

# STUDENT PROFILE



**LT. SEAN MCCAMMAN**  
GRAND RAPIDS (MI) PD

Lt. Sean McCamman has served with the Grand Rapids (MI) Police Department for 15 years and is currently patrol watch commander. His previous assignments include serving on the Special Response Team, acting as a long rifle observer coordinator, and instructing in defensive tactics, firearms and chemical munitions.

**Q:** You have had an opportunity to serve in both the military and civilian law enforcement and work for a variety of leaders. What consistent traits do you see in good leaders?

**A:** Good military or civilian law enforcement leaders tend to share several consistent traits. From my experiences, some of the traits that make “quality leaders” are the following:

**Integrity:** A leader’s ability to act with honesty, ethics and fairness builds trust among their team. Integrity helps guide decision-making in both challenging and routine situations.

**Empathy:** Understanding and considering the perspectives, challenges and needs of others is crucial. Empathy creates a sense of connection and ensures the leader can lead compassionately, especially in high-stress environments.

**Decisiveness:** Leaders must make difficult decisions, often with limited information. The ability to make a choice, communicate it clearly and stand by it is essential, even when facing adversity or uncertainty.

**Adaptability:** Good leaders are flexible and able to adjust their strategies when circumstances change. Unexpected situations can arise in the military and law enforcement, and effective leaders are those who can remain calm and adapt quickly.

**Communication skills:** Clear, concise and open communication is fundamental. Leaders need to articulate goals, provide feedback and listen actively to their team. Miscommunication can lead to confusion, mistakes and a lack of trust.

**Vision:** Great leaders have a clear vision of where they want to go and can inspire others to work toward that goal. They are forward-thinking and can see the bigger picture while also focusing on the day-to-day tasks that contribute to the overall mission.

**Accountability:** Leaders must hold themselves and their team accountable. Accepting responsibility for both successes and failures fosters respect and ensures that problems are addressed and corrected.

**Resilience:** Leadership often comes with challenges, setbacks and stress. A good leader is able to remain calm and composed under pressure and bounce back from failures, learning from them instead of being discouraged.

**Mentorship:** Good leaders focus on developing their team members' skills. They know that their success is tied to the growth of those they lead, so they prioritize mentoring, training and helping others succeed.

**Humility:** A great leader is humble. They recognize that they don't have all the answers and are always open to learning and improving. They show respect to their team members and value their contributions.

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

**A:** For NTOA members considering enrolling in the Command College, I'd offer the following feedback:

**Strategic leadership development:** The Command College is an excellent opportunity to sharpen your strategic leadership skills. It's not just about operational tactics, but also about learning how to lead large, diverse teams, make high-level decisions under pressure and develop a long-term vision for your agency. If you're looking to grow in leadership and have a broader impact on your department or agency, this program will be invaluable.

**Networking opportunities:** One of the Command College's standout benefits is the chance to network with peers from across the country.

**Real-world application:** The course content is practical, and the case studies are designed to address real-world challenges you will likely face in your command role. It's not just theory, it's about applying what you learn to your daily operations, making this program highly relevant and useful.

**Personal and professional growth:** You'll not only grow in terms of your command abilities, but you'll also refine your ability to problem-solve, manage resources and handle crises. It's a chance to push yourself outside your comfort zone and grow as a leader and an individual.

**Time and commitment:** While the Command College offers significant value, be prepared for the required time and effort. It involves balancing classroom/computer learning, assignments and practical exercises. If you're already in a busy role, ensure you can commit the time needed to get the most out of the experience.

**Leadership focus:** This program is geared toward those who are already in or aiming for senior leadership roles. If you are passionate about moving into command-level leadership, the Command College will equip you with the necessary skills and knowledge.

Overall, if you are serious about advancing your career and gaining a higher level of insight into command and leadership roles, the Command College is an excellent investment. Just be sure you're ready to invest the necessary time and energy in the experience.

**Q: As part of the Command College program, you are asked to select a Capstone Research Project. What topic will you select and why?**

**A:** My Capstone Research Project topic for Module III will focus on how leaders build the strong expertise necessary within an effective team if it suffers significant turnover. I will explore why the retention rate on SWAT has declined in recent years and ways that commanders can counter this dilemma. I will make specific recommendations that will improve the recruitment and retention rates in the future.

I chose this topic because it is an issue we face, and I experienced it as a sergeant on our agency's Special Response Team. I found it interesting and was able to experience the struggles alongside the team's commander and two other sergeants. I want to study/attempt to find ways that teams can avoid or reduce turnover to improve the functionality and overall ability of a team.



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