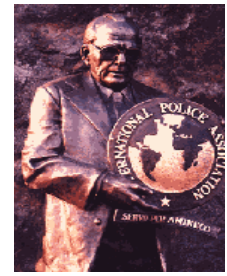




International Police Association

Professional Commission



Arthur Troop Scholarship 2019 REPORT

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IPA Section: Germany

Course attended: International Association of Women Police Conference
23. - 27.09.2019, Anchorage, Alaska, USA

I am a fairly new member to the IPA, having joined the International Police Association in Germany only five years ago in 2014. By becoming part of this international network of police officers from all over the world, I made it my goal to make the most out of it. Not only did I want to build up and continuously expand a network of professional knowledge, but I also wanted to meet the people and visit the countries behind all those meetings, conferences and seminars. I had heard of the Arthur Troop Scholarship for the first time in 2017 when I participated in the Young Police Officers Seminar in Green Bay, USA. At that point of my IPA membership I had just started to grasp the possibilities of what the IPA could offer and it would be only 1 year later that I decided to apply for the ATS for the following year.



The Arthur Troop Scholarship makes you think about your professional and personal goals as not only as a police officer but as a person as well, as you have to choose an event or seminar to take part in that benefits you the most. I choose the International Association of Women in Police 2019 conference in Anchorage, Alaska. To tell the truth, I had never heard of this worldwide network of female police officers until I discovered their 2018 conference in Canada on social media.



Being a female police officer in Germany puts me in a fairly “comfortable” position. My employer, the federal state of Northrhine-Westphalia, is extensively supportive of women in the police force, offering equal pay and career opportunities. There are plenty of possibilities to thrive and further my professional education.

But when I decided to gather more information about IAWP, I realized that the privileges are not self-evident to all my other fellow female police officers in the world. Of course, I had been aware of cultural and religious differences, but when you work in your little corner of the police world, despite travelling and networking internationally, you tend to take things for granted.

Being awarded one of the Arthur Troop Scholarships 2019 and being able to join the IAWP 2019 conference in Alaska offered me the possibility to change that.

I arrived in Anchorage on September 21st 2019, two days before the official start of the conference. I have never been to Alaska before and for me, being part of an international police network, it is of utmost importance not only to meet colleagues, listen to lectures but to visit and understand the country I visit as much as I can. Over the next days I would make the most out of that great opportunity.

Arriving at Anchorage airport gave me the first glimpse of what was to come, when a female United States of America border patrol officer inquired about my stay in Alaska. As soon as she heard why I was here, she smiled warmly at me, shook my hand and thanked me for my service. She told me to enjoy my stay here and make sure to see as much of Alaska’s beautiful scenery as I can. “We are very happy to have you here!” she said. A short time later a young blonde woman was walking next to me, looking at my Thin Blue Line wristband and asked “IAWP conference?” I nodded and she pointed at herself with a smile “Me too. Ukraine. You?” “Germany.” We were separated afterwards, but I already felt so welcome.

My first day in Anchorage was pretty uneventful. It was all about exploring the city, dropping by the Dena’ina Civic and Convention center where the conference would take place and finding my way around. When I woke up the next morning, looking out of my hotel room window from the sixth floor to the Alaskan mountain range surrounding the city, I felt really happy and excited.

I have to mention the utmost professionalism and enthusiasm of the IAWP conference organizers at this point. In advance of the event, they had created an App which not only provided constantly updated information on schedules etc. but also the possibility to connect with other attendees before the conference had even started. Imagine my absolute surprise and awe when I realized that there would be approximately 700 female police officers from 43 countries joining this event. Due to the App, the exchange even before arriving to Anchorage had been lively and excited among all participants.

I decided to register early on Sunday in order to forego the highly likely hectic schedule on Monday morning and together with another German colleague we headed over to the convention center. Only few attendees were there, but you could already feel the

excitement brimming. This was only confirmed when I headed over to Anchorage State Trooper Museum later that evening, where a small reception took place for all the participants who had already arrived. It would take up too much space to write about all the conversations I had, but one had stuck with me the most. A retired female detective from NYPD told me about her career and her multiple decade long IAWP membership.



Listening to her story how she started as a simple police officer in the streets of New York, with the public bathroom being the female changing room, working her way up the ranks through undercover missions to being a detective was undisputedly one of the most memorable moments of my stay in Anchorage.



Monday the 23rd of September officially kicked off the IAWP 2019 conference with welcoming words from leading personalities of the IAWP, the local police chief and the governor of Alaska amongst others. I have to admit that it was hard to follow every word, because I was utterly amazed by 700 police officers from 43 countries sitting around me, ALL dressed up in their uniforms, ranging from utilitarian to beautifully formal and of utmost traditional and native elegance. Distinguished IAWP members were honoured with awards and gave heartfelt and warm speeches about their personal and professional growth and prowess over the years. I began to understand that the IAWP meant family for many of the attendees, the same way as I feel being a part of IPA.

Part of that day was the IAWP parade of Nations across the streets of Anchorage. Imagine 700 female police officers, dressed up in their respective local uniforms, each group waving their country's flag proudly and some of them chanting wholeheartedly some of their national songs. It was absolutely breathtaking! Thank you to the citizens of Anchorage who, despite it being a normal working Monday, lined the streets, waving and greeting us



with friendly words. I hope my photos of that day can convey a little bit of that glorious feeling. The evening ended with an event at a local brewery restaurant organized by the attendees from Indonesia, who will be the host of the IAWP conference 2020!

I quickly realized that in order to make the most out of my stay in Alaska I needed to rent a car to get around. IAWP offered day long trips during the week for all participants, but due to a misunderstanding I did not realize that they were not included in the normal program but had to be booked additionally. Therefore, together with an attendee from Germany, we got a car and over the course of the week we drove around North and South of Anchorage, visiting places such as Seaward, Chugach State Park and National Forest, Wasilla, Palmer and the surrounding forests and lakes. It was staggering to realize that all this territory had to be covered by local police agencies. Working in a partially very rural area I know what it means to drive long distances to a police intervention, but nothing compares to what my Alaskan colleagues must obviously cover every day. Of course, many parts of Alaska run wild and free without any settlements or cities, but you still have houses and people spread all over the regions that might require help from the police. I will keep that in mind the next time a faraway call reaches us at work!



On Tuesday and Wednesday evening receptions were held at the National Heritage Center and at Anchorage Museum. Alaska has a rich and tremendously diverse native history and those localities cater to those traditions and different cultural origins.

What I liked the most about the IAWP conference was the diverse schedule, which offered lectures on many different topics. As an attendee you were able to choose the topics that were of most professional and personal interest to you. Not only for young and active police officers on duty but also for older, already retired women of the police forces and everything in between.

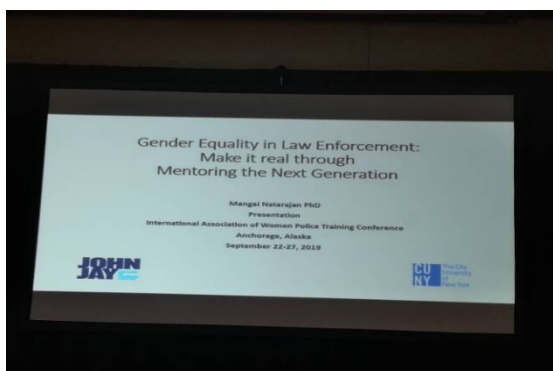
My absolute favourite lecture “The Montgomery FaceTime Stand Off” was held on Thursday by Officer Joe Di Lillo from South Euclid, Ohio. While on duty he was called to a possible incident of harassment and domestic violence which quickly evolved into a potential suicidal armed shooter driving around town threatening to harm himself, his ex-wife and their children. Most of the events were caught on Officer Di Lillo’s bodycam. He managed to resolve the situation peacefully by talking with the suspect via FaceTime on their phones. As a police officer on active duty you know perfectly well that communication is of utmost importance. Officer Di Lillo not only managed to calm the highly emotional, possibly mentally ill and enraged suspect down just by talking to him on the phone and by building up a connection with him, but he also constantly gathered information about the suspect’s surroundings and whereabouts in order to organize the police strategy to resolve that situation. Many attendees in the audience talked about their own experiences in situations like that and how they handled it. It was tremendously educational for me as I have had my fair share of situations with mentally ill people while on duty.

Another lecture I deemed very interesting and helpful was “Finish the Fight!” by Jeff Hall, a veteran and martial arts instructor, who lectured about the proper use of aggression in police combat. He introduced examples of police officers losing their lives during interventions and of those who came out as winners in armed conflicts. Despite being an armed police officer in Germany and being constantly trained in using my weapon on duty, by no means I face the dangers and potentially lethal situations my American colleagues encounter every day on duty as our gun laws for the general public differ greatly.



Notwithstanding, here in Germany, we face all kind of different dangers every day on duty as well and Jeff Hall’s lecture offered a new point of view on how to deal with his physically and even more important, mentally. Often people outside of the USA are appalled and scared of how American police officers handle situations. I might agree with a few of them, but listening to Mr. Hall’s lecture and attendees sharing their experiences, made me realize that nothing ever can prepare you for the moment when your life or that of your colleague is in danger. But you can be ready with the right mindset and physical preparation and training.

As IAWP is an organisation for female police officers around the world it was important for me to take part in a lecture which covered this topic. Mrs. Mangai Natarajan from John Jay CUNY, New York, lectured about “Gender equity in Law Enforcement: Make it real through mentoring the Next Generation”. She talked about necessary fundamental reforms in how police forces should recruit and retain women and the status of women in police. Mrs. Natarajan stated that research has shown that women possess talents and skills that are needed for policing and identified the various organisational barriers that widen the gender confidence gap. There is one moment during this lecture that left the biggest impression on me. Mrs. Natarajan listed points about why for many women in many countries it is of disadvantage to become a police officer. An attendee from the Middle East, unfortunately I can’t remember the country, stated “You won’t be able to find a husband!” At that a colleague from Washington, USA, added a bit wistfully “Neither in the USA!” Many of the



attendees in the room nodded. It made me sad and strangely happy at the same time. Sad, because women everywhere have to suffer in their private lives because of the job they had chosen, and happy, because the same problems unite and connect female police officers around the world.

Furthermore Mrs. Natarajan underlined the importance to mentor the next generation about this. At the end of this year I will be earning my qualification as a tutor/mentor for future police recruits. Therefore, this lecture really helped me to understand how much influence a mentor can have on a student. With this knowledge comes great responsibility and I appreciate that this lecture helped to further my understanding of that.

The conference ended with the “Glacier Gala”, at the same time preparing to take place in Indonesia 2020!

Before leaving on Sunday I managed to catch a flightseeing tour over forests and glaciers around the area of Talkeetna, North of Anchorage, bordering to Dena’ina National Park. It was an experience I will never forget.



And if this trip had not already been one of the most rewarding experiences I have ever made, the travel back home could not have been more special. I left Anchorage on September 29th, but due to bad weather and the resulting delay, missed my connecting flight from Seattle to Frankfurt. As Alaska Airlines only managed to book me a flight for the next day, I was stranded at the airport for the next 24 hours with several other passengers.

One male banker from Zurich, Switzerland, and a female Vice Police Chief from Avon and Somerset (who attended the IAWP conference as well) and we decided to endure this by sticking together. I can honestly say that sitting with these two at the hotel bar and later behind each other on the plane back, sipping on drinks and talking about Brexit, Police in Germany, Switzerland and the UK and our travels around Alaska, while being utterly exhausted from travelling, was one of the most interesting moments of my life.

Thank you IPA for not only rewarding me the Arthur Troop Scholarship 2019, but to offer me the possibility to evolve as a person and as a female police officer as well. It makes me proud to be an active member of the IPA and to continue to be so in the years ahead.

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