL

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**AUGUST  
18-23, 2019**

**Orlando, FL**

Rosen Centre Hotel  
Orange County Convention Center  
[ntoa.org/tactical-conference](http://ntoa.org/tactical-conference)

Co-hosts:

Florida SWAT Association  
Orange County Sheriff's Office  
Orlando Police Department

#NTOAOrlando

**ntoa.org**