

The Academy Connection

Where South Carolina Law Enforcement Training is Defined

SOUTH CAROLINA
CRIMINAL JUSTICE ACADEMY



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Director's Message Hubert F. Harrell

I cannot help but comment about what is happening in our country today. Each day in the news there is another horrific crime committed somewhere in the country. It appears that our society is changing into something that I cannot recognize. The killing of innocent people in Florida, children dying from heat exhaustion after being left in a parked vehicle, nine people in our own state murdered while they worshiped in a church. Citizens, who are affected by mental illness, often act out in a manner that causes them to be arrested and then housed in local detention centers rather than mental hospitals. This is, and has been increasingly more prevalent in our jails which have become surrogate mental hospitals. We are witnessing the erosion of respect for our neighbors, and especially for authority fig-

ures. We have to face the fact that our nation is changing and many of the values that we attest to, are eroding. The reality is, we hire from within our environment therefore we in law enforcement must change as well. The new guys we hire are different but no less dedicated. We must create a greater understanding among our officers of the social dynamics of today, which will affect how they perform their duties. That will take time and money.

Civility seems to have become a sign of weakness or a presumption that one is weak when they are courteous. Being respectful does not mean you are weak. Respect for the law, our neighbors, and our government is eroding at an alarming rate, and we cannot be a part of that. Some in our society feel that it is alright to prey on the weak, and the inno-



cent, but they also feel that they should not be held accountable when their transgressions are discovered. They feel that we can be intimidated by loud cries whenever a camera is placed in front of them, but they don't understand that we have sworn to protect them, even if we have to protect them from themselves. The time to argue is in court.

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Director's Message Continued

I subscribe to the theory that proposes “certainty of punishment is a far better deterrent than the promise of it”. I can remember a time when young people were afraid that their parents would hear about their minor transgressions, because they knew what was coming when they did. Justice was usually swift and certain and you thought twice before you committed the same transgression, which usually resulted in the same swift justice, until you got the point. I am not advocating beating our children but I am saying that they should be held accountable when they stray, to help them learn how they must act in a civilized society. Sadly for many in our society, justice is an abstract idea that is used only when it applies to their particular circumstance. It is no longer the concept of guilt or innocence but extenuation. Justice and fairness are often not the same, except in the mind of the persons affected by a particular series of events. It is a matter of perspective.

Our laws are written to create a guideline for justice and fairness, which is to apply to all without prejudice. The law is not intended to be a respecter of political affiliation, social or economic status, race, religion, sexual orientation, nor is it to be used as a tool to oppress some, while rewarding others. The law, in my opinion, is there to provide an even playing field for all who live under it. If you receive the benefit of it you are obligated to abide by it. Nothing is free, not even our freedoms. Someone has paid dearly to assure that we can all fall under the same protections that the law provides. That is where law enforcement agencies come in. It is our task to insure that those who are suspected of violating our laws are taken before someone, who may judge their behavior, and decide how they must make amends. Sometimes it is with money and in other cases it is with time.

The purpose of law enforcement is to detect a violation of our laws and bring the person or persons responsible before justice. It is not our obligation to justify those laws. That comes from the Judiciary and our Legislature through a political process established by our founding fathers. Accepting residence in our country compels compliance with the law. We must accept the fact that many of our laws protect us from each other, and some laws promote the sanctity of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Other laws regulate how we can pursue a better quality of life without infringing on the rights of others. I submit that law enforcement must give every citizen of this nation as much respect as they allow, but stand firm in our dedication to demand compliance as the law dictates. If you don't like the law, get it changed. There is a proven process for doing that; I think they call it “Voting”.

It's a hard job, but if it were easy, anyone could do it. God bless the men and women who have sworn to protect our Nation, our communities and our people. I, for one, am proud to be among those who are willing to sacrifice all, to preserve our laws, and call you my brothers and sisters. You are, in my opinion, worthy of praise rather than scorn and we must be the first to exclude those who do not uphold our dedication and purpose from our ranks. Some may not agree but that's how I see it.

This will be my last comments to you as Director of Your Academy. It has been my honor to work with, and for you, in our great state. Use your voice as much as your courage to make our state a healthy and safe place to raise our children. God Bless you all, because, this is “Your Academy”.

Marijuana: The Crash Crop of the Future

By: Michael Brantley

Another night on patrol and another collision scene. The smell of burnt rubber and the visions of twisted metal have become common sensations. This collision is one of the worst types. Tonight, on this dark and cold roadway, someone lost his life. Another casualty attributed to impaired driving, but this time it is not alcohol. The culprit of this tragic event is marijuana. Marijuana impaired driving instances are on a steady rise across the United States. More and more drivers are getting high before taking to the roadways around the country. Is this increase in any way linked to the current social trend of marijuana decriminalization? Many states in America have passed legislation that permits the use of marijuana, either as a medical remedy for specific conditions, or for recreational use. This expression of acceptance by the government has presented a ripple effect that has simplified the debate as to whether or not marijuana is safe. Just like alcohol, the substance most commonly associated with impaired driving, marijuana is a drug. Marijuana creates impairment by slowing a person's response times and reducing inhibitions. This creates a deadly situation resulting in more risk taking and the inability to react quickly to a changing environment. This is a deadly combination! By examining data from those states that have legalized marijuana, this research will be used to determine if the social acceptance of marijuana has resulted in an increased number of traffic collisions and deaths, both in states with and without legal marijuana laws.

The problem of driving under the influence of marijuana is not a new one. Recent studies estimate that approximately 22.2 million people in the United States over the age of 12 use marijuana (Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality, 2015). Marijuana is the most widely used illegal drug in this country, and this directly impacts the number of drivers on the roadways who are under the influence of marijuana. Recently, the social acceptance of marijuana has brought about a belief that the drug is safe to use. This is an argument that will be debated for years to come. The truth is, marijuana impairs a person's ability to operate a vehicle safely. This impairment directly contributes to deaths on the highways and back roads of America. How bad is the problem? Is it really worth devoting time and money to the problem or is it so minor that the energy should be focused on other issues? Put bluntly, yes, this is a major issue in our country, and if we do not get a handle on the problem now, it will spiral out of control. There are several studies that have looked at this issue. These highway safety studies, as well as the popular media, have recognized drugged driving as a major public health problem (Brady & Li, 2013). Researchers have found that "from 1992-2009, approximately 20,000 drivers nationwide involved in fatal crashes tested positive for cannabinoids" (Larkin, 2015, p.4). Cannabinoids, referred to as cannabis, is the drug class that includes the drug marijuana. One of the largest areas that marijuana has a negative impact on highway safety is when it comes to younger drivers. The demographic that contributes to the largest number of fatal motor vehicle collisions are young adults between the ages of 16 and 25. Unfortunately, this same age group represents the largest percentage of marijuana users (Larkin, 2015).

Approximately half the states in America have legalized the use of marijuana in some form. This fact has allowed for a great deal of data to emerge in reference to how legalization has impacted traffic safety,

especially impaired driving. One such data set found that the instances of cannabis that was found in the toxicology results of fatal drivers increased in both men and women during the specified dates. Men went from a positive toxicology in 6.1% of fatal drivers between 1999-2002 to an astonishing 12.3 % of fatal drivers from 2007-2010, an increase of 6.2%. Women saw an increase from 2.8 % between 1999-2002, up to 7.5% of fatal drivers between 2007-2010. This was an increase of 4.7% (Larkin, 2015). It is safe to believe that the simple fact that marijuana is easily accessible, as well as the glorification of the drug, would lead to an increased number of users on the roadways. These numbers should not be a surprise to anyone. In Colorado, where the drug is legalized for both medical and recreational use, studies indicate that there has been a significant increase in the number of drivers who are testing positive for marijuana. That state now has more drivers who test positive for marijuana use than any other state in the country, especially those that still consider the drug illegal. Another major concern with the legalization of marijuana is the increased potency of the drug. Since states have made it legal to grow and sell marijuana, budding entrepreneurs are coming up with techniques to increase the impairment level of the drug. This results in a higher level of impairment, which carries over into a greater risk of injury or death when a user decides to operate a motor vehicle (Larkin, 20015). Colorado is not the only state where the legalization of the drug is taking a toll. The state of Washington has seen an increase of over 100 percent in the number of traffic fatalities where the driver has tested positive for marijuana. This is based on a 2014 study that looked at the effects of marijuana legalization (Larkin, 2015). This has been attributed directly to the state's approach to the legalization of the drug. It is clear that there is a marijuana impaired driving problem in the United States, but is this problem in any way related to the push to legalize marijuana? One of the only positive things that has come from the legalization of marijuana is that there are more and more studies about the drug and how its use affects driving ability. There are currently 23 states that have legalized marijuana for medical use. An additional two states have taken the legalization further and made it legal to use the drug for recreational purposes. Advocates argue that even though marijuana causes impairment, that in itself is not a valid reason to outlaw the drug. That belief does hold weight. Alcohol has been legalized for a long time, and it is widely known that the impairing effects of alcohol often lead to traffic injuries and fatalities. Drivers who use marijuana and then drive are twice as likely to be involved in a traffic collision (Li et al., 2012).

Even with this statistic, alcohol is still by far the most used drug when it comes to impaired driving. Evidence shows that, although impairing, marijuana use still does not contribute to as many traffic fatalities as alcohol (Hall, 2009). Even with this fact in mind, it is easy to see that the legalization of marijuana has created a situation that has had a negative impact on the safety of the roadways in this country. Even in states that still consider marijuana an illicit drug, the overall social acceptance of marijuana has glamorized the drug even more. The glorification has overshadowed the serious health issues that are linked to long term marijuana use. Another major issue that legalization has created has to do with general deterrence. There is a specific amount of the population that has chosen not to use marijuana simply because its status as an illegal drug. When the government, either at a state level or federal level, decides to decriminalize the use and possession of marijuana, it opens the door for curious users. This creates a ripple effect that can lead to more loss of life on the highways of America. People who have never experienced the impairing effects of marijuana decide to try the drug because it is now legal. Not being familiar with its effects, they then choose to drive after using the drug. It is easy to see where this can lead to nothing other than bad results.

Whether it is good or bad, the legalization of marijuana is here to stay. It is safe to say that the legalization push will continue to spread across the country and with that push will come an increase in the number of lives lost on the roadways. Now is the time to enact strict legislation that will aid in preventing marijuana impaired driving cases from occurring. Criminal enforcement is not the only solution. Society must place an enormous effort into educating the public about the dangers of driving impaired on marijuana. It has been said that "One of the greatest challenges is dealing with the public attitudes toward DUI." (Hartman & Huestis, 2013, p. 489) The problem is real, and it will only get worse if there is not a proactive approach implemented at this early stage. Ultimately, people will always make bad decisions. It is the responsibility of government to provide the necessary guidance to aid in those decisions being more educated and in the best interest of preserving life. Failure by leaders to make hard decisions now will eventually put society in a mode of catch up. If this happens, there may never be an opportunity to get a handle on the situation.

References

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Hall, W. (2009). The adverse health effects of cannabis use: What are they, and what are their implications for policy?. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 20, 458-466.

Hartman, R.L., & Huestis, M. A. (2013). Cannabis Effects on Driving Skills. *Clinical Chemistry*, 59:3, 478-492.

Larkin Jr., P.J., (2015). Medical or Recreational Marijuana and Drugged Driving. *American Criminal Law Review*, 53:453, 1-55.

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**JP Strom Award Winners
April—June 2016**



BLE 646
Edward T. Sieban
Florence Police Department



BLE 647
Nicholas R. Taillon
SC Highway Patrol



BLE 649
Ryan M. Marro
Travelers Rest Police Department

**Bert Friday Award Winners
April-June 2016**



BD 364
Edward D. Huffman
Greenville County Detention Center

Basic Class Information

Basic Law Classes

B650 April 17—July 15, 2016
 B651 May 8—August 5, 2016
 B652 May 29—August 26, 2016
 B653 June 19—September 16, 2016
 B654 July 18—October 7, 2016
 B655 August 8—October 28, 2016
 B656 August 29—November 18, 2016
 B657 September 19—December 16, 2016

Limited Duty July 25—August 5, 2016

Basic Detention Classes

BD 365 July 11—29, 2016
 BD 366 August 8—October 28, 2016
 BD 367 September 5—23, 2016
 BD 368 October 3—21, 2016

Basic TCO (formerly E-911)

BTOT 206 July 25—August 5, 2016
 BTOT 207 September 5—16, 2016
 BTOT 208 October 17—28, 2016

BASIC LAW SFST DRINKING LAB

With the SFST and Datamaster DMT classes in the 12 week basic training curriculum, it is necessary to ask the field to assist us with volunteer drinkers. This training assists officers in not only DUI detection, but also help officers to recognize when subjects are impaired. This can make a huge difference in what approach an officer will take when handling various situations. We need approximately 250 volunteers per year. I know this sounds like a lot, but that is less than one percent of South Carolina's police population. If you can be of assistance or have any questions please contact Michael Brantley of the Traffic Safety Unit at (803) 896-7791 jmbrantley@sccja.sc.gov or Dale Smith at (803) 896-5556 desmith@sccja.sc.gov.

Below you will find a list of dates we need volunteers. We can provide rooms to any volunteer who will need to travel and stay overnight. Alcohol and meals are provided for all volunteers; however, if they desire to bring their own alcohol that is permitted.

Dates for BLE Drinking Lab 2016-2017

July 27 & 28, 2016
 August 17 & 18, 2016
 September 7 & 8, 2016
 September 28 & 29, 2016
 October 19 & 20, 2016
 November 9 & 10, 2016
 December 7 & 8, 2016
 January 11 & 12, 2017
 February 1 & 2, 2017
 February 22 & 23, 2017
 March 15 & 16, 2017
 April 5 & 6, 2017
 April 26 & 27, 2017
 May 17 & 18, 2017
 June 7 & 8, 2017
 June 28 & 29, 2017



New Employees



Frank Hinson
Student Liaison Officer



Justin Miller
IT Manager



Jonathan Osborne
Defensive Tactics Instructor



Bobby Mullinax
Traffic Safety Instructor



Retirement

Congratulations to Sherri Cloud Borden and Director Hubert Harrell on their retirement.



Employee Awards Ceremony

The following awards were given at the Employee Awards Ceremony on May 19, 2016

Employees were nominated by staff members and selected by a panel made up of Department Managers/Directors:

Outstanding Supervisor for 2016 - Roy Rogers

Outstanding Employee for 2016 - Cathy McQueen

Outstanding Basic Instructor 2016 - Shari Driggers

Outstanding Advanced Instructor 2016 - Chris Kendall

Director's Award 2016 - Lauren Orris

Congratulations to the following employees who received State Service Awards:

Five (5) Years

James Damoude

Kris Feldner

Jimmy Fennell

Russell Nieradka

Kevin Smith

Ten (10) Years

Eric Brown

Fifteen (15) Years

Maggies Corne

Sherri Cloud Borden

Twenty (20) Years

John Hunter

Twenty Five (25) Years

Bernard Shirer

Thirty Five (35) Years

Kathy Danielsen



Cathy McQueen (left), receiving the Outstanding Employee Award from Director Hubert Harrell.