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Workshop Session Proposal

"From Handcuffs to Hope: Transforming Homelessness Through Compassionate Policing"

Abstract

Communities across the country are confronting complex social challenges that traditional enforcement alone cannot solve. In this inspiring presentation, retired Tampa Police Officer Daniel McDonald shares how the nationally recognized Tampa Police Department Homeless Initiative transformed public safety through proactive engagement, strategic partnerships, and compassionate leadership.

Drawing on nearly 30 years in corrections and law enforcement, Daniel reveals how a collaborative, people-first approach reduced repeat calls for service, strengthened community trust, and improved outcomes for individuals experiencing homelessness and the broader community.

More than a presentation about homelessness, *From Handcuffs to Hope* is a case study in solving problems many organizations consider unsolvable. Through compelling stories and practical strategies, attendees will discover a proven framework for leading change, building effective partnerships, and creating measurable impact within their own agencies and communities.

They will leave with actionable ideas and a powerful reminder: lasting change begins not with handcuffs, but with hope.

“We are actively discussing the homeless issue in my county. I’ve heard several experts give their ideas, but Daniel gave the presentation in a manner that didn’t make me feel like I was the problem. Very informative.”
— Bob G., Sheriff

Learning Objectives

1. **Explain** how compassionate, collaborative leadership can improve public safety, strengthen community trust, and create better outcomes.

2. **Identify** practical strategies for building cross-sector partnerships, reducing repeat calls for service, and improving resource coordination.

3. **Apply** a proven framework for leading organizational change and implementing community-centered solutions within their own agency or organization.