

Department of Sociology and Criminology Come Back to Campus – February 22, 2018 Alumni Biographies

Thomas Backenstoe **Director, Centre County Probation Department** **Administration of Justice, 1985**

Thomas Backenstoe has been employed at Centre County Probation Department since 1985, He has been employed as an Adult/Juvenile Probation Officer and a Supervisor for 32 Years and accepted the position of Director in January 2017. He received his M.S. in Administration of Justice from Shippensburg University in 1991.

Kevin Deasy **Associate Dean of Students and Associate Professor of Legal Writing, University of Pittsburgh** **Law School** **Social Welfare, 1976**

Kevin is Associate Dean of Students and Associate Professor of Legal Writing at the University of Pittsburgh Law School. Kevin's particular areas of interest include academic support for students from underrepresented groups and use of short fiction to help students improve their persuasive writing skills. In program with the School of Social Work. He also oversees the Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project, a joint effort of the Schools of Law and Social Work in which law students teach constitutional law classes at local high schools in economically-disadvantaged neighborhoods. Kevin is also active his role as Dean of Students, Kevin provides students with both academic and counseling assistance. In addition, Kevin serves as faculty advisor for the Law School's Client Counseling Program as well as the joint JD/MSW with the Council on Legal Education Opportunity, a national program that works to increase diversity in legal education and the profession. Kevin has mentored numerous students through Penn State's Liberal Arts mentor program. He was the 2016 Department of Sociology and Criminology Outstanding Alumni Awardee.

Sandy Deveney **Security Investigator/ Certified Drug Detection Dog Handler and Trainer** **Law Enforcement & Corrections, 1970**

Sandy was a U.S. Customs Security Officer (original Sky Marshall Program) International in flight security, pre-departure screening and interdiction during the first two years of his career. From 1972-2000 Sandy was employed as a Senior Security Investigator, Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO Energy, Exelon Corp.). He was involved in multi-faceted investigations in white collar crime, street crime, executive protection, drug investigations, utility theft, scrap metal theft, etc. From 2000-2009, Sandy was a Licensed Private Detective, conducting investigations as requested by clients in addition to drug detection services.

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Sandy has twenty years of experience as a Certified Drug Detection Dog Handler/Trainer/Supervisor. He provided detection dogs to numerous Federal, State, and Local Enforcement Agencies and trained drug dogs for law enforcement agencies. Sandy participated in numerous searches resulting in significant seizures

Katherine Garren Senior Undergraduate Studies Adviser and Pre-Law Adviser

Katherine E. Garren, J.D. is a Senior Undergraduate Studies Adviser/Pre-Law Adviser in the Division of Undergraduate Studies. She earned her B.A. from Penn State (Psychology and Women Studies) and her J.D. from Northeastern University School of Law in Boston. Prior to her work at Penn State, Kathy practiced law for over eight years, focusing primarily on family law and domestic violence issues. For three of those years, she taught in the Domestic Violence Clinic and Institute at Northeastern University School of Law through a clinical teaching fellowship.

Penn State Pre-Law Advising is housed in the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park. Pre-Law Advising services are available for all Penn State students who want to explore, prepare and apply to law school. Penn State students in all colleges and at all campuses as well as alumni are invited to utilize our resources including but not limited to individual advising appointments, small group information sessions, workshops and events. For more information please visit: www.dus.psu.edu/prelaw.

Sgt. Monica Himes Police Sergeant, Penn State University Police Administration of Justice, 2001 *internship and employment opportunities available*

Sgt. Himes has worked in Law Enforcement and Emergency Medical field since 2002.

University Police has an Auxiliary Unit that employs students as Auxiliary Officers who provide security and traffic direction for many events on campus. Auxiliary Officers support University Police in providing security presence, community service, and traffic and parking control for many events. Applications are currently being accepted.

University Police and Public Safety has many job openings across the Commonwealth. Sworn law enforcement and civilian positions are available at many different levels.

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Ron Kocher CAPT, US Navy (Ret) Administration of Justice, 1987

Captain Kocher served 30 years in the U.S. Navy. He received his commission from the Naval Officer Candidate School, Newport, RI; bachelor's degree from the Pennsylvania State University, and master's degree from the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA. He served on three ships: USS Kitty Hawk (CV-63) an aircraft carrier, USS Alaska (SSBN-732) a Trident Submarine, and USS Frank Cable (AS-40). He was stationed in multiple locations throughout the United States and overseas; was a contingency Contracting Officer, Life Cycle Logistician, and a Program Management professional. He completed his Executive Education at the University of Michigan, and the Navy Business Management Course at the Darden School of Business, University of Virginia.

Matthew Lavelle Probation and Corrections Administration of Justice, 2001

internship opportunities available in Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, Williamsport, and Harrisburg

Matthew Lavelle has worked in the field of probation and corrections for over 16 years. Since 2008, he has been employed by the U.S. Probation Office in the Middle District of Pennsylvania (Scranton office).

Peter Liese Lower Southampton Township Police Department Law Enforcement & Corrections, 1970

Peter Liese worked with the Lower Southampton Township Police Department for 30 years filling a variety of posts including Community Policing Coordinator, Neshaminy School District Liaison, Town Watch Leader, Youth Aid Panel Liaison, Firearms Instructor, Armorer, Training Officer, and DARE Instructor.

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Ryan Meyers **Sentencing Policy Specialist, Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing** **Crime, Law and Justice, 2006**

Ryan is employed by the Pennsylvania Commission on Sentencing, an agency of the General Assembly. He was hired by the Commission as a Sentencing Policy Specialist in September 2013. His work focuses on Commission outreach and policy support activities along with data quality. In this capacity, Mr. Meyers works with legislatures, judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, and court staff (e.g., probation/parole officers and court administration).

Prior to his work as a Sentencing Policy Specialist, Ryan was employed by the Centre County Court of Common Pleas in the Probation Department. He began his employment as an Adult Probation Officer before being promoted to Centre Co. DUI Court Program Coordinator. During his tenure, he helped to continue the growth of Centre County's newly established treatment court.

Ryan began his professional career in the summer of 2006 with the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare as a Youth Development Aide at the South Mountain Secure Treatment Unit, a maximum security youth placement facility. As a result of his work with delinquent youth, he was recognized as Employee of the Year for 2007.

Ryan graduated from The Pennsylvania State University, University Park Pa. in 2006 with a B.A. in Crime, Law, and Justice and a minor in Sociology. He is currently completing his final semester in the Master of Public Administration program through Penn State University.

Ricardo J. Núñez **General Counsel - Securities & Regulatory and Chief Privacy Officer, The Penn Mutual Life** **Insurance Company** **Administration of Justice, 1979**

Ricardo J. Núñez joined Penn Mutual in May 2011, and serves as securities and regulatory counsel for Penn Mutual, and its internal broker-dealer, Hornor, Townsend & Kent. He is the head of the Special Investigations Unit, responsible for conducting all internal investigations at the Company, and is the firm's Chief Privacy Officer.

Ricardo has over 30 years of legal and regulatory experience. Prior to joining Penn Mutual, he was most recently Counsel for the Market Regulation Department at the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA). Ricardo also built his career at Genworth Financial, Wachovia Securities, the U.S.

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Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia, as an Assistant United States Attorney, and at the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission where he served as an Assistant Chief Litigation Counsel. He also worked at two premier law firms in Philadelphia, PA and Richmond, VA. A graduate of Penn State, Ricardo earned his M.A. from the State University of New York at Albany and his J.D. from the University of Pittsburgh School of Law.

Tom Rooney

**Retired Federal Criminal Investigator, Department of Justice / Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives
Administration of Justice, 1981**

Tom is a Supervisor for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, Arson and Explosives Task Force in Philadelphia, PA. He also served for this organization on the National Response Team (NRT) for six years. Prior to taking on a supervisory position, Tom was a Special Agent for the Bureau for 14 years where his investigative specialty was arson and explosives. He is a certified fire investigator and served on the National Response Team. Tom also served with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as a Criminal Investigator. Tom served as a Police Officer for the Abington Township Police Department from 1981 – 1987.

Michael Wagner – Class of 1995

**Vice President, Contracts & Administration, Crump Life Insurance Services, Inc., a BB&T company
Administration of Justice, 1995**

Mike is an attorney with over two decades of in-house corporate legal and insurance business experience. He currently serves as the Vice President of Contracts & Administration for Crump Life Insurance Services, Inc. (Crump), a Branch Banking and Trust Company (BB&T) company. As Crump's business counsel, Mike has primary responsibility for drafting and negotiating various types of transactional agreements as well as other legal, compliance and business-related matters for Crump. Prior to joining Crump in 2009, Mike served as in-house counsel for CIGNA Corporation in Philadelphia for ten years. While at CIGNA, Mike handled a wide range of contractual, regulatory, compliance and litigation matters and claim adjudication/appeals.

Mike serves as the Chair of the Department of Sociology and Criminology's Board of Visitors and is an Advisory Board member of the Department's Justice Center for Research. He resides in Harrisburg, PA.

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Chief William f. Wiegman Jr.
Chief of Police (retired), Lower Southampton Police Department
Business Administration, 1973
***internship opportunities available**

Chief Wiegman began his career in law enforcement in 1973 with the Lower Southhampton Township Police Department as a Patrol Officer, where he remained for sixteen years. He was promoted to Sergeant in 1989 and later to Lieutenant. In 2003, William was promoted to the Chief of Police. Chief Wiegman has been through extensive training programs, most recently the F.B.I. Law Enforcement Executive Development and the Advanced Poles, Police Executive Development at Penn State. William also continues to be actively engaged in a multitude of professional organizations. He is currently involved with the Bucks County Council on Alcohol & Drug Dependence and the South Eastern Police Chiefs Association.