

MICHELLE TAVAREZ, ADMINISTRATIVE LIEUTENANT
SUMMERLIN AREA COMMAND
LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

Michelle Tavarez is a Lieutenant with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, where she has served for over nineteen years. She is currently assigned as the Administrative Lieutenant in LVMPD's newest station, Summerlin Area Command. She is responsible for overseeing the patrol detectives, FLEX team (a plain clothes unit that specializes in confidential informant buys, search warrant service, and surveillance operations), Community Oriented Policing team, the Summerlin Enforcement Team, and the Area Command Information officers. Michelle also works in an auxiliary position as the back-up team leader for LVMPD's Crisis Negotiation Team. This position is responsible for the leadership and direction of the team during dynamic hostage/barricade situations.

Michelle had the honor of being a founding member of the leadership team responsible for opening Summerlin Area Command. As the day shift Lieutenant, she oversaw the shift through a difficult year of civil unrest, COVID-19, and an unprecedented economic downturn. Prior to the opening of Summerlin Area Command, Michelle was assigned as the day shift Lieutenant in LVMPD's Southeast Area Command. Here she helped lead a long-term project that turned one of the cities highest crime complexes into crime free multi-housing.

Prior to her promotion to Lieutenant, Michelle was a Training and Counseling Sergeant in LVMPD's police academy. At this time, LVMPD was experiencing their largest hiring push the agency had seen in a decade. The pace at which the academies operated was astounding, ultimately hiring over 600 officers in roughly one and a half years. Preceding her time at the Academy, Michelle revitalized the Recruiting section. She was brought in as the first recruiting Sergeant the agency had since the economic downturn experienced in 2008. Michelle was responsible for rebuilding the section and jump starting the hiring initiative previously mentioned.

Michelle also served as a Crisis Negotiator for six and a half years with LVMPD's Crisis Negotiation Team. She has responded to over 150 dynamic incidents of suicidal subjects, barricaded individuals, and hostage takers all around southern Nevada. She assisted in the negotiation of a barricaded subject on a transit bus which shut down the iconic Las Vegas strip for several hours. Michelle acted as a primary negotiator during a 23-hour stand-off in which a mother suffering from mental illness took her two small children hostage. Most recently, she helped lead the team through a 29-hour hostage barricade where an ex-felon took a 4-year-old and the child's babysitter hostage.

Michelle has held several diverse assignments through her career giving her a balanced view to speak from which includes: Law Enforcement Support Technician in the Clark County Detention Center, Patrol, the Problem Solving Unit, Radio Systems Bureau, Missing Persons detective, Sexual Assault detective, Mounted Patrol Unit, as a Sergeant in Recruiting and the Police Academy, as a Lieutenant in Patrol, Public Employee Assistance Program Cadre, and operating as the Watch Commander.

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Michelle began teaching early on in her career, understanding the importance of education and mentorship. She has instructed both internally with LVMPD as well externally throughout Southern Nevada. Michelle was granted the responsibility of creating the lesson plan and implementing the training for her entire agency when LVMPD upgraded to a new radio system. She has been asked to speak at several events during her career to include luncheons honoring women in law enforcement, LGBTQ panels, school community events, and Crisis Negotiation training.

Michelle obtained her bachelor's degree from Liberty University majoring in Criminal Justice and graduating Summa Cum Laude. Law enforcement runs in Michelle's blood as both of her parents retired from LVMPD; her father as a Police Captain in 2015 and her mother as an Abuse and Neglect Specialist in 2018. She is most proud of the family that she's built with her wife of nine years, a current fire Captain with the Clark County Fire Department. Together they have four young children who range in ages from three to eight years old.