

JULIE WERHNYAK



Julie Werhnyak is a decorated police officer who proudly served 20 years before retiring from the Tempe, Arizona Police Department in 2016.

She was awarded the Police Cross, the Medal of Valor, and was named the 2015 Officer of the year and the 2013 Defensive Tactics Instructor of the Year.

Julie is a subject matter expert in Physical Fitness - certified trainer for the Federal Air Marshals and Adjunct Faculty Member for Rio Salado College. She is passionate about teaching and holds certificates in several areas including; Defensive Tactics, Force on Force, Firearms and Crisis Negotiations.

A black belt in tae-kwon-do, Julie has practiced and taught martial arts for over 30 years and is a two time member of the United States National Tae-Kwon-Do Team.

Julie is the owner of Artemis Self Defense and is a sought after personal safety consultant trusted by global brands to design and deliver lifechanging, interactive training that inspires change, challenges thinking and increases personal and professional safety.

Title: Embracing a New Normal

On March 3, 2015, response to a 911 call became a life and death encounter for 19 year veteran officer, Julie Werhnyak of the Tempe, Arizona Police Department.

JULIE WERHNYAK

Julie and additional officers answered a check welfare call, discovering a domestic violence victim screaming for help from inside her residence. Officers forced entry- Julie was the first through the door, and in a darkened hallway was ambushed by the suspect who was armed with a large hunting knife. Julie was stabbed in the neck, the wound missing her carotid artery by less than an inch! Julie and other officers shot and killed the suspect and found the victim bound, beaten and stabbed multiple times. The immediate and heroic actions taken by Julie and the other officers on scene saved the young woman's life.

This presentation provides a detailed account of this harrowing call, including recordings of radio traffic and actual crime scene photos. Julie also shares how her personal commitment to mental and physical readiness combined with tactical training prepared her to survive this lethal encounter.

Julie will discuss her struggle to find understanding of all that she endured, ultimately finding peace and purpose in the aftermath of this critical incident. Julie is dedicated to sharing the journey of finding her new normal to encourage and support others who have experienced similar events.