



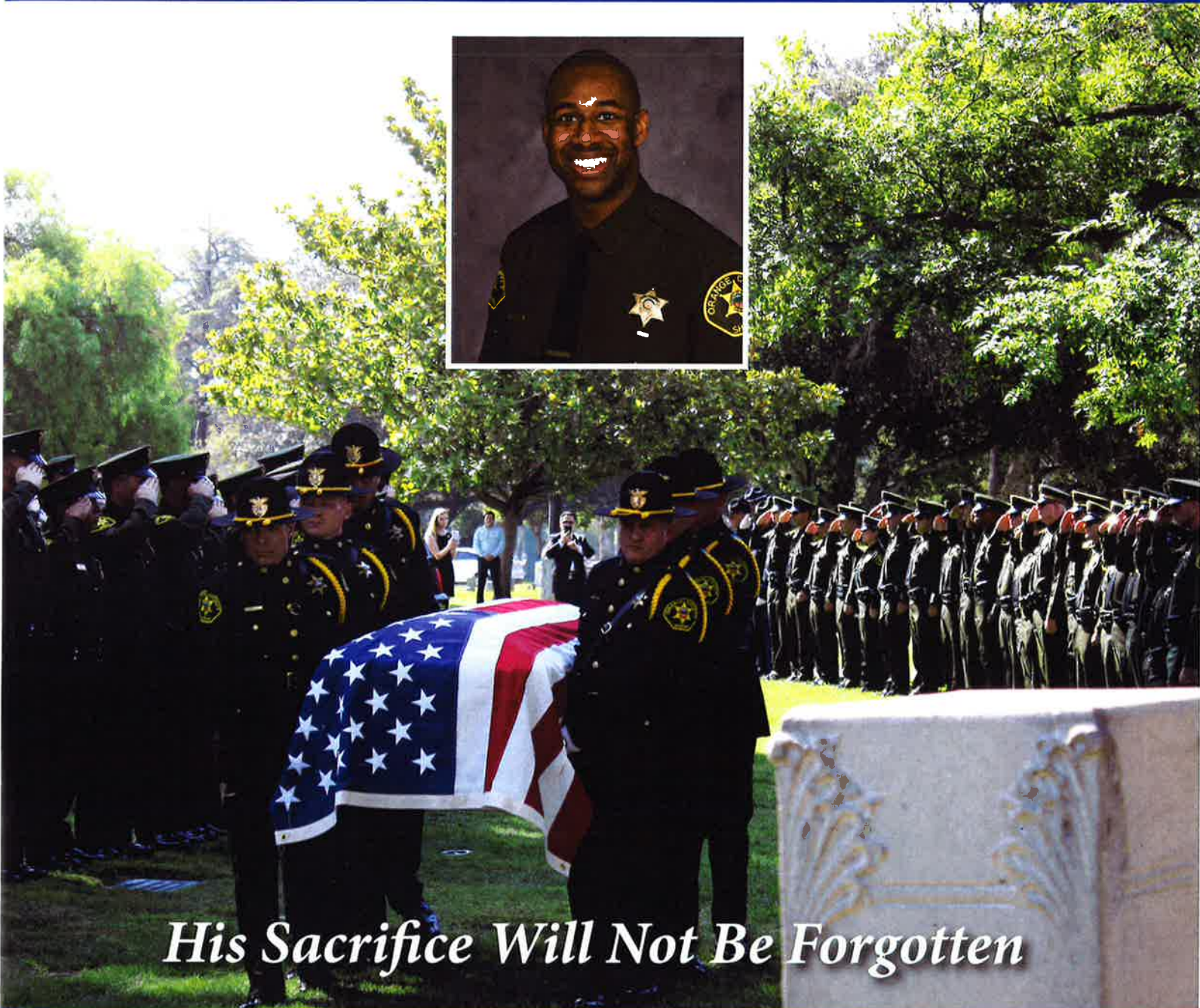
Association of Orange County Deputy Sheriffs

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In Loving Memory of Deputy Carlos Cammon



His Sacrifice Will Not Be Forgotten

Built Upon a Foundation of Unity, Integrity and Leadership



The Triad: A Synchronized Support Program

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Peer support programs have been around for ages. In the 1950s and 1960s, peer support programs began to emerge back east at the Chicago, Boston and New York police departments. They called those willing to help their fellow co-workers “peer counselors” and they had to be in recovery for alcohol abuse. The peer supporters followed the 12-step program for Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). Departments felt that they were the best equipped to help others if they were alcoholics themselves and in the AA program.

In the 1980s, formalized, official, peer support programs were starting to be developed by Los Angeles Police Department, San Bernardino County Sheriff’s Department and the Long Beach Police Department. It was at this time they changed their names from “peer counselors” to “peer supporters.” It was recognized that peer supporters provided so much more than talking and listening to a distressed co-worker. The peer supporters were guided by a clinician and in place to make referrals. Those designated peer supporters would help recognize those sworn employees who were having personal and emotional problems - similar to an early detection program.

In the 1990s, peer support programs became a significant resource for law enforcement agencies. It was at this time they added support personnel to the program, such as dispatchers, records clerks and secretaries. The expansion proved to be the right thing to do. Many sworn personnel reached out to talk to the support employees, because it felt less intimidating than talking to one of their peers.

It was in 1995 when the Orange County Sheriff’s Department put on their first training for its first peer support team. This was the beginning of changing the culture. The department also added a chaplain to the training and to the team, which was different than most programs.

In the last 5 years, the Orange County District Attorney’s Office and the Orange County Probation Department recognized they also needed to have their own synchronized Triad, a group of clinicians, peer supporters and chaplains working together. They had even helped the County of San Bernardino after their terrorist attack a few years ago. Their peer supporters were very helpful.

Peer supporters are a great resource for those who need to talk “on the job.” There will always be co-workers who are reluctant to reach out to a clinician or chaplain. They may feel

like they would be ridiculed for going to therapy or they are not interested in talking to someone of faith.

Things have changed in law enforcement. Chaplains are abundant and most are not concerned about reaching out to get professional help with a clinician. There is a synchronized effort for all three disciplines to work together in tandem.

When the Association of Orange County Deputy Sheriffs (AOCDS) made a decision to have its members be able to get the help they need through the Counseling Team International (TCTI), they also went to our peer support training to understand the concept more and to know everything there was to know about peer support. They



embraced the Triad of clinicians, peer supporters and chaplains. They have always encouraged all three, as long as everyone stays in their lane.

The Triad is designed to prevent any one group from acting alone. They work together as a team for the health and benefit of those they are serving. TCTI clinicians possess the diagnostic skills to help recognize issues that are more serious than others may observe. They are also granted legal privileged communication under the law, just like certificated/licensed chaplains have, but peer supporters do not have the same legal privileged communication at this time.

The mission of peer support is to get those having difficulty to open up about their problems, so the peer supporter can get them into the appropriate resources. Peer supporters know

their boundaries. They are to LISTEN, ASSESS and REFER and, most importantly, FOLLOW-UP with those they have helped or talked to. We call it “looping back.” Check to see if they followed through with their decisions or if they took the referral that was given to them. Peer supporters are not their clinicians and do not want to act like they are. Peer supporters are not their faith leaders and do not want to act like they are. The beauty of having a Triad is that all three can provide the appropriate support without treading on the other discipline’s role.

Chaplains are such a valuable resource. They build ongoing relationships with department personnel by riding along, going to briefings and just making their presence known. They make themselves available by walking around and riding along.

The Counseling Team’s clinicians are available 24/7/365 to help anyone in need. We facilitate defusings, debriefings, crisis management briefings and psychological first aid. We encourage chaplains and peer supporters to support all these areas of intervention when we are providing them to Orange County.

When I go to the police memorial in Washington, D.C. every year to support the families and friends of those who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty, it is the time the Triad truly shines. Everyone there works together for the benefit of those who are hurting. It is such an honor to work alongside those who care and who really want to help their brothers and sisters in law enforcement.

There is a nonprofit organization that caters to this synchronized Triad... the Public Safety Peer Support Association (PSPSA.org). They have an awesome conference coming up in San Diego November 5-8, 2019. It would be great to see everyone there!

When the Orange County Sheriff’s Department, probation, the DA’s office, OC parks, TCTI, chaplains, peer supporters and AOCDS synchronize their efforts, it is a sign of unity. It shows all departments and their personnel “wellness resources under one banner.” It just doesn’t get any better than that!



Be safe!
Dr. Nancy



AOCDS, in partnership with The Counseling Team International (TCTI), offers the below listed professional licensed and confidential services to members of the AOCDS Medical Trust, at no additional cost. Please visit TCTI’s website at <http://thecounselingteam.com> for details.

**Counseling services can be obtained 24 hours a day,
365 days a year by calling 1-844-655-1035.**

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Addictive Behaviors
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