

# SAFER ROADS



*All OSU-Oklahoma City Precision Driving Training Police and EVOC instructors have a background in law enforcement. Will Orr has 28 years experience with the Oklahoma City Fire Department, Bill Hughes has 27 years of law enforcement experience and retired as assistant chief of the Oklahoma Highway Patrol, Jerry Cason is a retired chief with 34 years of experience, and Charlie Childers is a retired sergeant with 30 years of experience.*

## *Precision driving program helps drivers put the brakes on accidents*

**W**hen Oklahoma City first responders need a one-stop program encompassing hands-on learning in all vehicles ranging from fire trucks to motorcycles, they can count on OSU-Oklahoma City's Precision Driving Training.

The one-of-a-kind facility offers advanced driving skills for emergency vehicle operators and the community with exclusive training in the university's SkidSUV, ambulance, fire truck, motorcycles and police vehicles.

"The sole focus and purpose of our training program is to spare injuries and save lives," says Ron Pierce, lead motorcycle instructor. "Our facility is one of the most unique aspects of our training."

Precision Driver Training Police and Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC) instructor Will Orr agrees with Pierce about the uniqueness of the facility. He says the skills pad has a highway design where accident avoidance, lane change, threshold braking and residential backing are taught, while the SkidSUV simulates adverse road conditions.

“Our outside track can demo every type of curve encountered in rural and city driving,” Orr says. “Our Precision Driving Training course takes everyday drivers and teaches them skills taught to emergency vehicle operators. The result is that drivers, their families and the people they share the roadways with are safer.”

Not only is the facility something unique, but so are the instructors. All of the Precision Driving Training instructors have extensive driving experience in their respective fields. The majority are former first responders, which gives them more knowledge on how to train local policemen, firemen and emergency medical technicians.

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“The training at OSU-OKC is unique because we have a professional staff from all areas of community service instructing at one of the best facilities using the latest techniques and equipment,” says Bill Hughes, Precision Driving Training police and EVOC instructor. “Most schools consist of classroom and/or limited driving, but at OSU-OKC students are put in stressful, evasive maneuvers and skids under controlled conditions that improve their driving skills at higher levels.”



PHOTOS / SONNI GLADDEN

Hughes says the instructors’ knowledge coupled with the facility’s capabilities help the community by creating better drivers at all levels. “New drivers up to current police officers are instructed, making a safer environment for all. First responders benefit from the availability of advanced training that smaller agencies or departments don’t often receive.”

OSU-OKC’s Precision Driving Training fleet consists of 16 motorcycles ranging from 125cc’s to 500cc’s, one fire engine, one ambulance, one SkidSUV and 14 other vehicles.

From 2009 to 2010, more than 2,600 participants took Precision Driving Training courses specializing in everything from teen driving to experienced motorcycle courses to advanced law enforcement driver training.

“Most every person who turns 16 will operate a motor vehicle. Nowhere in the formal educational process is there any education on vehicle laws or vehicle dynamics,” says Jerry Cason, Precision Driving Training Police and EVOC instructor. “OSU-OKC has a program that is putting forth an effort to bring about change. There are very few institutions of higher education in this nation that provide this type of training.”

Other courses such as Defensive Driving enhance already-present skills in licensed drivers.

“The Defensive Driving Course is designed to strengthen basic driving skills for the average licensed driver,” says Charlie Childers, Precision Driving

Training police and EVOC instructor. “Our goal is to train drivers to become proactive drivers versus reactive drivers in an effort to reduce the incident of collisions and death.”

Looking forward, Cason would like to see OSU-Oklahoma City be the standard for all state agency training.

“Every state agency has a risk management program, but there are no provisions for hands-on retraining, only classroom lectures,” Cason says. “As a state agency, OSU-OKC should be the vehicle for training and remedial training for all state agencies.”

Cason is confident OSU-OKC’s Precision Driving Training courses can combat the leading cause of death and injury in the United States — vehicular crashes. “We can help police officers perform their duties better and we can make citizens better drivers, while reducing death and injuries on our streets and highways,” he says.

Lloyd Scott, Precision Driving Training police and EVOC instructor, says that by taking any of the courses the facility offers, community roadways are a bit more secure.

“Each student finishing any of the driving courses such as motorcycles, trucks, buses, emergency response, driver’s education and commercial class has the knowledge and skill to be a low-risk driver,” Scott says. “This in turn can make the community a safer place.” **D**

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