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Spotlight: Advanced Domestic Violence Training for Law Enforcement

Article by Sgt. Tina Jones, Portland Police Bureau, Domestic Violence Reduction
Unit/Domestic Violence Enhanced Response Team

The Portland Police Bureau has been providing extensive advanced domestic violence training for new recruits for over twelve years. The training includes extended training on significant topic areas followed by scenario based interactive training, which incorporates the learning objectives from the classroom. This model is effective and can be replicated in any jurisdiction with enthusiastic partners who are willing to participate.

Classroom Training

Law enforcement recruits participate in many hours of classroom and practical scenario training at the basic police academy, with some dedicated time for domestic violence issues. We have found over the years that recruit Officers are so bombarded with material and concepts that are new to them that it is difficult to achieve long-term understanding and

comprehension of key information. To address this, we include targeted DV training to recruits during our Advanced Academy.

During the Portland Police Bureau's Advanced Academy, the Domestic Violence Reduction Unit provides additional classroom training on key areas, such as;

- Lethality and Patrol Response,
- Stalking,
- Strangulation,
- Investigations,
- Restraining Orders,
- Dominant Aggressor analysis,
- Elder Abuse & Vulnerable Adult Investigations.

During the trainings, the Officers are provided with specific case examples to help them understand and retain the information. They learn to look for, ask about, and recognize lethality indicators during DV investigations. The trainings stem from incorporation of nation-wide best practices and our unit's

experience in conducting follow up in DV cases.

Scenario Training

Following the classroom training, we provide up to six different scenarios for officer participation. These scenarios are conducted with actors who are volunteers from our partners, such as Parole & Probation, Advocacy Agencies, DHS, DA's office, other law enforcement partners, and the DV unit for PPB. We have found that these actors can provide critical feedback to new recruits, enhance connections for new Officers with outside partners, and most importantly, they are incredible actors waiting to be discovered!!

We work hard to incorporate the lessons learned in the classroom within the scenarios. The scenarios are designed to run about thirty minutes with fifteen minutes of time to debrief.

Continued on next page.

Spotlight continued: Advanced Domestic Violence Training

The Officers are paired up, as if in a real incident where two Officers are dispatched. Here are some examples of scenarios:

- A female employee calls 911 to report an unwanted male at her workplace. The male has been previously trespassed and has been sending her cards, flowers, and has been following her home. He has shown up with a camera in his pocket, duct tape on his arm, and panty hose in his pocket. They never had an intimate relationship.
- A same sex couple is arguing in a park and Officers respond to a disturbance. The couple was at a party where one partner forced the other to leave by grabbing her by the arm and dragging her outside. One partner has a restraining order against the other.
- Officers respond to a DV incident where the male party has a bite mark and visible injury. He purports to be the victim. The female half was being shoved and was trying to call 911 when the male broke the phone and put her in a head lock resulting in a bite.

For the scenarios, we include props and try to make them as realistic as possible. During the de-brief we ask officers about lethality indicators they recognized, what evidence they would collect, who the dominant/primary aggressor was and why, what crimes they would charge if an arrest was

made, and what resource referrals would they make.

Overwhelmingly, the Officers report increased confidence in responding to DV calls. These are some examples of feedback from Officers from the last training conducted:

- "One of the most useful trainings I have received,"
- "It was practical-this training makes me confident for real world scenarios,"
- "The repeated same-type scenarios gave me confidence in how to handle these situations,"
- "The scenario training was the biggest contribution to my learning."

We make a point of collecting feedback to ensure the officers are getting value out of the training and to identify any areas we need to improve upon in the future.

Ideas for Implementing Similar Training

This training can be tailored for any jurisdiction and their needs. For example, three members of our DVERT team provided similar training for the Prairie Band Potawatomi Tribal Police in Kansas. To successfully do this, we learned about their particular laws and created training specific for them with the inclusion of national best practices regarding DV response. In addition, we have provided training for outside agencies, such as the Southern Oregon Coastal Region and Tillamook County.



Officer interviews a witness during DV training scenario

The feedback from these events has been positive, especially among those Officers who have had five or more years of patrol time already. These officers appear to be able to process the information at an advanced level and to readily apply personal experience from calls they have been on in the past. If your jurisdiction does not have the means to provide training to every new recruit, I highly recommend providing advanced training opportunities for Officers who have some experience in the field.

We encourage jurisdictions to consider providing opportunities for training to include external partners, such as advocates, District Attorney representatives, and Parole & Probation Officers. When we learn and share together, we create the necessary bonds to address DV with an improved coordinated community response. If your jurisdiction is interested in providing training similar to this and you would like advice, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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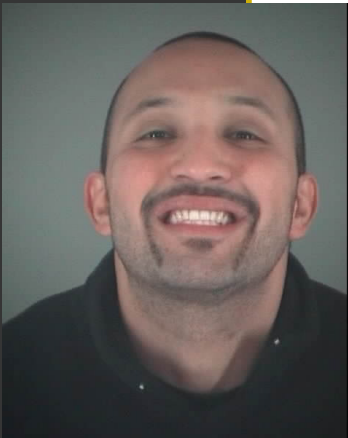
Of Note:

A column featuring DV cases tried by local prosecutors so we can learn from each others' accomplishments, strategies, and trial challenges.

State v. Hugo Romero

Article by Dave Hopkins, Assistant District Attorney

Lane County Circuit Court 201122132



Two of Hugo Romero's smiling mug shots

On October 19, 2011, neighbors heard Tasha Sanchez screaming for help. One neighbor looked out of her apartment and saw Romero dragging Ms. Sanchez back into her apartment by her hair. Rightfully concerned, the neighbor called 911. Officers responded immediately, finding Ms. Sanchez crying, her makeup smeared, bumps on her forehead and cheeks, and blood running down her face from where a piercing had been pulled from her flesh. She told officers that her previous boyfriend, Hugo Romero, had assaulted her. Unfortunately, the Restraining Order she had against him was not enough to stop him from attacking her.

Ms. Sanchez recounted how, on October 19th, she had returned home from visiting a friend. After being home for a while, she realized Romero was in her apartment. She told him to leave, citing the Restraining Order as her protection. Romero refused to leave

until he made himself something to eat and begin preparing a chicken pot pie in the microwave. Romero immediately became angry and began verbally and physically assaulting Ms. Sanchez. He threw her on to the couch, but she was able to free herself, and ran upstairs. Apparently unconcerned, Romero continued tending to his chicken pot pie.

While upstairs, Ms. Sanchez plugged her cell phone in as the battery was depleted. Ms. Sanchez heard Romero coming upstairs so she hid the phone. Romero, with the piping-hot chicken pot pie and an 8 inch butcher's knife in hand, entered her bedroom where Ms. Sanchez was seated on the bed. He tossed the knife towards her and goaded her to "do something." Fearing he would ultimately use the knife, she tossed the knife over the edge of the loft. While holding the hot pot pie up, he threatened to push it in to her face and burn her with it.

Ms. Sanchez then tried to get into the bathroom, but Romero raised a heavy drinking glass and threatened to hurt her with it. Ms. Sanchez was able to wrestle it out of his hands and throw it to the side, out of reach. She tried to get out a back door onto her deck to call for help. She got partially out when Romero drug her back in by her hair. The first neighbor called 911. Ms. Sanchez tore four fingernails loose trying to claw at Romero to get free while he repeatedly punched her.

Ms. Sanchez' second attempt to get outside was long enough to scream for help and yell her apartment number. Romero again dragged her back in by her hair, this time being witnessed by another neighbor that ultimately called 911 and elevated the response to "Code 3"—emergency situation.

Continued on next page.

Of Note: State v. Hugo Romero

Romero took off riding a Razor scooter (Note: You seriously can't make this stuff up) and was apprehended a short time later on a bike path. After he left Ms. Sanchez's apartment, she discovered Romero had taken her cell phone with him. Officers found her cell phone a short distance from where Romero was detained. Sadly, the Razor scooter was never found.

To state the obvious, Hugo Romero had problems. But when it came to a possible sentence, he really had problems. Prior to the incident on October 19, 2011, he was already an "A" on the guidelines based on a prior Assault III, Assault IV, and three Resisting Arrest charges. In all, he had 20 convictions listed on his criminal history at the time of sentencing. So what does Romero do? He does what any experienced criminal might—he wrote a letter to the DA asking to provide cooperation in exchange for leniency. His thinking errors appeared throughout the letter and cited the usual garbage of the career criminal: How great a father he was to his eight year old son, the different treatment

programs he had completed pursuant to court orders, and his plans to attend community college the very next term. And then came the winner: "My mom taught me to respect women. And I do love and cherish the relationships that I've had with women. I want you to be aware that I do not have multiple cases of domestic violence with multiple women, but only with the case at hand do "fresh" "domestic" incidents exist. . . I respect women in general for they are a gift from god and I have a beautiful son from a woman." His 2009 conviction for Assault IV was for assaulting this same victim. Apparently it still qualified as "fresh."

Mr. Romero concluded his letter by offering to bring down the drug lords in our community.

The victim and neighbors became fearful of testifying at trial as there were concerns Romero had gang affiliations. Ultimately, after several conversations, they were prepared to do what needed to be done. Fortunately, their testimony became unnecessary.

On February 28, 2012, Romero pleaded to one count of Felony Assault IV, two (2) (Level 7) Coercions, and three (3) counts of Unlawful Use of a Weapon. The "Unlawful Use of a Weapon" counts were predicated on his use of the knife, the glass, and the hot pot pie as dangerous weapons. Pursuant to negotiations he was sentenced to 96 months in the Department of Corrections with no eligibility for Alternative Incarceration Programs other than earned good time.

During his colloquy he, like many beaters, put everything on the victim, including when he dragged her back in to the house from the balcony by her hair-- "she was acting crazy, I didn't want her to jump." Lane County Circuit Court Judge Valeri Love interrupted him, chastised him for his misguided thoughts, and told him he couldn't speak anymore or he might get more time. She then imposed sentence—96 months. Romero finally became silent.

"My mom taught me to respect women. And I do love and cherish the relationships that I've had with women. . . I respect women in general for they are a gift from god and I have a beautiful son from a woman."
- Hugo Romero at his sentencing

Sexual Assault Awareness Month



The sexual assault statistics are startling. There are an average of 207,754 victims of rape and sexual assault each year.

That means that every two minutes, someone in the United States is sexually assaulted. Forty four percent of the victims are under 18 years old and 80% are under 30. Still, 54% of sexual assaults go unreported. After factoring in unreported rapes, 97% of rapists will never spend a day in jail. Further, approximately two-thirds of rapes are committed by someone known to the victim and 50% of all rapes and sexual assaults were reported to have occurred at the victim's home or within one mile of it.¹

On a more positive note, sexual assault has fallen by more than 60% in recent years. Had the rate held steady since 1993, 6.8 million Americans would have been assaulted in the last 13 years. The actual number of victims was about 4.2 million. If not for the gains made in the last decade, an additional 2,546,420 Americans would have become the victims of sexual violence.³

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM). Since 2001, the month of April is dedicated to making efforts to raise

awareness about, and prevent of, sexual violence. Each year, the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC)⁴ designates a national campaign slogan for SAAM.⁵ This year the topic is healthy sexuality with the theme: "It's Time... To Talk About It! Connect. Respect. Prevent Sexual Violence."³

The campaign describes healthy sexuality as having the knowledge and power to express sexuality in ways that enrich one's life. This includes healthy sexual interactions that are consensual, respectful, informed, and free from coercion and violence.

The campaign focuses on providing models of healthy behavior to address the root problems of sexual violence. In providing positive examples, young people are encouraged to grow into sexually healthy adults and adults can work to model the behaviors throughout their lives. The more knowledge of healthy sexuality one possess, the more likely they are to identify sexual abuse or violence when it occurs. The goal is that this will lead individuals to feel more comfortable taking action in their own lives and getting involved as a bystander when they witness behavior that presents risk for sexual violence. The campaign also discusses pushing back against gender norms. Strict gender norms contribute to

sexual violence because of expectations and beliefs associated with what is "masculine" and "feminine."

IPV & Sexual Assault

A growing body of research indicates that the strong association of intimate partner violence and unintended pregnancy, abortion and sexually transmitted disease result from male coercive behaviors around sex and contraception. For example, almost one in five young women ages 19-24 have experienced forced sexual intercourse. On average, almost 500 women (483) are raped or sexually assaulted each day in this country. Fifty three percent of women aged 16-24 in family planning clinics reported physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner.⁶

1 <http://www.rainn.org/statistics>

2 <http://www.rainn.org/get-information/statistics/sexual-assault-offenders>

3 <http://www.rainn.org/get-information/statistics/frequency-of-sexual-assault>

4 <http://www.nsvrc.org/saam/sexual-assault-awareness-month-home>

5 http://www.nsvrc.org/sites/default/files/SAAM_2012_An-overview-on-healthy-sexuality-and-sexual-violence.pdf

6. <http://www.knowmoresaymore.org/wp-content/uploads/2008/07/factsheet-on-rh-and-dv-nov-2010.pdf>



IT'S TIME ... TO TALK ABOUT IT!
CONNECT. RESPECT. PREVENT SEXUAL VIOLENCE.

National Child Abuse Prevention Month

In 2010, in the fifty states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, an estimated 695,000 children were victims of child abuse, and 1,560 children died as a result of abuse or neglect.¹ The majority of child abuse cases stem from situations and conditions that can be preventable when community programs and systems are engaged and supportive.

April was first declared Child Abuse Prevention Month by the presidential proclamation of Ronald Regan in 1983. In 1989, the Blue Ribbon Campaign to Prevent Child Abuse began as a Virginia grandmother's tribute to her grandson who died as a result of abuse. She tied a blue ribbon to the antenna of her car as a way to remember him and to alert her community to the tragedy of child abuse. The Blue Ribbon Campaign has since expanded across the country and many people wear blue ribbons in April in memory of those who have died as a result of abuse and in support of efforts to prevent abuse.²

Another campaign by Prevent Child Abuse America (PCAA), Pinwheels for Prevention, distributes pinwheels and coordinates outdoor pinwheel displays that represent children affected by abuse or neglect. The goals of this campaign are to focus the community and public policy on prioritizing prevention from the start to make sure abuse and neglect never occur. Since April 2008, nearly 900,000 pinwheels have been displayed.³

Research by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has identified six factors that are known to prevent and reduce incidents of child abuse and neglect. The protective factors are conditions in families and communities that can increase the health and well-being of children and families. The factors are: (1) nurturing and attachment; (2) knowledge of parenting and child development; (3) parental resilience; (4) social connections; (5) concrete support for parents; and (6) social and emotional competence of children. For more details on the six factors, visit the National Child Abuse Prevention website.⁴

To learn more about Child Abuse Prevention month and to see the 2012 resources guide: Preventing Child Maltreatment and Promoting Well-Being: A Network for Action, go to: <http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/preventionmonth/history.cfm>

1 <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/pubs/cm10/cm10.pdf>

2 <http://www.blueribbonsonline.org/>

3 <http://www.pinwheelsforprevention.org/index.php>

4 <http://www.childwelfare.gov/preventing/preventionmonth/factors.cfm>

April is the time to acknowledge the importance of families and communities working together to prevent child abuse.



Cases to Watch: Gladstone Man Accused of Posting Fake Sex Ads to Craigslist

Local case makes national and international news

Andre Jermaine Flom, 31, is charged in Multnomah County with 20 counts of identity theft and 5 counts of unlawful use of a computer. Flom is alleged to have posted ads to Craigslist, posing as his ex-girlfriend, inviting men over to her house for sex. Flom was previously convicted in November of strangling his ex-girlfriend and she received a restraining order against him.

The ads included her phone number, address, and explicit sexual requests. The victim reported that up to 20 men would arrive at her home for sex at all hours of the night. Flom is

also alleged to have listed the contact details of the victim's mother.

The investigators traced the IP address used to post the ads to Flom's neighbor who was using an unsecured wireless router. Flom has pled not guilty to the charges and the trial is set for April 16th in Multnomah County.

For local coverage, see the Oregonian's article at http://www.oregonlive.com/portland/index.ssf/2012/02/post_184.html

For national video coverage on ABC, go to <http://abcnews.go.com/US/video/jilted-boyfriend-posts-fake-sex-ads-15775166>



Andre Jermaine Flom

For international coverage, go to <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2105542/Jilted-boyfriend-Andre-Flom-posts-sex-ads-pregnant-ex-girlfriends-Craigslist.html>

Legislative Updates: The Kunkle Fix (and more)!

The Healthy Teen Relationship Act

The Healthy Teen Relationship Act, HB 4077, was enacted during this year's legislative session. The Act requires school boards to develop programs to educate students about dating violence and authorizes the Oregon Department of Justice and the Oregon Department of Human Services to allocate funding to help combat the problem.

The "Kunkle" Fix

In 2011, the Oregon legislature passed HB 2940, elevating the crime of Strangulation from a misdemeanor to a class C felony under certain circumstances. One circumstance under which a person can now be charged and convicted of felony Strangulation is when the person has

been previously convicted of Assaulting or Menacing the same victim (ORS 163.187(4)(e)).

Unfortunately, in the chaos of last year's session, a mistake in the body of HB 2940 was not caught before it was passed. It took the eagle-eye of Jean Kunkle, DV Team leader from Marion County, to catch the error. The flawed statutory sub-section read:

The person has been previously convicted of violating ORS 163.160, 163.175, or 163.190 or of committing an equivalent crime in another jurisdiction, and the victim in the previous conviction is the same person who is the victim of the *current conviction*."

Obviously, if a person is presently being charged with a crime, it cannot

be a "current conviction." Luckily, the mistake was identified prior to the deadline for proposing bills in this year's legislative session. We were able to draft a proposed change that was ultimately passed; SB 1527 was a very simple technical fix that merely substituted "current crime" for the previous phrase of "current conviction."

The governor signed the bill and the bill went into effect on March 27, 2012¹

¹ The 2012 Criminal Code includes the incorrect version of the Strangulation statute. However, please be advised that SB 1527 has fixed the error.

**Oregon Department of Justice
Domestic Violence Newsletter**

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"If you think she's got injuries now, wait 'til you see her in two weeks."

Defendant's comment as he is being arrest.

They Said What?!?

"I asked her why she lied to me and she told me she just got pizza and did not want to go to jail."

Conversation between defendant and the officer after she is pulled over for a traffic infraction and is caught giving a false name.

Upcoming Events Supporting Local DV Agencies

♦ **Mt. Bachelor Charity Ski Weeks – First two weeks in April**

Saving Grace is thrilled to again be included in Mt Bachelor's Charity Ski Weeks. Pick up your voucher from Saving Grace's Administrative Office in Bend and use it on the mountain during the first two weeks of April. \$25 dollars gets you an all-day lift ticket and the proceeds go straight back to Saving Grace. For more information call 541-382-9227 or go to <http://www.saving-grace.org/Homepage-Event/418433.aspx>.

♦ **Ready, Set, UNITE! Child Abuse Prevention Run/Walk – April 28th**

The *Domestic Violence Resource Center* of Washington County is hosting a child abuse prevention run/walk, Ready, Set, UNITE!, on Saturday, April 28th at Cool Park in Tigard. The events include a 10K, 5K, 1K and kids run. For more information, visit their website at <http://www.uberthons.com/childabuseprevention#raceinfo>

♦ **Rock'n Roll Cosmic Bowl – April 28th**

Henderson House Family Crisis Shelter of Yamhill County is hosting Rock'n Roll Cosmic Bowl on April 28th. This fun-filled charity event is being hosted to help raise money for Henderson House's Biggest Turkey Candidate "Full Tilt Riders" motorcycle club, so they can help Henderson House win the title of McMinnville 2012 Biggest Turkey. For registration details visit the Henderson House Rock'n Roll Cosmic Bowl registration website at <http://www.hendersonhouse.org/index.php?page=cosmicbowl>

♦ **End the Silence Community Breakfast – May 15th**

Womenspace of Lane County is hosting their second End the Silence Community Breakfast on Tuesday, May 15th. The breakfast is being held at Hilton Eugene & Conference Center. Full breakfast buffet begins at 7:00 AM with a one-hour program scheduled to end at 8:30 am. For registration information, go to the Womenspace website at <http://www.womenspaceinc.org/>