



# LIFE LINE

Volume 2, Issue 1

March 2013

## LIFE

Leadership Inventory for  
Female Executives

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**March 18-22, 2013**  
Leadership Inventory for  
Female Executives  
(LIFE)  
**July 29-August 2,**  
**2013**  
Leadership Inventory for  
Female Executives  
(LIFE)  
**July 24-26, 2013**  
1st Annual LIFE Confer-  
ence

## Editor's Brag By Leslie A Smith

First, let me welcome everyone to Volume 2, Issue 1 of the LIFE LINE Newsletter. I'm not sure how it got to be March already, but belated Happy New Year just the same. Since our last issue in November, we have added 18 new graduates from the LIFE program and we welcome you to the Alumni ranks.

Second, I want to take a moment and add a brag about my department. A newly released FBI report has named Little Elm the safest city in Texas and the 18th safest city in the nation, among all cities with a population over 25,000 people. The report, conducted in 2011, assessed cities in terms of the number of violent and property crimes. Little Elm had the lowest number of combined crimes among all Texas cities.

The report takes the total number of these crimes and compares it to a city's population in order to develop a ranking. Little Elm received an overall score of 84, meaning that it is safer than 84 percent of all cities nationwide.

Our staff is composed of highly dedicated individuals that strive to be at their best each and every day. I truly believe their "Can Do Attitude" towards problem solving in our community is reflected in those numbers. To say I am one happy Operations Commander is an understatement!

## LIFE'S BRAGS

### **Annie Almendarez**

Completed the LEMIT 'Leadership Command College' in February 2013, the title of her research, "A Stepping Stone to Independence: Public Housing that Works"

### **Shelley Knight**

Promoted to Captain at the Dallas County SO

### **Kudos to all the graduates of LIFE Class 5**

The class sponsored 2 scholarships to NAWLEE.

One was received by Carol Riddle, Arlington PD and one is to be paid forward for someone in the March class. (See page 3)

## Don't try to change the world...Change you By Diane Lowe

Happy new year. Yes here we are 2013. How many of you have decided that this will be the year you will finally change? Get fitter, lose weight, and run round the globe!

We all do it, just as we shouldn't worry about what we eat between Christmas and New Year but worry about what we eat between New Year and Christmas!! So we should realistically look at what exactly we are trying to achieve in 2013.

Can we look back over the past 10, 20 years or more and see that every New Year we make the same promises to ourselves, only to find by mid February (at the latest) we have given up or forgotten why we did it in the first place. The reasons we fail is that we expect too much of ourselves too quickly and we are too hard on ourselves. You can't lose 20lbs in 2 weeks or have the body of Jennifer Lopez because you eat salads and stop drinking for 2 days.... So how do you do it?

First of all you have to decide what you really want. Are you really committed to your goal or do you just think you ought to do it?

Secondly is your goal realistic? Most goals are abandoned because we don't see instant results. We expect to go from climbing the stairs to conquering Mount Everest in 2 weeks.

We really don't need to change the world, we need to change the way we think about ourselves. Take your goals a step at a time. Reward yourself when you achieve small but important landmarks. Do not get despondent if you slip up. Just start again and put it down to experience. Share your goal, ambition with your partner, friend or coach. They will be of great support to you.

"We must not, in trying to think about how we can make a big difference, ignore the small daily difference we can make which, over time, add up to big differences that we often cannot foresee". **Marian Wright Edelman, American Activist, Families in Peril**

Just as you cannot move from Officer to Police Chief over night (you need to take steps in-between) so you cannot change other aspects of your life without small steps and hard work.

## Anyone can learn to be resilient By Julia Savacool

Why is it that two people facing the same tough situation can have such different responses? It comes down to resiliency, says Steven Southwick a professor of psychiatry at the Yale School of Medicine and co-author of *Resilience: The Science of Mastering Life's Greatest Challenges*.

"It's not just a genetic thing that you have or you don't," Southwick says. "Resiliency is something anyone can learn. We hope to demystify the process."

Southwick and his co-author, Dennis Charney, a professor of psychiatry and neuroscience at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine, identified 10 factors shared by people who bounce back most effectively from traumas.

**10 Factors to Bouncing Back Effectively: Optimism, Flexibility, Core Value System, Faith, Positive Role Models, Social Support, Physical Fitness, Cognitive Strength, Facing Fears, and Finding Meaning in Struggles.**

"Out of those factors, if I had to pick, I'd say social support is one of the most important in developing resiliency," says Southwick. "Knowing you have someone you can count on is essential."

Another crucial piece: your outlook. "Pessimism is contagious," says Southwick. "Optimism is an essential component to resiliency because it lets you filter out negative thoughts that do not accurately reflect the situation."

With practice, people can teach themselves to bounce back faster. "Most people are much more resilient than they think," says Southwick. "You just don't know it until you're put to the test."

## Pay it Forward - How a Culture Starts By Magdalena Denham

Realizing the value of professional associations, the 5<sup>th</sup> session of LIFE not only sponsored one member to a 1-year membership, but opted to leave a legacy for the incoming class. Therefore, the participants of March 18-22/2013 session already have one small brick of support from the preceding class in a form of 1-year membership fund to NAWLEE.

It is our hope that the tradition will be perpetuated and become part of our LIFE organizational culture. Yes, we are building organizational culture for LIFE by setting up norms of communication, ways of sharing, language of "eating the frogs", annual symposia, possibly an association down the road. Even though we often say "organizational culture" we rarely think about how it is formed and what it means for an organization.

Any organization does not simply start with boxes and titles and lines of authority. Every organization starts by being "peopled" - people bring with them dynamics, energy, influence, ideas and by coming together start weaving their interactions within the network of boxes and lines of authority. What people do in social and cultural terms is a true bloodline of any organization. When the culture is healthy, the organization prospers. Looking at the future of LIFE, I find its culture will have a determining effect on its impact to females in law enforcement community. That is why I believe initiatives and ethos such as "paying it forward" are superb blocks of legacy and culture shaping.

I encourage you all to get involved in shaping the LIFE culture so that the program may prosper. Before you know it, you may call it an organization.

## July Conference By Magdalena Denham

The Institute is pleased to announce the First Annual LIFE Conference will be held July 24-26, 2013. The Institute has made the decision the conference will be reserved for only those individuals who have already completed the LIFE program (past Alumni and graduates from the March 2013 class.) Walking the delicate line between being inclusive, yet focused on the mission, the decision to include graduates only was determined by the fact that the First Annual Conference will also be a forum for ad hoc working groups with respect to decisions such as formalized association discussion, centered data collection and research, continuity of publications, and linking among cohorts that have not interacted face-to-face, among others.

LEMIT will support the conference attendees with refreshments, lunch, and covering of key speaker fees. We may also provide limited transportation. We encourage you to seek sponsorship to absorb hotel cost or to share rooms to minimize expense. Naturally, the dominant theme and related topics of the conference need to be shaped by your voice. That is why we strongly encourage you to submit all and any ideas you consider **worth exploring, in need of exploring, or learning about, worth sharing, or simply having fun with** during the conference.

Please submit your suggestions as soon as possible to Yvette or Magdalena. If you know *pro bono* speakers on topics of *relevance to our members*, please submit them as well. It is important the LIFE conference reflects your needs and your voice. In order to structure the conference's agenda most efficiently, we would like to hear from you **between now and May 15<sup>th</sup>** to allow a few months for proper agenda setting and coordination.

## **Everyone Needs a Mentor** By David Webb, Ph.D. , Assistant Executive Director of LEMIT/Adjunct Faculty Member, College of Criminal Justice

Everyone needs a mentor - I did - and the benefits of that experience - that relationship - were amazing. They changed the direction of my life, and still influence me today. My mentorship really started when I was a young police sergeant in the UK. My mentor was the Chief of Police of quite a large department - some four and a half thousand women and men. He was influential in persuading me to compete for a Police Force scholarship to attend University. I did, and never looked back. My mentor retired.

Over the years that followed, I became very conscious of the paucity of female command staff in the department. Later in my career as Chief Superintendent of Police with the power and authority of the Human Resources Department within my grasp, the opportunity arose to influence the conditions and processes of change - promotions, assignments to specialist positions, command team membership, and succession planning were within my remit. I have a view - if you know that an individual could, or can, exhibit particular sought-after competencies, you either develop or harness those competencies, and indicate to their holder, options for either advancement or re-positioning. "Favoritism!", some murmured, while forgetting that mentoring was in fact open to all! I guess my bottom line was to present competent female officers positive choices, and to afford them opportunities to compete with their male counterparts on a more equal basis.

I sometimes ask myself, "Is mentoring just winding up the clockwork motor on someone's back, pointing them in a given direction, and letting go?" In some cases perhaps it is - whatever - the bottom line is probably about recognizing ability - true potential in a person, and showing the person how to harness that kinetic energy, and use it to drive to the next milestone until the final goal is reached. "Jo" was a young sergeant. She was mentored, and subsequently was to become the Commander of the largest Independent Command Unit in England with nearly 1300 sworn officers, commanding the respect of her officers without losing her female dignity.

Part of LIFE is about mentoring - helping others realize their full potential - whether that is in the police service, or outside of it. Good mentors recognize competence in others, and long may they stand up for them in oft-times difficult circumstances. Women are generally good candidates to be mentored, and more acceptably respond to the challenges of reality without burying themselves in the type of ego more often identified in their male counterparts. And finally, a small observation, please do not try to think or behave like a man, especially when it comes to mentoring. Women have special behavioral competencies - they make decisions differently and frequently achieve much better outcomes. Build on these strengths, and we shall see more women performing policing roles where they are now so scarce.



## November 2012 L.I.F.E Graduates



From left upwards: Magdalena Denham-LEMIT, Eline Moya-Victoria PD, Pamela Starr-Dallas PD, Deanna Lugo-Williamson Co SO, Michelle Sanders-Plano PD, Evelyn McLean-Georgetown PD, Carol Riddle-Arlington PD, Jennifer Watkins-Lacy Lakeview PD, Anna Sifuentez-Brazos County SO, Carri Turner-Travis County SO, Sabrina Naulings-Houston ISD PD, Desiree Lyles-Texas DPS, Laurie Crain-UNT Health Science Center PD, Cheryl Wilson-Dallas County SO, Traci Thompson-Alabama Coushatta Tribe of Texas PD, Catrina Nanez-UT Health Science Center at San Antonio PD, Tana Travis-TABC, Bobette McGilberry-Alvin PD, Jody Aranda-Brazos County SO, Yvette Shorten-LEMIT, Diane Lowe over the pond

## Callings By Tara Mohr [www.taramohr.com](http://www.taramohr.com)

Callings are dispatches from the universe about what work is yours to do.

Callings are your assignments for bringing light into the world.

Oh wait. Here's what they really are: When you take the great love for all life, when you take the great power of service, when you take the energy of the universe, the desire to extend, expand, and amplify life.

And filter it through the prism of your gifts, your abilities, your circumstances, your opportunities to serve, what you get is your calling.

Big love for all life, the great love, filtered through the prism of you.

Don't want to miss out on that, do you?



**Tara Sophia Mohr**  
*Wise Living*

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## Training Opportunity -Plano, Texas March 11-14, 2013

### Female Officer Survival Skills

This course provides female officers with the skill sets, techniques, and knowledge required to improve firearms accuracy, mental preparation and confidence for surviving the fight of their lives.

The program provides an opportunity to train under a comfortable learning environment at the range, in the gym, as well as in the classroom. The course will provide each student a personalized assessment of their particular skill sets and identify areas that students may need to focus on to continue development of new skill sets. It is designed to give female officers the skills to engage lethal threatening situations with confidence.

Total Cost \$425.00 Please contact Sgt. Alicia Nors at 972-941-2701 or [aliciano@plano.gov](mailto:aliciano@plano.gov)

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