

In Memoriam : Toamalama Scanlan



**Tofa ma malolo filemu
(Farewell and rest in peace)**

**Correctional Officer IV
Fresno County Sheriff's Office**

Class of 1998 - Department of Criminology

On 12 October 2021, the Fresno County Sheriff's office announced that Toamalama Scanlan has passed away at Kindred Hospital in Paramount, California. He was 46 years old.

Information posted by the Sheriff's Office

On September 3, 2016, Officer Scanlan sustained gunshot wounds while responding to an active shooter in the main jail lobby. Since that date, Officer Scanlan has been hospitalized and ultimately succumbed to his injuries.

Toamalama Scanlan began his career with the Fresno County Probation Department on June 29, 1998 as a Probation Aide assigned to the Drug Suppression Unit. He promoted to a Group Counselor in 1999 and continued to promote through the ranks as a Juvenile Correctional Officer II. He was beloved by his coworkers and youth in the facility. He

served as one of the first armed Transportation Officers in the facility and quickly earned the reputation of a being a reliable and professional officer. His smile and sense of humor filled the Juvenile Hall and brought great happiness to everyone who knew him. Despite being a man of great strength and stature, he was kind and a gentle soul. He developed lifelong relationships with his coworkers at Juvenile Hall and Probation.

He had a calling to serve the community in another capacity and joined the Fresno County Sheriff's Office on April 10, 2006 and again quickly moved up the ranks promoting to Correctional Officer IV on August 20, 2012. He was beloved by the Sheriff's Office Correctional Team and inmates. Correctional staff respected him and enjoyed all the qualities that he had given Probation over the years. At the time of his injury he was assigned to Population Management and he was a SERT team member. Officer Scanlan leaves behind his wife, Tepatsi, and six children.

We would like to share a few comments from former and current

Dept. of Criminology faculty who knew Malama

From a retired Fresno County Probation Officer and recently retired Dept. of Criminology Professor:

"Malama Scanlan was a Criminology major in the 1990's and was a member of Fresno State's football team in 1996. He took several of my classes and internship. He was a gentle, giant, proud Samoan. When he came to Fresno State to play football he was already married with several children. He went to work for Fresno County Probation as a Correctional Officer in 1998 and then joined the Fresno County Sheriff's Office as a correctional officer in 2006. He was always polite and always had a smile on his face. On Sept. 13, 2016, Officer Scanlan was working the front desk at the main jail when an armed convicted felon, recently released from prison, entered the jail lobby and caused a disruption. I had done the sentencing report many years before on the shooter and 22 other gang codefendants who were responsible for a sex-trafficking ring in the 1990's.

While attempting to escort the individual out of the lobby, Officer Scanlan and Officer Juanita Davila were shot. Officer Davila recovered from her injuries but Officer Scanlan spent the last five years in various hospitals while undergoing rehabilitation trying to learn to walk and talk with very little success. Pictures of Officer Scanlan in rehab made one cry as he was but a shell of his former self. His wife and 6 children stuck by him throughout. Why does this happen to good people? If correctional policy remains the same, the criminal will be in prison for the rest of his life - he was sentenced to 112 years to life".

From a current Fresno County Probation official and current Dept. of Criminology Professor:

“During the time Toamalama worked in my department, and I interacted with him, he was always professional, level-headed, respectful, polite, and ALWAYS had a smile on his face no matter what kind of day he was having. When he left to go work with the Fresno Sheriff’s Office it was a loss for my Dept. and such a big gain for FSO. In part he left because he felt he could make a bigger impact in his interactions with that population, and in the end making a bigger impact on the community. His legacy will continue on with his beautiful children”.

Officer Scanlan’s passing contains an important lesson for our students – that the careers to which many of you aspire, while extraordinarily rewarding, are also extraordinarily dangerous. Please take all that you do in preparation for these careers – your studies, your interactions with others, your personal behavior – seriously and ethically. You are unique on this campus in that there is no other department preparing you for both the rewards and the dangers of these types of careers. Remember that you will, in the not very distant future, be representing yourself, your agency, the Dept. of Criminology, and Fresno State. And, you will represent the memory of those who came before you, who sat in the same seats you are sitting in now, like Correctional Officer Toamalama Scanlan, Dept. of Criminology, Class of 1998.

May he rest in peace.

If you would like more information or to learn how to support the Scanlan family, please visit their [facebook](#) page.