

CPP Profile



Jeff Lee, CPP, recalls what first led to his interest in a security career: More than 12 years ago, he says, “I was attracted to the industry by the opportunity to make key decisions that, if made correctly, could make significant changes in individuals’ lives.”

Today, as a special agent with the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, Lee revisits that initial attraction every day as part of a team responsible for the worldwide protection of the Secretary of State. The job frequently entails traveling alongside Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice—just as he accompanied former Secretary General Colin L. Powell (USA-Ret.)—on trips to distant and little-known locales.

Lee, an ASIS member for about five years, credits the Certified Protection Professional (CPP) certification he obtained from ASIS in 2002 with helping him succeed in his job. “Working on the Secretary of State’s protective detail, I am tasked to deliver relevant and timely security decisions,” said Lee. “The CPP has given me the tools to make the best decisions based on industry practices.”

Lee began his career in law enforcement and security in 1993 as a detective with the Essex County Prosecutor’s Office in Newark, New Jersey, where in addition to his daily workload, he provided executive protection to the prosecutor. In 1999, Lee became a security agent with Public Service Enterprise Group (PSEG), a Fortune 500 utility company, which fostered his interest and provided his foundation in physical security. It was during his tenure at PSEG—which paid for the certification review course—that Lee earned his CPP credential.

He views his certification as an asset to his position at the U.S. Department of State, where he has been since 2003, and advocates for others to become certified in their areas of security. “The certification helps my organization by establishing a benchmark for all security professionals to work toward,” Lee said.

—By Chris Flynn, ASIS public relations manager