

## WESTERN STATES HOSTAGE NEGOTIATORS' ASSOCIATION

2023 Featured Presenters  
May 1, 2023 – May 3, 2023



### **Special Agent Cassie Taylor – Federal Bureau of Investigation**

Cassie Taylor is a Special Agent for the FBI. She primarily works Indian Country matters in Northern Nevada. After attending the National Crisis Negotiation Course (NCNC) in Quantico, Virginia in April 2019, Cassie has been actively involved with the local crisis negotiation teams since that time. Additional collateral duties include assisting the Northern Nevada Safe Streets Task Force and coordinating the Behavioral Analysis program for the Las Vegas Division of the FBI.

### **Rocky Boice Negotiation at Pyramid Lake Indian Reservation**

Awaiting synopsis.



### **Robert Ragsdale - Phoenix Police Department - Retired**

Bob Ragsdale retired from the Phoenix Police Department with 29-years of service. Fifteen of those years were spent with the department's full time tactical team, the Special Assignments Unit (SAU). His negotiations career began in 1988 when the SAU lieutenant told him he was now a negotiator. In 1992 Bob started creating and conducting training in hostage/crisis negotiation and crisis communication, and has been doing that, off and on, ever since.

Bob has taught nationally for both the National Tactical Officers Association (NTOA) and Crisis Systems Management (CSM). He was the managing editor of the NTOA's "Crisis Negotiator" journal and a member of their editorial board and has authored numerous negotiation-related articles. Bob has also been a speaker at national, regional, and state negotiation conferences. He no longer travels and teaches multi-day negotiation classes but still does an occasional zoom or in-person class or conference presentation when requested and volunteers his time helping local negotiators and teams with their training.

### **WSHNA "Operating as One Team" Synopsis**

Although the tools and tactics may be different for the tactical and negotiation teams, they share the mutual goals of the preservation of life and the peaceful resolution of a crisis incident. While not always possible due to uncontrollable circumstances, these goals cannot be accomplished if both teams do not work together as one team under the leadership of a knowledgeable command element that ensures there is a unified strategy, a constant exchange of information between all elements, and timely decision making with input from both teams.

This interplay begins with the sharing of information from the initial intelligence gathering by the negotiators and the scout of the crisis site by the tactical operators. A “Parallel Approach” is utilized, as the incident progresses, where there is a synchronization of talk and tactics (force) to encourage and promote communication, and incident resolution. Even when a negotiated resolution does not appear likely, the negotiation team, working in conjunction with the tactical team and command, can engage in “tactical negotiation” strategies that assist the tactical team with the risk effective tactical option chosen to resolve the incident.

Promoting this idea of operating as one team begins well before a crisis incident begins. The tactical, negotiation and command elements should know and understand each other’s philosophies, strategies, responsibilities, and capabilities. This can be done through education, cross training, and regular joint training exercises, all of which promote credibility, mutual trust, and respect.

This presentation was originally created for an agency’s joint training day and the information is relevant for incident and tactical commanders, tactical operators, and negotiators.



**Sergeant Jessica Hill  
Detective Justin Godfrey  
Agent Joshua Lynch**

**Layton City Police Department, Utah**

Jessica Hill is a Sergeant with the Layton City Police Department and has been serving her community for the past 9 years. She attended Weber State University, where she received a

bachelor’s degree in Criminal Justice with an emphasis in Law Enforcement. During her career, Jessica has served in the patrol division and has held various positions, including Field Training Officer, Firearms Instructor, Women’s Assault Defense Instructor, Physical Fitness Coordinator and Domestic Violence Protocol Instructor. She is currently assigned as the Administrative Sergeant and Field Training Program Coordinator.

Jessica has been a Crisis/Hostage Negotiator on the North Davis Metro SWAT team since 2015. She has completed the Basic FBI Crisis Negotiation School, Phase II & III Crisis Negotiation courses and other advanced negotiations courses. Jessica has served as the North Davis Metro SWAT Crisis Negotiations team leader since 2020 and oversees a team of seven members. She has a passion for crisis negotiation and strives to develop more frequent and standardized training for the team.

Detective Justin Godfrey has been with the Layton City Police Department since 2017. He has worked as a Patrol Officer, Detective/School Resource Officer, Background Investigator and CIT Officer. Some of Justin’s extra assignments have included being a member of the Community Engagement Team and a Training Instructor. Justin has contributed to the North Davis Metro SWAT team as a Crisis/Hostage Negotiator since 2020. As a member of the negotiations team, he has responded to numerous critical incidents to include suicidal individuals, barricaded suspects, and an armed hostage situation. Detective Godfrey finds great reward in working with his team to use effective communication on a personal level to deescalate and create solutions to critical incidents.

Detective Godfrey lives in the community where he works with his wife and three children. He has a bachelor’s degree in Psychology from Weber State University.

Agent Joshua Lynch has been an officer with the Layton City Police Department for 10 years. He has worked as a Patrol Officer, DUI Officer, Field Training Officer, Drug Recognition Expert, and a member of the Crime

Reduction Unit. For the past year and a half, Joshua has been assigned to the Davis Metro Narcotics Task Force. During Joshua's first few years in law enforcement, he discovered a passion for influencing people through effective communication. He was selected as a member of the North Davis Metro SWAT Negotiations Team and has been on the team for the past 7 years. He believes that while negotiators see a wide array of outcomes, all individuals deserve a fair chance at a peaceful resolution.

When Joshua is not at work, he has a passion for all things outdoors, especially when it involves family, friends, a smoked brisket, and a cold drink.

### **“Wasatch Front Rescue: A Family Saved”**

In September 2021, a suspect was involved in a several days crime spree that spanned through multiple Davis County cities. The suspect had been committing violent crimes for two days and kept evading police. The suspect was eventually located and lead police on a high-speed vehicle chase. At the conclusion of the pursuit, he fled again and unlawfully entered a residence in the middle of the night where he held a family hostage at gun point. For over 9 hours, the suspect assaulted, manipulated and terrorized the family. Several agencies, including the North Davis Metro Crisis Negotiations Team, were called to the scene to assist. Negotiators were eventually able to establish communication with the hostages and suspect, which began a tense multi-hour negotiation.

This presentation will discuss the outcome of the incident and the unique circumstances that concluded it. It will cover negotiating through text message and working through a perceived Stockholm syndrome. Lastly, it will discuss the incidents shortcomings, successes, and the importance of working together jointly with the tactical team.



### **Officer Erik Morris – Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department**

Erik Morris is a Police Officer with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD) and has been with the agency for 14-years. Officer Morris has worked varying assignments as a patrol and plainclothes Officer; Patrol, Gang Unit and Organized Crime Detective and currently works full time as an instructor with the LVMPD Firearms Training and Tactics Unit. Officer Morris became a Negotiator with LVMPD in 2015 and is the Assistant Team Leader for one of two LVMPD Crisis Negotiator Teams.

### **‘Many Lessons Learned’**

In May of 2021, Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department's Crisis Negotiation Team responded to a callout of a barricaded subject. What was initially a lone barricade involving a male, wanted for battery on a police officer and other stolen property offenses, quickly turned into a hostage situation involving a 4-year-old boy and his babysitter. This incident would conclude twenty-nine hours later after several shift changes, multiple agencies becoming involved, and many lessons learned.