

STUDENT PROFILE



SGT. STEPHEN J. RYAN
RADNOR TOWNSHIP (PA) POLICE DEPARTMENT

Sgt. Stephen J. Ryan began his career in law enforcement in 2013 with the Delaware County (PA) Sheriff's Office. In 2014, after serving as a part-time police officer with the Upper Chichester Township Police Department, Ryan was hired as a full-time police officer with the Radnor Township Police Department. In 2017, Ryan was selected to join the Central Delaware County Tactical Response Team, where he currently serves as a team leader and sniper unit leader. Additionally, Ryan holds certifications as a firearms instructor, a less-lethal instructor and a field training officer. He was promoted to the rank of sergeant in 2023 and has a bachelor's degree from West Chester University.

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

A: After being promoted to team leader and assigned the responsibility of the sniper unit leader, I was looking to continue to expand my proficiency in leadership. After being offered the opportunity to attend the NTOA Command College, I eagerly accepted. The depth of knowledge that is accumulated throughout the three modules in the Command College is incredible. My understanding of the immense complexity of all aspects that make a SWAT team functional, as well as the importance of professionalism and leadership, has grown much more than anticipated when I signed up for the experience. This valuable information will directly benefit me not only in my leadership role on the team, but also in my role as a street supervisor within my department and future endeavors. This program has, without a doubt, made me a better leader.

Q: You have had an 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: Today's law enforcement departments and SWAT teams face challenges with recruitment and retention. Regardless of the factors that play into these challenges, I believe that departments and teams should be looking for candidates who possess three qualities identified by Patrick Lencioni in his book, "The Ideal Team Player." These qualities are humble, hungry and smart. If a candidate possesses all three of these attributes, it will positively impact the teamwork of whichever department or team is fortunate enough to select them. These men and women will become the future leaders of the agencies. In addition, I think it's important for today's officers to be students of the profession. It is not enough to merely show up. Each officer needs to seek to gain knowledge and further their abilities constantly. This applies not only to entry-level officers but all parts of the department. Learning should never stop.



Q: How have the lessons in the Command College improved your interaction with other tactical teams and leaders in your area?

A: The lessons taught within the Command College and offered by the NTOA have provided tactical teams with best practices and a better understanding of the standards. With many regional tactical teams in my area embracing the NTOA and the courses offered, the consistency of operations and procedures when assisting one another has greatly improved. Furthermore, the in-person courses held by the NTOA have provided opportunities to meet other leaders from neighboring jurisdictions and discuss the challenges that are shared amongst the teams.

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

A: With support from my home department, I have been extremely fortunate to attend the NTOA Command College on behalf of the Central Delaware County Tactical Response Team. Additionally, I am honored to serve on the team with our commander and the first graduate of the NTOA Command College, Jeffrey Brown. Brown's implementation of the lessons learned from the Command College to our team has been vital to our success. If any operator, leader or commander is considering enrolling in the Command College, do it! You owe it to yourself, your team and your family to be the very best at the extremely dynamic career path you chose. Many of you reading this magazine are self-motivated, determined individuals who do not shy away from a challenge, whether in your personal life or career. Make the Command College your next challenge to attack head-on.



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 SID HEAL TACTICAL COMMAND COLLEGE IS RIGHT FOR YOU!



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