



PSO Newsletter

April 2025

This newsletter features

- PSO partners at the American Society for Evidence-Based policing Conference
- Partner publications
- Professional activities
- Research opportunities.

We regularly update our [website](#) and our [LinkedIn](#) page. Please follow us and invite interested contacts to do so as well. Those interested may sign up for the PSO Newsletter by using the [contact form](#).

PSO Partners at the ASEBP Conference

Nearly a dozen PSO Partners will speak at the annual conference of the American Society of Evidence-Based Policing (ASEBP), to be held Wednesday, April 30, through Friday, May 2, in Tucson, Arizona. PSO Partners will speak on topics ranging from community-based crime reduction to the use and impact of artificial intelligence in body-worn camera review to analyzing personnel exit interview data to evidence-based recruitment. Sessions featuring PSO Partners (indicated by an asterisk) and focusing on staffing issues are the following. The complete program agenda is available [here](#).

Analyzing Exit Interview Data to Enhance Retention Strategies in Law Enforcement

Carlee Ruiz, RTI; Emily Hadley, RTI; Kelsea Albertson, RTI; Tanya Meisenholder*, New York University; Zollie Saxon, RTI

Wednesday, April 30, 3:10 p.m. to 4:10 p.m.

RTI, in collaboration with the 30x30 Initiative, analyzed exit interview data as part of a larger, multi-method study. Exit interviews can offer a unique perspective on turnover, but law enforcement agencies may not always use their insights. This work assesses current exit interview needs, examines data from existing exit interviews, and creates standardized exit interview templates.

Evidence-Based Recruitment in Policing: An Efficiency Frontier Approach

Erik Alda*, Marymount University; Luubinka Andonoska, University of Texas – El Paso

Thursday, May 1, 8:45 a.m. to 9:15 a.m.

This work presents a novel approach to evidence-based recruitment and selection: Data Envelopment Analysis with Assurance Region. This approach enables police agencies to mitigate challenges when evaluating candidates based on multiple criteria while considering diverse stakeholder preferences. Using simulated data, the researchers demonstrate how this model can rank candidates by relative efficiency scores.

Law Enforcement Training and Education: Inspiring and Empowering the Next Generation of EBP Advocates

Mo McGough*, University of South Carolina; Seth Stoughton, University of South Carolina; Kristen Mahoney, University of Chicago; Ian Adams* University of South Carolina; Renee Mitchell, ASEBP; Jerry Ratcliffe, Temple University

Thursday, May 1, 10:15 a.m. to 11:15 a.m.

In the last few years, a number of law enforcement executive and mid-career education programs have launched across the country. Many of these programs are shaping the next generation of leaders by emphasizing critical yet under-appreciated approaches, such as evidence-based policing, to advancing public safety. Such programs are expanding the range of law enforcement professionals who are exposed to evidence-based policing. This panel will describe current models for evidence-based policing support, identify gaps in support, and explore how best to empower all rising leaders to be active participants in advancing evidence-based policing.

Resilience, Moral Injury, and Officer Mental Health within a Police Cohort: An Examination of the First Year of an Officer's Career

Hunter Boehme, University of South Carolina; Gabrielle O'Keefe, RTI; TJ Geary*, University of South Carolina; Sohee Jung, University of South Carolina; Scott Mourtgos*, University of South Carolina

Thursday, May 1, 4:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

This presentation will discuss findings from a longitudinal survey of mental health and resilience among a first-year law enforcement cohort. The researchers will discuss the temporal order of contributors to attrition and poor mental health among members of this cohort. They will also discuss how the measures they use may help agencies implement appropriate mental health interventions.

Field-Based Lessons for Addressing the Police Staffing Challenge

Ethan Humphrey*, Michigan State University; Jeremy Wilson*, Michigan State University

Friday, May 2, 3:25 p.m. to 4:25 p.m.

This session will present findings from research supported by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services regarding the police staffing challenge. The first project identified important dimensions for recruitment programs. The second rated more than 200 recruitment, selection, and retention tactics on several performance metrics, including not only their effectiveness in increasing staff levels and managing workload but also by their immediacy of impact and ease of implementation, cost, and their effects on quality of policing and in advancing community policing.



Partner Publications

Shaping Police Self-Efficacy: A Content Analysis of Officer Views Towards Their Duty Assignments, Working Locations, and Working Times

Logan J. Somers, Georgia Southern University, and Natalie Todak, University of Alabama at Birmingham

This work uses narrative survey responses from a large U.S. police agency to assess how and why work contexts shape self-confidence. Working patrol assignments, in high crime areas, and on night shift are especially important in boosting the self-confidence of officers. The findings offer insights for police agencies looking to build the self-confidence of their sworn personnel.

Balancing Duty and Family: The Effects of Support Systems on Women in Law Enforcement

Kathleen E. Padilla, Texas State University; Wesley T. Smith, Texas State University; Kellie Renfro, Dallas (TX) Police Department

This work surveys current and former women officers of the Dallas (TX) Police Department to explore how childcare resources and parental support might impact organizational commitment, particularly given retention difficulties faced by U.S. police agencies. The analysis finds parental and social support boost organizational commitment, but there are challenges related to scheduling and promotion, breastfeeding, and differential expectations for mothers and fathers.

Examining the Impact of State-wide Reform on Police Attitudes and Perceptions in New Jersey

Gabrielle T. Isaza, National Policing Institute; Ryan T. Motz, University of Cincinnati; Hannah D. McManus, National Policing Institute; Nicholas Corsaro, University of Cincinnati

New Jersey has enacted one of the most ambitious police use of force reduction initiatives, requiring all law enforcement officers to participate in de-escalation training and peer intervention training. This work surveys officers before and after training. It finds that participation in training shifts officer attitudes and perceptions in ways that align with program tenets. That is, the training can alter officer outlooks to support safe, effective interventions with community members. This work offers one of the few accounts of police office receptivity to state-mandated use-of-force training.

How Do They Do It? Success Factors for Women Pursuing Positions on Elite Police Specialty Units

Natalie Todak, University of Alabama at Birmingham; Katharine Brown, University of Mississippi

This work reports findings from interviews with 32 women officers in the United States who have served or led an elite specialty unit on contributors to their success in these roles. The interviews emphasized the importance of developing a good reputation as a patrol officer, unit-specific skills, and the ability to fit into an all-male environment. A summary of this work is also available in *Applied Police Briefings*.

Bearing the Badge, Battling Inner Struggles: Understanding Suicidal Ideation in Law Enforcement

Daniel S. Lawrence, CNA Corporation; Kathleen E. L. Padilla, Texas State University; Jessica Dockstader, CNA Corporation

This work surveys sworn and professional personnel in eight law enforcement agencies regarding psychological contributors to suicidal ideation and self-reported measures of mental health and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). It finds that PTSD diminishes mental health, which exacerbates suicidal ideation. The results highlight the vital role that enhanced mental health services plays in reducing suicidal ideation and underscore the importance for law enforcement agencies to prioritize staff wellness by implementing comprehensive wellness programs. A summary of this work is also available in *Applied Police Briefings*.

Examining the Relationship Between Officer Work Assignments and Retention: Evidence from the Charleston, SC, Police Department

Elias Nader, Kent State University; Bradley J. O'Guinn, University of Cincinnati; Anthony Gibson, Charleston (SC) Police Department; Dannelle Goldberg, Charleston (SC) Police Department

This study uses ten years of hiring and employment data from the Charleston (SC) Police Department to test whether the number and type of assignments that officers receive early in their careers are associated with the likelihood of officer separation. It finds that early career officers with more assignments are less likely to separate from the agency than their colleagues with fewer assignments across the same time periods. It also found that the recency of assignment made a difference in the likelihood of separation, with officers receiving a new assignment being significantly more likely to make it to the next two years of employment markers (e.g., getting a new assignment between year 2 and 3 made officers less likely to separate than colleagues at Year 3 and Year 4 markers).

Motivations for a Career in Law Enforcement: Comparing Police Officers and Deputy Sheriffs

Jennifer C. Gibbs, Penn State Harrisburg; Mackenzie Bingaman, Penn State Harrisburg; Baha Barchnak, Penn State Harrisburg

This work reports interviews among 340 Pennsylvania police officers and deputy sheriffs about their motivations to pursue their current career. Both groups commonly sought a career in law enforcement to help people, although the police officers had more diverse motivations than deputy sheriffs did. Family and friends in law enforcement were more important recruiters for deputy sheriffs than for municipal police officers.

Does Humanizing the Police Improve the Effectiveness of Police Recruiting Efforts?

Shawn L. Hill, University of California at Santa Barbara; Laure Brimbal, Texas State University; Edward R. Maguire, Arizona State University; Eve Stephens, University of Texas

This experimental study explores whether portrayals of police officers in recruiting videos that are more "humanizing" than those in traditional, action-oriented portrayals can affect police recruitment. The videos varied how a female police officer described her career and her personal life. Students who watched the humanizing video subsequently expressed greater identity with the police and greater trust

in the police, but did not express greater interest in a career in policing. Nevertheless, the greater identity with the police did lead to an indirect boost in student interest in policing careers.

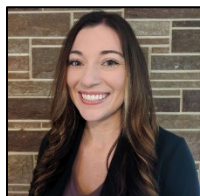
Addressing Police Turnover: Challenges, Strategies, and Future Research Directions

Katherine Hoogesteyn, RTI; Meret S. Hofer, RTI; Travis A. Taniguchi, RTI; Jennifer R. Rineer, RTI

This review synthesizes findings from policing and related fields regarding strategies to enhance officer retention. It categorizes strategies as compensation and financial incentives, career development and professional growth, workplace environment and support, wellness and resilience, and feedback and organizational learning. It notes the importance of context-specific, tailored approaches and of rigorous studies to evaluate these strategies. Among its recommendations are adapting organizational structures to foster innovative retention strategies, optimizing resource management, and implementing continuous evaluation processes.

Professional Activities

Huff Receives Emerging Policing Scholar Award from ACJS



Congratulations to PSO partner Jessie Huff, who has received the Inaugural Emerging Policing Scholar Award of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS) Police Section. The award “recognizes an outstanding early career scholar who has shown remarkable potential and achievement in producing quality research in the field of policing.” Huff, an assistant professor in the School of Criminal Justice at the University of Cincinnati, uses experimental methods to examine programs and policies intended to improve police effectiveness and fairness.

Chermak Receives Outstanding Faculty Award



PSO Partner Steve Chermak has received the Michigan State University William J. Beal Outstanding faculty Award. The award recognizes faculty for their comprehensive and sustained record of scholarly excellence in research or creative activities, instruction, and outreach. Chermak’s work on police staffing has involved working with police organizations to implement and then evaluate staffing and the effectiveness of various crime control strategies.

Ryan Caps Academic Career



Our congratulations and best wishes to Ann Marie Ryan on her retirement as professor of organizational psychology at Michigan State University. Ryan’s career has explored improving the quality and fairness of employee selection methods as well as topics related to diversity and justice in the workplace. Her PSO contributions have included research on strategic recruitment for enhancing diversity, withdrawal patterns from academy training, reasons potential recruits may reject policing, and media and public perceptions of the policing profession. We hope to feature more of her work as she finished up projects.

Wilson Named to NPI Board of Directors



PSO Director Jeremy Wilson has been appointed to the National Policing Institute (NPI) Board of Directors. Since its founding in 1970, the NPI has partnered with public safety leaders to address law enforcement's most pressing and complex challenges.

Research Opportunities

University of Akureyri to Host Policing and Society Conference

The Police Science Research Center at the University of Akureyri invites abstracts for its 8th Policing and Society Conference to be held October 1 and 2. The conference is a joint venue for academics and professionals to share their research and experience involving policing, to learn from one another, and to engage with the public.

The theme of this year's conference is de-escalation, i.e., methods aimed at bringing calm to volatile situations using the least amount of force possible. Organizers strongly encourage presentations that deal with de-escalation but welcome all contributions that intersect with policing in one form or another.

Each presentation is allotted 25 minutes, including a question-and-answer session. Individuals wishing to make a presentation should submit an abstract of no more than 250 words to goddsson@unak.is no later than June 15. Abstracts should include a title, short description, methods, and main results or arguments, as well as information on the presenter's academic position.

For more information, see the conference website: [Policing and Society Conference | University of Akureyri](#).

Policing: An International Journal Special Issue on Police and Terrorism

Policing: An International Journal seeks contributions to a special issue on police and terrorism, violent extremism, and targeted violence. Aims of the issue are to identify police strategies to counter terrorism; to explore police preparedness for mass casualty events stemming from terrorism; to determine what effect terrorism, violent extremism, and targeted violence has on police wellness; and to identify police as offenders or catalysts for violence. The journal will accept submissions for this issue from April 30 to September 30. For further information, see <https://www.emeraldgrouppublishing.com/calls-for-papers/police-and-terrorism-violent-extremism-and-targeted-violence>.

Newsletter Archive

Our newsletters are online. Click [here](#) to read the most recent or previous issues.

About the Michigan State University Police Staffing Observatory

The Police Staffing Observatory (PSO) is a global collaborative of academics, scholars, practitioners, and students working with Michigan State University to promote evidence-based police workforce research, strategy, and operations. Its primary aims are to advance police workforce knowledge and its application by

- Conducting timely and innovative research on critical aspects of a wide-range of police staffing issues, resulting in scholarly and practitioner-oriented publications
- Creating a venue for the network of police staffing scholars to share opportunities, discuss ideas, and enable collaborations
- Facilitating researcher-practitioner partnerships and technical assistance
- Serving as a repository and dissemination vehicle for the research of collaborators so that it is easily discoverable by practitioners and others.

Through its facilitation of research and outreach, the Police Staffing Observatory is a community of science that ultimately serves as a valuable resource for the community of practice.

