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THE POST DISPATCH

THE LATEST NEWS AND UPDATES FROM
COLORADO POST

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

This Is the Time To Focus on Creating Better Workplaces

Deputy Director Ron Ryan shares his thoughts about work-life balance in the high-demanding fields of law enforcement and public safety.

Ron: This summer the POST team had the pleasure of working with an intern, Andre, who is a local high school student aspiring to be a public servant. Not only were we extremely impressed with Andre's intelligence, work ethic, and natural aptitude for leveraging technology, we also appreciated the **opportunity to learn what he and his peers may expect** from their future careers and employers. This was of interest to me as, having spent much of my own career recruiting and hiring, I often wonder how we can adapt to ensure we attract and engage the best candidates for our communities. **The future peace officers' desire for balance among their personal and professional lives, flexibility in their schedules, and contributions to their personal growth appear to be of high importance.**



When I began my career, I would have been thrilled for such benefits, but agencies back then were able to have a roster of eager applicants without offering such incentives. At the recent career fair hosted by the Thornton Police Department, it was clear that there are agencies working hard to attract tomorrow's officers based on the changing priorities. Some booths that were once adorned with action shots of officers in tactical gear, standing at attention in dress uniform, or chasing suspects down alleys, now displayed cinematic views of the neighborhoods, attractive main streets, and smiling officers collaborating with community members. Conversations included **robust retirement plans, education support, and generous hiring and retention bonuses.**

Although these kinds of benefits aren't new,



their place as the “hook” is increasing. Discussions at the fair among the officers with decades of experience included rethinking **how we staff and schedule a 24/7 operation while meeting the needs of the new officer**, compounded by the continually understaffed status of most departments. Ultimately, the bemoaning “I didn’t have that when I started,” evolved to a more envious “I wish I had that when I started.” We took on long shifts, day-sleeping, missed family milestones, and increased health risks – not only willingly, but in a mélange of pride and martyrdom. Perhaps **combining our experience** with our knowledge of the modern aspirant’s expectations, we can create an evolved and desirable environment for those willing to dedicate their lives to public service.

ATTORNEY GENERAL PHIL WEISER’S REMARKS

Building a Shield Against Hate: Law Enforcement and Community United

I recently visited Steamboat Springs and learned of an inspiring collaborative called STAND, the Steamboat Team to Disrupt Antisemitism and Discrimination, which was formed **to combat bias and discrimination** in Routt County and **to foster kindness, awareness and inclusion**. STAND has brought together law enforcement, schools, SROs, religious leaders, students, and community leaders who together work to address incidents of hate in their community.

This level of open communication is critical to our collective response to rising levels of intolerance and acts of hate. Such collaboration can allow for earlier intervention as schools and community members are often the first to identify potential issues and flag concerning behaviors early on. It can also facilitate a coordinated response particularly where pre-established protocols between law enforcement and schools in particular are in place. And importantly, it can **strengthen the relationship between law enforcement and the community**, especially with marginalized groups, fostering trust and encouraging reporting of crimes.

Together

I am deeply concerned about the rising prevalence of hate and of hate crimes – such acts erode the very fabric of our society. Hate crimes don’t only impact the victim, but their entire community. Law enforcement’s role in deterring and investigating hate crimes is vital to the safety of us all. **By investing in programs like STAND** that build trust, encourage reporting, and foster collaboration **we can make significant progress in combating these incidents and creating safer communities for everyone**.

I am encouraged by the thoughtful work in Routt County, and I know many of you have similar initiatives. Please tell us about these bright spots and share your success stories by reaching out to POST Director, Bo Bourgerie, at erik.bourgerie@coag.gov.

New Compliance Specialists Are Now on Board

Earlier this year, two Compliance Specialists joined POST. Eric Sipes (or just "Sipes" as he calls himself) and Lisa McCammon came to us with extensive law enforcement backgrounds and have been wonderful additions to the team. Get to know Lisa & Sipes a little by reading the bios below and please be sure to give them a warm welcome when you see them out in the field!



Lisa: I was born in Colorado and for the most part raised in this beautiful state. The Wildlife Biology degree I received from CSU eventually guided me to a rewarding career in law enforcement. Starting as a State Park Ranger, I transitioned to Deputy Sheriff and later moved to a civilian role. I eventually found myself at the CU Boulder Police Department, overseeing Records, Property & Evidence, and Dispatch. Throughout my career, I've had the opportunity to make an impact among different communities and connect with amazing people. I'm happy to to continue do that and more at POST! Outside of work I like to travel. I was also talked into playing recreation level ice hockey last year! On the picture is me with my 13-year-old son Dexter.

Sipes: I grew up in the Harvy Park/South Platte area of Denver. After graduation, I enlisted in the military and was honorably discharged in 2002. I worked in reclamation while attending school, and eventually I started a rewarding law enforcement career with the Summit County Sheriff's Office as a Patrol Deputy. I later moved down to the front range and worked at the Longmont Police Department. I found my passion in training new officers as a Field Training Officer, but my career was cut short when I was injured in the line of duty. My wife Steph and I used this unfortunate event as an opportunity to open a Crumbl Cookies store. We continue to own and operate our location with our two boys and newly arrived daughter. I missed my career in law enforcement though, so I decided to continue supporting the citizens of Colorado by working at POST. I am excited to be a part of such an amazing organization and inspired by the direction POST is giving this honorable profession.



Training Opportunities Not To Miss

Did you know that there are 20 online training courses available to be taken on Benchmark? That includes two new courses that have recently been added: Investigations of Crimes to At-Risk Adults and Protecting Victims of Domestic Violence. As the title suggests, Investigations of Crimes to At-Risk Adults goes into crimes against at-risk adults and investigative strategies to battle them. Protecting Victims of Domestic Violence talks about the importance of an officer's response to domestic violence investigations. The centerpiece of this training is a video produced and provided to Colorado POST by the Denver Police Department. Both trainings are an hour long and well worth your time. We look forward to any feedback at trainingpost@coag.gov.



In addition to online training, POST offers the following in-person courses:

- **Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics (ICAT)** provides first responding peace officers with the tools, skills, and options to defuse a range of critical incidents successfully and safely. This course is a day and half, with the first day in the classroom and the next day participating in scenarios to put into practice what was covered in the classroom.
- **Ethical Decision Making Under Stress (EDMUS)** offers strategies to recognize human responses to stress, apply techniques to manage it, and make ethical decisions in distressing circumstances. The EDMUS course is one day, with an optional second day to become a trainer on this course. This allows peace officers to go back to their agencies and teach the class themselves.

Keep your email address current in Benchmark to receive updates about the above courses and other POST news!



GRANTS

Summer Full of Numbers and Travels

Those of you working close with accounting know that summer means fiscal year end. Well, at least the first month or so. On June 30, POST successfully closed another grant year, while preparing for the new one. We've provided a few data points on the next page to give you an idea of what this program (managed by three mighty people by the way) does for Colorado officers.

In FY24...

- **\$2.4M of grant funds** was invested in rural and urban law enforcement communities;
- **102 classes** held with **1,978 students** trained and **678 scholarships** provided;
- **76,466.75 hours of training** between both classes and scholarships;
- **103,381** peace officers used PoliceOne training platform, largely funded by POST.

Though getting all of this done was not an easy task, we still found opportunities to travel across the state and engage with our training regions.



The most recent **POST Open House was hosted by Delta County Sheriff's Office** (a BIG shout out to them for that). Officers representing several agencies from the western slope attended to hear about POST happenings and to network with other law enforcement professionals. Sounds like something you would like to do as well? Then reach out to Kim Hernandez at kimberly.hernandez@coag.gov.

POST BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

June 9 Session

Attorney General Weiser opened the Board Meeting, recognizing the contributions of departing board members Sheriff Mazzola and Sheriff Mobley, and welcoming new board members Chief Thomas of the Denver Police Department, and Detective Sergeant Meyers of the Lakewood Police Department. Attorney General Weiser acknowledged departing Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) Marc Weber (Curriculum), Jeff Bredehoeft (Firearms), and Craig Klukas (Arrest Control), and congratulated Mary Vekasy on her new role as POST Compliance Manager, as well as welcoming Eric Sipes and Lisa McCammon as POST's new Compliance Specialists.

After reports from the SME committees, the Board addressed appeals relating to five Rule 8 Variances, four misdemeanor and two felony revocations, one suspension, five revocations for untruthfulness, and six voluntary revocations. Also discussed were revised grant guidelines and grant awards, instructor methodology course and academy redesign updates. Sheriff Martin reported on two appeals hearings that were heard by a subcommittee of the POST Board prior to the meeting.

For more details on these matters, see minutes on the [POST website](#). Be safe!



**FOR NEWSLETTER
INQUIRIES**

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