

# Good News

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## TEAM TWO



*“Police had negotiated with the subject for over thirty minutes before the situation was resolved.”*

**Montpelier P.D.  
Chief Anthony  
Facos**



Small breakout group discussions are an important piece of each Team Two training.

### Press Release—City of Montpelier Police Department Suicidal Man Who Stabbed Himself is Saved by Montpelier Police Tactical Response

On Friday March 29, 2019 at approximately 10:07 AM, the Montpelier Police and Fire Departments were dispatched to a 911 call involving a male subject who allegedly “fell on a knife in attempts to harm himself.” At the responding officer’s request, Washington County Mental Health screener Jordan Houston also responded and staged at a safe distance. This incident occurred inside an apartment building on Barre Street in Montpelier, VT. Upon arrival to the third floor apartment, MPD officers observed a male subject (age 32), standing in a doorway who had blood all over his chest, holding a knife down by his side. MPD officers first on scene immediately began negotiating with the injured person and made multiple demands that he drop the knife—which were unsuccessful. The

MPD officer who was negotiating with the distraught person continued to do what she could to keep him calm, attempting to de-escalate him during this intense situation. Additional MPD personnel and resources were called to assist, including a ballistic shield, and less-lethal weapon systems (which consisted of a Pepperball launcher and a modified shotgun loaded with special bean-bag rounds).

The MPD negotiator continued to maintain some dialogue with the subject, even as he took the knife to his neck and began “sawing” at his neck, which already had other open bloody wounds. The subject then suddenly advanced towards the officers with the knife. At this point, one of the officers shot the man in the lower abdomen region with a 12 gauge bean-bag round, which immediately halt-

ed his advance towards the officers. Soon after being hit with the bean-bag round, the subject held the knife out to the side and he slowly put it down. He then calmly surrendered to MPD and was taken into custody without any further incident. He was immediately treated for his wounds, which included at least one self-inflicted stab wound and the self-inflicted cuts to his neck. The MFD medics transported him to the Central Vermont Medical Center. Police had negotiated with the subject for over thirty minutes before the situation was resolved.

No criminal charges are being sought as a result of this mental health crisis response.

**For more information, contact:  
Chief Anthony J. Facos  
(802) 223-3445**

### Barre City P.D. and WCMHS’ Roos Ride Together

This spring Washington County Mental Health Screener, Nick Roos, had the opportunity to join Barre City Police Department on three outreach calls in one day. Barre City PD called Nick to respond as the emergency screener on duty and Nick was able to quickly respond to the calls. The day was an excellent example of the collabora-

tion and communication that Team Two trainings promote. Barre City police officer James McGown was able to clearly and succinctly describe the situations to Nick and specifically articulate that he wanted Nick to go with them on each of the calls. On the first call Nick and the Barre City Officers responded to a woman in the community

who was presenting as manic. The police were receiving numerous complaint calls from neighbors about the woman’s behavior. Nick and the police were able to go and see her at her apartment. They provided support and helped deescalate the situation. Nick was able to

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*“... Winooski PD helped every step of the way. They went above and beyond...”*

## Winooski

A Howard Center substitute crisis clinician had a terrific experience with Winooski Police. She had just become a Qualified Mental Health Professional (QMHP), and had to complete her first mental health warrant for a client in serious distress. Even in the early hours of the morning, Winooski PD helped every step of the way. They

went above and beyond, telling the screener in great detail everything they had learned about the case, providing strong collaboration, and finding her the correct phone numbers for the on-call judge. The officers, whose names the clinician could not recall, even helped ease her nerves during her first phone call to a judge. They made this

first warrant so much easier and less stressful for the QMHP. The clinician never felt rushed for time, and enjoyed answering their questions on mental health specific to this client. Their kindness and sense of humor has not been forgotten. Every time Winooski police have interacted with this clinician, it has been an absolute pleasure.

## Waterbury Center

Washington County Mental Health screeners received a call to check on an individual at his residence in Waterbury Center. Not being familiar with the caller, WCMH asked the Vermont State Police at Middlesex bar-

racks to go along with them as they performed this welfare check. Trooper Jacob Fox did not hesitate to provide assistance and was very communicative when he became delayed because of a truck fire on the inter-

state. Once Trooper Fox was cleared from the traffic detail, he led WCMH screeners to the residence, went in to ensure it was safe to enter and stood by while the screeners performed an assessment of the individual.

## South Burlington

A Howard Center community outreach worker was called to a case recently where a woman was subpoenaed to testify in a case against her abuser; a man had attempted to strangle her in November, resulting in intense emotional trauma and distrust of others. Upon being subpoenaed by South Burlington police, the woman became distressed, and officers called for Community Outreach. However, by the time the worker arrived, the woman was deescalated. The community outreach program worker, along with Officer Dince and Officer Dan Brunelle, spoke to this woman about her trauma, her fears, and how they could help her moving forward. Both Officers impressed the

Outreach worker with their expression of empathy, their knowledge of domestic violence and trauma, and their skill in building trust with a woman who was terrified to trust officers. Later, when the Howard Center worker was able to follow up on the woman, she reiterated countless reasons why she dislikes law enforcement, yet specified that Officers Dince and Brunelle were so kind and knowledgeable that she trusts them.

Ultimately, this positive experience paved the way for Community Outreach to convince the client to come to the police station, which she had previously been hesitant to do. A meet-

ing was held between the client and Officer Sarah Superneau, who similarly displayed empathy, knowledge, and skill when working with a victim of domestic violence. It has taken approximately six months since the original violent offense, but in the last month that the community outreach worker and the woman have been working together, the woman has now obtained a Relief From Abuse order, and Officer Superneau is following up on the information provided in their last meeting. The client remains distrustful at times, yet due to collaboration between Community Outreach and Officers Superneau, Dince, and Brunelle, there has been movement towards increased safety for the client.



Sgt. Knisley leads a small group discussion. Groups are composed of police, crisis workers, dispatchers, EMTs and ED personnel.

## Steering Committee Members

Keith Clarke, Windham County Sheriff, is an original member of the Team Two Steering Committee. Sheriff Clarke retired June 30, for a well-deserved rest from law enforcement duties. Keith has taught “Interacting with Persons with a Mental Illness” or “ACT 80” training, at the police academy ever since it was mandated by the legislature that every certi-

fied officer in Vermont receive this training.

Other Steering Committee members include:

- Laurie Emerson, NAMI VT
- Tony Facos, Montpelier Police
- Mourning Fox, DMH Deputy Commissioner
- Gary Gordon, Washington County Mental Health
- Kate Lamphere, Healthcare and Rehabilitation Services
- Caitlin Rose League, consumer
- Jackie Leman, consumer
- Mary Moulton, Executive Director, Washington County Mental Health
- Ed Riddell, DAIL
- Lt Garry Scott, Vermont State Police

- Cindy Taylor-Patch, VT Police Training Academy
- Tony Folland and Megan Mitchell, ADAP, VT Department of Health
- Simone Rueschemeyer, Executive Director, Vermont Care Network/ Vermont Care Partners

## Burlington

First Call for Chittenden County really appreciated the help they received from two Chittenden County Sheriffs as well as Burlington PD when they were called to assist with a veteran who was being evicted from his residence. This was a well-coordinated response to a potentially violent individual who was a military vet. The client had barricaded all doors and windows and there was concern that they may have had firearms and surveillance set up for monitoring intruders. The

police were not only instrumental with ensuring the environment was safe but also in interacting with the individual. They were receptive to the First Call clinician’s input that the individual was a military vet and used this knowledge to inform their rapport building. The clinician was able to enter the home with police support and provide an assessment. The Sherriff staff involved went out of their way to make themselves available as a

support for the client who was being told he needed to vacate his apartment immediately. The Sherriff offered the individual help removing his belongings the following day. It was a cold day in the middle of the winter and the clinician, the deputy sheriffs and the Burlington officers all stood outside for about three hours working together as a team to wait for the client and ultimately to figure out how to make entry into the apartment.

*“The Police were not only instrumental with ensuring the environment was safe but also in interacting with the individual.”*

## Small Break-Out Groups from Team Two Trainings



Royalton Police Chief Loretta Stalnaker leads discussion



VSP Det. Chris Blais & WCMHS Screener Andrew Clammer facilitate the discussion



AHS Field Director Jean Helmstetter listens to Burlington P.D. Dispatcher & Team Two Instructor Brandi Barbeau

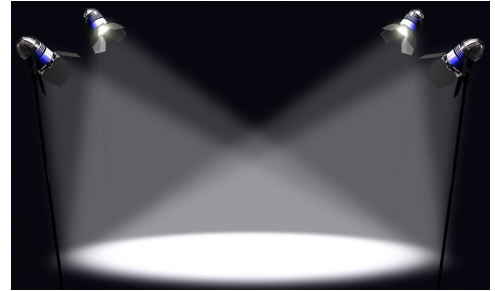
## Instructor Spotlight—Montpelier P.D.’s Knisley and Pearson

Montpelier Police Department’s **Matt Knisley** and **Jeff Pearson** have been Team Two instructors since 2013, the inception of Team Two training! The commitment to a collaborative effort in responding to mental health crises is evident in their devotion to spending a day training others on the Team Two model. Each of them have volunteered on their days off; they can always be counted on to be there when needed!

**Matt** has been employed with the Montpelier Police Department since 2001 and holds the rank of Corporal. He has a Bachelor’s Degree in Criminal Justice from Castleton State College and a Master’s Degree in Mediation and Applied Con-

flict Studies from Champlain College. Matt is currently assigned as the School Resource Officer for the Montpelier School District and as the Child Sex Assault Investigator for Montpelier Police Department. He is trained as a Hostage/Crisis Negotiator, Defensive Tactics Instructor, and a Pepperball Instructor.

**Jeff** has been employed with the Montpelier Police Department since 2009. After a 4 year enlistment in the United States Navy, Jeff attended the police academy in North Carolina. He remained in North Carolina and policed for over 7 years where



he was assigned as a Detective as part of the Major Crimes Unit for over 3 years prior to returning to his home state of Vermont. Jeff is currently a Sergeant for the Montpelier Police Department. He is trained in Crime Scene Processing, Interviewing, Sex Assault Investigation and Hostage/Crisis Negotiation. Jeff is a graduate of the North Carolina Justice Academy as a Criminal Investigator.

## Morrisville

Morrisville Police officer Kevin LaPlante responded to a person with a chronic mental illness who was living in their own apartment and had been reported by their case manager to have a medical issue. This individual was refusing to seek medical attention and appeared to have a

broken collarbone, and was also actively experiencing psychotic symptoms. The Lamoille County Mental Health crisis team went to his apartment with Officer LaPlante, and an ambulance also responded. Officer LaPlante was kind, empathetic, gave clear directions and sup-

port to the individual, and was effective in getting them to go willingly to the Emergency Department for evaluation. The ambulance crew was also accepting and supportive, and further facilitated a positive experience for the client and all involved.

*“Officer LaPlante was kind, empathetic, gave clear instructions...”*

## Team Two Invited to WA Symposium

Coordinator Kristin Chandler has been invited to speak about Team Two at a symposium hosted by the city of Shoreline, Washington in September, 2019. For the past four years, the Shoreline, Washington Police Department has worked in partnership with George Mason University, the Police Foundation, and the Bureau of Justice

Administration to develop and implement RADAR, a novel approach to addressing behavioral health crisis responses. RADAR (Response Awareness, De-escalation, and Referral) is based on the theory that when responding to a behavioral health crisis event, the more subject specific behavior information that first responders have



available to them the more informed their decision making will be and the greater likelihood that the response will be both safe and effective for everyone involved.

## St. Albans

Embedded NCSS clinician Josh Cate responded with Sgt Paul Morits (Team Two Trainer) and Officer Allison from the St Albans Police Department to search for a 16 yr. old male who had run away from an alternative school after he had an altercation with a teacher. The client was located across from a local store sitting at a picnic table with two staff members.

Due to this young man's history of negative behaviors towards police officers it was decided that police would not approach him. Josh gathered information from school staff and a decision was made to allow the client some time to de-escalate. Josh and the other staff sat with the young man and utilized humor to assist him in calming down. They discussed his interests and

ways he could get his needs met in a more positive manner. The client understood that his behaviors were not appropriate and was able to regulate and agreed to go home for the day with an appropriate adult. Police were able to leave the scene while Josh and the staff members waited with the young man for his ride home.

## Team Two to Present at the IACP Annual Conference

Team Two will be presenting our one-day training model at the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) annual conference in Chicago in October. Coordinator Kristin Chandler, steering committee member and Montpelier Police Chief Tony Facos and Washington County Mental Health Services

CEO Mary Moulton will travel to Chicago in late October to present a workshop entitled "At Risk Communities: Responding to Mental Health Crises Collaboratively". We presented at the 2016 IACP conference in San Diego and will once again be in the smaller agency track of workshops and presenta-

tions. This is a great honor to be selected among the many proposals submitted by agencies all over the world to showcase what we think is a terrific curriculum for establishing positive outcomes to mental health crises.

*"This is a great honor to be selected among the many proposals submitted by agencies all over the world..."*

**Good News Bulletin**—Far too often, the public does not hear about the really good work going on by law enforcement and mental health crisis workers.

### **The Team Two Grant is administered by Vermont Care Partners**

Team Two is a grant funded one day scenario based training provided in 5 different regions around Vermont 6-8 times a year. This training grant is a collaboration between the Department of Public Safety and the Department of Mental Health to promote a collabora-

tive response among first responders to a mental health crisis. The training is designed to build the relationships necessary for the best possible outcomes to a person in a mental health crisis. It focuses on the safety, clinical and legal aspects of three different sce-

narios, as well as provides an overview of current legal issues and community and statewide resources. A person with lived experience gives a brief presentation along with a law enforcement officer and a crisis clinician to further demonstrate responses that have worked well for them.

## Frank Silfies, Jr. 2018 Awards

The annual Team Two “Frank Silfies Award” is presented to a Vermont law enforcement officer and to a mental health crisis clinician who exemplify collaborative response to mental health crises. The 2018 Frank Silfies Award recipients are Lieutenant Maurice

Lamothe, Vermont State Police (St. Albans barracks) and Talaia Thomas, of Washington County Mental Health Services. Presentation of the award took place at the Capitol during Mental Health Advocacy Day on January 30, 2019.



Pictured from Left to Right: Montpelier P.D. Chief Anthony Facos; Talaia Thomas; Kristin Chandler, Team Two Coordinator; Karen Kurrle, E.S. Director WCMHS

## Miss Vermont Attends Team Two Training

Julia Crane, Miss Vermont 2018, is a Howard Center crisis clinician. Julia attended the May 15, 2019 training in the NW Region.

## Barre P.D. and WCMHS’ Roos continued from page 1

refer the woman to WCMHS’ urgent care program, Adult Access so she could get ongoing mental health services and supports.

On the next call Nick and Barre City Officer Jonathan Bullard went to see a woman at her apartment who was making suicidal statements. Nick and the officer talked with the woman and provided support and de-escalation. Nick was able to clinically determine the woman

needed to go to the Emergency Department at Central Vermont Medical Center. An ambulance was called, and the woman was safely transported to the ED.

On the third call of the day Nick received a call from a mom who was worried about her adult son who receives services through WCMHS. Nick called the Barre City Police to provide a welfare check and headed to the person’s apartment. The person was screaming at police through

the door and had a knife. The person made homicidal statements toward the officers. Nick and the police were able to remain calm and to de-escalate the situation safely. Everyone remained safe and the person was transported to the emergency department to receive further treatment.

These three situations in one day clearly illustrate the immense collaboration and communication that happens everyday be-

tween law enforcement and emergency mental health screeners. All responders in these situations acted quickly and responsibly and treated vulnerable people in need with respect and dignity. Through their excellent interventions together they were able to keep everyone safe, deescalate situations and get people the help they needed.

## Team Two at the NARMH Annual Conference

In late August, Coordinator Kristin Chandler will travel to New Mexico to present the Team Two training model to a national audience at the 45<sup>th</sup> annual conference. The Team

Two model of holding a one day scenario-based training to promote collaboration among first responders seems a perfect fit for this national rural mental health conference.

### TEAM TWO

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