



2026 WPLF WINTER TRAINING CONFERENCE & EXPO



SPEAKERS & PRESENTATIONS

USE OF FORCE IN AMERICA: LESSONS LEARNED FROM MINNESOTA

This session provides an unfiltered and deeply informed perspective on the events leading to the death of George Floyd and the nationwide impact that followed. Participants will explore how officer-involved incidents since 2014 have reshaped use-of-force policies, courtroom practices, and the rules of engagement across the country. Through the review of body-worn camera (BWC) footage and case studies, attendees will examine key policy considerations within the context of Wisconsin law.

Topics include high-liability areas such as de-escalation, duty to intercede, and duty to render medical aid. The presentation will highlight lessons learned and practical strategies for law enforcement professionals to enhance decision-making and accountability.



About the Presenter:

Imran Ali is a shareholder at Eckberg Lammers and serves as Senior Director of Training, Consulting, and Investigation Services. With more than 19 years of experience as a public-sector trial attorney, Imran has prosecuted complex cases involving homicide, sexual assault, narcotics, and violent crime. In 2014, he founded the East Metro Human Trafficking Task Force—one of Minnesota's first—and has since trained thousands of officers and prosecutors nationwide.

A respected educator, Imran has taught at the University of Minnesota Law School and Mitchell Hamline School of Law, providing instruction to judges, prosecutors, and law enforcement professionals. He is a two-time recipient of the Minnesota Attorney of the Year Award (2016 and 2020) and continues to be recognized for his leadership, advocacy, and commitment to justice.



Attorney Ali Imran
Shareholder at Eckberg Lammers
Law Enforcement Training Academy





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DATA WITHOUT BORDERS: PROVEN MODELS FOR SECURE, STATEWIDE INFORMATION SHARING

In today's data-driven world, law enforcement agencies face an overwhelming challenge—too much information and too little connectivity. Peregrine is changing that. This session explores proven models for secure, statewide data sharing and highlights how agencies across the nation are breaking down silos to share critical intelligence seamlessly, safely, and efficiently.

Attendees will learn practical strategies for improving interoperability, strengthening investigations, and enhancing public safety through smarter information exchange. The discussion will also explore what successful collaboration could look like for Wisconsin, drawing from real-world examples and lessons learned from agencies already using Peregrine's innovative data-sharing platform.



Kyle Whyte
Senior Account Executive
Peregrine (Midwest)

About the Presenter:

Kyle Whyte serves as Peregrine's Midwest Senior Account Executive. Peregrine is a leading technology platform that helps law enforcement agencies transform fragmented data into clear, actionable intelligence. Over the past five years, he has worked closely with departments throughout Wisconsin to implement tools that simplify workflows, strengthen operations, and boost officer morale. Kyle is passionate about using modern, intuitive technology to empower agencies and help them better serve their communities with clarity and confidence.



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SPEAKERS & PRESENTATIONS

PREVENTION AND RESPONSE TO SEXTORTION – THE JORDAN DEMAY CASE STUDY

On March 25, 2022, 17-year-old Jordan DeMay tragically took his own life after enduring a five-and-a-half-hour sextortion scheme orchestrated by Nigerian actors. The ensuing investigation led to the arrest, extradition, conviction, and federal sentencing of the perpetrators. The case also uncovered a domestic money-laundering network, resulting in the arrest and sentencing of multiple U.S. citizens who facilitated the transfer of illicit funds through cryptocurrency.

This presentation provides an in-depth examination of the investigation and highlights critical lessons learned, including:

- Background of the victim and suspects
- Death and digital investigations
- Evidence preservation and coordination
- Interagency collaboration and communication
- Media relations and public messaging
- Factors contributing to case success



Sheriff Gregory Zyburt
Marquette County Sheriff's Office (MI)

About the Presenters:

Sheriff Gregory Zyburt brings over 45 years of law enforcement experience to his role as Sheriff of Marquette County. Beginning his career as a patrol officer, he went on to serve 35 years as Chief of Police for Chocolay Township before being elected Sheriff in 2017. Throughout his tenure, Sheriff Zyburt has secured millions in grant funding to enhance law enforcement technology and safety—introducing Michigan's first body-worn camera program, pioneering the use of SOTOR body scanners in corrections, and leading technology initiatives recognized at the state and national level. A graduate of the FBI National Academy (Class 202), he has testified before the White House criminal justice panel and served as a Department of Justice consultant on technology integration and transparency. Sheriff Zyburt currently serves on the MI Commission on Law Enforcement Standards, numerous community advisory boards, and continues to champion officer wellness, innovation, and community engagement.



Undersheriff Lowell Larson
Marquette County Sheriff's Office (MI)

Undersheriff Lowell Larson began his public safety career in 1998 with Marquette County Search and Rescue before joining the Sheriff's Office in 1999. Rising through every division and rank, he has served as corrections deputy, road patrol deputy, detective, firearms and active shooter instructor, and medical examiner investigator. At the time of the Jordan DeMay case, he served as Detective Lieutenant, later promoted to Captain of Law Enforcement Services in 2023 and appointed Undersheriff in August 2024. He also serves on the ISD School Board for Marquette and Alger Counties and is a strong advocate for youth safety, digital crime prevention, and proactive law enforcement collaboration.



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SPEAKERS & PRESENTATIONS

PURPOSE AND COMPASSION AT WORK

What truly defines leadership in today's workplace? In this thought-provoking and inspiring session, John McHugh explores how purpose and compassion can transform organizational culture and drive lasting success. Drawing on Kwik Trip's decades-long commitment to mission-driven values, John illustrates how building a culture rooted in trust, care, and authenticity leads to stronger teams, loyal customers, and thriving communities.

Through engaging stories and real-world examples, participants will learn how to foster a culture where people feel valued and connected to a greater purpose—one that inspires excellence, accountability, and service.



KWIK TRIP



John McHugh
Director of Corporate
Communications, Leadership
Development, and Training for
Kwik Trip, Inc. (La Crosse, WI)

About the Presenter:

John McHugh serves as the Director of Corporate Communications, Leadership Development, and Training for Kwik Trip, Inc., based in La Crosse, Wisconsin. Under his leadership, Kwik Trip has been recognized as a Top Workplace by the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Minneapolis Star Tribune, and Des Moines Register.

Before joining Kwik Trip in 2004, John was an educator and principal at Aquinas High School in La Crosse. He holds degrees from the University of Saint Thomas (Saint Paul, MN) and the Gregorian University (Rome, Italy). John also serves on the Boards of Trust Point, Better Life Insurance, and Viterbo University.



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SPEAKERS & PRESENTATIONS

WHEN GETTING IT RIGHT MATTERS: COMMANDING THE NARRATIVE, BUILDING TRUST, AND COMMUNICATING DURING A CRITICAL INCIDENT

No agency is immune to a critical incident. Whether large or small, rural or urban, every department must be prepared to communicate clearly, confidently, and compassionately when it matters most. In this dynamic, video-rich presentation, veteran journalist Anastasiya Bolton shares insider insight on how law enforcement can effectively engage with the media and their communities during crises.

Drawing from decades of experience covering mass casualty events and working alongside law enforcement agencies, Bolton offers practical strategies to help leaders manage public messaging, maintain transparency, and build long-term trust. Participants will learn how to develop a communication framework that highlights their agency's professionalism, preparation, and purpose—whether through traditional media outlets or direct community engagement.



Anastasiya Bolton
Seven-time Emmy Award-winning
Television Journalist

About the Presenter:

Anastasiya Bolton is a seven-time Emmy Award-winning television journalist with more than 25 years of experience in news media, crisis communications, and public speaking coaching. Throughout her career, she has specialized in reporting on law enforcement, courts, victim advocacy, and mass violence.

Today, Bolton brings her firsthand experience to media training programs nationwide—bridging the gap between first responders and the media. Her practical, real-world approach empowers agencies to navigate complex narratives, communicate effectively under pressure, and strengthen the trust between officers and the communities they serve.



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SPEAKERS & PRESENTATIONS

RESILIENCE BY DESIGN: LEADING WITH STRENGTH IN TIMES OF CHALLENGE

Modern policing demands more than operational excellence—it requires leaders who can navigate uncertainty with optimism, courage, and purpose. Resilience by Design explores how intentional leadership practices centered on self-care, adaptability, and vision create organizations that not only endure challenges but emerge stronger from them.

This inspiring keynote will challenge police leaders to integrate resilience into their leadership philosophy, cultivating healthier officers, more effective teams, and communities strengthened by trust and shared purpose. Attendees will gain practical insights into fostering a culture of growth, compassion, and endurance—one that sustains both the individual and the institution through times of adversity.



Chief (ret.). Dr. Douglas Shoemaker
Denton Police Dept. (TX)

About the Presenter:

Dr. Doug Shoemaker is a distinguished 33-year law enforcement veteran, most recently serving as Chief of Police for the Denton (Texas) Police Department. Prior to that, he led the Grand Junction (Colorado) Police Department and spent nearly three decades with the Jefferson City (Missouri) Police Department. Throughout his career, Dr. Shoemaker has been recognized for advancing progressive policing through community partnerships and promoting organizational cultures built on empowerment, resilience, and innovation.

He is a past 3rd Vice President of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) and currently serves as Co-Chair of the IACP Human and Civil Rights Committee. Deeply committed to service beyond policing, he has worked with organizations such as the United Way, Boys and Girls Clubs, and Children's Advocacy Centers.

Dr. Shoemaker holds a B.A. in English Literature, an M.S. in Criminal Justice, and a Doctorate in Organizational Leadership. He is also a founding board member of The Curve, a nonprofit co-created with author and speaker Simon Sinek, dedicated to reimagining police leadership and organizational culture.



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DEBRIEF OF THE BOULDER KING SOOPERS MASS SHOOTING

On March 22, 2021, tragedy struck Boulder, Colorado, when a mass shooting occurred at a King Soopers supermarket, claiming ten lives, including a responding police officer. This presentation offers a firsthand account of that day, exploring the tactical, emotional, and leadership challenges faced by those who responded.

Commander Mike Heath, one of the on-scene responders, will provide an inside look at the department's immediate response, crisis management, and operational lessons learned from this devastating event. Chief Stephen Redfearn will share insights drawn from his extensive experience responding to and leading through mass casualty incidents. His discussion will focus on critical considerations for law enforcement executives—preparation, communication, coordination, and community trust—when tragedy strikes within their jurisdiction.



Chief Stephen Redfearn
Boulder Police Dept. (CO)

About the Presenters:

Appointed Chief of Police for the Boulder Police Department in September 2024, Chief Stephen Redfearn brings over 23 years of law enforcement experience across Boulder, Aurora, and Jefferson County. Known for advancing progressive, community-centered policing, he has implemented initiatives to promote transparency, inclusion, and officer wellness. Chief Redfearn previously served in leadership roles during major incidents, including the 2012 Aurora theater mass shooting, and now serves as President of the Colorado Fallen Hero Foundation.

He holds a Master of Science in Organizational Leadership from Colorado State University, is a graduate of the Harvard Kennedy School Senior Executives in State and Local Government Program, and has presented at national forums including the FBI National Academy and IACP.



Commander Michael Heath
Boulder Police Dept. (CO)

Commander Michael Heath has served with the Boulder Police Department since 2004, holding roles across Patrol, Investigations, and Specialized Units. A veteran SWAT Commander, he has extensive expertise in tactical response and officer survival training. He currently oversees the department's Homeless Outreach and Unsanctioned Camping Teams, Community Services, Pearl Street Mall Team, and K9 Unit, and leads strategic planning for Boulder's upcoming Sundance Film Festival events.





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SPEAKERS & PRESENTATIONS

LEGAL UPDATES



District Attorney Eric Toney
Fond du Lac County (WI)



This presentation, led by Fond du Lac County District Attorney Eric Toney, provides law enforcement leaders with an overview of recent legal developments affecting policing in Wisconsin. It covers key state and federal court decisions, legislative changes, and policy updates related to search and seizure, use of force, custodial interrogations, digital evidence, and criminal procedure. The session also examines trends in case law involving body-worn cameras, open records, and officer liability. Designed for command staff and decision-makers, the presentation emphasizes proactive legal awareness, compliance, and risk management. Attendees will gain practical guidance and real-world insights to strengthen policy, training, and operations in accordance with Wisconsin law and national best practices.

About the Presenter:

Eric Toney is the elected District Attorney for Fond du Lac County, Wisconsin, and a career prosecutor recognized for his leadership on criminal justice issues statewide. A lifelong Fond du Lac resident and son of a longtime law enforcement officer, Toney earned his bachelor's degree from St. Norbert College and his Juris Doctor from Hamline University School of Law. Elected District Attorney in 2012, he has prosecuted major cases involving homicide, sexual assault, domestic violence, and narcotics, while expanding specialized prosecution units and helping establish the county's drug court. Toney has also served as President of the Wisconsin District Attorneys Association and was the Republican nominee for Wisconsin Attorney General in 2022. Named "*District Attorney of the Year*," he continues to be a leading voice for law enforcement, justice reform, and community collaboration across the state.

EMPLOYMENT LAW AND COLLECTIVE BARGAINING UPDATES



Attorney Kyle Gulya
von Briesen & Roper, S.C.



Presented by Kyle Gulya, Shareholder in the Labor and Employment Law Section of von Briesen & Roper, S.C., this session provides an in-depth overview of recent developments in employment law and collective bargaining that impact Wisconsin law enforcement agencies. Drawing on his extensive experience advising police, fire, and sheriff's departments, Gulya outlines key legal trends affecting personnel management, discipline, arbitration, contract negotiations, and Police & Fire Commission matters.

Attendees gain practical guidance on navigating evolving state and federal employment regulations, handling workplace investigations, and managing complex labor relations issues in a unionized environment. The presentation emphasizes proactive strategies for chiefs and command staff to maintain compliance, reduce liability, and strengthen agency leadership during negotiations and disciplinary proceedings.



About the Presenter:

Recognized as a Wisconsin Super Lawyers® Rising Star, Gulya brings a management-side perspective shaped by years of collaboration with the WCPA, WPLF, and Wisconsin Fire Chiefs Education Association.