

# Instructor Biographies

## Fall Conference, 2023



### James Aguiar, Jr.

James Aguiar, Jr. started his career in law enforcement with the Monroe County Sheriff's Office in 1986. He served as a correctional officer, classification officer, sergeant, and director. In 2000, James served with the Marion County Sheriff's Office as a bailiff and fire safety officer. James is currently serving with the Sumter County Sheriff's Office as the accreditation inspector in their Professional Standards Division. James is an assessor and team leader for law enforcement and corrections for the Commission for Law Enforcement Accreditation, Florida Corrections Accreditation Commission and Florida Model Jail Standards. He also serves as an assessor for American Corrections Association and served as a PREA auditor with the Bureau of Justice from 2015 to 2019. He has completed over 134 assessments and regularly teaches various subjects for both of the commissions and FLA-PAC.

### Gary Barrett

Gary Barrett started his career in law enforcement in 1988, serving in the United States Army as a military police officer and criminal investigations command special agent. He was hired at the Leesburg Police Department in 1992 and is a lieutenant serving as the accreditation/professional standards commander. He has served in various capacities at the Leesburg Police Department including patrol, SWAT, traffic homicide, narcotics/ vice, criminal investigations, intelligence liaison, street crimes, professional standards/accreditation and grant management. He holds a bachelor's degree in organizational management and a master's degree in criminal justice administration. He is a graduate of the Southern Police Institute's Administrative Officer's Course (125th) and the Police Executive Leadership Graduate Program. He is a CJSTC general and firearms instructor. He serves as a law enforcement assessor and team leader for CFA, and enjoys family activities, hunting, fishing and boating.

### Nicholas Bliss

Nicholas Bliss started his career with the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office in October 2004 with the Department of Corrections. He worked in various areas as an officer including releasing, intake, and housing. He attended the Crossover Course and became dual certified as a Law Enforcement Officer in 2007. He was promoted to Corrections Sergeant in 2011 and was assigned to various locations within operations. He was assigned as the Field Training Officer and Training Sergeant for the Department of Corrections. Nicholas was reassigned as the Corrections Inspections Sergeant within Professional Standards. Here he assisted with accreditation for the Sheriff's Office. He was assigned as the Accreditation Manager for approximately a year. During this time, he managed all five of the accreditations the Sheriff's Office held. Nicholas was promoted to Corrections Lieutenant in 2019 and worked in operations as a Watch Commander. In 2023 Nicholas was appointed to Assistant Chief by Sheriff T.K. Waters and has served as the Assistant Chief of the Community Transition Center

## **Juli Brown**

Juli Brown is the Northeastern Accreditation Coordinator for the Florida Sheriffs Association. Juli serves as a Liaison between the Florida Accreditation Office and Sheriff's offices seeking initial accreditation by CFA. Juli has 15 years of experience in accreditation - 10 years as the accreditation manager for the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Division of Law Enforcement. She has been a FLA-PAC Certified Accreditation Professional (CAP) since 2012, was awarded CFA Team Leader of the Year in 2015 and has conducted more than 70 mock and formal accreditation assessments as a CFA certified Assessor and Team Leader.

## **Lisa Cahill**

Lisa Cahill started her career in the 9-1-1 communications center in November of 1995. She served as a call taker, law dispatcher, and master sergeant with Marion County Sheriff's Office. In October 2011, there was a consolidation and she became a shift supervisor with Marion County Public Safety. Lisa is a highly trained public safety telecommunicator with over 23 years of 9-1-1 call center operations and management experience. Lisa's duties involve training and supervising communication center public safety professionals, the development and implementation of standard operating procedures and directives for law enforcement, fire, EMS and emergency management operations. She is diplomatic and gracious, with a desire to deliver exceptional customer service by promoting training and teamwork.

## **Dana Clay**

Dana has worked in the criminal justice field for more than 30 years. She began her career serving as staff to the NC Criminal Justice Education & Training Standards Commission which establishes the minimum employment, training, and retention requirements for law enforcement and criminal justice officers in the state. During her tenure, she worked in several capacities including Correctional Coordinator, Campus/Company Police Administrator, Instructor Coordinator, and Training Systems Manager. She went to work with the Garner (NC) Police Department in 2003 where she served in a civilian command role. While in this position she managed several programs, including recruitment, hiring, promotions, budget, payroll, and grants. She also supervised the Criminal Records Division, as well as serving as the agency's Accreditation Manager. She has held the latter position for the last 18 years. Dana has been with PowerDMS for eight years serving as a contract trainer with the Customer Success Training Team.

## Natalia Duran

Ms. Natalia Duran began her career with the Miami-Dade Fire Rescue Department as a Fire Rescue Dispatcher in 1976. Quickly moving up in rank to supervisor in 1980. In 1986 she was promoted to Fire Communications Officer, managing the Operations, Training and the EMD Quality Assurance for Miami-Dade Police Department of the Communications Center. She retired in 2012, after 36 years of service. Since 2012, as an adjunct instructor for the APCO Institute, Natalia has provided training to 911 Emergency Communication Specialist across the country and as far as Baja California, Mexico's 911 centers. As the State Coordinator for the FL-APCO Telecommunicator Emergency Response Taskforce Team (FL-TERT) she works with Police & Fire agencies in Florida in the deployments of Emergency Communication Specialist who are trained to deploy to assist a 911 center during hurricanes such as Hurricane Irma 2017, Hurricane Michael 2018, Hurricane Sally 2020, Hurricane Ida 2021. A CISM/Peer Support Team Lead for MDFR, she continues to work in supporting our emergency responders. A humbling experience, she worked at the SURFSIDE Collapse (2021) site providing peer support to emergency responders as Operations Chief. A graduate of the Certified Public-Safety Executive Program (2017) through APCO International, Natalia has proven to be a leader in our 911 industry and continues to make a difference. A proud mother of two Marine Vets and grandmother of six, she enjoys traveling, training, and meeting many of her brothers and sisters in public safety.

## Lafayette Hodges

Lafayette Hodges has been employed by the Ocala Police Department for 17 years. Her current assignment is Grants and Sustainability Coordinator/Accreditation Manager. Her experience at the Ocala Police Department includes: Managing, Supervising and Training personnel. Prior to her current position, she managed the Records section as well as the Employer Services Section. Ms. Hodges is a Technical Sergeant in the US Air Force Reserves and is on the tail-end of her inactive reserve commitment. She earned a Bachelor's degree in Organizational Leadership, a Master's degree in Public Administration and is All But Dissertation (ABD) in the Public Policy Administration Doctoral program at Walden University. In her spare time, she is a Social Services Counselor for a Children's Crisis Stabilization Unit in Ocala and a mother of three. Ms. Hodges serves on the training and outreach committees and is also an active assessor for the CFA.

## Jack Jordan

William “Jack” Jordan has over 45 years’ experience in law enforcement. His experiences include being a traffic homicide investigator for the Clearwater Police Department, an assistant state attorney in Florida, (6th Judicial Circuit), and undersheriff and legal counsel for the Sumter County Sheriff’s Office. Mr. Jordan earned his bachelor of science degree from Eckerd College, and his doctor of jurisprudence from the Cumberland School of Law at Samford University, and he is a member of the Florida Bar. He is also a member of the United States Supreme Court Bar. He is a graduate of the FBI National Academy at Quantico, VA, Session 211. He has been an adjunct professor for over 30 years, teaching legal and management classes at both the bachelor and masters level.

## Oscar Kieffer

Oscar is currently the accreditation manager for the City of Palmetto Police Department, with a background in customer service management prior to his employment with the police department. He successfully got the agency re-accredited in 2016 and 2019. He served as the Training committee chair for the FLA-PAC from October 2016 – February 2018, and was appointed to 2nd vice president of the FLA-PAC in February 2018. He is an active assessor and team leader for CFA.

## Ryan LaRowe

Ryan LaRow is currently a Detective Sergeant with the Palmetto Police Department and has been with the agency for 19 years. He is a Computer Voice Stress Analysis Examiner and Background Investigator as well as a member of the Association of Certified Background Investigators. Ryan is a FBI LEEDA Trilogy Graduate and holds a Master’s degree in Public Administration and Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice Administration. He also serves as a CFA assessor for law enforcement assessments.

## Julie Leftheris

Julie Leftheris serves as the Inspector General and Director of Compliance for the State University System of Florida. She previously spent 9 years as the Inspector General for the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles and previously as the Deputy Inspector General for the Florida Lottery. Julie has worked in the Inspector General community for 28 years working in both auditing and investigative functions. Julie is a graduate of Florida State University with degrees in both Finance and Accounting. She has obtained the professional certifications of Certified Inspector General, Certified Public Accountant, Certified Internal Auditor, Certified Fraud Examiner, and Certified Information Systems Auditor. Julie currently serves as a board member of the Florida Association of Inspectors General and the Leon County School Board. She is a current Commissioner for the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation.

## Kathy Liriano

I have been with the City of Coral Springs in the Emergency Communications Unit since June of 2009. Started as an Emergency Call-taker, then Public Safety Telecommunicator/Communications Training Officer and Communications Shift Supervisor prior to my promotion to Center Manager. As a Shift Supervisor, I was the units CAD Administrator and later successfully migrated to a new CAD system in December of 2016 as the project lead.

In February of 2017 I was selected to lead the Emergency Communications Unit. Currently leading a team of 57. We service the cities of Coral Springs and Coconut Creek for Law and Fire. We also service City of Parkland for Fire only. As Communications Center Manager, I was working on February 14, 2018, during the Marjory Stoneman Douglass tragedy. I was the Fire Incident Command Dispatcher during this tragedy. The well-being of the Communications Team was paramount after incident, as well as the collection of evidentiary 911 calls, actions to improve the dispatch response and interoperability within Broward County. It has been my mission since MSD is to ensure that the Coral Springs ECC is interoperable with county systems.

## **Flora Miller**

Flora Miller started her career in state government in 2000 in Public Assistance Eligibility and Public Assistance Fraud Investigations, joining the Office of Inspector General in approximately 2003 as a regional investigator and regional investigator supervisor. She currently serves as both a regional investigator, covering portions of the Central, Northeast, SunCoast, and Southeast Regions, and as the accreditation manager for her agency. Mrs. Miller is a team leader for Inspector General assessments for the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation (CFA), completing over 25 assessments (mock, formal, and technical assists) as both a team leader and team member. She has completed approximately 20 peer reviews as both a team leader and team member for the Association of Inspectors General (AIG) Peer Review Committee. She is the chair of the AIG's Peer Review Committee. Mrs. Miller is an instructor for the Florida Police Accreditation Coalition (FLA-PAC) and the AIG Institute. She holds certifications as a certified inspector general investigator (CIGI) and certified accreditation professional (CAP). In her downtime, Mrs. Miller is active in the martial arts community with her husband, sanctioning amateur competitive events through the Florida Boxing Commission and in the Bahamas.

## **Nicole Minick**

Nicole Minick is the Commander of the Policy Compliance Bureau for the Collier County Sheriff's Office. She started her career in 1993 at the St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office. Nicole has 22 years of experience in accreditation. She maintains all disciplines of accreditation for the Collier County Sheriff's Office. She is a FLA-PAC Certified Accreditation Professional (CAP) since 2013 and CALEA certified Accreditation Manager since 2018. Nicole has won the FCAC Accreditation Manager of the Year award in 2018, the FCAC Team Leader of Year award in 2015, and the FCAC Assessor of the Year award in 2020. Nicole is an assessor and team leader for CFA, FCAC, and FCAC Pre-Trial Assessments.

## David Pate

David Pate started his career in law enforcement with the Leon County Sheriff's Office (LCSO) in 1987. He served in Uniform Patrol, as a School Resource Deputy, Criminal Investigations, and, after 09/11, as a Domestic Security Task Force Agent. In 2004 he came to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation (FWC) Commission, having served in the Office of Inspector General, the FWC Academy and the Office of Professional Standards. David retired as a Captain in 2020 and returned to serve as a Deputy Sheriff with LCSO. David regularly serves as a team leader for law enforcement and inspector general assessments for the Commission for Law Enforcement Accreditation. He has completed over 70 assessments, and he regularly teaches Team Leader and Assessor certification courses for the Commission. David is a CJSTC and NRA certified firearms instructor and is also a Taser, impact weapon and chemical agent instructor. He holds certifications in multiple disciplines as an armorer and has been assigned as the Agency Armorer for both LCSO and FWC. He is an avid waterfowl and upland bird hunter and has been active with the Boy Scouts of America since his youth.

## Doug Robertson

Chief Doug Robertson came to the Wilton Manors Police after a distinguished law enforcement career in Upstate New York, where he rose through the ranks from dispatcher to serve as Chief of Police for nearly 12 years. In addition to his law enforcement command experience, he served as an instructor at the Central New York Regional Police Academy and an adjunct faculty member of the Public Safety Training Center at SUNY Onondaga Community College in Syracuse, NY. Chief Robertson has 32 years of accreditation experience after having been named accreditation manager for the North Syracuse Police Department back in 1990. In 2005, he was the primary author of the New York State's Division of Criminal Justice Services Accreditation Manager Training Tutorial. In 2006, former New York Governor Pataki appointed Robertson to a seat on the New York State Law Enforcement Accreditation Council (Commission). Over the last 32 years, he has served as an assessor and team leader in New York and continues to serve in those roles for CFA here in Florida. Doug has conducted over 60 mock and on-site assessments in both states and is an active member of the FLA-PAC and the training committee. He is a proud grandfather to his eight grandchildren.

## **Gary Robinson**

Gary Robinson started his career with the West Palm Beach Police Department in 1973, retiring as a Captain in 2004. He served in a broad range of assignments, including communications, patrol, special investigations, criminal investigations, training, property and evidence, and administration, among others. He served as the accreditation manager from 1997-2004. He served as the Major over Support Services Bureau for the Port St. Lucie Police Department from 2004 to 2012. With the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office since 2012, he currently serves as the Unit Manager over Staff Inspections and the law enforcement accreditation manager. He holds an MBA and graduated from the Southern Police Institute, 82nd Administrative Officers Course. He's been involved in accreditation at some level since 1989; continuously since 1997, including as an assessor and team leader for CFA since 1999; CALEA assessor and team leader 2001-2012. Certified Accreditation Professional since 2010. CFA Assessor of the Year 2012 and Team Leader of the Year 2019. Individual recognition, IACP Webber-Seavey Award, 1995. He is a former FLA-PAC Treasurer and PAC-CHAT editor. He has served as a CFA SRIC member 2006 – 2009 and currently since 2019. Gary has completed over 88 law enforcement and Inspector General assessments, 64 as team leader.

## **Frank Ruggiero**

Major Frank Ruggiero has been in law enforcement since 1990 and currently works for the Tarpon Springs Police Department (TSPD). Prior to his promotion to major in 2021, he served as the accreditation manager and supervisor of training, hiring, recruiting, traffic homicide, and special events. Major Ruggiero began teaching at the Pasco/Hernando State College in 2000 as a lead instructor and has taught more than 50 different academy classes. He is currently CJSTC certified in the areas of firearms, police driving, defensive tactics, medical first responder, dart firing stun guns, and general topics. He has been on the FDLE Curriculum Maintenance Board since 2006. He has been a member of the St. Petersburg College Training Advisory Board since 2005. He has presented for several different organizations including the Property Evidence Association of Florida (PEAF), the State of Florida Crime Watch Organization, FLA-PAC, and for several city commissions. Major Ruggiero has been a CFA assessor since 2012 and a CFA team leader since 2016. He is also a member of CFA SRIC and a Certified Accreditation Professional. Until his promotion in 2021 he served as the FLA-PAC Training Committee chairperson. He is a graduate of the University of Louisville's SPI Command Officer Development Course class #77. His awards include Officer of the Year 2004 and 2018, Best New Crime Watch Program for State of Florida 2011, Certified Public Pension Trustee (FPPTA), Best Instructor PHSC (multiple times), and the TSPD Award of Excellence.

## **Kim Wachter**



Ms. Wachter began her career in law enforcement in 2002, as an intelligence analyst with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. She is a 2004 graduate of the FDLE Analyst Academy. During her career with FDLE, she worked in the Melbourne Field Office, in the Orlando Region. Her assignment to the field office included working as the analyst with Special Agents handling public corruption, economic crimes, violent crimes, narcotics investigations, and cold case homicides. In 2007, she began working with the Indian River County Sheriff's Office as an Investigative Analyst. There, she worked in the Investigations Unit with detectives assigned to persons and property crimes, as well as the detectives assigned to the Multi Agency Criminal Enforcement Unit, specifically handling narcotics investigations and Intelligence (gangs and drugs). In 2012, Ms. Wachter was hired by the Sebastian Police Department as their Crime Analyst and Accreditation Manager. In 2013, she became an accreditation assessor and has traveled around the state to assess other law enforcement agencies to determine their compliance with the state accreditation standards. In 2015, Ms. Wachter was promoted to Administrative Supervisor where her duties included continuing as the crime analyst and accreditation manager but also supervising the Records Unit and Logistics Unit. While with the Sebastian Police Department, she had the privilege of serving as their accreditation manager for two assessments (2014 and 2017), the last of which recognized the Sebastian Police Department as an Excelsior agency with the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation (CFA). In 2017, Ms. Wachter moved to Tallahassee where she now serves as a Senior Management Analyst Supervisor with the Department of Financial Services, Division of Investigative and Forensic Services. Her duties include supervising the Division's public records specialists and acting as the Division's accreditation manager. In October 2018, the Division proudly received their initial accreditation with CFA and received their first reaccreditation award in October 2021.

## **William Walls**

William "Billy" Walls is a senior program manager for the Florida Accreditation Office and is responsible for assisting agencies in the Southeast Florida region. He has previously been an active assessor and team leader for CFA and has over twenty years of law enforcement experience. His career began in municipal law enforcement with the Havana Police Department. He then moved to the Tallahassee Police Department. While with TPD, he served as a patrol officer, DARE officer, and fraud investigator. Billy was hired in 2000 by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Inspector General as an investigative lieutenant and in 2002 he was promoted to captain. In 2003, he was promoted to the chief of training in the Division of Law Enforcement. In that position, he was a member of the State Law Enforcement Chiefs Association and a member of the Training Center Directors Association, Chairing Region 15 which oversaw funding for all state law enforcement officer advanced training. Billy holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Flagler College and is instructor certified through the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission.