

Instructor Biographies

Spring Conference, 2024



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.

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.

Dawn E. Case

Dawn E. Case began her career in 1986 with Florida's Department of Children and Families (formerly the Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services), Office of Inspector General, where she held numerous investigative positions including six years as its chief of investigations. After 16 years with the Department of Children and Families, Office of Inspector General, she held the positions of director of investigations and deputy inspector general in the Executive Office of the Governor's Chief Inspector General's office. After eight years with the Office of the Chief Inspector General, she returned to the Department of Children and Families as inspector general where she served in that capacity for approximately 15 months before returning to the Governor's office as deputy chief inspector general. In October 2016, Ms. Case became the inspector general for the Florida Department of Management Services. During her tenure as inspector general, the Florida Department of Management Services investigative function achieved accredited status in October 2018. Ms. Case returned to her previous position as the deputy chief inspector general in the Chief Inspector General's Office in June 2019. Ms. Case earned her bachelor and master's degrees from Florida State University. Ms. Case is a certified inspector general, a commission member on the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation, and serves as the first vice-president of the Association of Inspectors General, Florida Chapter.

Mark DeStefano, Lieutenant (Ret.)

Lieutenant (ret) Mark DeStefano is a 48-year law enforcement veteran who retired from active service in 2021. During his career he worked uniform patrol division, investigations, tac squad, and SRO. He was also a Sgt over numerous units and watch commander when he retired. Mark is a graduate of the University of Central Florida with a BS in social science with a minor in Criminal Justice. Also, during his career, he attended numerous in service training classes, including Command Officer Development Course through the University of Louisville and Public Safety leadership through Valencia College. He is a founding member of BlueLine Support is a peer support officer program combined with a network of Mental Health Professionals (MHPs) to provide intervention, prevention, resiliency, training, and self-care services for law enforcement officers regardless of status (wounded/active/retired), rank, or agency, and is a trained Peer 2 Peer Officer. He is also the team coordinator for the West Orange Law Enforcement CISM team.

Jen Jacques Senior Program Manager

Jennifer Jacques joined the Florida Accreditation Office in January 2020. Jennifer brings over 10 years of accreditation manager and assessor experience. She began her career with the Department of Transportation, Office of Motor Carrier Compliance in 2006 and officially became the Accreditation Manager in 2008. In 2011, FDOT merged with the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles where she became the Accreditation Manager in the Office of the Inspector General. Then in 2012, she became the Accreditation Manager for the Department of Business and Professional Regulation, Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco, Bureau of Law Enforcement, Office of the Chief where she was instrumental in the revision of the Bureau's policy manual, as well as ensuring the Bureau maintained compliance with the standards set forth by the Commission to achieve reaccredited status in 2013, 2015, and 2018. She was an active Executive Board member with the Florida Police Accreditation Coalition for ten years serving in the role of Secretary. She has been an active participant with the State Law Enforcement Chiefs Association (SLECA). She became a Certified Accreditation Professional (CAP) in 2020. She is an active member of the National Accreditation Organization, AccredNet,

Lt. Chuck Harwood

Lieutenant Harwood has more than 27 years of law enforcement and corrections experience and began his career with the Clay County Sheriff's Office. He began his law enforcement career in the auxiliary unit and also worked as an inmate supervisor. He later transferred to the Operations Department. He has experience in patrol, traffic enforcement, investigations, civil, warrants, bailiff, and marine enforcement. In 2004 he transferred to the Corrections Department and was assigned to a security squad. He has experience in security, transport, logistics, training, and laundry. In 2013 he was promoted to sergeant and supervised a security squad, admissions, releasing, and classification unit, and the administrative security unit. In 2019 he was promoted to lieutenant and is currently the Administrative Support Lieutenant. He assisted in standing up a two-team canine unit from the ground up and currently supervises its daily operations. Lieutenant Harwood has completed the Florida Sheriff's Association Commanders Academy (class president) and the FBI-LEEDA leadership trilogy. He has earned his United States Police Canine Association handler and trainers' certifications.

Sgt. Thalantha K. Jones

Sgt. Thalantha K. Jones has served as a Detention Deputy since 2002 at the Clay County Sheriff's Office. She currently holds the position of the Security Support Unit Sergeant. She is supervisor over the following areas: detention facility kitchen, maintenance, supply/inventory, and the field training program. In 2010 Sgt. Jones graduated with her A.A. degree from Vincennes University. She has completed various training seminars and conferences to include becoming a Florida Corrections Accreditation Commission (FCAC) assessor, completing the FBI LEEDA Leadership trilogy, and becoming a Florida Model Jail Standards Inspector. She has assisted the Florida Sheriff's Association (FSA) with several inspections throughout Florida. In September 2018 she was awarded the 2017 Florida Model Jail Standards Inspector of the year.

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.

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.

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.

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.

Frank Ruggiero

Assitant Chief 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.