

How Departments Nationwide Partnered with IACP to Develop Their Leaders Using Leadership in Police Organizations (LPO)TM, A Program Focusing on Principles of Dispersed Leadership and Behavioral Science

In February 2009, the IACP realized its goal to create and maintain a division to focus on leadership training, research, and information dissemination for law enforcement. The Center for Police Leadership and Training (CPLT) was created to house both one to five day tuition training programs and IACP's nationally recognized leadership training course, Leadership in Police Organizations (LPO)TM. The LPOTM course, uses a foundation of behavioral science theories and focuses on the principles of dispersed leadership. More than 220 local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies have participated in the program. In January 2010, a yearlong effort to update and enhance the LPOTM curriculum culminated in the rollout of new training materials to 18 partner agencies throughout the United States. The updated program caps a 12-year effort to provide training that is practical, relevant, academically sound, research- and behavioral science-based, and affordable.

The article below describes the evolution, content, structure and delivery methods of the LPOTM program. Different models used by participating agencies to successfully adopt the program, integrate it into their department and sustain it locally are highlighted.

The Evolution of the LPO

In 1998, the IACP sponsored a leadership conference to develop a strategy to assist chiefs in leading their organizations and to establish guidelines for employees who aspire to become police chiefs. The resulting report included a recommendation that the IACP continue to develop the concept that "Every Officer (Is) a Leader" by creating and delivering a law enforcement-specific leadership training program to as many officers as possible, of every level and rank.

In order to develop curriculum, hold an academic summit, and pilot the basic program and a follow-on faculty development workshop (FDW), the IACP obtained three grants from the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) office of the U.S. Department of Justice (USDOJ) from 2000 to 2004. As a part of this initial effort, IACP developed a text, basic PowerPoint slides for instructors, training bulletins, and reading lists.

From 2000 to 2010, more than \$1.4 million was devoted to developing, piloting, and refining the LPO(TM) curriculum and associated training materials. When grant funding ended in 2006, the IACP Foundation, the IACP, and the Motorola Foundation provided financial support to sustain and update the program. In addition, the IACP developed a tuition-based training program that allowed agencies to contract with the IACP to host the 15-day LPOTM class and a follow-on FDW to develop their own instructional cadre to maintain and grow the program locally. The IACP has delivered the training to law enforcement departments in 24 states. In 2010,

departments in 19 states entered into partnership agreements with the IACP to continue the program locally, using instructors and instructional materials developed through the IACP. Additional departments are participating in FDW's this summer for the purpose of developing their faculty.

Program Content and Structure

The origin of the LPO program lies in a leadership course previously offered by the U.S. Military Academy (USMA) at West Point and designed by Dr. Howard Prince while he served as head of the USMA's Department of Behavioral Science and Leadership. A group of law enforcement and academic consultants then modified the West Point curriculum to meet the unique needs of law enforcement while retaining the behavioral science foundation.

Based on feedback from more than 2,000 participants, a group of law enforcement and academic professionals convened in March of 2009 to review, update, and revise the curriculum. They added new topics (leading in a diverse community) and expanded others, such as communication and counseling skills. Their efforts are reflected in the new, three-volume text available from Balmar Press which provides updated research, and real life scenarios depicting use of the principles learned in the classroom. The CPLT also developed a SharePoint website for and maintained by the IACP exclusively for the trainers in partner agencies around the country. The website contains new PowerPoint slides, lesson plans, class exercises case studies, and video clips that department trainers can download for use in the classroom. It also provides a forum for trainers to share "best practices" and lessons learned in the classroom.

The LPO™ course gives students an in-depth understanding of "dispersed leadership"—clarifying and reinforcing the principal that "Every Officer (Is) a Leader." It demonstrates that leadership is not the exclusive domain of senior or executive ranks; rather, people in all ranks are expected—and trained—to be leaders. This course is presented to a cross-section of sworn and non-sworn personnel ranging from the chief to senior patrol officers (in general, 36 per class), thus enabling students to benefit from vertical team-building skills and increase their confidence in themselves and each other.

Classes are typically taught by senior IACP instructors at the police department, a hotel, or academy, in 5-day increments over 10 to 12 weeks depending on the operational needs of the participating agencies. The IACP conducts follow-on FDWs for 10 days at a time at a location the department chooses. In the workshop, prospective LPO™ instructors study the educational theory that underpins the LPO™ course, teach the material, and receive peer and instructor critiques. After completing the workshop, students return to the classroom, where a senior instructor mentors them to successfully deliver the program within their own agency or region.

The LPO™ course employs facilitated, adult learning techniques, including lecture, role playing, interactive class exercises, small group discussion, videos, case studies, and student journals. The first week's lessons focus on leading individuals and cover such topics as attribution, expectancy

and equity theory, generational differences, and followership. Students also learn the Leader Thought Process, a problem-solving approach to leadership and the fundamental process that supports each lesson throughout the course.(1) Week two focuses on leading groups and explores group development, socialization, decision making, group cohesion, and intergroup conflict. Topics in the final week include communication and counseling skills, strategies for leading in a diverse community and for leading change, shaping organizational culture, and creating an ethical environment.

Several states have obtained Peace Officer Standards and Training Board (POST) accreditation for the program and have partnered with local educational institutions to obtain three hours of graduate or undergraduate credit for the curriculum.

Although tuition for the initial three-week class varies according to hotel and airfare costs, the cost of the course averages about \$380 per student per week. To keep travel costs down, the IACP has utilized web based conferencing for class orientations that involve participants from throughout a state or region.

During the last three years, as the program has become more geographically dispersed, the IACP staff has worked with each agency to find a delivery model that will work for its situation. The following examples show how a number of departments have financed, delivered, and expanded the program in their areas. As the following models show, the LPO program is not limited to large or small agency participation, since the behavioral science principles are applicable to both. Sworn and non-sworn personnel from departments of varying sizes have participated in the program.

Training and Delivery Models Employed by Different Departments

- **Small Agency Training Consortium**

To help defray the costs of hosting a class, and bring diverse perspectives to the classroom, several smaller departments have collaborated to contract with the IACP. For example, the Athens-Clarke County Police Department in Athens, Georgia, joined with the University of Georgia Police Department to host and offer classes for other agencies throughout Georgia. They then participated in an FDW and mentored and developed their own trainers. They have now completed their fifth regionally based program. Police departments in Garden Grove, California; Jacksonville, North Carolina; Wisconsin and Lufkin, Texas, have replicated this model.

(1) IACP Publication - Report from the Summit, August 2005, pg 3.

“This course is a road map for success as a leader. I can only imagine what a tremendous difference could have been made in my life if this road map had been provided 22 years ago when I started my career. It is my strong opinion that this program must be taught at every level of leadership.” (Lieutenant, Georgia Police Department)

- **State Police Model and a Focus on Training at All Levels in the Organization**

The Minnesota State Patrol hosted a class that included both local departments and other surrounding state police organizations. Having completed the FDW, these instructors are being mentored by IACP in the classroom and are partnering with other local and state agencies for future classes. Pennsylvania, Delaware, Washington, and New Mexico state police have also adopted the updated LPO™ program. Wisconsin State Patrol will be partnering with IACP to run a program this summer. Reciprocal agreements among some of the states have helped them diversify their training cadre and reduce their out year costs. Some departments have also offered portions of the program, such as the module on followership to recruits in the basic academy.

“The Minnesota State Patrol began using LPO™ curriculum as its core leadership training program during 2009. Feeling strongly about the need for diversity in thought and experience, as well as collaboration, we developed a multistate/agency approach. We’ve continued this cooperation with surrounding states as well as agencies within Minnesota. An emphasis has been placed on providing this training from the top of the command structure first, and working down from there to facilitate the implementation of LPO™ concepts into everyday business within the organization. A demonstration of this commitment was shown in the first LPO™ class hosted in Minnesota, which the agency’s entire command staff attended. The LPO™ program has provided tremendous opportunity personally and professionally for each of our employees, while providing a platform for additional collaboration with our allied agencies both in and beyond Minnesota.” (Colonel Mark Dunaski, Minnesota State Patrol)

- **Major City and Large Department Models**

Montgomery County, Maryland; Tulsa, Oklahoma; and Milwaukee, Wisconsin have participated in the LPOTM program and have developed their own instructional cadre to sustain the program and embed it into the organizational culture.

“Our police department, along with the surrounding municipal agencies, is greatly benefiting from the opportunities created through the LPO™. We are in the early stages of implementation and the visible changes are already evident. Our LPOTM graduates are engaging in a productive dialogue that has assisted us in re-examination of some of the important challenges we face. Leadership is a skill that takes lots of intentional time and effort to improve on and this class is a substantial vehicle that is enhancing our department’s effectiveness. We are thankful

for this training and are pleased to have chosen this thoroughly researched and scenario-based teaching method.” (Chief Thomas Manger of Montgomery County, Maryland)

To facilitate implementation in large departments, IACP also developed a one-week program for command staff, which was taught in large departments, and made available for the larger law enforcement community.

- **POST and State Chiefs Association Facilitate Statewide Participation**

The Arizona POST Board (AZ POST) and Colorado Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP) have both been instrumental in spreading the LPO program to law enforcement statewide. AZ POST has been involved in the LPO program since 2006 and has been instrumental in the development of the curriculum that has been instructed throughout the United States. AZ POST has conducted sixteen classes, comprised of nearly 500 sworn and civilian students who represent 73 city, county, state, federal and tribal criminal justice agencies. AZ POST is holding seven LPOTM courses this calendar year and has conducted three FDWs with IACP for Arizona and national instructors since its association with the LPO™ program.

In June 2009, the (CACP) hosted its first class for 36 participants from around the state. Twenty-eight students from this first class expressed interest in becoming trainers and subsequently completed the FDW in the fall. These instructors will be mentored during the two sessions held this spring. The CACP plans to run three courses this year for agencies within the state. Chief Daniel Brennan of the Wheat Ridge, Colorado Police Department and CACP Board Member has been a strong proponent in bringing the LPO program to Colorado.

“In Colorado, law enforcement CEOs identified leadership training as a critical need in our agencies. While our association offers training programs for newly promoted supervisors and managers, we see the LPO™ program as the capstone of leadership development in Colorado. The three-week LPOTM program helps leaders understand the role that behavior and value-based leadership play in meeting the needs of employees, the organization, and community. The program structure of reading, instruction, classroom dialogue, and putting theories to practice through the Leader Thought Process assists the student in developing a new toolbox with which to successfully address leadership challenges. Our 28 instructors come from departments of various sizes throughout the state. As a group, they have enthusiastically embraced this training, describing it as the best leadership training they have ever received. CACP appreciates the cooperation and collaboration we have received from the CPLT in making LPOTM training a reality in Colorado.” (Chief Daniel Brennan of the Wheat Ridge, Colorado, Police Department)

- **Joint Fire and Police Training Programs**

In response to interest from the fire community, and to encourage first responders within any given region to train together, the IACP partnered with the Western Area Fire Chiefs, Glendale Fire Department, and AZ POST to pilot a Leadership in Public Safety Organizations (LPSO)™ course in Glendale Arizona in February 2010. Police personnel and City of Glendale Assistant Fire Chief Chris DeChant worked with the IACP staff to modify the text and teaching materials to reflect both police and fire culture. Enrollment was open to both police and fire personnel. Fire

personnel also joined classes in Lufkin, Texas. Based on the success of the pilot program, the IACP plans to partner with other police and fire agencies to co-host classes in their areas.

"As a long-term fire chief, I found this experience to be refreshing and stimulating. The homework was relevant and prepared us for the daily discussions. It was gratifying to see the small group sessions of combined police and fire lead to in-depth conversations on how we each do our jobs. We learned how much police and fire share in our pursuit to serve the community. I believe this integration of police and fire leadership education is vital as we move forward in our complex world." (Fire Chief Dave Bierwiler, class participant, Medford, Oregon)

- **Public and Private Partnerships**

When the Modesto, California, police department was looking for a local partner with whom to help develop and fund the program, it teamed up with the private security staff of nearby E & J Gallo Winery, a private, family-owned and operated company. By opening up slots to members of Gallo's security staff, some of whom later became LPO instructors, Modesto PD enhanced community relations and demonstrated that the leadership concepts used in the military and taught at the university level to business, organizational development, and future industry leaders also apply to police work. A tour of Gallo Winery underscored the idea that policing requires involvement and partnership with the community. Although emphasizing the "bottom line," business point of view, the tour reinforced LPO™ leadership concepts and provided a broader understanding of them.

"The leadership concepts learned in LPO™ classes apply to every organization, public and private, because in the end, every organization is made up of people. The key is to understand how those theories and principles are implemented in different organizations, a benefit of partnering with a private organization." (Lt. Chris Fuzie, Modesto Police Department)

The IACP training division recently met with the training division of ASIS International, which represents members in the security business, to discuss future ways in which police departments and corporate security could partner on local training initiatives, including the LPO™ program.

Program Impact

In 2008, faculty and graduate students from the University of Maryland and members of the IACP's Research Center Directorate evaluated the LPO™ program. The assessment team used an online survey to quantify the effects of training on individuals and agencies. Three hundred and seventy-one graduates participated in the survey. Additionally, roundtable focus group discussions with course participants in three locations provided more detailed qualitative data. Focus group participants came from 28 different law enforcement agencies and included both sworn and non-sworn personnel.

Analysis of the data showed an overwhelmingly positive response from course participants. Some of the key findings included:

- 95.1 percent of survey respondents felt they had become more effective leaders after participating in the LPO™ training course.
- 98.4 percent of survey respondents said they would recommend this training to others.
- 92.7 percent of survey respondents said they felt the training had a positive effect on them personally, with no one (zero percent) reporting a negative effect.
- 95.1 percent of survey respondents reported taking new ideas presented in the course back to their department/agency.

“LPO™ has been shown to be effective in changing the leadership practices in individual officers and their agencies. Focus group participants shared their enthusiasm about the program and asserted that LPO™ provides a curriculum distinct from other leadership trainings.” (2)

Future Efforts

In the future, the IACP will continue to examine student and instructor feedback to refine and expand the program. IACP plans to continue the partnership with the Motorola Foundation that funded the recent update to the program. The CPLT will focus additional efforts on the use of training materials to develop classes specifically for field training officers and command staff. Additional LPSO™ classes will be held to foster joint fire and police training. The IACP will also explore blended learning modules to help deliver the program to more locations at a reasonable cost without losing the unique classroom experience that distinguishes the LPO™ program. Moreover, the IACP will continue efforts to make the program available in geographically dispersed locations to help further reduce travel costs for students. Finally, the CPLT will continue to support, develop, update, and mentor the instructional staff of the partner organizations with Web-based and face-to-face meetings designed to update, inform, and allow partner agencies to share “best practices” as they develop.

Obtaining Additional Information

For additional information on the LPO™ or LPSO™ programs, please refer to the IACP website link www.theiacp.org and click on the training tab, or contact CPLT staff members Jennifer Porter (porter@theiacp.org) on 703-836-6767 ext 366 or Roberta Dean (dean@theiacp.org).

(2) Research Committee and University of Maryland, 2008 Assessment of the LPO Program, December 2008, page 3