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Guidetti Translates Thesis Into Profession

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When New Jersey State Police Lt. Ray Guidetti drives to work each day and peers across at the New York City skyline, what strikes him most is what he does not see.

"It's not the same landscape we saw years ago," said Guidetti. "There are no Twin Towers. There's nothing there. That's a daily reminder."

The attacks of 9/11 not only changed the view of New York's skyline, they also altered how Guidetti and others view police work. Eight years later, Guidetti can boast a series of law enforcement positions synonymous with the term homeland security that require the spirit of collaboration fostered at the Center for Homeland Defense and Security (CHDS).

Currently, he serves as Intelligence Manager of the Analysis Element of New Jersey's Regional Operations Intelligence Center, also known as the ROIC (pronounced ROCK). The facility is a Fusion Center that synthesizes and analyzes security-related information.



With a foundation from his CHDS thesis, "Policing the Homeland: Choosing the Intelligent Option," Guidetti helped form protocols for the ROIC before it was established.

Prior to this current position, Guidetti worked on the Joint Terrorism Task Force – he played a role in the prosecution of 9/11 conspirator Zacarias Moussaoui – and earned a master's degree from the Center for Homeland Defense and Security that in turn led to a career move to the ROIC. In that role, he practices daily his thesis topic of intelligence-led policing.

"With the thesis, it touched on an area that at the time was a gap in the knowledge at the state and local level," Guidetti said while back on campus in October. "Being in the NPS program has served me well, not only from the perspective of focusing on intelligence and intelligence-led policing, but also in working with non-traditional partners."

Guidetti began his career with New Jersey State Police in January 1993. He worked throughout the state, including assignments as a general road duty trooper in Northern New Jersey and the New Jersey Turnpike. After several years of working patrol assignment, he transferred to the Intelligence Bureau where he investigated organized crime, drug trafficking and corruption.

The events of Sept. 11 set into motion a major career shift.

Following the attacks, Guidetti was assigned to the FBI/NJSP Joint Terrorism Task Force. While serving on that Task Force he was assigned to the Moussaoui case in what was known at the PENTTBOMB (Pentagon, Twin Towers Bombing) investigation. His role was to investigate and piece together the timeline of Flight 93, which flew out of the Newark, N.J., airport and crashed in a field in Pennsylvania on that infamous day. He became familiar with the events prior to takeoff, and what was happening when it was hijacked.

"We found out what happened in the moments before the crash, which was important to understanding what was going on between the terrorists and the heroes of Flight 93," he said.

Working on the Moussaoui prosecution team galvanized the state trooper's commitment to homeland security work.

Like the absence of the Twin Towers in the New York skyline, the investigation left an impression.

" The souls that perished on that plane... many were from New Jersey," he recalled. " It certainly makes me understand the impact of terrorism on the United States and why we need to pull out all the stops to make sure nothing like that happens again."

While working on the Task Force, Guidetti began considering continuing his education (he had already earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Montclair State University in 1989 and a Master of Arts degree in Education from Seton Hall University in 1998).

He heard about CHDS from a friend, and the mission of the Center fit the educational opportunity he was seeking.

" It sounded interesting and it fit with what I was involved with at work," said Guidetti, who resides in Bergen County, N.J.

His thesis focused the need for law enforcement to expand from its traditional role in a post-9/11 world.

Intelligence-led policing was originated in Great Britain, said CHDS Professor David Brannan, and has taken on a more comprehensive meaning in the post-9/11 United States. Brannan, who served as Guidetti's thesis advisor, related, " In the homeland security age, community policing and intelligence-led policing are often mixed together as a way of extending the central mission of law enforcement to include other issues such as terrorism and counter-terrorism."

In Guidetti's case, his thesis was targeted to a specific organization, the New Jersey State Police.

" He's taken his strategic and theoretical work at CHDS and applied it to his occupation, which is ultimately what the sponsors of CHDS want to happen," Brannan said.

After completing his CHDS education, some career milestones would come at a rapid pace for Guidetti.

Just a couple of months after graduating he testified in the Flight 93 case. Following the conclusion of the trial, he was assigned to a staff position with the State Police designing protocols for a Fusion Center in New Jersey.

That assignment led to his current role as Intelligence Manager of the Analysis Element, working on developing " current and warning" intelligence. The facility in West Trenton is staffed by about 100 people from various state and federal agencies as well as representatives from the nearby Philadelphia Police Department. More than an information-sharing enterprise, the facility is also the state police's operations center for emergencies ranging from terrorist attacks to industrial accidents to natural disasters.

Guidetti credits his experience at CHDS as improving his ability to work across bureaucratic lines.

" Being in the NPS program served me well not only from the perspective of focusing on intelligence-led policing, but also working with non-traditional partners," he said. " When you're a law enforcement officer, you don't often get to work with fire service folks or folks from public health, or from transportation or the private sector. In my work with the Fusion Center, I work with these people everyday. NPS prepared me for that."

In this role, Guidetti practices his passion for Intelligence-Led Policing. The role involves analyzing incidents and trends to provide decision makers with data to craft well-informed decisions.

" My goal is to make sure the folks in the field, whether that is cops on the street or folks out there in the middle of the night doing surveillances, get relevant information to help them not only stay safe, but to do their job better," he noted.

Fusion Centers have been lauded for synthesizing disparate information to better prepare various public safety and emergency services departments to address threats. At the same time, they have come under scrutiny from civil liberties groups that worry the all-in-one intelligence shops could encroach on the public's rights. Police in New Jersey are mindful of that concern and monitor their practices to ensure constitutional muster, according to Guidetti.

" When I took an oath to be a police officer, I took an oath to defend the Constitution," he said. " I have as much a stake as anybody in protecting people's rights. We are constantly auditing to ensure our folks are safeguarding the Constitution. That's extremely important to me."

Guidetti was honored in March 2009 with the Fusion Center State or Urban Representative of the Year at the National Fusion Center Conference in Kansas City, Mo. That recognition was based in part on his commitment to protecting privacy and civil liberties in the course of his duties.

Along with his academic credentials, Guidetti brought his career background in narcotics and organized crime investigations as well his previous post with the state's counter-terrorism unit to his current job.

The result is he is applying many of his thesis ideas to real-life crime scenarios.

" We've developed processes that I believe are paying off," he said.

He points to an ongoing analysis of shootings in which the department is tracking every incident in the Garden State called NJ POP (Pins on Paper). In pinpointing where each shooting takes place, the department is studying the relationships between shooters, victims and witnesses, all with an eye towards foreseeing where future incidents might occur.

" Our feeling is that shootings are the best barometer for violent crimes," Guidetti said. " We've moved forward from the identification of shootings to a more predictive analysis."

This information allows analysts to track incidents in near-real time. Information from the ROIC provides daily, weekly and monthly information on gun violence, whereas the old way of getting this information from federal crime reports meant the data was a year old by the time it was released. This new method allows decision makers to more quickly allocate resources. That helps police identify what areas they should be patrolling, who they should be monitoring and aids them in crafting crime reduction programs.

Work at the center is ever-evolving and encompasses an " all-threats" approach. One day may be examining a threat posed by a Nor'easter weather system and the next day may be spent on gangs or a terrorism investigation.

" Every day is a different adventure for us," Guidetti said.

Guidetti has also consolidated the sum of his experiences into writing and teaching.

He authored a chapter titled " Collaborative Intelligence Production" for the textbook " Strategic Thinking in Criminal Intelligence." Guidetti is also the co-author of the Manhattan Institute's " New Jersey State Police Practical Guide to Intelligence-Led Policing," and was among a working group of professionals who produced " Navigating Your Agency's Path to Intelligence-led Policing," sponsored by the Department of Justice's Global Information Sharing Initiative.

Formerly an adjunct professor at John Jay College in Manhattan, he is now among the members of Long Island (N.Y.) University's Homeland Security Management Institute's faculty of senior fellows.

And for all the work he is involved with, he credits his accomplishments to his CHDS experience.

" It seems that challenges have become opportunities because of the knowledge and relationships acquired through NPS," Guidetti said.

