

DEPARTMENT HEAD'S CORNER

## Raising the Bar in 2011: Challenges of 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly'

DR. STEVE BROWN

The spirit of this department can be summarized as that of "raising the bar." Students and faculty of the department are excited about the many facets of scholarly engagement opportunities we have recently expanded. No doubt, however, 2011 has been a challenging time, requiring doing "more with less" to remain true to this commitment to raising the bar for teaching and learning. There has been a lot of conversation about "good" and "bad" problems. While problems are best avoided in their entirety, those of the "bad" variety are an anathema to a healthy learning environment. "Bad" problems within an academic program at a university, especially in an era of state budget crisis,

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*Student research posters on display in Belk Building.*

LEARNING THROUGH CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION:

## A Perspective from Two Students

DEREK MUELLER AND TRAVIS SIMPSON



*Two of our students represented the department and WCU very impressively at the annual meeting of the North Carolina Criminal Justice Association held in Raleigh on Feb. 17-19. Here they share their experience and summarize the papers that they presented.*

The Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at Western Carolina University provided us with ample opportunities to further our academic experience through activities such as studying abroad in Europe, visiting prison facilities within North Carolina, and attending academic conferences. It is through all of these wonderful experiences that true knowledge is obtained. Each of these experiences has helped contribute to both our knowledge base of the criminal justice system and to our overall character. In particular, this article will highlight one of these fascinating opportunities that we experienced as students during the Spring semester of our senior year at Western Carolina University.

We both attended the annual meeting of the North Carolina Criminal Justice Association in February 2011 in Raleigh, N.C. Understandably, presenting at an academic conference does not sound exciting to all. There is, however, something for all individuals to take from this experience. It was great to see how individuals in many different roles within the criminal justice system were able to come together and share their research and interests. This was a true learning experience. During this four-day trip we also were able to connect with our criminal justice faculty. We all shared many interesting conversations and learned from each

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might include low demand for a major, lack of innovation and determination to meet new challenges or scholarly impotence among the faculty. The Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice is very fortunate to not be facing any “bad” problems. To the contrary, our courses are virtually all filled to a capacity beyond the desks allotted to each classroom; we are continually implementing extraordinary opportunities to engage our students in the discipline; and our faculty members are generating a litany of scholarly products. To wit, review this and recent issues of *The Carolina Criminologist* and note the multiple activities of students presenting research in a variety of forums, study abroad activities, student participation in provocative field trips and opportunities to hear lectures and debates from distinguished visiting scholars and criminal justice practitioners. Listings of “faculty scholarly works,” likewise, document a continuous flow of quality faculty scholarly engagement. Our institution and the QEP provide a superlative framework to encourage and support extraordinary opportunities for our students and faculty. We are indeed fortunate to have support from many corners to continue delivering these exceptional learning opportunities and avoid the “bad” problems that are becoming so pervasive at some institutions as a consequence of underfunding higher education.

“Good” problems have an upside but accompanying undesirable consequences. We are blessed with the “good” problem of increasing demand for all of our programs and rising quality among our student body. In our residential criminal justice program, for example, at press time we have already registered 342 majors and 132 minors relative to 320 and 109 respectively just last spring. Our residential emergency and disaster management (EDM) minor is rapidly growing as well. In our distance learning (online) programs, administration of justice has recently restricted enrollment to practicing professionals yet continues with high enrollment (162 at press time) while

EDM now enrolls 82 majors compared to the 72 we had in the spring. Having more and better students is indeed a good problem to have. The problematic side of this strong positive trend is that we must critically evaluate/consider our resources and how they impact our mission. If the number of students continues rising while the number of faculty remains unchanged, then we may have to permanently abandon the WCU trademark of small and moderate-sized classes in order to meet this student demand. For example, for the fall semester, we have moved all sections possible of our introductory course and our new student orientation seminar from a classroom with 42 seats to classrooms with capacities of 58 and 65 seats. They are still all completely filled, albeit in less congenial classrooms. We also added sections and still have had some students having to delay enrollment in their inaugural major classes – a less than ideal consequence of a “good” problem. In short, we have burgeoning enrollments (the good “problem”) and are increasingly raising the bar, but the budget crisis and its consequences, as they impact our department, render a scenario of “the good, the bad and the ugly.” While we contend with the bad and the ugly, our focus on the “good,” providing engaging opportunities for our huge body of enthusiastic students, remains at center stage. Raising the bar continues as the maître of criminology, criminal justice and emergency management.

This issue reviews a typical sampling of the “good” news emanating from the department. Our lead story in this issue was written by two students (Derek Mueller and Travis Simpson) reminiscing about their experience attending and presenting papers at the annual meeting of the North Carolina Criminal Justice Association. The faculty members attending the conference were immensely impressed with our students’ involvement and will be returning to the conference with another group of students in 2012. Over the summer, Dr. Lisa Briggs taught our “International Studies in Law and Society” course in a

European setting. Over two weeks abroad, Dr. Briggs took 17 students to key justice sites in France, England, Belgium and the Netherlands. Another student entry by Katie Jones recounts her semester-long experience studying in Wales. Still another describes the visit of two classes to the Marion Correctional Institution. These are examples of continuous engagement opportunities that students simply do not experience on such a broad scale at other institutions. This is what makes WCU a special institution and separates our department from hundreds of criminal justice, criminology and emergency response programs around the country.

While teaching larger class sizes, yet continuing to provide students with unique learning opportunities, our faculty members have persisted in scholarly pursuits. A review of our “Faculty Scholarly Works” feature reflects a variety of presentations and publications in recent months. A contribution by Dr. Al Kopak, summarizing the research that he shared in our Faculty “Brownbag” series, serves as an example of some of the interesting research under way in our department.

In short, there is no denying that the 2010-11 academic year was a “bad” one in the context of a reduced budget, fewer faculty members and overfilled classrooms. Yet measured by the standards of our students’ accomplishments and the impressive scholarship of students and faculty, it was not only a “good” but an amazing year. Just walk the halls on the fourth and the back portion of the first floor of Belk and review a sampling of recent posters produced by our students as faculty members involved them in valuable research projects. I am certain our students, alumni and other supporters will be awed by the successes that will be presented in the two issues of vol. 4 of *The Carolina Criminologist* during the 2011-12 academic year. We look forward to sharing the accomplishments of current students and faculty as the academic year unfolds.



## STUDENTS VISIT CORRECTIONAL FACILITY

On April 29, Dr. Kopak escorted a number of students enrolled in “Introduction to Criminal Justice and Criminology” to tour Marion Correctional facility, a close security North Carolina prison. This was the third semester in a row that students had a chance to get a first-hand look at how prisons operate. During the visit, students saw where inmates lived, worked, recreated and received medical care. They had a chance to speak with various individuals on staff at Marion about the realities of working in a prison and they also had an opportunity to hear from an inmate about his personal pathway towards criminal offending. It was an eye-opening experience for all who attended. The department has a continuing commitment to take our students into the field to see the criminal justice system at work.

## COURSE SPOTLIGHT

### CJ 305: “Social Justice and the Law,” taught by Dr. Cyndy Caravelis Hughes

Because this is the beginning of the second year of our new curriculum, we wanted to highlight the breadth of new courses that have diversified the offerings now available in the department of criminology and criminal justice.

“Social Justice and the Law” is a course designed to focus on issues of diversity, oppression and social justice. Specifically, students learn how the law can be used as a tool to enhance civil liberties or as an instrument of repression, marginalization and exclusion. The class also takes a critical look at the social construction of categories of difference (race, ethnicity, social class, sex and sexuality). In this course, students are encouraged to question the difference between biological and social facts. As a complement to the course, students attend numerous university functions that highlight the diversity present in our student body. Additionally, a series of invited guest speakers engage students across the subtopics of the course.

## Learning through Conference Participation *Continued from cover*

other. Our faculty also got to learn about us beyond our status as students. Most importantly, it was clear to us that everyone enjoyed the trip very much.

The environment where the conference was hosted was very welcoming. Faculty members from other universities and practitioners in the criminal justice field were very receptive to student involvement. This very welcoming environment allowed for our nerves to rest. Among the members in attendance were university faculty, college students, police officers and even a hospital security adviser. Throughout the presentations, the audience was very respectful and this created a comforting environment. At no time did either of us feel threatened by our status as students. In fact, we were both applauded on our research presentations and complimented on our poise.

There was a wide array of unique topics and research areas that were presented at the NCCJA annual conference. Topics ranged from law enforcement officers dealing with individuals who have disabilities such as autism to the application of the death penalty in North Carolina to a roundtable discussion about criminal justice graduate programs in North Carolina. The roundtable discussion provided unique insights from the graduate coordinators into their programs curricula and current directions of their programs. We were both able to pose

important questions concerning funding opportunities and entrance requirements at various graduate schools. Moreover, we were thrilled to find the opportunity to talk one-on-one with coordinators from just about every graduate program in the state. The conference provided immense opportunity for connections that can pay off in the future. While there we even received tentative offers of admission and funding to some N.C. graduate schools. While this helped us to plan our next steps toward developing careers, we were happy to have had similar career discussions with practitioners in attendance. In short, there was something there for a very committed criminology/criminal justice student.

Overall this was an invaluable experience that helped us both in unique ways. We both can agree that the actual experience of presenting research in front of an enthusiastic and receptive crowd is important. Individuals who plan to immediately seek employment after college will encounter instances where public speaking is a must. This can include scenarios such as being the perspective employee and going through an oral board interview or in dealing with members in a community. For those who wish to attend graduate school, presenting at a conference is very beneficial. This is what faculty members do; they contribute research and present their findings through writings as well as at conferences. This conference also

allowed for us to meet with other faculty members, students, and criminal justice practitioners. This is a great way to directly find out what other programs are about while getting your name out as a viable candidate for a graduate program or employment.

We both presented on a panel with Dr. Jamie Vaske. Travis was interested in looking at student perceptions of legal and extralegal factors in officers' decisions to stop and arrest; whereas Derek was interested in factors that contribute to student mistrust in criminal justice agencies. We both were able to utilize very similar literature in regards to our research topics.

The major theoretical framework stemmed from Albert Bandura's (1977) origins of attitudes in his work titled "Social Learning Theory." In this text Bandura states that individuals' actions are guided by information from three sources. These sources are external, vicarious and individual. These actions are typically guided through interactions and learned behaviors of others. Both of us found research that separately highlighted each of these three origins of attitudes in regards to numerous topics including trust and racial profiling. External influences can include the amount of news an individual watches or the amount of crime drama shows (i.e. COPS, AMW and CSI) an individual watches. Instances of vicarious influences can stem from the experiences



*Travis Simpson discusses his research findings with fellow student, Christina Foster.*

By completing this analysis it was found statistically significant that individual level variables lead to higher levels of mistrust in criminal justice agencies. Students who reported negative interactions with criminal justice agencies showed increased levels of mistrust. Students who study criminal justice agencies or worked/interned with criminal justice agencies displayed lower levels of mistrust. The results show that it is important for students to gain exposure to criminal justice courses and experiences. It leads to lower levels of mistrust in criminal justice organizations which could lead to more cooperation with criminal justice agencies and less criminal behavior.

These studies did have some limitations. The sample only included individuals from four majors at Western Carolina University. Particularly, 64 percent of the individuals included in the sample were males. It would be important to investigate these research questions at other universities. Regarding Travis's study, it did not include a measure of "condition of vehicle" as possible reason to stop vehicle.

In sum, our conference experience was both enjoyable and a great learning experience. We would strongly recommend that every motivated student take advantage of such opportunities. It is a great way to be exposed to cutting edge developments presented by practitioners in the criminal justice system as well as to learn about graduate school opportunities. The NCCJA provided an ideal forum for easing into formal presentations. We are so glad that we participated. It helped us to make important decisions about our future. Our only disappointment is that our own Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice does not have a master's program to allow us to stay at WCU a bit longer. We will miss our university but feel that it has very well prepared us for the career challenges that lay ahead.

Bandura, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. New York: General Learning Press.

*"We would strongly recommend that every motivated student take advantage of such opportunities. It is a great way to be exposed to cutting edge developments presented by practitioners in the criminal justice system as well as to learn about graduate school opportunities."*

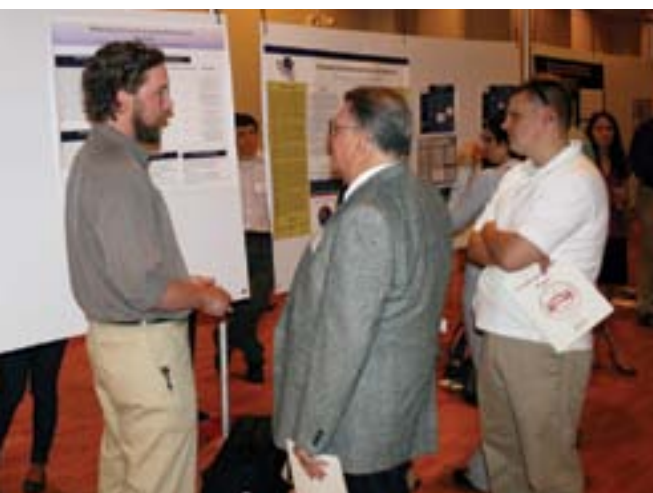
of another member within the household. Individual level influences on perceptions can include factors such as personal experience with criminal justice agencies.

The data that were used in both studies were obtained through a random sample of Western Carolina University students. The final usable sample was 269. Proportionate random sampling was used of classes from criminal justice, political science, finance, and computer/electrical engineering.

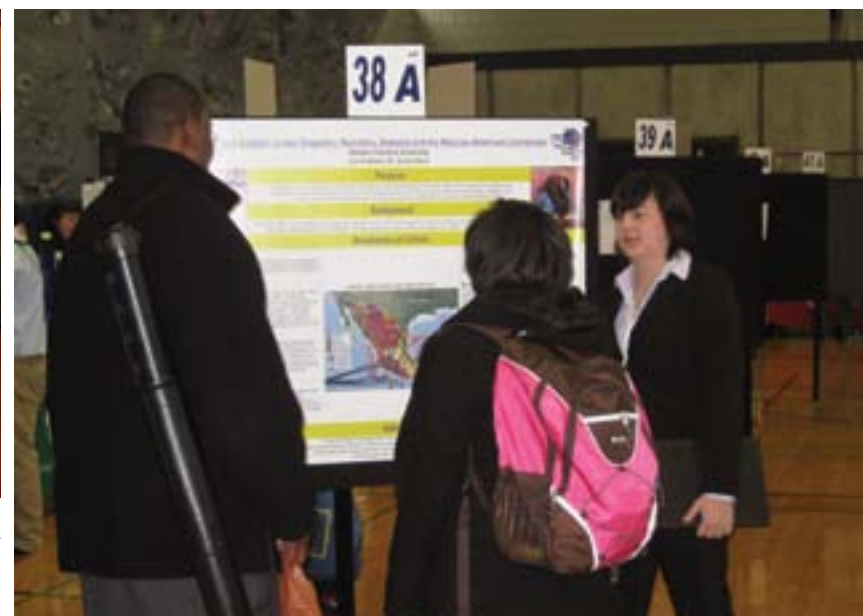
Travis utilized the data in order to run a few different statistical tests. In particular, zero order correlations were examined to determine if there was a relationship between predictors of stops and arrests. Travis also used logistic regression analysis

to see if there was a relationship between different predictors of an officer's decision to make stops and arrests. It was found that individuals who cited extralegal factors as important in the decision to stop an individual tended to be: nonwhite, have never completed an internship at a criminal justice agency, and had reported a bad experience with a criminal justice actor.

In order to examine factors that contribute to individual mistrust in criminal justice agencies, Derek utilized an ordinary least squares regression analysis. Employing this type of statistical test, four separate models were created. The importance of doing this was to see the effect of the individual level variables, the vicarious level variables, and the external variables on the model.



*Above, Professor Bob Berry asks questions about the research presented by Brandon Edwards. Right, Erin Andrews discusses her research with session attendees at NCUR.*



## Immigrant Status and Substance Use among Mexican Americans: Is There a Connection?

DR. AL KOPAK

*The following summarizes an April 13 presentation Dr. Kopak made to colleagues in our Faculty BrownBag Series. We appreciate his sharing this interesting work.*



The 2010 Census shows the Hispanic population in North Carolina increased 111 percent from 2000–10 while South Carolina experienced a 148 percent growth in this population during the same period. As the Hispanic population in the United States continues to grow, there are mounting concerns surrounding substance use in this ethnic minority group.

There is a great deal of research documenting the negative health and behavioral outcomes related to drinking alcohol use and smoking cigarettes. Unfortunately, these continue to be two of the most popular substances used by the general population in the U.S. Similar to the white majority, prevalence rates of use for these substances in the U.S. Hispanic population are relatively high, with 42 percent of those ages 12 and older having used alcohol in the past month and 19 percent classified as current alcohol users (SAMSHA, 2007). Despite our knowledge of the harmful effects of cigarette smoking,

tobacco dependence continues to be the leading preventable cause for mortality and morbidity in the U.S. (Mokdad et al., 2000). Given these alarming statistics, and the fact that alcohol- and cigarette-related mortality is preventable, studying the developmental patterns of the use of these two substances in the largest ethnic minority group in the country is extremely important.

It is crucial to consider that a significant proportion of the U.S. Hispanic population comes from immigrant families. In fact, there has been a 30 percent increase in the number of Hispanics born outside the U.S. from 2000-09 (Pew Hispanic Center, 2011). The immigration experience can be characterized by a process of cultural adaptation that takes place as recent immigrants navigate and become involved in a new cultural system. This can include, but is not limited to, learning a new language, learning the unwritten rules of social interaction, and adopting acceptable substance-use norms. Traditional Mexican

culture, for example, holds that drinking alcohol is appropriate at family gatherings and celebrations. Unlike American tradition, which is largely tolerant of drinking alcohol as a coping mechanism to deal with life's hardships, traditional Mexican values strictly prohibit this behavior and view those that do so as dishonoring their families.

The immigrant experience is also intricately connected to social mobility. First-generation immigrants, those who recently emigrated to the U.S., are most likely to comprise the lowest socioeconomic groups while second-generation immigrants, those who were born in the U.S. while their parents were born outside the U.S., may experience a higher likelihood of socioeconomic advancement. Later immigrant generations, those who were born in the U.S. and whose parents also were born in the U.S., seem to become the most Americanized given their greater immersion in mainstream American culture. This group is most likely to adopt most of

the country's values while attaining higher levels of education, and ultimately integrating into higher socioeconomic groups relative to their earlier immigrant counterparts. Later-generation immigrants also are likely to develop more tolerant and accepting views toward substance use: a characteristic of mainstream American culture compared with the more prohibitive views toward substance use held by most traditional Hispanic cultures.

The Hispanic Immigrant Paradox offers one possible explanation about why the earlier immigrant groups may be less likely to develop harmful health-related behaviors compared with later-generation immigrants. The paradox suggests most recent immigrants have not been exposed to the level of risk toward substance use as the later generation immigrants. Recent immigrants may be more likely to retain their traditional cultural value systems, including their views toward substance use and their strong family orientation, two important factors associated with lower levels of substance use.

Prior investigations of the link between immigrant status and substance use among Hispanic populations have provided a substantial amount of evidence establishing this connection. One study found that being born in the U.S. was the greatest risk factor for substance use in a sample of Mexican-heritage adults in California (Vega et al., 1998). U.S.-born immigrants with foreign-born parents (i.e., second generation) and foreign-born immigrants were significantly less likely to be daily cigarette smokers compared with U.S.-born immigrants with U.S. born parents, regardless of racial or ethnic background (Acevedo-Garcia, Pan, Jun, Osypuk, & Emmons, 2005). Living in the U.S. longer has also been found to increase the length of time Hispanic adults had smoked cigarettes and the number of cigarettes smoked per day among those who were born in the U.S. compared with those born outside the U.S. (Wilkinson et al., 2005).

Although there is strong evidence drawing a connection between immigrant status and substance use, these findings should be interpreted with caution. Many of these studies, for example, fail to take into account the sociodemographic background of the immigrant groups being examined. Considering that studies which have taken these factors into account have found

that immigrant status no longer explained differences in substance use (Hussey et al., 2007; Prado et al., 2009), immigrant status may not be as important to explaining substance use as the sociodemographic context of immigration.

If immigrant status is truly associated with substance use, there should be observed differences in alcohol and cigarette use over time among immigrants, regardless of sociodemographic factors. To test this hypothesis, alcohol and cigarette use was examined from adolescence to early adulthood using latent growth curve analysis in a nationally representative sample of 1,274 Mexican Americans in the U.S. Data were collected at four points in time over the course of 13 years, from 1995-2008. The mean age of the participants was 15.6 years during wave I and 28.6 years during wave IV. First-generation immigrants comprised the smallest group (8.6 percent) in the study. The largest (53.8 percent) group consisted of second-generation immigrants and the later-generation group consisted of 37.6 percent of those in the study.

Contrary to the hypothesis, alcohol use did not vary by immigrant status. In other words, second- and later-generation immigrants did not use alcohol any more than first generation immigrants. The figure presented here shows alcohol use steadily increased at similar rates for all three immigrant groups.

Although there was no relation between immigrant status and alcohol use, immigrant status was associated with changes in cigarette use over time.

First-generation immigrant Mexican Americans experienced smaller increases in the number of cigarettes smoked over time compared to second generation immigrants. The same pattern was observed between second and later generation immigrants. Essentially, more recent immigration was associated with smoking fewer cigarettes over time.

This research emphasizes the importance of examining immigrant status and substance use without ignoring the social context surrounding this complex relationship. Immigration appears to influence the use of certain substances over others (i.e., cigarette use rather than alcohol use) and this use takes place regardless of certain influential

demographic factors. These findings also indicate that immigration can affect cigarette use over time. Immigration is a significant and life-changing experience that is likely to have a lasting effect on substance use. Prevention programs targeting immigrant populations should take into account the cultural variations that are likely associated with immigrants' experiences in the U.S. This can not only help to reduce substance abuse in this vulnerable population, but it can also help to minimize the demands placed on the criminal justice system as the default approach widely used to address behavioral problems related to substance abuse and dependence.

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## Emergency Management Curriculum Mapping Committee Efforts

PROFESSOR ROBERT. T. BERRY

After having attended many of the annual FEMA Higher Education Project conferences and talking with many of the professors of emergency management programs at universities and colleges from across the United States, a common or repeated issue continually emerged. What should an emergency management student know upon graduation?

Many of us began to discuss the key knowledge, skills and abilities that an undergraduate degree in emergency management should provide and expect its students to acquire after completing the degree. It was recognized that this effort should be based upon the groundwork formed by the "Principles of Emergency Management" and other contributions provided by earlier Emergency Management Institute (EMI) work groups during the past six years.

In an effort to forge such a concept of ideas into some form of document containing "Curriculum Outcomes," I was selected as one member of a committee consisting of nine academics with FEMA and EMI support. A series of formal meetings were held at EMI in October 2010 and March 2011, followed up with phone conference calls in April and May and many email exchanges of ideas. The annual meeting of the Emergency Management Higher Education Conference provided the opportunity to share committee findings and solicit input from faculty across the discipline.

This roundtable group recognized that there is a highly diversified variety of degree programs and a wide variety of ways to address this issue. Therefore, they agreed to focus their efforts on a more narrow but complex goal. It was decided that it was best to begin by concentrating our efforts on creating "a working document that defines what the emergency management

hiring community should expect and look for in someone who has been granted such a degree," which we called "Curriculum Outcomes."

The result of the committee's efforts is a document which contains a statement of "Curriculum Outcomes." This is an academic advisory document which is designed to serve as a "guide" to institutions of higher education who now have, or plan to develop, an emergency management degree program. The document consists of an opening framing statement that explains its intention to be used as a guide, followed by three major headings of "Foundation Tenets," "Core Areas" and "Supporting Areas." Each of these major headings contains key subheadings with explanations and examples of the knowledge, skills and abilities that are important for a student to be able to demonstrate after completing the EM degree.

### FOUNDATIONAL TENETS

1. Historical awareness
2. Effective communications
3. Leadership, management and decision-making
4. Personal, organizational and professional development

### CORE AREAS

1. The "Principles of Emergency Management"
2. Human dimensions (social, political, economic, cultural, budgetary, statutory, etc.)
3. Areas of EM responsibilities (mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery, damage assessment, etc.)
4. Risk assessment process and methodology
5. Fiscal dimensions of EM
6. Awareness and promotion of the discipline of EM as a profession

### SUPPORTING AREAS

1. Public administration, community planning and development
2. Public, private and nongovernmental organization networking
3. EM standards, best practices and comparative practices
4. Current and emerging technologies

The contents of this document were presented by each of us on the committee and discussed at the annual FEMA Higher Education Project Conference at EMI in June 2011. In this session, we explained our purpose and process as well as addressing questions. Feedback obtained from these breakout session discussions will be incorporated into the final cut of the "Curriculum Outcomes" document. The final version of this document will be posted on the FEMA EMI Higher Education Project website for all institutions and academics to access and apply as they deem appropriate to their degree program.

All of us on this committee agree that this effort was long overdue. It is recognized as a valuable step toward establishing quality and continuity in the Emergency Management undergraduate degree curriculum as it supports the EM discipline as a profession. It is important to note that our emergency and disaster management (EDM) undergraduate degree program here at WCU had already been incorporating and applying the basic tenets, core and supporting areas identified in the new "Curriculum Outcomes" as part of our ongoing Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP).

## Senior Seminar Prepares Students for Work Force

*Dr. Jamie Vaske incorporates a number of features in our senior seminar to prepare criminal justice students for the transition to work or graduate school. One of them is to invite a variety of guests to the class to discuss employment in their areas. The following is a list of recent speakers in the seminar.*

### MASTER TROOPER RUSSELL BROADWAY AND MASTER TROOPER PETE NIELSEN

#### *North Carolina State Highway Patrol*

Master Troopers Broadway and Nielsen visited Dr. Vaske's Senior Seminar class to discuss a career as a N.C. State Highway Patrol officer. The officers spoke about the requirements for applying to the highway patrol, the responsibilities of an officer, and the structure of their basic training academy. Master Trooper Nielsen noted that the highway patrol has a number of specialized units that people may not think about when considering the highway patrol, such as canine units, aviation units and accident reconstruction units. The troopers highlighted that their academy is very structured and rigorous in nature, and closely follows that of the military. For more information on the North Carolina State Highway Patrol, visit [www.ncshp.org](http://www.ncshp.org).

### OFFICER DEREK STANLEY

#### *Raleigh Police Department*

Officer Derek Stanley of the Raleigh Police Department visited the Senior Seminar class to introduce students to the vast number of law enforcement opportunities at Raleigh PD. He spoke of the various selective enforcement units of Raleigh PD and their use of community-oriented policing and problem-oriented policing. As an alumnus of WCU's criminal justice program, he emphasized the importance of knowing constitutional and state law and working with specialized populations such as the mentally disordered offender or juvenile offenders. For more information on the Raleigh Police Department and its recruitment, contact Officer A.P. Kerensky at [Anthony.kerensky@raleighnc.gov](mailto:Anthony.kerensky@raleighnc.gov) or visit the website at [www.raleighnc.gov](http://www.raleighnc.gov).

### BRITTANIA BINTZ & DR. PATRICIA FOLEY

#### *Forensic Science, WCU*

In May, Brittania Bintz and Dr. Patricia Foley visited Dr. Vaske's Senior Seminar course to discuss career options in forensic sciences. Ms. Bintz and Dr. Foley are research scientists in the forensic sciences program at WCU. During their visit, they discussed the various branches of forensic sciences with students (such as forensic biology, forensic pathology and digital forensics), as well as the educational requirements for pursuing careers in each of the branches. When asked which forensic science class they would recommend for our criminal justice students, they noted that the course "Physical Methods in Forensic Science" (FSC-466) would be an excellent course for CJ students, especially those interested in law enforcement or the courts. The course will be offered in Spring 2012.

### DR. REBECCA LASHER

#### *Social Work Department, WCU*

Dr. Rebecca Lasher visited Dr. Jamie Vaske's Senior Seminar course to discuss the profession of social work and counseling with our criminal justice students. Dr. Lasher discussed the skills and educational requirements for being a social worker. She noted that social work is a great profession for those who like to work with people, who want to help others, and who are flexible. She also discussed some of the common issues social workers face on the job, such as modeling professionalism for clients and setting firm boundaries with clients. Dr. Lasher discussed the master of social work program at WCU and encouraged those interested to apply. For those interested in the MSW program, contact Dr. Pat Morse at [pmorse@email.wcu.edu](mailto:pmorse@email.wcu.edu).

### SGT. TIM LOMINAC AND SGT. GREGORY DANIELS

#### *North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, Division of Enforcement*

Sgt. Tim Lominac and Sgt. Gregory Daniels visited Dr. Jamie Vaske's Senior Seminar class to introduce students to careers in the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission. During their visit, they discussed the duties and responsibilities of a N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission officer. N.C. Wildlife Resource Commission officers enforce regulations related to fishing, boating and the illegal wildlife trade. Sgt. Daniels discussed the steps to applying for a law enforcement position in the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission and basics of its 19-week academy. For more information on becoming a N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission officer, visit [www.ncwildlife.org](http://www.ncwildlife.org).

### DETECTIVE LT. WILLIAM HAMBY

#### *Iredell County Sheriff's Office, Special Victims Unit Supervisor*

Detective Lt. William Hamby of the Iredell County Sheriff's Office spoke to Senior Seminar students regarding special victims units (SVU) in law enforcement agencies. He introduced students to the daily inner workings of a SVU detective, as well as the educational and experience requirements to become an SVU detective. He spoke about his close workings with domestic violence shelters and organizations in N.C. and some of the issues related to working with victims (i.e., secondary post-traumatic stress syndrome). A major theme throughout his presentation was the need to continue one's education through the North Carolina Criminal Justice Academy while working "in the field."

## A Semester Studying in Wales

KATIE JONES

For a semester, I lived in Wales and studied at the University of Glamorgan through the exchange program offered by WCU. I chose to study at Glamorgan because the university offers classes in both history and criminal justice, my major and minor respectively. The experience has been wonderful and I hope that my story will encourage other WCU students to consider studying abroad.

When I left for Wales in January, it was the first time I had ever traveled outside the United States and the first time I had ever flown by myself. I was rather nervous about the traveling and about arriving in a country where I knew absolutely no one. Once I arrived though, I managed to make it over to the university, find the house I was to be living in and unpack within a few hours. My housemates were three guys from different areas of the United Kingdom who, fortunately, were very welcoming and helped me figure out how to get around in my new town.

I have to admit the first couple weeks were not the easiest. I was rather homesick and unfortunately, the Internet in the house stopped working the day after I arrived and did not start working again until 10 days later, which made communication with my friends and family back home fairly difficult. After those first couple weeks though, I really began to enjoy the experience. I met a few people in one of my history classes who took me to Cardiff and showed me around the capital city. Within a few weeks I had a small group of really good friends whom I hope to stay in touch with now that I am back in the U.S. I also had the chance to stay in Kilkell, Northern Ireland, for a week with two of my friends during the break before exams. It's been one of my lifelong dreams to visit Ireland, and I am very grateful that I had the opportunity to do so while I was studying abroad.



I really enjoyed the criminal justice classes, or modules as they're called at Glamorgan, that I took while I was there. It was interesting to learn about a criminal justice system that in many ways is different from the system we have in the United States. It was also helpful when completing my assignments to be able to compare and contrast the two systems. In all honesty though, I think I learned more just from having conversations with my classmates before and after classes. Most people I talked with were very interested in learning about how America's system works and they were most willing to answer any questions that I had. This was not just the case with criminal justice subjects but also with American and British culture in general. I found that a lot of stereotypes that I had always thought to be true of British culture did not hold up with the people that I met. I also found that many people were surprised to find that many of the stereotypes that they thought to be true of Americans did not apply to me. It was a very rewarding experience to expose a lot of those cultural prejudices with my friends and the people that I met.

My advice to anyone who is thinking about studying abroad would be to just go for it. It was not an easy decision for me to make but I am so glad that I decided to take the opportunity. I learned so much about myself in those few months and definitely feel that I grew to be a much more outgoing and independent person. I certainly will remember the experience for the rest of my life.



Study abroad students visit Breendonk Concentration Camp.



Dr. Briggs escorts study abroad students to Anne Frank's hiding place.

## Criminology Students Study in Europe

During the summer of 2011, 17 students enrolled in "International Studies in Law and Society" and studied abroad with Dr. Briggs in England, France, Belgium and the Netherlands. Among some of the more remarkable sites visited were: the Tower of London and its dungeons, seeing the actual Code of Hammurabi and the Mona Lisa, visiting Breendonk Concentration Camp (perhaps the only camp which remains totally intact today); observing an actual trial at the Royal Courts of Justice in London, re-stepping the crime scenes of Jack the Ripper, visiting Ole Bailey, New Bailey and Bow Street. Locating the monument of Sir Robert Peel (the founder of the British police system), seeing Buckingham Palace and observing the "changing of the guards," viewing the House of Parliament and the Palace of Justice in Belgium (and the Grand Palace where public executions were held), touring Versailles (the home of Marie Antoinette), standing at her place of execution, visiting the Conciergerie (medieval prison and torture chamber and home of the infamous guillotine), observing the redlight district (providing a clearer perspective on the decriminalization of soft drugs and prostitution), and visiting the actual hiding place of Anne Frank.



**American Red Cross**



## Music Festival Targets Food and Blood Needs

BY AUSTIN RITCH

I headed a food and blood drive charity benefit/local music festival at the EpiCentre in Charlotte, N.C., on Saturday, July 2. I have always been interested in community service and have participated in many local nonprofit organizations. This was my first time organizing and executing an event of this magnitude. The idea was stimulated by a "cheesy" zombie movie last Halloween season. It seems that zombies are always hungry and so are a lot of people in our community. Ergo, the idea of a zombie-themed food drive was born. It was too ironically funny to pass up so I began my venture into the details and permission forms to start my master plan. As I was running through my log of contacts that might be of assistance, I focused on the American Red Cross. Organization representatives expressed much interest in the cause and were a huge help in sponsoring the event as a combined food and blood drive. As incentive to bring in donors, the American Red Cross and Music Saves Lives tour agreed to give free VIP passes to the upcoming Vans Warped Tour 2011. This sparked the idea to make this a large-scale event and include a local music festival as the main attraction. We expected record numbers of people to come and join their community in giving to a charitable cause. It will hopefully become an annual charitable event that brings the community together for two important causes while also bringing local artists and musician's valuable publicity.

*Austin Ritch is a senior from Weddington, NC, majoring in criminal justice and minoring in emergency and disaster management. He describes a charitable event he organized to address food and blood shortages.*

## DR. HOON LEE JOINS FACULTY



We are pleased to welcome the newest member of the criminology faculty at WCU. Dr. Hoon Lee recently received his Ph.D. in criminal justice from Sam Houston

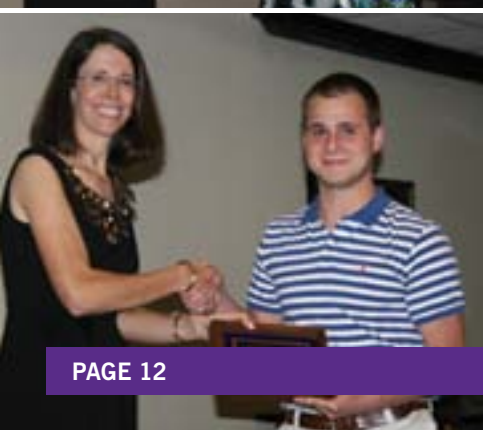
State University. His master's degree in criminology was earned from Florida State University and his Bachelor of Science in law from the Korea National Police Institute. His strong academic credentials are supplemented by a wide range of experience as a police officer in Busan, South Korea. One of Dr. Lee's special areas of expertise is the potential civil liabilities associated with administration of justice. He has published his work in such outlets as the Journal of Criminal Justice, Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management and Asia and Pacific Journal of Police & Criminal Justice. This fall, Dr. Lee is teaching "Police in Society," "Research Methods in Criminology & CJ" and "Comparative Criminal Justice Systems." Dr. Lee's office is located in Belk 110.

## DEPARTMENTAL GROWTH

It is not just numbers of majors growing in the department. Congratulations to Dr. Cyndy Caravelis Hughes and her husband, Patrick, on the birth of their daughter on April 21. Lexi Harper Hughes had a birth weight of 8 lbs 1 oz and was 19.5 inches in length. Lexi is the couple's second child, joining their son, Parker, in the family.

Dr. C quickly returned to the classroom to finish out the semester and then went on to teach "History of Serial Killers" in the first summer session, an 8 am class that attracted 23 students!

Congratulations are also in order for Dr. Albert Kopak and his wife, Kim. Their daughter, Kayla Jennie Kopak, was born on Aug. 10 at 8:55pm, weighing 7 lbs. 11 oz. and was 19.5 inches in length. Kayla is their first child and both mother and baby are doing great.



## Honors Bestowed Upon Students at College Meeting

Six top graduates were recognized for their outstanding achievements at the awards ceremony of the College of Health and Human Sciences on April 27. They were selected by vote of the department's Student Affairs Committee. Congratulations to all for their exceptional accomplishments.

### OUTSTANDING CRIMINAL JUSTICE STUDENT

#### *Kayla Russell*

Graduated with a 3.75 GPA. She belonged to the Criminal Justice Club and Alpha Phi Sigma, the honor society for criminal justice. She has joined the Air Force and plans to pursue a career in federal law enforcement.

### OUTSTANDING EMERGENCY AND DISASTER MANAGEMENT STUDENT

#### *Sarah Fishburne*

Is employed as a paramedic and serves as an EMS captain in York Springs, Pa. She is originally from Asheville but earned an honor's bachelor's degree in biology from Gettysburg College. She completed the EDM program with a 3.91 GPA.

### CRIMINOLOGY & CRIMINAL JUSTICE SERVICE AWARD

#### *Rebecca Oates*

Served as president of the Criminal Justice Club and the Club Sports program. She was a member of the Disc Golf Club and Ultimate Frisbee Team and started a women's club soccer team. She accumulated a 3.38 GPA. She has gone on to the Air Force and plans a career in the Secret Service or U.S. Marshals.

### WILLIAM HYATT LEADERSHIP AWARD

#### *Derek Mueller*

Earned bachelor's degrees in both criminal justice and sociology with an overall GPA of 3.79. He belonged to Alpha Phi Sigma, the criminal justice honor society, and Alpha Kappa Delta, honor society of sociology. Derek has been awarded an assistantship in the graduate program in criminal justice at the university of Cincinnati, where he plans to earn both a master's and doctorate degree in criminal justice.

### OUTSTANDING NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENT AWARD

#### *John Taylor*

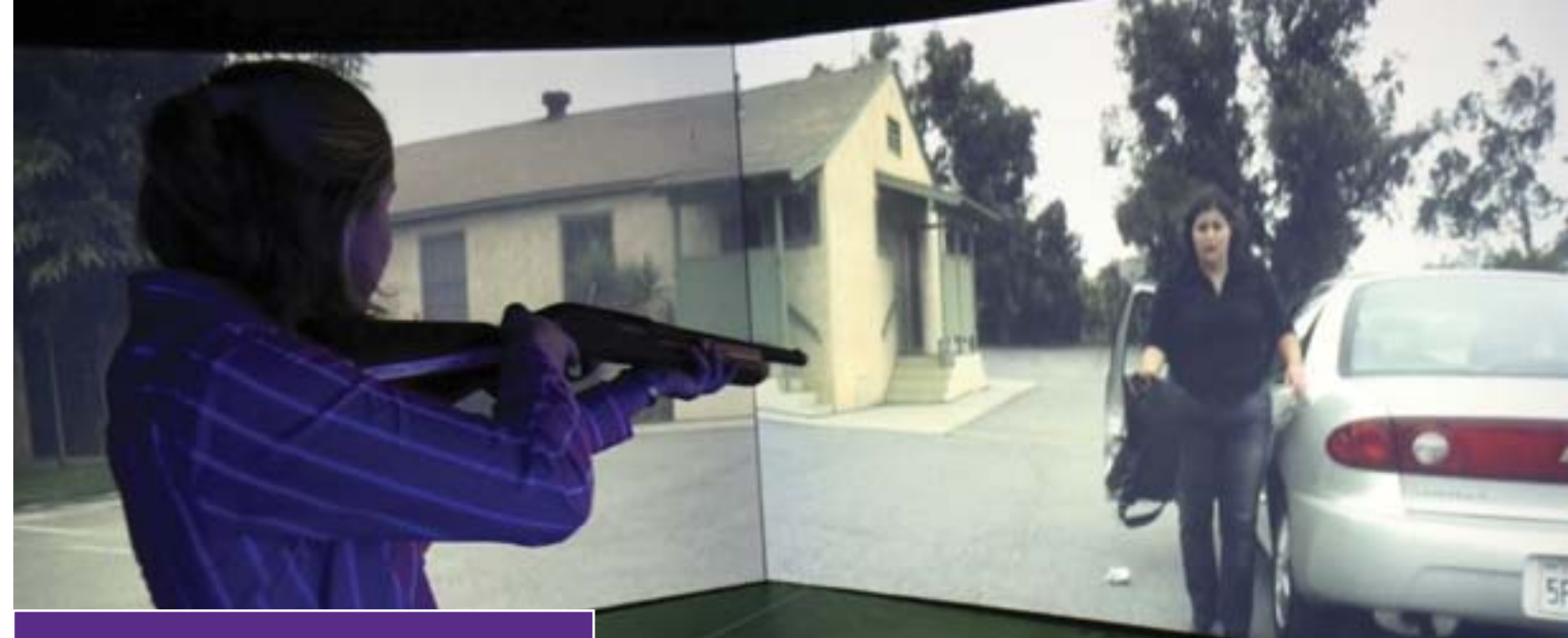
Is a 10-year law enforcement veteran with a current GPA of 3.91 in our administration of justice (online) program. He has been named "officer of the year" in the Roanoke Rapids Police Department. On Nov. 17, 2010, he was shot four times during a routine traffic stop but has made a courageous recovery.

### DANI WEST MORGAN SCHOLARSHIP

#### *Christina Foster*

Is a rising senior with a double major in criminal justice and psychology. Like Dani, the alumni who this scholarship honors, Christina has a passion in advocating for at-risk juveniles. That devotion to youth in need is what Dani is remembered for. Christina is helped by the support of the Dani West Morgan Scholarship in taking a step toward her career aspiration of helping youth. She is serving a summer internship with the Rowan County Youth Bureau Services. After three years of college, she has accumulated a 3.85 overall GPA. No better candidate could have been selected to honor the youth advocacy that Dani was so well known for.

*Interim Associate Dean, Dr. Judy N. presented college awards to six of our students and one of our faculty members, from top: Kayla Russell, John Taylor, Christina Foster, Rebecca Oates and Derek Mueller.*



## ATLANTA ALUMNI AND NETWORKING DAY

Three of our Criminology and Criminal Justice students attended Atlanta Alumni and Networking Day, a collaborative effort between Career Services, Development and Alumni Affairs. **Daniel Barnes** and **Rebecca Oates** were paired with **Col. Milton Beck**, a 1988 graduate of WCU and a current division commander with the Cobb County Sheriff's Office while **Christina Foster** shadowed **Clay Cox**, a 1991 WCU graduate and current president of Professional Probation services. In addition to learning about the value of networking and shadowing, students had a chance to learn about pursuing professional opportunities and using their resources to make strong connections.



## CRIMINOLOGY & CRIMINAL JUSTICE STUDENTS JOIN THE RANKS AT NCUR

**Erin Andrews** and **Christina Foster** traveled to Ithaca, N.Y., with fellow WCU students to present their research at the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR). Erin presented a poster titled "Los Estados Unidos Drogados: Narcotics, Violence and the Mexican-American Connection," while Christina's presentation was titled "Comparison of Self-Reported Crime and Official Crime Statistics at Western Carolina University." Christina also had the distinction of presenting this same study at the North Carolina State Capitol, an experience which allowed her to share her findings with state legislators and students from around the state.

## PROFESSOR AARON VASSEY HONORED

Members of the Mu Epsilon chapter of Alpha Sigma Lambda national honor society for nontraditional students recently named several WCU faculty and staff members as honorary inductees. Among them were our own Aaron Vassey, distance education adviser and instructor within the department. The group was honored at the society's annual induction ceremony, which was led by Regis M. Gilman, interim dean of educational outreach and Mu Epsilon chapter director, and Linda Seestedt-Stanford, interim provost and honorary inductee of Alpha Sigma Lambda.



# GRADUATES

## SPRING 2011 CRIMINAL JUSTICE HONORS COLLEGE

Kelly Gwyn Atkins – *summa cum laude*  
Daniel Ronald Barnes  
Brittany Burke – *cum laude*  
Heather Cavalier – *summa cum laude*  
Joshua Johnson – *magna cum laude*  
Kayla Russell – *magna cum laude*

## EMERGENCY & DISASTER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM HONORS COLLEGE

Rafael Bango – *magna cum laude*

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Barnes, Daniel  
Bowers, Jacob – *cum laude*  
Canale, Anthony  
Cannon, April  
Carver, Seth  
Cavalier, Heather – *summa cum laude*  
Cross, Natalie

Dunn, Sarah  
Durham, Joshua  
Gafford-Trevino, Brendon  
Gilliland, Luke – *cum laude*  
Gunsley, Mary – *cum laude*  
Harper, Lindsey – *cum laude*  
Hunter, Christopher  
Hunter, Kerri  
Johns, Matthew  
Johnson, Joshua – *magna cum laude*  
Mueller, Derek – *magna cum laude*  
Nieto, Aimee  
Peters, Jordan  
Petticord, Melissa  
Quinn, Jared  
Reardon, Michael  
Reichenbach, Joshua  
Rice, Amanda  
Russell, Kayla – *magna cum laude*  
Russell, Kendall  
Sherrill, Clay  
Simpson, Travis  
Sprague, Kayla  
Walden, Steven

## CRIMINAL JUSTICE DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAM

Atkins, Kelly – *summa cum laude*  
Clanton, Donna – *magna cum laude*  
Dintsch, Laura – *cum laude*  
Eastwood, Albert – *magna cum laude*  
Edwards, La Costa  
Gilreath, Donald – *magna cum laude*  
Kyle, John – *magna cum laude*  
Mann, Ricky  
Robinson, Amanda  
Yandell, Bradley – *summa cum laude*

## EMERGENCY & DISASTER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

Brines, Justin  
Duffy, Robert  
Fishburne, Sarah – *summa cum laude*  
Gore, Michael  
Jones, Cara  
Miller, Brian – *cum laude*  
Perez, Rigoberto  
Pierson, Frank

## FACULTY SCHOLARLY WORKS

### DR. STEVE BROWN

Presented at the annual conference of the North Carolina Criminal Justice Association, Raleigh, Feb. 17. His topic was “Curricular Directions in Criminology & Criminal Justice at Western Carolina University.”

### PROFESSOR BOB BERRY

Delivered a presentation at the Emergency Management Higher Education Conference on June 8. Professor Berry serves as a member of the group’s national Curriculum Mapping Committee. He addressed “Curriculum Outcomes,” focusing on methods and procedures of teaching online classes, at the meeting.

### DR. CYNDY CARAVELIS HUGHES

Presented at the annual conference of the North Carolina Criminal Justice Association, Raleigh, Feb. 17. Her paper was on “The Application of the Death Penalty in North Carolina.”

### DR. FRED HAWLEY

Recently completed three entries for the Sage Encyclopedia of Street Crime. The topics were “Vigilantism,” “Juvenile Curfews” and “Pool Halls.” Dr. Hawley also just authored three pieces for The Social History of Crime and Punishment in America, also published by Sage. These were “Wyatt Earp,” “Andrew Johnson Presidency” and “History of Crime from 1850 to 1900.”

### DR. AL KOPAK

Has had a manuscript titled “Parental Monitoring, Alcohol, and Marijuana Use among Hispanic and Non-Hispanic White Adolescents: Findings from the Arizona Youth Survey” accepted for publication in the Journal of Drug Issues. Dr. Kopak is the lead author, joined by S. Ayers, V. Lopez & P. Stevenson.

At the annual meeting of the North Carolina Criminal Justice Association in Raleigh, Dr. Kopak presented a paper at the Saturday, Feb. 19, sessions, titled “The Long-Term Protective Effects Family Factors Have on Delinquency Among Latino Youth.”

### DR. JAMIE VASKE

Has contributed a manuscript entitled “Genes, Twin Studies, and Antisocial Behavior” to a book edited by A. Somnit and S. A. Peterson and titled Biology and Politics: The Cutting Edge. United Kingdom: Emerald Group Publishing Limited. Dr. Vaske co-authored the chapter with Danielle Boisvert.

On Feb. 17, Dr. Vaske presented a paper entitled “Student Perceptions of Legal and Extralegal Factors in Judges’ Pretrial Decisions” at the annual meeting of the North Carolina Criminal Justice Association in Raleigh.

## DONATIONS

We would like to express our deep appreciation for recent contributions made to the Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice from the following individuals. These gifts are extremely important to us as we strive to continue providing quality instruction and valuable extracurricular activities to our students in these challenging economic times.

John Ayers | Jamie Keever | Linda Stanford | Kyle Ward

## ALUMNI UPDATES

To facilitate alumni keeping up with former classmates and making professional contacts, please submit your name, graduating class, current position and other information you would like to share to the newsletter editors: Dr. Cyndy Caravelis Hughes at [caravelis@wcu.edu](mailto:caravelis@wcu.edu) or Dr. Steve Brown at [browns@wcu.edu](mailto:browns@wcu.edu).

### JOHN CRANE-BAKER '93

Sergeant, Delray Beach Police Department, Training and Recruiting Unit  
· Assistant SWAT Commander  
· Honor Guard Commander  
· FTO Commander

300 West Atlantic Ave.  
Delray Beach, FL 33444  
561.243.7601  
[cranebak@mydelraybeach.com](mailto:cranebak@mydelraybeach.com)

### SGT. JAMIE KEEVER '05

Rutherford County Sheriff’s Office  
Detective (*domestic violence and other case responsibilities*)

828.287.6084  
[Jamie.Keever@rutherfordcountync.gov](mailto:Jamie.Keever@rutherfordcountync.gov)

### MEGAN PEARSALL '06; MSW FROM WCU IN 2009

Department of Defense, Fort Dix, NJ  
Wedding plans for 2012!  
[megan.pearsall@gmail.com](mailto:megan.pearsall@gmail.com)

### KYLE A. WARD '08

State training and exercise coordinator  
(*STO, ETO, SAA*)  
South Dakota Department of Public Safety, Office of Emergency Management

118 West Capitol Ave.  
Pierre, SD 57501  
Office: 605.773.3231  
Fax: 605.773.3580  
[Kyle.Ward@state.sd.us](mailto:Kyle.Ward@state.sd.us)

# Help Support Your Program

Show your support for programs in criminal justice and emergency and disaster management. With your tax deductible gift of \$25 or greater, you will receive the WCU lapel pin of your choice (Criminal Justice or EDM) and will be placed upon the mailing list to receive printed copies of The Carolina Criminologist. Donors also will be recognized in The Carolina Criminologist, which is circulated on campus and emailed to thousands of alumni. Your gift will help provide the margin of excellence needed for these programs and will help support activities and events that distinguish criminal justice and EDM education at WCU, including support for student presentations at conferences, guest speakers, student workshops and agency visits.

There are a number of ways to give to the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice. Please consider how you can help strengthen the department through a gift.

### RECENT ALUMNI \$25-35 (2008 graduate or later)

- Lapel pin of your choice
- Placed on the mailing list for copies of The Carolina Criminologist
- Recognition as a Recent Alumni contributor

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- Invitations to special departmental and college events

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Alumni  yes  no

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#### Mail checks to:

Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice  
Western Carolina University  
Cullowhee, NC 28723

**Checks should be payable to** "The Western Carolina University Foundation" and note on the memo line "gift for Criminology & Criminal Justice Department."

#### Make a gift online at: [give.wcu.edu](http://give.wcu.edu)

Please specify for the Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice in the comments box.

**Call WCU's Office of Development to make a credit card gift by phone:**  
828.227.7124 or 800.492.8496.



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- Sustaining Supporter [recurring monthly gift of \$10 or greater]
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- Please contact me to discuss planned giving options

To discuss planned giving or support needed for major departmental initiatives with naming opportunities, please contact Dr. Steve Brown, Department Head, at [browns@wcu.edu](mailto:browns@wcu.edu), 828.227.2174 or Greg Bauguess, Director of Development, at [bauguessg@wcu.edu](mailto:bauguessg@wcu.edu), 828.227.3045.

## the Carolina CRIMINOLOGIST

Department of Criminology & Criminal Justice

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and comments.**