

NTOA COMMAND COLLEGE STUDENT PROFILE



SGT. JR MAHONEY
SHAWNEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Sgt. JR Mahoney has been with the Shawnee (KS) Police Department for 19 years. He joined the department's Tac Team in 2006 as a member of the entry team and has been serving as an entry team leader since 2015. He holds several instructor certifications in various SWAT and patrol related specialties.

Q: What feedback would you give other NTOA members who are considering enrolling in the Command College?

A: The NTOA Command College is a unique program that is the first of its kind. There are countless available courses across the United States for the tactical leader that focus predominantly on tactics. This program is different because it fills the remaining void and focuses on concepts, history, education and philosophy. The Command College provides a more complete perspective that is imperative to becoming the best leader possible.

As a tactical leader, you need to be prepared to put forth the necessary effort to complete the course. The course is challenging and can be time consuming. If you are up for the challenge, you will be rewarded with great instruction and education that will build confidence in your ability to lead your team.

Q: How do you envision the NTOA Command College benefiting you in your leadership role on your team?

A: Each tactical team is built upon the basic premise of saving lives and protecting our communities in stressful and unpredictable situations. To accomplish that endeavor you must formulate a group of qualified and tactically sound officers to fill that role. In order to lead a team of highly motivated and capable officers, you need someone who has tactical experience coupled with tactical education in order to move forward in a positive direction.

The Command College is providing me with tools to better lead into the future. A major benefit for me is that the course has provided confidence and validation of my training and role on our team. It is extremely beneficial to share ideas and perspectives and to learn from my peers across the country, all supported through the course research, teachings and discussion. Summarized in a final capstone project at the end of each module, the teachings take on a practical application and encourage you to think critically and comprehend the subject matter.

Q: You have had the opportunity to serve in a number of assignments that involve training law enforcement officers. What qualities and skills do you think are most important for today's officers?

A: The role of a police officer has changed and expanded greatly over my 19-year career. Times change along with technology and societal norms that affect expectations of law enforcement officers. Society expects law enforcement officers to reflect the best of humankind, and that is a tough standard to uphold.

Young officers must start with a strong moral and ethical code. There is no room for anything less. Officers must possess an inherent integrity in order to be trusted by society and co-workers. In my experience, successful officers possess three important qualities:

- **Grit:** To persevere through the rough times and the patience to know rough times will not last forever.
- **Loyalty:** Loyalty to your department, your community, your co-workers.
- **Professionalism:** It's important to always be professional and take the high road. Our choice of profession is one of service, humility and integrity. A true professional recognizes that and is a better officer for it.

Q: As a senior leader within your organization, what role do you feel you play in identifying and mentoring the next generation of leaders?

A: I believe there is a fine line between a team leader and a team manager. In many cases, we are required to be both — leaders who focus on vision and the future, and managers who think and react in the short term. As our teams fill with a new generation of officers and future commanders, it is important that we take our roles very seriously.

In a tactical operation, I believe that there is nothing more valuable than experience. For young officers who haven't had the time to gain that experience, it is imperative to the success of a team that a strong leader is in place.

I believe my specific role is to maintain tradition, teachings, best practices and solid tactics, passing experience and knowledge to the younger officers who will become the leaders of tomorrow. I am indebted to my mentors throughout my career who emphasized the importance of history, tradition and foresight. They stressed the responsibility of the position and the need to take it seriously. I still to this day cannot make a decision without hearing the words of my previous team leader, "Do we really want to do what we are about to do?"

It's my turn to give back what I have learned throughout my career to help ensure the success of future leaders. It is no longer about my success, but enabling others to be successful. I need to be available and open to the young leaders through their mistakes and successes. Working through problems can be a very positive learning experience if approached correctly.

Do the right thing for the right reasons, do what is best for the team as a whole and avert the pitfall of doing things that are only gratifying to your own ego. For me, it is about getting back to basics: training, humility, officer safety and showing up for our community.



SET YOURSELF APART FROM OTHERS IN THE PROMOTIONAL PROCESS BY ENROLLING TODAY!

The NTOA Command College isn't just for aspiring leaders, it's also the perfect opportunity for experienced tactical team leaders and commanders to validate the leadership philosophies and tactical concepts that they may already know.

Through video lectures, quizzes, discussion forums and writing assignments, you'll be able to demonstrate your knowledge of tactical leadership skills. Seasoned leaders in this program often excel at the assigned tasks, as they have numerous experiences to draw from.

FIND OUT TODAY IF THE NTOA COMMAND COLLEGE IS RIGHT FOR YOU!

Visit ntoa.org/academy to learn more.