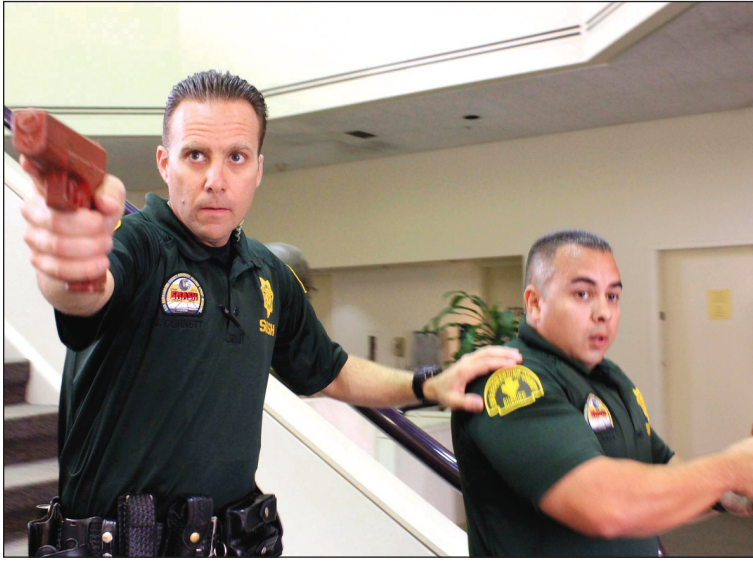


# Active shooter drill prepares authorities, Loma Linda University



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San Bernardino County Sheriff's Deputy **Jeremiah Cornett** (left) and partner **Dominick Vaca**, search for a shooting suspect during an active shooter drill April 25 at Loma Linda University's library.

**By Yazmin Alvarez**

The sounds of cries and moans filled the air in the typically quiet Dell Webb Library at Loma Linda University after a gunman opened fire inside the busy campus building.

Authorities from the San Bernardino Sheriff's Department rushed to the campus April 25 after receiving reports of the shooter, but luckily, the event was only a drill to give emergency responders an opportunity to hone their skills.

And the drill was played out as realistic as possible.

The sounds of gunshots were heard in the library. Then a man's voice came as a shocking surprise.

"I'm taking everybody out," he yelled.

Then, the slowly fainting voice of a victim could be heard from throughout the library, "...please help, I've been shot. Someone, help us, please."

Moments later, San Bernardino Sheriff's Department Deputies, Dominick Vaca and Jeremiah Cornett, stormed into the building with guns drawn.

Vaca was leading the two-man

team with Cornett following with one hand placed on his partner's shoulder. They scanned the library's lower level then made their way upstairs after another set of gunshots were fired and the man's voice heard again, "Get out of here, you're next."

While the deputies used fake weapons, their tactics exercised during the drill were real.

"My heart rate was going," Vaca said of his training experience. "I treat these trainings as if they were real calls."

Vaca said drills like Loma Linda's are effective since they allow first responders the opportunity to become familiar with campuses and the buildings in case there was ever a threat.

"I've never been in the building so I didn't know where I was going. I didn't know where to look for the suspect, or how big the area he could be hiding in was. But drills like these give us familiarity."

While the events unfolded within minutes, the drill lasted for about an hour, with the suspect taken into custody.

A total of 21 victims were involved in the shooting, nine of which were critically injured.

Faculty, students and staff from Loma Linda University participated in an active shooter drill on campus April 25. Authorities from the San Bernardino Sheriff's Department responded to the drill, using the incident as a training exercise.

The victims were taken to Loma Linda's hospital and Arrowhead Regional Medical Center.

"We have to be as prepared as possible and play out the scenario with as much detail so we can work efficiently with university staff and first responders," said Brett McPherson, with the university's environmental health and

safety department.

McPherson, who was also the drill coordinator, said the drill came in light of events that have happened within the last few years at university campuses. And while the campus has exercised emergency situation drills, McPherson said it is important for the university to work directly with law en-

forcement and the fire department so that they can effectively respond to similar events.

Sheriff's department officials said they plan to extend drills like Loma Linda's active shooter scenario to area high school campuses.

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