

**Nomination Form****POST Excellence in Training Award****Application for 2015 Nominees**POST Home
California Home[Section 1 – Nominee](#)[Section 2 – Nominator](#)[Section 3 – Justification](#)[Section 4 – Documentation](#)**Section 1. Nominee Information**1. Award Category (select one only) ☒ Individual ☐ Lifetime ☐ Organizational

2. Nominee Michael Rodriguez

3. Title (if applicable) Sergeant

4. Agency/Organization (if applicable) Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

5. Mailing Address

6. Contact Numbers

Section 2. Nominator Information

7. Name Steven D. Katz

8. Title Captain

9. Agency/Organization Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department

10. Mailing Address

11. Contact Numbers

12. Department Head/CEO

13. Signature

Complete all remaining sections. Attach additional pages if needed.[Section 3 – Justification](#)[Section 4 – Documentation](#)[How to Submit](#)POST
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**Nomination Form: POST Excellence in Training Award
Application for 2015 Nominees**[Section 1 – Nominee](#)[Section 2 – Nominator](#)[Section 3 – Justification](#)[Section 4 – Documentation](#)**Section 3. Justification for Nomination – REQUIRED****14. Describe the individual's or organization's purpose and training responsibility.**

Sergeant Michael Rodriguez is a homicide detective for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) and the lead trainer and facilitator for the renowned LASD Homicide School. He is responsible for organizing and putting together the full-time, two week, 80 hour course, and is the instructor in several course topics, including one of the most critical lectures involving officer involved shootings.

15. Describe the nominee's overall achievement.

The act of homicide is held as society's most heinous crime. The violator is often punished by life in prison or death. As a result, it's no surprise the job of homicide investigator carries the burden of being the toughest position in law enforcement. Morbid crime scenes, grieving families, long hours, and an unpredictable schedule are just a few of the things homicide detectives are faced with. And with the recent arrival of social media, and the increase in the presence of video surveillance, detectives now have significantly more evidence to analyze when investigating a murder. Considering the rigors of the job, and the technical know-how needed, training a new homicide detective can be a daunting task and bears a lot of responsibility.

Sergeant Rodriguez hosted the LASD Homicide School in January, March and June of 2015. Those courses had 25 to 30 police officers in each class, and included officers from federal, state and local police agencies. Students from several states, including Washington, Utah and Nevada were in attendance.

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He cultivated an innovative approach in teaching detectives on how to thoroughly investigate a homicide, using only active homicide detectives to teach the curriculum. This differed from similar courses taught by other agencies who typically relied on retired detectives for lectures. The use of active investigators allowed a more current, topical, and up to date connection with the students, which was critical with the ever changing atmosphere in law enforcement.

In each course, students attended a "pig dig", where they excavated the remains of a buried pig, using a cadaver dog and members of the Los Angeles County Department of Medical Examiner-Coroner's Special Operations Response Team to assist in a real time setting. Students also attended a life-like homicide scene in the crime scene management scenario, documenting and collecting evidence and processing a homicide scene from start to finish.

Michael molded the course curriculum from a series of lectures into an interactive model. He had the students combine what they learned over the two weeks in topics like interview/interrogation techniques and media relations and use it toward handling a mock homicide investigation, ending with a simulated presentation to a district attorney for consideration of filing of murder charges.

b) Impact

Sergeant Rodriguez crafted a curriculum that included a wide array of lectures, from the mindset shift for the homicide investigator, case management, arson and terrorist related homicides, to forensic entomology, firearms, and the role of the crime lab. Officers left the course with a solid base line in what it entailed to be a full time homicide detective in today's world with the unpredictable law enforcement climate.

c) Reputation/Recognition

Despite being the lead instructor for the LASD Homicide School, Sergeant Rodriguez continued in his work as a top-notch detective with Homicide Bureau, putting into practice what he preached. He handled eight murder investigations and was involved in eight officer involved shooting investigations to date in 2015.

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Robert Presley "Institute Of Criminal Investigation" Homicide and Death Investigation Course syllabus:

January 19-30, 2015

April 20-May1, 2015

June 8-19, 2015

To complete your application:

- 1) Make sure you have filled in all applicable sections.
- 2) Print and sign form.
- 3) Attach all supporting documents.
- 4) Send your completed application to:



**Excellence in Training Screening Committee
c/o California POST
Executive Office
860 Stillwater Road, Suite 100
West Sacramento, CA 95605**

Application questions: 916.227.2808 — Janice Bullard