

Public Safety aims to change misconceptions

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Staff Writer

For those who are resenting new policy changes on campus and feel there is someone to blame: Public Safety would appreciate it if you would think twice about directing these emotions towards them. The department is experiencing change, too.

"I think we have become the bad guy due to enforcement policies," said Keifer Bradshaw, Operations Coordinator of Public Safety.

It is Public Safety's job to tell those celebrating at a social gathering to dump the remnants of their cups and disperse.

Many of these new policies may not appeal to a typical Guilford student. But Director of Public Safety Reginald Hayes and Public Safety Officer John Martin would agree with Bradshaw when Bradshaw says, "We do not make policies or rules; we only enforce them. It is our job to maintain a safe environment." These officials are well aware of the transformations that are occurring across campus and they do not want to be blamed if a community member disagrees with the policy.

The Guilford Department of Public Safety believes that these changes will affect the community in a positive manner and is

working toward building better relationships with both students and staff. "My goal in the near future is to structure a more positive image of Public Safety, letting the community know we are here to help them and not harm them," said Bradshaw.

Change has become a prevalent theme this year at Guilford College and Public Safety is one of the many departments on campus affected by this change.

In the past two years, Public Safety moved from being outsourced to Allied Security to becoming in-house under Campus Life, with Guilford hiring its own officers. As of August 2004, Public Safety is now under the supervision of Gerald Boothby, Vice President of Finance and Administration.

Hayes believes the move away from Campus Life to be essential. "It allows Public Safety to be more

sions. Also, this allows us to have our own identity."

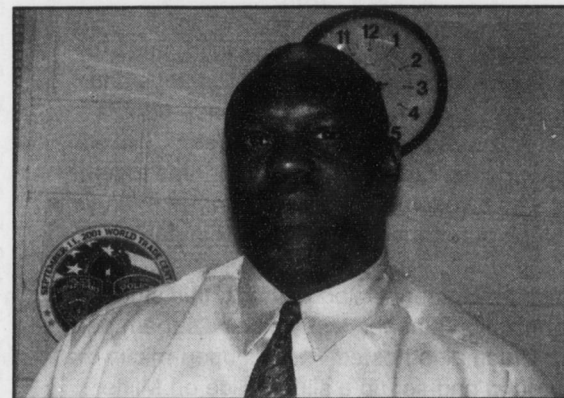
Kizzy Elliot, Public Safety Administration Manager, said, "We've attempted to make significant changes in the way we handle things in the department from protocol to parking."

Public Safety is more self-regulating, allowing it to make its own choices. "Before these changes we did not have our own identity," said Bradshaw. The department is hoping that this independence from other campus departments will help them form a more positive image.

Changes in policy enforcement that will affect the image of Public Safety include: parking, smoking policies, social gatherings regulations and the new lake policy.

As of the 2004 school year, students are now designated specific sections of the campus in which they are allowed to park. If parked outside of this designated area they will be ticketed. A student's parking location depends on where they live on campus or whether they commute. "With the new parking policies it is an easy way to identify who belongs on campus and who does not. This will cut down theft and criminal behavior," said Hayes.

A new lake policy will be implemented next month. The lake will have operation hours, when anyone can spend time at the lake, which will be in effect during daylight hours. "These



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Reginald Hayes, Director of Public Safety

hours prevent non students from coming to the lake (outside operation hours) and allow Guilford students to better utilize the lake," said Hayes.

Another change in the department is that Public Safety aides will now be working alongside Public Safety. The aides will monitor campus in uniform, checking the parking lots for propped doors and looking for any unusual activity.

The aides are traditional and Continuing Education students who are trained the same as Public Safety officers. "These aides are additional eyes on campus," said Hayes.

Bradshaw identified a Public Safety focus for the near future: "We would like to breach the gap between students in a positive manner."

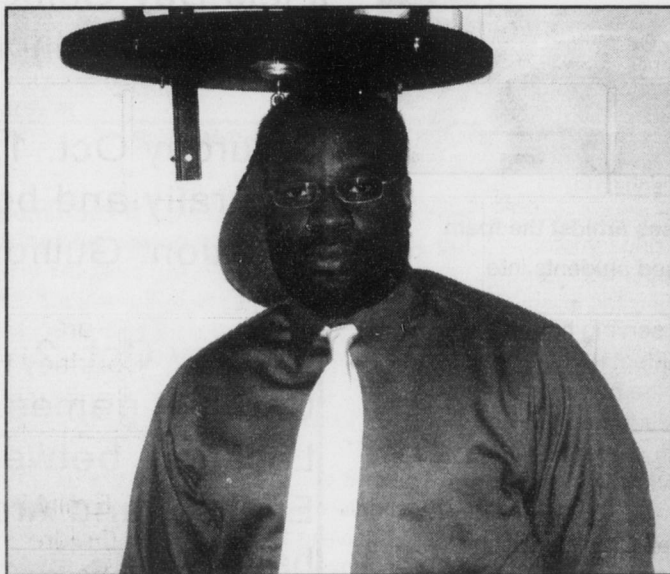
Rachel White, a senior, said, "In the past, security was much more personal and tried to relate to the students. Now they are dominating and intimidating. They don't explain what their concerns are and they don't seem to have an interest in hearing what the students are saying." It is crucial for both Hayes and Bradshaw that the students no longer feel this way about Public Safety.

The department plans to host a cookout sometime in October, where students and officers can mingle. "We want to let people come by and get a hotdog and meet us. (Public Safety) wants the rest of the Guilford Community to understand that we are real people with feelings and we care. I don't think we are given that kind of respect yet," said Hayes.

In regards to Public Safety's bad rap, officer John Martin replies, "It doesn't bother me. I'm 60 and I've been through a lot in my life. I enjoy that this job allows me to be outside. And I also enjoy talking to the young people; it keeps me a little more lively."

Hayes encourages students to speak with officers such as Martin. "In order to improve the relationship between students and Public Safety, students need to initiate conversation with the officers," said Hayes.

If you find yourself doubting Public Safety and the enforcement of the new policies, do not get angry; instead, take the time to visit them in the basement of Bauman. They will be pleased and surprised that a community member is also working to remove any barriers.☞



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Keifer Bradshaw, Operations Coordinator of Public Safety.

independent. We were too consumed with just Residential Life issues. We wanted to allow officers to move more independently and make their own deci-