

## FBI National Academy A 40-Year Tradition of Excellence and Accomplishment

**M**onday morning, July 29, 1935, was hot and humid in Washington, D.C. As I walked down Pennsylvania Avenue to the Department of Justice Building, I felt a keen sense of excitement and anticipation. I was on the threshold of a worthwhile experiment—establishment of the new Academy of the Federal Bureau of Investigation.”

These observations, recorded by one of the 23 police officer graduates of the first session of what has become the renowned FBI National Academy, clearly express the hopes and anxieties of those associated with this pioneer project four decades ago. The ancient Chinese proverb “A thousand-mile journey begins with the first stride” appears appropriately applied to the modest beginnings and long-range objectives of this new police training endeavor.

What occasioned this unique undertaking? Who made it possible?

### *Lawless Era*

During the 1930's, daring and vicious criminal gangs roamed broad areas of the United States terrorizing communities and challenging constituted authority. Some of these outlaws, due to their daring exploits, were often glorified by many as folk heroes. Police, frequently inept in trying to cope with these villains, were common targets of public scorn and jest. A pressing need was evident for elevating the competence and quality of local law enforcement across the length and breadth of this land.

### *National Crime Conference*

Flourishing crime prompted President Franklin D. Roosevelt to convene a national crime conference in late 1934. At this assembly, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover and Attorney General Homer S. Cummings presented a

novel proposal—institution of a permanent police training school at Washington, D.C., for selected career peace officers. This school would be modeled after the successful FBI Special Agent Training School, however, oriented toward local law enforcement problems. Its objective would be to train attending officers as executives, administrators, investigators, and instructors for raising the standard and proficiency of law enforcement at all levels.

This proposal was well received and widely acclaimed as a necessary and timely measure for professionalizing law enforcement. Among the endorsers and supporters from the outset was the International Association of Chiefs of Police.

### *Early Academy History*

With this prelude, 40 years ago this month the “Police Training School of

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Some Highlights in  
FBI National Academy History

December 10-13, 1934--

At Attorney General's Crime Commission meeting, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover and Attorney General Homer S. Cummings present proposal for police training school.

July 29, 1935--

First Session commenced.

October 19, 1935--

Graduation of 23 officers attending First Session.

1939-40--

At the invitation of the U. S. Marine Corps and by special congressional appropriation and authorization, construction of first FBI Academy structure was initiated and completed at Quantico, Virginia.

November 8, 1957--

Dwight D. Eisenhower becomes first U. S. President to address National Academy graduates (60th Session).

May 23, 1969--

National Academy graduation for 83rd Session held in the East Room of the White House.

June 26, 1972--

First substantially expanded National Academy class (90th Session) commences at recently completed ultramodern academy facilities at Quantico, Virginia.

March 20, 1975--

Graduation of 100th Session during 40th year of National Academy operation with total graduates numbering almost 9,000.

June 17, 1976--

The 10,000th officer was graduated with the 105th Session.

the Federal Bureau of Investigation," as the National Academy was officially referred to in the early days, became a reality.

During the first 5 years of operation, National Academy training was primarily afforded on the premises of the U.S. Department of Justice Building in downtown Washington, D.C. In 1940, the first Academy structure was completed at the U.S. Marine Corps Base at Quantico, Va. This one-building facility was designed to augment academic training at the Justice Building by providing housing and instructional space for use of National Acad-

emy students during firearms and field training phases of the program conducted at nearby range areas. It was utilized for this purpose for 32 years.

**Academy Facilities  
Greatly Expanded**

Today, all National Academy instruction and training take place at the greatly expanded FBI Academy facilities dedicated in mid-1972. This ultramodern 10-building Academy complex is situated amid rolling woodlands on the Quantico Marine Corps Reservation some 40 miles south of the Nation's Capital. It was designed as an autonomous community for learning and set in a secluded environment conducive to acquiring knowledge.

Most prominent at the Academy are the twin seven-story dormitory buildings, centrally located within the complex. These structures feature double-occupancy rooms with individual study desks and shared bathroom facilities. Comfortable lounge and recreation areas on the first floor complement these student quarters.

Adjacent to the dormitories is a large cafeteria-style dining area. Nearby are a refreshment bar, banking facility, mailroom, barbershop, general store, chapel, and other student service accommodations, including laundry and drycleaning outlets.

The main classroom building encompasses 23 specially designed classrooms and 8 seminar-size conference rooms. The classrooms feature the latest in audiovisual aids and instructional support equipment. Included are a capability for closed-circuit television and a highly sophisticated student response system. Several classrooms are uniquely equipped for specialized instruction and laboratory work in the fields of forensic science, photography, and fingerprint identification. Seating in most of the classrooms is arranged in a tiered and

semicircular manner to provide each student an unimpaired view of instruction presented.

With over 80,000 titles, the Academy's Learning Resource Center is recognized as one of the foremost law enforcement-oriented libraries in the world. Highlights of its collection include an extensive legal section and a broad array of visual study aids.

The physical training center allows a full range of athletic activities and is available for student use after regular class hours. A special exercise room, complete with weights and modern exercise bars and apparatus, is only a few steps from the main gymnasium where basketball and volleyball courts are available. Nearby is a varied-depth water training pool situated in temperature-controlled surroundings.

Since several firearms training courses are offered as part of the National Academy format, a number of firearms ranges, indoor and out, are available for this purpose. These permit use of all standard police weapons.

Graduation exercises are held in the impressive 1,000-seat Academy auditorium. This spacious hall also serves as a forum for appearances of noted speakers and, during evenings, as a movie theater for Academy residents.

**Cost Factors**

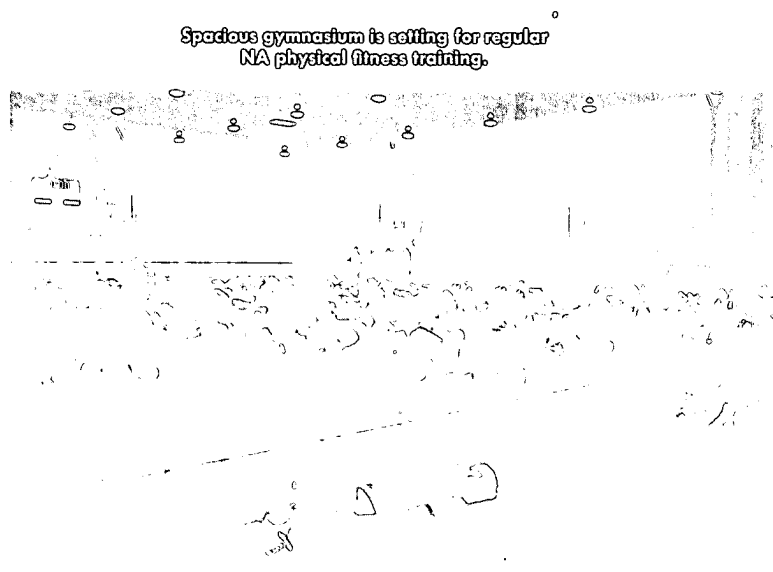
All instruction, meals, lodging, laundry, and necessary equipment and supplies associated with students' training are provided without cost to them. Attending officers from local, county, and State law enforcement agencies of the United States are also provided transportation expenses from place of assignment to the National Academy.

**Intense 11-Week Program**

Each National Academy session consists of a comprehensive and bal-

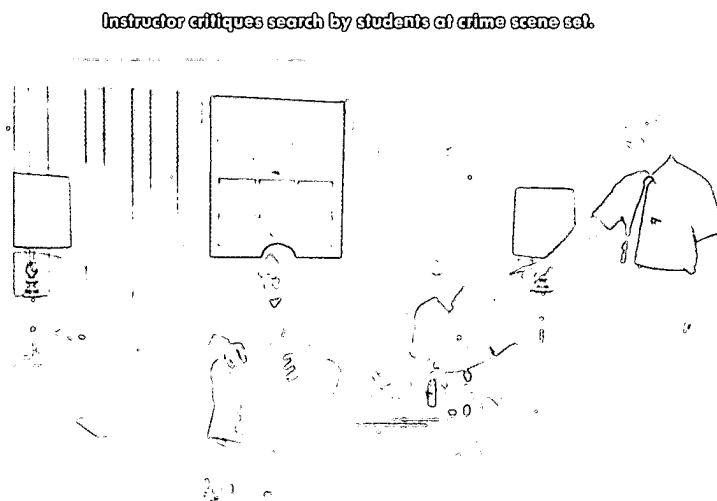


NA students receive academic instruction in specially equipped classroom.



Spacious gymnasium is setting for regular NA physical fitness training.

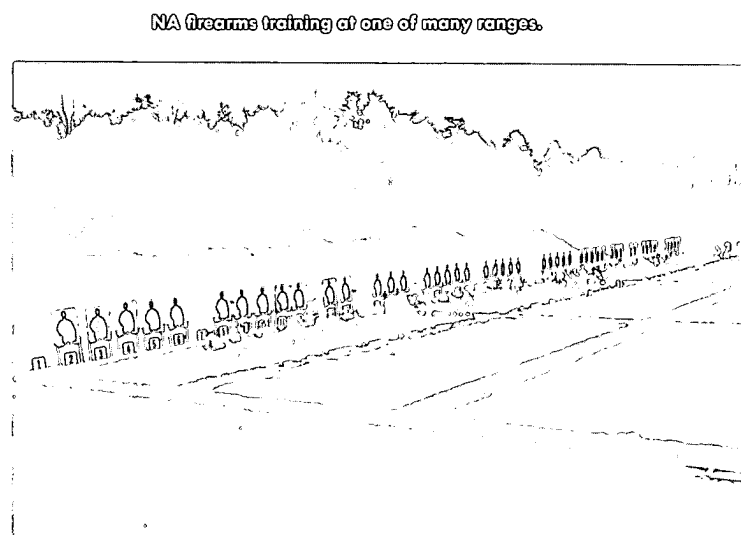
## NATIONAL ACADEMY TRAINING: an intense program of varied phases



Instructor critiques search by students at crime scene set.



NA refresher class receives water safety instruction at training pool.



NA firearms training at one of many ranges.

anced 11-week program of advanced professional instruction.

The academic curriculum is composed of courses relating to management science, behavioral science, law, education and communication arts, and forensic science. Through affiliation with the University of Virginia, up to 16 hours of undergraduate credit can be earned. For officers who qualify, an opportunity exists for taking a total of 9 graduate credit hours in selected disciplines. Overall, a minimum of 14 semester hours of academic work is required. Each student may elect to take an additional 1 or 2 semester hours in a variety of electives offered, such as budgeting for law enforcement, police unions, instructional technology, legal research, and others.

In addition to the academic requirements, National Academy students must participate in 20 hours of law enforcement arts noncredit electives. This training is available in 24 areas of vocational interest, for example, basic pistol marksmanship, advanced disarming techniques, latent fingerprint photography, hostage situations, and rappelling and rope rescue operations. All of these electives except one are of 10 hours' total duration, allowing students to select two such courses to fulfill this requirement. The exception is a 20-hour elective entitled "Current Events Affecting Law Enforcement."

### Program Review

All phases of the National Academy program are under continual review to insure they are current, relevant, and practical. The overall course is regularly analyzed to insure attending officers are being motivated to put forth their best effort, thereby maximizing their potential for achievement.

During 1972-73, a 12-member FBI Law Enforcement Training Advisory

### Significant Statistics—FBI National Academy

(Figures are tabulated through 107th Session graduation Dec. 16, 1976)

Total graduates	10,657
Graduates still active in law enforcement	6,789
Graduates who are currently heads of agencies	1,154
Chiefs of police	873
Sheriffs	167
State police commanders	14
Other top executives	100
Graduates from U.S. territories and possessions	104
Foreign graduates (representing 54 countries)	428
Largest graduating class (members, 92d Session, March 1973)	299

Committee, comprised of 5 law enforcement executives, 4 educators, and 3 representatives of business and industry, evaluated the National Academy, giving particular attention to its adequacy in fulfilling the needs of local and State law enforcement. This committee issued a report complementary to the Academy and its program. Some comments from this report are worth repeating:

"The National Academy is unique in that it is a blend of three critically significant factors:

"(1) A training and educational facility without equal in the history of the Criminal Justice System.

"(2) A faculty and staff which includes experienced and qualified FBI personnel, recognized and prestigious representatives of the University of Virginia, and successful practitioners of law enforcement.

"(3) A potential for sustained study and analysis of the

This photo, taken October 19, 1935, pictures Attorney General Homer S. Cummings (right) presenting diploma to a graduate of First Session of "FBI Police Training School." Others present include FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover (center), and members of collaborating committee of the International Association of Chiefs of Police.





Pleasant, modern surroundings of FBI Academy dining area.

needs of law enforcement for training and education, coupled with an opportunity to provide direct and catalytic responses to these needs."

### *High Esteem of Academy*

The esteem with which the National Academy is viewed is attested to by the distinguished line of dignitaries who have appeared as speakers and guests at Academy graduation exercises. This prestigious group includes 3 U.S. Presidents, 4 Vice Presidents, 2 Chief Justices of the Supreme Court, 26 Congressmen, numerous Cabinet members, and several ranking police and military figures. From the private sector, notable national leaders in the business, industry, labor, media, and religious fields have further graced these commencement proceedings by their presence and tributes to graduates.

### *FBI National Academy Associates*

Graduation does not sever the attending officer's bond with the Na-

tional Academy. Upon successful completion of the program, membership is automatic in the FBI National Academy Associates. This organization, with 40 active chapters, sponsors periodic chapter and regional retraining sessions. Activities of its members, along with current items of interest about the National Academy, are published in the NA "Newsletter." Issues of this pamphlet are published six times a year and forwarded to graduates.

### *Future Most Promising*

Achievement and excellence have been hallmarks in the National Academy's long and proud history. The original premise that better law enforcement is founded upon advanced training and education has been proven time and time again. Those associated with the Academy continue to be dedicated to providing the finest professional training possible to career law enforcement officers who potentially will benefit most from it. Considering this commitment and the National Academy's past as prologue, the future is most promising. ®

### *Requirements for National Academy Candidates*

Only promising career officers who can be expected to benefit most, both in terms of their own performance and that of their fellow officers, are selected for candidacy. Although chosen without regard to race, creed, color, sex, or national origin, a candidate must:

- (1) Be at least 25 years of age and not have reached his or her 51st birthday.
- (2) Be a full-time officer employed by a duly established law enforcement agency with at least 5 years of substantially continuous law enforcement experience.
- (3) Possess at least a high school diploma, or its equivalency, and show aptitude and interest in academic achievement.
- (4) Be in excellent physical condition and within prescribed weight requirements based on height and build.
- (5) Possess outstanding character and reputation and have demonstrated unimpeachable moral conduct and integrity. (The FBI will investigate each officer nominated to insure these standards are met.)
- (6) Possess leadership qualities, enjoy the confidence and respect of fellow officers, and have a serious commitment to law enforcement as a public service.
- (7) Be nominated by the head of respective agency, or if the head, be self-nominated or nominated by a supervisor such as a mayor or city manager.
- (8) Be willing to certify to the nominating official or entity that candidate will remain in law enforcement for a minimum of 3 years following National Academy graduation.

*Applications*—Officers who believe they qualify should request that their agency obtain application forms from the nearest FBI field office. When completed and properly endorsed, these forms should be forwarded to the Special Agent in Charge of the FBI field office covering the candidate's area of employment.