

Police Officer Receives State Recognition

By Cindy Bridges
Editor

Dave Reece, the director of the Methodist College Police and Public Safety Department, has recently been awarded the North Carolina Advanced Certificate in Law Enforcement.



Dave Reece.

The purpose of the Law Enforcement Officers' Professional Certificate Program is to acknowledge the level of competence of the officers, to promote increased interest in college education and professional law enforcement training programs, and to attract highly qualified individuals into a career in this field. This program was created to grant state and national recognition to dedicated officers who have completed certain standards for education, professional training, and on-the-job experience.

Dave Reece has obtained his B. S. degree in Criminal Justice and Sociology from Methodist College. He has 25 law enforcement training points and six years of full-time law enforcement service. He received his Intermediate Certification in July 1996 and was awarded his Advanced Certificate in February 1999. Reece stated, "I am elated to receive my Advanced Certification. It has required a great deal of work and self-sacrifice to meet the standards but it was well worth it."

RELATIONSHIP ISSUES

Separated... But Still Together

Dear Darlene,

I am very much in love with my fiancé. We are separated by a two-hour drive due to his being in the Marine Corps. This June, he is leaving for Japan and will be gone for six months. He has been gone before but never for more than a month. I am a very independent person, but I hate being away from him. I don't know what I am going to do. I already miss him just being two hours away. Any suggestions you have on how to get through this will be greatly appreciated.
Lonely Already

Dear Lonely,

I can't really imagine how hard that would be. I have never been through such a separation and have never tried to make a long distance relationship work. However, working on a college campus where many students are in long distance relationships, and working in a city where there are so many military folks, I have listened to many people struggle with this difficult relationship situation. I will share with you some things I have learned from them.

Cherish the time together and make the most of it. Since you have precious little time together, it is very important to be mindful of the quality of that time. You can enhance your time together by making a decision to forgive quickly. You can decide that you will be the first one to admit mistakes, rather than waiting on your lover to say "I apologize" first. You can also decide to do as many loving acts as you can think of as often as you can.

Communicate clearly about expectations. Before you are separated, it is important to agree on expectations. How often will you write? How often will you call? Who will pay the phone bills? Is it okay to go out with the opposite sex as friends? Settling such issues as these in advance will save a lot of pain. It is much harder to settle conflicts long distance, since a makeup kiss is not an option.

Make special efforts to share in each other's lives. Phone calls and writing are not the only ways to share. Sending favorite foods, snapshots, articles about items of interest, news of mutual friends, and little presents helps to keep the connection strong. Keeping each other updated on your celebrations and struggles keeps the relationship alive. Don't assume because your fiancé can't help you with something that he doesn't want to hear about it. Chances are he will be more hurt if he finds out that you struggled through something alone than he would be if he knew you were hurting and couldn't help. You will want to communicate about expectations of this sort before his absence.

Get support. Don't try to tough it out and do this alone. There are plenty of people who are going through the same thing. Ask around and make friends with whom you can share mutual support while your special someone is away.

Take it one day at a time. Life can't be lived in advance. Don't jump too far ahead of yourself. There is not much point in stressing now over future happenings. Even when he is gone you will get through it much easier if you focus on getting through each day as it arrives.

Drop me a line or come by and let me know how it goes.

Best Wishes,
Darlene

Darlene Hopkins, Director of Counseling and Psychological Services at Methodist College, is the author of "Relationship Issues." If you would like to submit a letter to "Relationship Issues," please send it to the *Pride* via campus mail. If you would like a confidential reply to a letter, you may send it to Darlene Hopkins, Counseling Center, via campus mail.



Edward McKay

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