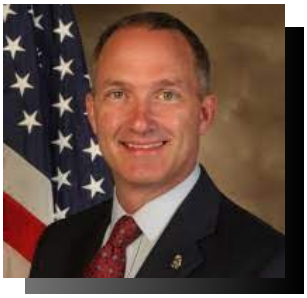
TELL US YOUR STORY

National Criminal Justice Training Center *of* Fox Valley Technical College

AGENCY SPOTLIGHT

MEET Special Agent in Charge, Adam DeCamp

Division of Criminal Investigation - Major Crimes Unit (Iowa Dept. of Public Safety)



"I'm a lifelong Iowan. I have two grown children of my own — a grandchild on the way," says Special Agent in Charge Adam DeCamp, reflecting on what drives his work with the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI) to find missing kids. "I would want someone to do this for my family, for my neighbors."

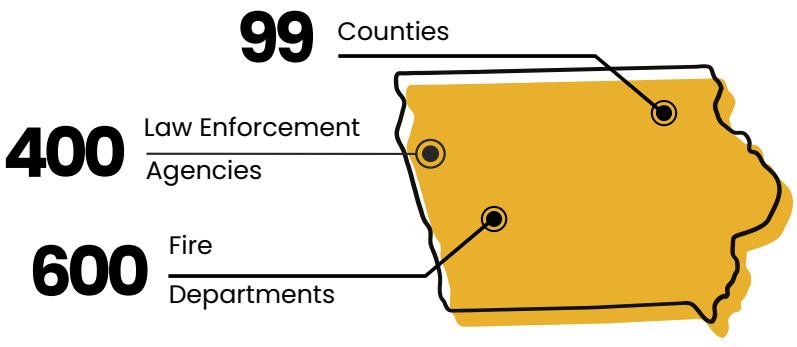
This personal conviction fuels DeCamp's nearly 30-year career in law enforcement. He currently oversees Zone 1 of Iowa's Major Crime Unit and has a unique perspective from having worked in different roles in child abduction cases. "As an investigator, sometimes it's easy to get lost in things like, 'I need to find the child and I need to make an arrest, and I need to have answers,'" he reflects. "But as a supervisor now, I can look back and say, 'The details and having someone to hold accountable are important, but *nothing* is more important than finding the child.'"

"This is really where focus, attention and professionalism and preparedness all come together to bring missing children home."

NEW VISION Transforming Iowa's Approach to Missing Children

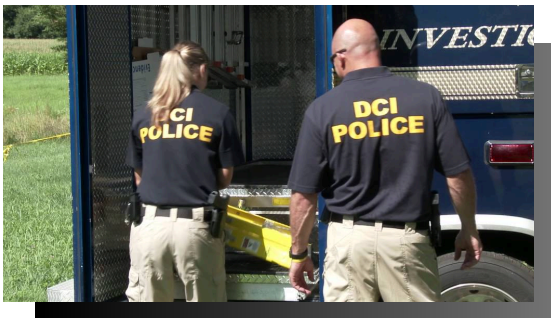
In 2020, as the pandemic created unprecedented challenges, DeCamp saw an opportunity to strengthen Iowa's Child Abduction Response Team (CART). Having witnessed the system from both sides, he identified gaps in their multi-jurisdictional model covering Iowa's 99 counties. "When we launched in 2013, we had some holes that were just inherently created," explains DeCamp. "Every time a new police chief came in, every time a new sheriff or emergency manager arrived, we needed to go out and get a new memorandum of understanding."

With nearly 100 counties, 400 law enforcement agencies, and 600 fire departments across the state, ***maintaining these relationships became a "full-time job"*** *that* ***diverted resources*** *from the primary mission of finding missing children, DeCamp shares.*



Change was clearly needed — but what would make the difference? The team introduced a transformative solution: shifting to a single-agency CART model, with the Iowa Department of Public Safety's 900 members forming the core response team. Instead of relying on formal agreements with each jurisdiction, they leveraged existing relationships with local agencies to streamline collaboration.

"We essentially said, 'We will deploy as a Department of Public Safety, and augment the base of the Child Abduction Response Team with the services and relationships that we already have within those local areas,'" he explains. With training, a shared commitment and thinking outside of the box - this creative statewide CART model has proven significantly more effective around the state, allowing law enforcement officials to focus on continued preparation and accessing the training they knew they needed to be effective.



STRATEGIC TRAINING Building Skills Through NCJTC

DeCamp says The National Criminal Justice Training Center (NCJTC) has provided the expertise and training necessary to make Iowa's new procedures successful. He has completed numerous NCJTC courses, including Investigative Strategies in Child Abduction Cases and CART Training. He's attended the National AMBER Alert Symposium and has leveraged resources from our Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) program.

What makes NCJTC's approach particularly valuable, according to DeCamp, is how the courses interconnect. "You can't talk about recovering a child if you don't also have the reunification piece, and you can't have a reunification piece if you don't have a sustainability piece," he notes. "It's really important to have those mixed together."



Image from the National AMBER Alert Symposium

Beyond the content itself, DeCamp values the networking opportunities that NCJTC training provides. "It's relationships that were built over the years with people like Derek VanLuchene (NCJTC Project Coordinator, CART expert, and Instructor), who provided me more exposure to NCJTC and its role in training law enforcement officers," he says. DeCamp also values NCJTC's flexible training options. "Today I can get onto the NCJTC website, I can log in and find the video that is pertinent to me. I can play it while I'm sitting in a briefing room, on my break, or on a snowy night sitting along the roadside."

Outcomes Achieved

- Reduced the impact of **staffing changes** by rethinking and adapting the CART structure.
- Expanded **collaboration** statewide and nationally to improve response and recovery efforts.
- Updated **outdated policies** and emphasized effective training to build confidence.
- Minimized **administrative burden** and optimized resources to refocus efforts on what matters most—the recovery of missing children.

RESULTS Confidence, Creativity and Certification

DeCamp's investment in training and his strategic redesign of Iowa's CART program have yielded powerful results. Under his leadership, the Iowa DCI CART not only implemented the new single-agency model but also achieved program certification — a testament to the quality and effectiveness of their approach.

36th
Certified team (CART) in the nation

07th
Certified **statewide** team in the nation

As Derek VanLuchene, notes: "Adam is responsible not only for the initial implementation of the Iowa DCI CART, but also spearheaded getting the program certified. Adam is a true champion." Read more about their CART certification at [amberadvocate.org.](amberadvocate.org)



From Iowa's February 2023 CART certification are, from left, Derek VanLuchene, AATTAP Project Coordinator; Mitch Mortvedt, Assistant Director, Iowa Department of Public Safety (DPS)/Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI); Medina Rahmanovic, Coordinator, Iowa DPS/DCI Missing Person Information Clearinghouse; Stephan K. Bayens, Iowa DPS Commissioner; AATTAP Administrator Janell Rasmussen; and Adam DeCamp, Iowa DPS/DCI Special Agent in Charge.

REAL-WORLD IMPACT When Preparation Meets the Moment

Their preparation was put to the test on April 1, 2024, when Clayton County received a report of a missing five-year-old girl who had wandered away from her residence.

DeCamp's team mobilized quickly, deploying approximately 50 people including local law enforcement, fire departments, EMS services, Emergency Management, and three drones to search. The team's persistence and training paid off when they found the girl lying on a picnic table under the metal roof of a pavilion, less than a mile from her home. "Any time we recover a missing child, alive and safe, that is a win for us," DeCamp says, reflecting on cases like this one. "The confidence, networking, and training all come together to bring missing children home."



Photo: Clayton County Sheriff's Office from Iowa News Now coverage

"If we can prepare for it and can invest a little time into that training and into that preparedness, the response and the results are going to be more successful."

DeCamp says this creates a **multiplier effect** that makes every **training investment worthwhile for law enforcement officials around the country.** "Those officers can provide a resource to another officer who isn't as trained as they are, and it's reciprocal," DeCamp explains. "In law enforcement, we do a great job of helping each other, and in turn, helping the people we serve."

Life-Saving Results

50+
First responders deployed to search

04
Hours from report to recovery

01
Five-year-old **safely recovered**

"The confidence, networking and training all come together to bring missing children home."



Watch DeCamp's full VIDEO interview

in Ep. 03 of the *Tell Us Your Story* series!

ncjtc.org/episodes

LEARN MORE What Worked for Iowa DCI

The Iowa DCI team has prioritized training for years, and we are proud to continue to be entrusted with the team's professional development. DeCamp and his team have taken a mix of virtual and in-person courses, as well as self-paced courses and live webinars across multiple disciplines. Their commitment to making training and real-world application a priority has strengthened both their CART program and the overall capacity of their agency.

Learn more about the specific NCJTC training DeCamp's team has applied to their work:

- Child Abduction Response Team (CART)
- National AMBER Alert Symposium (2023, 2024)
- Investigative Strategies for Child Abduction Cases
- CART Commander Online Training (CART-COMM)
- Child Abduction Response Team Training for New Members (CART-NM)

*View more upcoming training opportunities at **ncjtc.org/training**!*

For more information on the Iowa Department of Public Safety - Division of Criminal Investigations (MCU), please visit their website:
https://dps.iowa.gov/divisions-iowa-department-public-safety/iowa-division-criminal-investigation

ABOUT THE SERIES

NCJTC's Tell Us Your Story series highlights the inspiring successes of our customers and the positive impact of their work within the communities they serve. Watching their video interviews offers you a glimpse into how they've leveraged training to not only improve case outcomes but to save more lives.

Each story highlights real-world challenges and innovative solutions, allowing criminal justice professionals to not only celebrate each other's successes but also learn from each other as you work to solve similar public safety concerns.

Highlight Success **Inspire Others** **Foster Change** **Earn Perks**

We want to hear your story of **impact.**

Scan the QR code or visit
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