



Rick Staly, Sheriff

## FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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# NEWS RELEASE

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## **FCSO SWAT Team Competes in 2019 UAE SWAT Challenge in Dubai**

On February 6<sup>th</sup>, eight members of the Flagler County Sheriff's Office (FCSO) SWAT Team flew to Dubai to participate in the 2019 UAE SWAT Challenge. FCSO was one of four agencies from the United States invited by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Ministry of Interior and Dubai Police to participate in the training competition. All travel and accommodations for FCSO's team were paid for by the United Arab Emirates Police and the UAE.

During the UAE SWAT Challenge, 49 SWAT teams from across the world went head-to-head in five tactical Challenge Categories across five days. Each challenge was designed to build cooperation between all SWAT Teams on a global level and for members to participate in fact-based scenarios in an effort to create best practices and skill improvement.



From left: Sgt. Bernard Woodward, Cpl. Mark Moy, Sgt. Michael Breckwoldt, Det. Diego Morales, Sgt. Ryan Emery, Sheriff Rick Staly, Dep. Chris Taylor, Dep. Brandon Fiveash and Dep. Daniel Malta.

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FCSO placed 34/49 in the SWAT Tactical Event, 23/49 in the SWAT Assault Event, 38/49 in the SWAT Officer Rescue event, 16/49 in the SWAT Tower Event, and 45/49 in the SWAT Obstacle Course. Collectively, FCSO placed 32nd overall.

However, more important than the challenge results are the training and networking the SWAT Challenge provided for those who attended. Detective Diego Morales, who led FCSO's team in Dubai, said that the team itself has done well and that the competition was valuable in other ways.



FCSO SWAT team in action during the Challenge.

“The ability to network with different people from around the world is the most rewarding part of the experience,” Detective Morales said. “Hearing stories from others who have experienced tragedies and been there to pick up the pieces is priceless and you learn a lot from the experiences of others. That simply wouldn't happen if we weren't given this opportunity.”

Sheriff Staly was invited by the Dubai Police to accompany the FCSO SWAT team with expenses paid by the Dubai Police and Ministry of Interior. While there, Sheriff Staly met with the Dubai Police Chief and the Deputy Prime Minister Saif bin Zayed Al Nahyan. He also learned how Dubai Police serve their community, which is significantly different than American policing and extensively uses advanced technology and does not use traditional patrols. Sheriff Staly witnessed and encouraged the FCSO SWAT team as they competed in the training scenarios and got a first-hand look at new tools and tactics available to agencies around the world.

“What an incredible experience and amazing training opportunity for our team,” Sheriff Staly said. “Our SWAT team was competing with agencies who have been attending SWAT Challenges for the past 30 years. The fact that we placed 32<sup>nd</sup> proves that we have a well-trained and outstanding SWAT team. They did great despite unfamiliar obstacles and harsh desert conditions. I am very proud of each of our team members and their performance and team effort.”

The FCSO was one of only four American agencies invited to participate in the Challenge. The others included the Osceola County Sheriff's Office (finished 3<sup>rd</sup>), the Alachua County Sheriff's Office (finished 8<sup>th</sup>) and the New York Police Department (finished 36<sup>th</sup>).

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