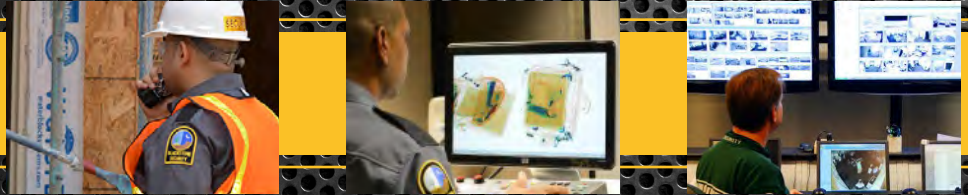




BLACKSTONE POST



*"The Secret to Our Success
is in Our People."*



The Voice of Blackstone Security

Third Quarter, 2022

Blackstone Security Officer Prevents Mass Shooting at Local Business

Editor's Note: Because of the sensitive nature of the subject matter, Blackstone Security Services Inc.® will not divulge the name of its client nor the exact location of the incident. Sometimes the best of outcomes from crisis situations go unreported because the crisis situations are prevented from happening.

Las Vegas – A quick-thinking private security officer likely prevented a mass shooting at a local high traffic retail outlet recently when he calmly persuaded a suicidal gunman to relinquish a backpack that contained a handgun and dozens of rounds of ammunition, before calling police.

The drama unfolded shortly before noon on Sunday, July 10 when a distraught-looking man with a backpack entered the establishment. Errol Bernard, a security officer for Blackstone Security Services, Inc.® sensed that the man should be watched closely.

Bernard followed the man, later identified as Kenneth Louis, as he wandered about the store. When Louis noticed he was being followed he confronted Bernard who asked, "May I help you?" Bernard said Louis replied that he did need help. He also told Bernard that he had a gun

in his backpack. When Bernard asked for the backpack, Louis at first refused and became agitated. Not wanting to escalate the situation, Bernard, who works unarmed, persuaded Louis to follow him to an area away from customers.

Bernard, who had gone through de-escalation training during the past year from the Blackstone company training coordinator, began talking to Louis and learned that he was suicidal and no longer wanted to live. After calming Louis down, Bernard learned Louis had never recovered from the suicide death of his brother two years earlier and he was having serious problems at home. Remembering his training, Bernard wrote in his report, "I told him I understood his pain and began to speak to him (about) situations I have been a part of. (Louis) then began to cry, at this point I began to hold (Louis) telling him everything was going to be okay. I then asked for his backpack, and he gave it to me."

See De-Escalation page 3



Blackstone Solutions, Employee Benefits Unveiled at Annual Managers' Meeting

Phoenix – Division managers and support staff peered into the future of Blackstone Security Services this spring at the 11th annual Managers' Meeting held June 20-22 at the Doubletree Hotel at Metrocenter in northwest Phoenix.

The meeting was an intensive three-days of training sessions that reviewed existing administrative and operational policies and procedures to introductions to expansion plans and service additions designed to not only keep Blackstone competitive going forward, but to help the veteran-owned company excel in a growing industry worth billions of dollars.

Blackstone Solutions, a three-phased next generation growth strategy to escalate the integration of electronic security with the traditional guard force at Blackstone, emerged as one of the most intriguing presentations that will help Blackstone remain competitive while the company increases its national footprint.

Blackstone founder and CEO Dan Swindall, whose motto is, in business if you're not growing, you're dying, said the integration of technology with traditional guard

services is the wave of the future. "If we're going to compete, we've got to go that route," Swindall said later. "The days of one-dimensional companies are over."

The group also heard presentations on the initiation of employee benefits such as 401k's and insurance.

"I really liked hearing what direction Blackstone is going and learning about the additional benefits that will be forthcoming for staff," commented Albuquerque/Gallup New Mexico Division 42 Manager Scott Clark. "I also, liked seeing everyone come together from the other Divisions."

Lizette Banuelos, newly installed as the Regional Manager of Blackstone's Border Region in Texas, said she is also excited to know all the changes coming to Blackstone. "The 401k is a big one for me as I plan to stay with Blackstone for many years to come," Banuelos said. "It's exciting to know that I can get that started and feel comfortable with retiring with Blackstone, if I choose."

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Ken Vandiver
Corporate Training Coordinator

De-Escalation Needed?

Unless you're living under a rock and have no access to the news or social media, there has been a roaring citizen outcry for law enforcement and security professionals to use more de-escalation techniques in their day-to-day policing. With the constant confrontations with non-compliant individuals and the increasing use of force being employed, it has become more prevalent that the officers are involved in going hands on, and more notably, using excessive force and in the sad cases where deadly force was thought to be the only choice left. We can see that there must be a better option to bring an individual into compliance with an officer's commands.

It goes by different names, but recently de-escalation or verbal judo is a technique that is taught by several agencies to gain compliance without the use of force coming in play. It starts from first contact and can go "good or bad" from that point forward. It has been said that an incident "plus" our response will equal an outcome good or bad. We make the difference on what outcome we want by the response we give. Training the officer to make good decisions when contacting individuals is the key and using some simple techniques to ensure the outcome is a good one.

We teach a step-by-step plan to empower officers to defuse a situation. It starts with awareness which is the mental state or ability to perceive emotions, conditions and patterns by individuals. If we can spot these, we can start to understand the individual and where they are coming from. Emotions will play an important role as will self-awareness that controls the decisions we make. We must be ever vigilant to continue to observe our surroundings so we are not caught off guard and make a rush decision on what we should do.

Some call this a "360 degree awareness" of what's going on around us and this is taught in many self-defense classes. Of course, we could just avoid it all together, but I'm pretty sure this may not be an option and most times it is unavoidable.

The best defense is having a plan, in other words knowing what you would do in any situation. I like to call it the "what if game". What if something happens? What would I do? Trust me, you can't wait till the moment of an incident to determine what your response would be.

You must plan, or better yet make a mental movie of what you would do or what your response would be. And in all cases, you must have an exit plan or make sure you know where you would go if things go bad. Sometimes escape is the only option, but the best option is to have a plan.

Be SAFE and above all else, TRAIN!

In her decades of professional experience, Rodriguez has developed a keen sense of determining a potential client's needs and developing a plan to meet those needs while nurturing a sustained relationship that has benefited clients and Blackstone alike.

During her time with Blackstone, Rodriguez's business savvy has enabled her to post robust numbers in client development based upon trust, professionalism and follow through. She knows that client engagement is an ongoing process.

A Laredo native, Rodriguez is familiar with the area's unique culture and business environment and adapts her customer engagement skill set to meet the individual needs of each new Blackstone client.

Blackstone and its clients are fortunate to have someone of Rodriguez's caliber in the Laredo Division.



Isabel Rodriguez
Business Development Manager

Isabel Rodriguez Hired as the New Business Development Manager for Blackstone Security Services of Texas, Inc.® Laredo Division

Laredo – Isabel Rodriguez has joined Blackstone as the new Business Development Manager for Blackstone's Laredo operations. As such, she is the lead in expanding Blackstone's client base within the greater Laredo metropolitan area.

Rodriguez brings to Blackstone a wealth of varied professional experiences that include, business ownership, management, sales, employee development, customer service, social services, youth services and administrative support.

"Life is like a board game. Advancing forward is the key."

— Torron-Lee Dewar



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This newsletter is produced at Blackstone Corporate Headquarters for the use and enjoyment of our employees and clients.

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Raul De Leon – Vice President

Ken Vandiver – Corporate Training Coordinator

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Division 62

Matthew Clay – Division Manager

Blackstone Security Services of Tennessee, Inc.®

Nashville

Division 72

Mason Appleby – Division Manager



Raul De Leon
Vice President



“Good leaders don’t make excuses. Instead, they figure out a way to get things done.” — Jocko Willink

Training and Attention to Detail

Attention to detail is described as the ability to focus on all areas of a project or task, no matter how small.

For the following read, I will focus on the training aspect of our industry. As mentioned by Ken Vandiver in his article on de-escalation Needed, training in our industry has become more prevalent.

In this article and in the news and social media, more intense training is needed for security professionals. According to the Association for Talent Development, U.S. companies spend over \$160 billion on training and development. Blackstone Security has invested in training techniques, taught by professional corporate trainers.

Getting ready and “in the moment” state of mind is critical when we conduct various types of trainings. Attention to detail!

You will read in this article about Mr. Errol Bernard’s possible life-saving act during his shift at one of our retail locations in Las Vegas, Nevada. This was all possible, not just by the quick thinking of Mr. Bernard but also from the training in de-escalation that he received from Ken Vandiver.

Training can produce a positive change in the way you function, not just at your work site, but every day of your life. However, most importantly, it can save lives.

De-Escalation *Continued from page 1*

While consoling Louis, Bernard contacted the police and medical department. When he looked inside the backpack, Bernard did indeed find a handgun and many rounds of ammunition. That’s when Louis said, “he had full intentions of shooting everybody in the (establishment) until he talked to me.”

Officers from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department arrived with paramedics, took Louis into custody, and transported him to a local hospital.

Bernard’s feat was made all the more notable because it was bookended by the tragic massacres of 10 black people and the wounding of three others at a Tops Friendly Markets grocery store in Buffalo New York and that of 19 children and two teachers in an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas by two 18-year-old men in separate incidents in May followed by the fatal shooting of three people and wounding of two others in a suburban Indianapolis shopping mall by a 20-year-old man in July. It comes just five years after a 64-year-old man opened fire on a music festival crowd from the 32nd floor of the Mandalay Bay hotel in Las Vegas killing 60 people and wounding more than 400 others.

“This was a textbook de-escalation technique by officer Bernard who used it to subdue someone who was armed and showing classic signs of mental and emotional instability,” said Blackstone founder and CEO Dan Swindall. “With all that’s been written connecting mental health issues to mass shootings, this was a monumental accomplishment by Errol Bernard. He and company trainer Ken Vandiver should be as proud of themselves as everyone in the Blackstone family is of them.”

Besides confirming that the incident took place, the LVMPD declined to comment further saying in an email that, “At this time, we are unable to accommodate your request as this is an ongoing investigation.”

Attention to Detail: Before a training session, you should do the following:

1. Get some rest
2. Eat a meal or snack
3. Have some water handy
4. Make sure you understand the training material and what it will be about
5. Focus
6. Ask questions! Ask questions! Ask questions!

Three main lessons you should walk away with after your training:

1. Your level of awareness will increase
2. Your individual skills will improve in one or more areas
3. You should be motivated to perform your job

Thank you, TEAM, and stay SAFE!

“The result of their training and the application of that training to the on-site security officer is the saving of lives that cannot be denied, and we are so very thankful for this outcome.”

Blackstone Chief Operations Officer Jeanne Croft said Bernard’s accomplishment bodes well for the entire private security industry. “De-escalation is another tool for private security, and it should be the first option, whenever possible,” Croft said. “Mass shootings have increased the demand for private security at businesses and at schools, and we need to provide our people with useful tools to employ in potential crisis scenarios.”

Matthew Clay, Blackstone’s Division Manager in Las Vegas, said it is obvious that Bernard’s action saved lives. “Using his personal experience, de-escalation tactics and compassionate mindset, Mr. Bernard was able to save lives in the community he loves before the threat reached the community,” Clay said.

A spokesperson for the company, which has more than 2,200 outlets in 34 states and the District of Columbia, said it has been proven repeatedly that tragedies can happen anywhere unexpectedly. No location is exempt. “It was with the aforethought of the safety of our patrons that we engaged the services of Blackstone Security to watch over our patrons, which is what they’ve done in this instance. The result of their training and the application of that training to the on-site security officer is the saving of lives that cannot be denied, and we are so very thankful for this outcome.”

According to news reports, there have been at least 246 mass shootings through June 5 this year, the same number the country saw through June 5 in 2021 — the worst year on record since the Gun Violence Archive, an independent data collection and research group, began tracking mass shootings in 2014. In 2021, there were 692 mass shootings. “That 246 number also means there have been more mass shootings than days so far in 2022 — a trend that’s recurred each year since 2020 — underscoring the growing prevalence of gun violence in American life,” according to CNN.



Errol Bernard

*Officer of the Quarter
Division 62 Vegas*

Las Vegas – The term “hero” is thrown around a lot and there are some out there. But we’ve seen too many times that just because someone has hero in their job description, getting them to perform heroic acts is a different story.

Errol Bernard is a security officer who takes his job seriously, but approaches it with a disarming, soft-spoken efficiency that makes him a client favorite. The 11-year security veteran has a proven track record of sustained excellence who has handled tense situations that may suddenly arise. That’s why Bernard is the Officer of the Quarter for Blackstone’s Division 62 in Las Vegas.

Bernard joined Blackstone two years and seven months ago, and though his hiring has paid dividends, none were as valuable as the heroic act he performed earlier this summer when Bernard, who works unarmed, used his de-escalation training and insight to talk a distraught individual into surrendering loaded weapons and ammunition that he had intended to use in a crowded venue, thus preventing a mass shooting (see page 1).

Division 62 Manager Matthew Clay said Bernard has always shown a great dedication to Blackstone and to client safety. “Officer Bernard has shown time and time again a desire to go above and beyond to ensure client satisfaction and the safety of others,” Clay noted. “Officer Bernard recently used his training and positive attitude to stop a large threat at a client location. By using this training, Officer Bernard possibly saved the lives of many patrons at a client location.”

A Chicago native, Bernard said he likes the family atmosphere he experiences while working at Blackstone. “The family feel I obtain from Blackstone is great,” he said. “I like being part of the team and feel like I am family to all of Blackstone.”

Clay agreed and called Bernard a “hard working employee and a key member of Blackstone’s Nevada family.”

Bernard added that he enjoys his job because he meets new people and provides them with safety at the sites. “I feel like security is meant to provide protection and customer service to all patrons and employees at a client’s location,” he said.

When he is not protecting patrons and property, Bernard said he enjoys spending time with his family and his grandchildren.

Congratulations Officer Bernard, and thanks for being a “heroic” Blackstone ambassador.



Joseph Carpenter

*Officer of the Quarter
Division 32 Phoenix*

Phoenix – Joseph Carpenter is described by his Division Manager as a “highly motivated individual who always does his very best to find new dynamics to improve security relations toward our client.”

That statement by Blackstone Division 32 Manager Jim Ayala pretty much sums up why Carpenter’s is the Division 32 Officer of the Quarter. “Officer Carpenter shows exceptional customer service and is always willing to learn the ins and outs of the security business,” Ayala continued. “Officer Carpenter was recently promoted to dispatch from a security officer position where he excelled! Thank you, officer Carpenter and congratulations on a fine job.”

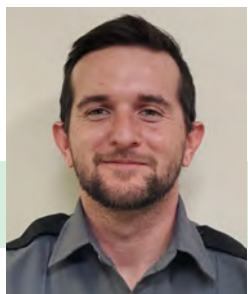
Carpenter is a Sacramento, California native who has spent 10 years in the private security industry, the past three with Blackstone.

Carpenter says he enjoys the culture that is fostered at Blackstone, and he likes to make a difference. He also enjoys contributing to the company’s growth. Carpenter’s philosophy on the importance of feeling safe is brief and to the point, “as security officers our ethos should be to be responsible and uphold the trust of the public.”

Carpenter says his favorite hobby is his 8-year-old son, Ezra. “I really enjoy playing airsoft and playing the outfield in baseball,” he said. “My favorite team is the San Diego Padres.”

Carpenter and his wife, Nicole, have been married 11 years. Well done, officer Carpenter.

Congratulations Joseph, and thanks for being a Blackstone ambassador.



Ethan Black

*Officer of the Quarter
Division 34 Tucson*

Tucson – Security Officer Ethan Black is described by his Division Manager as someone who is always there no matter what. He always comes to work with a positive attitude. That’s why Black is the Officer of the Quarter for Blackstone’s Division 34.



Ethan is dependable around the clock,” says Tucson Division Manager Adam Roberson. “He’s always willing to help and he’s great with all the guards.”

Black, a supervisor, has been in the security industry for a little less than a year. He describes his six months with Blackstone as “a half year of awesomeness.”

“Even though I have been in the industry for less than a year, I am grateful for the opportunity and experience that have been given to me,” Black said.

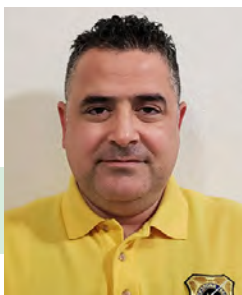
A Tucson native, Black has an associate degree in criminal justice. He said what he enjoys most about Blackstone are his fellow guards and upper management. He said his job is great because there are new experiences each day. “Every day there is something different,” Black said. “I also like being able to see more of Tucson.”

Black’s philosophy on private security is that everyone should feel safe and secure. “I believe anyone who has worked hard or had a piece of property handed down to them should feel safe and secure on their own property,” he said.

When Black is not keeping others safe and secure, he enjoys hiking and camping.

Congratulations Ethan, and thanks for being a Blackstone ambassador.

*“I like being part of the team and feel like I am family to all of Blackstone.”
— Errol Bernard*



Othman Azeez

*Officer of the Quarter
Division 54 Houston*

Houston – Othman Azeez admits he was intrigued by Blackstone's motto of "the secret to our success is in our people." That's why five years ago he decided to join the Blackstone family in Houston.

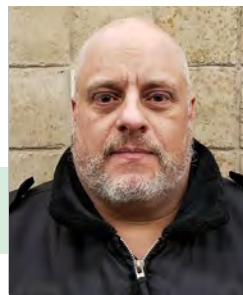
The vision of Blackstone is different from other companies as the motto states," Azeez said. "It means a lot that the company is valuing employees and correlating success with its employees." Azeez has climbed the ladder to become a Lead Supervisor. He is also the Officer of the Quarter for Division 54.

Azeez is a 10-year veteran in the private security industry, and while he did not serve in the military, he pulled duty overseas as a security contractor at a US military base in Kuwait.

Houston Division Manager Anthony Taylor said Azeez regularly goes above and beyond on the job. "Othman puts in the extra effort every day," Taylor wrote in his nominating narrative. "Othman is tasked with training any new supervisors hired in the Houston Division because of his knowledge of the position. It's been a pleasure working with Othman Azeez over the past four years and I would like to personally say thank you for your hard work and dedication."

Azeez says he loves his job because he has the responsibility of being a field manager which requires listening to employee concerns in order to fulfill their needs. "Making sure everyone is safe is what I enjoy the most because it gives me the sense of true leadership," he said. "I am proud to be a part of Blackstone Security's Houston Division for the past five years and I would like to thank our Manager, Mr. Anthony Taylor, for being a great supporter to our team and for nominating me for this title out of all the great officers we have."

Congratulations, Othman, and thanks for being a Blackstone ambassador.



Christopher Palmeter

*Officer of the Quarter
Division 42 Albuquerque/Gallup*

Albuquerque – Security Officer Chris Palmeter is a man of few words and lots of action. His work ethic and selfless dedication to his job and coworkers is a big reason he is the Officer of the Quarter for Blackstone's Division 42, but that's not the only reason.

Division 42 Manager Scott Clark describes Palmeter as someone who is very dependable and always goes above and beyond in his duties. Clark said he has seen the level of respect Palmeter receives when he completes his duties and that he exceeds all expectations. "Chris is always ready to go the extra mile, if needed, as I have called on him when additional security is needed for various functions and emergency situations," Clark wrote. "He is always willing to learn a new post or assignment. He has worked every post in the Albuquerque area and is often called upon to assist with the field training of new staff."

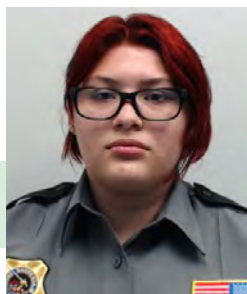
Clark added that he knows that when Palmeter is on duty, "he will perform all duties as a professional and will follow all procedures as requested by myself and the client." Clark added that he is honored to have someone of Palmeter's caliber on staff.

And Palmeter said he is just as happy to be working at Blackstone. "What I like most about Blackstone is the people," he said. "Jeremiah (Butler) and Scott are the best management team I have ever worked for."

Palmeter is a 28-year veteran of the security industry, spending the first 27 years in Georgia before coming to New Mexico. He will celebrate one year with Blackstone in November. The Syracuse, New York native is also a US Army veteran who served as a Private 1st Class in Military Intelligence in Operation Desert Storm and in Panama.

Palmeter said he likes everything about his job, and his philosophy on security is simple: "Be vigilant." His favorite hobbies? "Work, work and more work," he says. "Then, some fishing." Palmeter, who is a widower, said he and his wife, Kimberli were married 24 great years and have a son, Johnathan, and a daughter, Ashley.

Congratulations, Officer Palmeter, and thanks for being a Blackstone ambassador.



Emily Bohlst

*Officer of the Quarter
Division 52 El Paso/Laredo*

El Paso – Emily Bohlst came to Blackstone right out of high school where she was enrolled in a security officer course. She must have paid attention because 10 months later Bohlst has earned Officer of the Quarter honors for Blackstone's Division 52 in El Paso.

It was Bohlst's attention to detail and follow through that impressed Division Manager Lizette Banuelos who praised the novice security officer's quick development. "Emily was nominated for the outstanding work she provides the client," Banuelos wrote of Bohlst's performance. "Emily remains alert throughout her shift and will report anything out of the ordinary."

As an example, Banuelos recalled an incident two months ago when Bohlst noticed a group of teens had trespassed onto the client's property. "She immediately took action, announcing her presence and contacted local police department," Banuelos said. "When the police arrived, Emily assisted them with contacting the parents of the teenagers on site and made sure they all made it home safely."

A native of Houma, Louisiana, Bohlst says what she enjoys most about Blackstone is the friendly staff. She also gets a kick out of enforcing the rules the client makes. When she is not enforcing the client's rules, Bohlst is an avid video gamer, artist, and musician who enjoys playing the guitar, hiking and spending time with her fiancé, Shawn.

The philosophy about security that she has developed during her young career is no nonsense and to the point: "I believe everyone has a right to protect their property."

Congratulations, Emily, and thanks for being a Blackstone ambassador.

"It means a lot that the company is valuing employees and correlating success with its employees."

— Othman Azeez

James Ayala Takes Over as Division 32 Manager in Phoenix



James Ayala
Division Manager

Phoenix – By now the word is out that James “Jim” Ayala has taken over as the Division 32 Division Manager in Phoenix. Ayala has been in the position now for three months after spending a year as the division’s manager for hiring and recruitment. He enjoys his new role.

“It’s really cool,” Ayala said. “But there are some challenges.” Ayala is no stranger to private security. He came to Blackstone after being recruited from an international private security company where he spent five years as an account manager.

Prior to going into security, Ayala worked in law enforcement as a sergeant assigned to the Arizona Department of Corrections Special Security Unit. He was a member of the Gang Intelligence Unit Apprehension Squad for 11 years.

Ayala describes himself as a team player who enjoys his role in management. “Being this close to the corporate office is rewarding because I get to interact with corporate officers and share ideas to primarily grow the business by adding hours to a contract or getting new clients,” Ayala said.

A Phoenix native, Ayala graduated from Maryvale High School. He enjoys assembling classic cars. “If I had all the money in the world that’s what I would like to do and I have photos to prove it,” he said. “My passion is church and the kids, and barbecue, but my hobby is cars.”

Ayala and his wife, Victoria, have three children: Elizabeth, Maddie and Daniel, who was just sworn into the US Marines on Ayala’s birthday, Sept. 14. “That was something I did not do, but I am very proud of my son.”

Ayala said his overall experience with Blackstone has been exceptional. “It has been great,” he said. “As the manager of the largest division in our company, it gives me the opportunity to develop future leaders for Blackstone and the sky’s the limit.”

Managers’ Meeting *Continued from page 1*

Mason Appleby, Manager of Blackstone’s Division 72 in Nashville, said he enjoyed the meeting because it helped him put faces with names, being relatively new to the company. Appleby continued saying that he really liked the concept of the breakout exercises, but would have liked to have had more hands-on training to cover the inner workings of TrackTik. “I did enjoy how each subject matter expert gave a presentation along with Q and A afterwards, better letting everyone understand how their department works and can be utilized by everyone,” Appleby said.

Matthew Clay, Manager of Blackstone’s Division 62 in Las Vegas said he loved the Managers’ Meeting because it was very knowledgeable, fun and had a family feeling. “My favorite session during the meeting was the insurance presentation as it allowed me the knowledge to provide information to our officers and to show our officers that we care about the health and well-being of them and their families, as they are valued members of this company,” Clay said. “I was very impressed with each and every presentation: the information, laughs and time spent with those we have met or known is second to none. The stories shared at the dinner, the ideas flowing from other managers and seeing the future of Blackstone Security... the meeting was amazing to be a part of. This was my second meeting, and I can’t wait to be a part of many more.”

KJ Jackson, Manager of Blackstone’s Division 53 in Dallas, said that as a new member of the Blackstone family, the meeting was very successful because it’s important to know the company structure. “That’s exactly what the meeting provided,” he said. “Being able to meet and brainstorm with all of your business unit colleagues is a great morale booster. My favorite part of it was seeing the diversity of the people. I really hope that it only gets better and bigger in the years to come.”

Lizette Banuelos to Manage Blackstone’s Border Region in Texas



Lizette Banuelos
Regional Manager

El Paso – Blackstone Security is thrilled to announce the promotion of Lizette Banuelos to Regional Manager of the Border Region in Texas. Banuelos joined the Blackstone family two years ago and has advanced through progressively with opportunities in operations and sales, where to this date, she has played a key role in startup operations in Laredo and the Rio Grande Valley.

Banuelos brings a wealth of experience, 15 years exactly, to the security industry and to the Blackstone family and we are excited for her new role and her continued success.

Banuelos will manage El Paso, Laredo and the Rio Grande Valley (South Texas) divisions.

Banuelos’ promotion is a testament to Blackstone’s continued growth and involvement in our business and the possibilities for new positions and promoting from within.

“Being able to meet and brainstorm with all of your business unit colleagues is a great morale booster.”

The first Managers’ Meeting, conceived by Dan Swindall, was in 2010 when Blackstone had divisions in Phoenix, Tucson, Albuquerque and El Paso. It was attended by about 10 people. This year’s gathering was attended by 35 managers and staff from 9 divisions across five states. Blackstone COO Jeanne Croft said that number will increase to 12 divisions in 2023. She said the meetings have gotten better, and better, over the years.

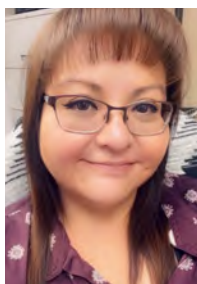
“This year was the best meeting yet,” Croft said. “There was a lot of positive energy in the room, and it showed in the enthusiasm displayed by everyone.”



Globe Life representatives, Tiffany and Dani, present on new benefits for Blackstone.



Team Blackstone coming together for a night of celebration at local BBQ spot, Bobby Q’s.



Melissa Thompson
Executive Administrative
Assistant

Melissa Thompson Joins Blackstone's Corporate Office as New Executive Administrative Assistant

Phoenix – Blackstone Security welcomes yet another new face to its corporate office. Melissa Thompson has already assumed her duties as the executive administrative assistant to Blackstone CEO Dan Swindall, COO Jeanne Croft and VP Raul De Leon.

Thompson will effectively become the lynchpin that keeps everything running smoothly assisting with items such as contracts, startups, licensing and vehicle inventory. She will also track birthdays of corporate and division employees and distribute Arizona Diamondback tickets to clients and employees.

Thompson comes to Blackstone from a security alarm company where she had similar administrative duties. She was convinced that Blackstone was the place to be after her interview with Division 32 Manager, James Ayala. "That's when I decided to go forward," Thompson said.

Thompson is from Page, Arizona. She is married to her husband Gary and is the mother to five daughters who range in age from 17 to 34, and grandmother to two grandchildren. "My hobby is babysitting," she quipped. "We travel a little, but not too much."

Thompson said that so far, so good on the job. "I enjoy working with Dan and Jeanne, they keep me busy," she said. "I'm still learning a lot too, but I'm getting there."



Kayla McClenthen
Business Administrator

Kayla McClenthen Joins the Blackstone Nashville Office

Nashville – Kayla McClenthen has joined Blackstone as the new Business Administrator in Nashville, Tenn. McClenthen is a military veteran with a wealth of knowledge in the service industry.

She has more than three years of experience as an administrative assistant as a Logistics Specialist in the U.S. Army. McClenthen attended Rockford University and received her BS in Management Studies with a 3.99 GPA and her MBA with a 4.0 GPA.

McClenthen has worked in the service industry for half her life, working up the chain to management. She has increased daily sales, recruited employees, maintained inventory, and has a way of making her customers feel special. Her most significant accomplishment in the Army was creating and implementing a reliable system in the parts room. This provided accountability, organization, reduction in spending cost, and increasing times making items mission capable ready. She also maintained the service schedules for seven companies, resulting in over 150 vehicles and weapons.

McClenthen loves being in the classroom, learning, and helping others, but she is more excited to have the opportunity to get out in the workplace and apply her knowledge. She is goal-oriented, dependable, organized, and an adaptable and transformational leader with the ability to work independently. She enjoys creating compelling presentations, public speaking, and developing opportunities aligning with organizational goals. McClenthen also enjoys collaborating with teams and being a team player. Her core values include respect, integrity, honesty, grace, dependability, accountability and trustworthiness.

McClenthen grew up in Machesney Park, Illinois, with her two older brothers and parents. Growing up, she loved playing basketball, shooting pool, bowling, and dancing. McClenthen is adventurous, loves to travel, and is always up for a good challenge. However, she always makes time to play fetch, go on a walk, or give attention to Lucy and Ricky, her beautiful and smart German Shepherds.

McClenthen believes her purpose in life is to help others and inspire people to follow their dreams. Her goal in life is to be the best person she can be and a better person than yesterday. The best advice she had heard is "no one can walk in the same river twice."

Welcome to the Blackstone Security family!



Noah Nathanson
Account Executive

Noah Nathanson Joins the Blackstone Team in Vegas

Las Vegas – If after a conversation with Noah Nathanson, you came away with the impression that he is meticulous in his approach to his work, thorough and careful, you would be correct. And these are the qualities that the Southern California native bring to Blackstone Security Services, Inc.® in his role as account executive for Blackstone's burgeoning Division 62 in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Nathanson's journey to private security and Blackstone began as a detention officer for Homeland Security where he supervised inmates awaiting deportation or a trial date at the Adelante Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) processing facility in Adelante, California. You could say that role convinced him to pursue another career.

"I got out of there in 2020," Nathanson recalls. "I needed something that would allow me to build my family. I was working 70 to 80 hours a week which left little time to spend with my fiancée who is now my wife."

After looking to get away from law enforcement, Nathanson moved to Las Vegas to be close to his siblings where he landed a job with a large private security company that proved unfulfilling. He said the company was too large. There was a lack of opportunity for advancement, so I looked for a company where I had the opportunity for upward mobility," Nathanson said. "I didn't want to be just a cog in a machine."

He sent out his resume and waited for someone to respond.

Enter Blackstone.

Nathanson was contacted by Blackstone Vice President Raul De Leon and was interviewed by De Leon and Blackstone founder and CEO Dan Swindall.

He was offered a job the next day, which, Nathanson noted, was perfect. "I was looking for something that was in my wheelhouse," Nathanson said. "I researched the company and saw the numerous awards it had received, so I figured I'd apply. Blackstone was the first company to respond to my application."

Nathanson said while the awards were nice, it was the interview that won him over. "Seeing the company was a tight-knit family run company and the fact that the CEO interviewed me, he is not just anybody," Nathanson said. "Also, the fact that they put people first is a philosophy I definitely can relate to."

Nathanson said he was most impressed by the Arizona Better Business Bureau's Torch Award for Business Ethics awarded to Blackstone in 2012. "That really impressed me, I've never seen any other security company receive such an award. I made a good decision. I'm definitely a lot happier with my employment. Dan has been good to me."

Nathanson says he is a motorcycle enthusiast who bleeds Dodger Blue.

"The secret of getting ahead is getting started. The secret of getting started is breaking your complex overwhelming tasks into small, manageable tasks, and then starting on the first one."

—Mark Twain



TAKE ME OUT TO THE BALL GAME!

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enjoying Blackstone's excellent season tickets.

