

Making Waves:

Highlighting the Graduate Programs in the
Department of Criminal Justice

NEWSLETTER

Spring/Summer 2021 | Issue 1



Thriving in Challenging Times



Welcome to the inaugural edition of *Making Waves*! This newsletter is dedicated to highlighting and celebrating the Graduate Programs in the Criminal Justice Department.

In 2021, our Masters in Criminal Justice and Masters in Administration of Juvenile Justice Programs (MCRJ & MAJJ) will graduate another successful cohort of students. Our MCRJ program continues to offer working professionals and recent college graduates an affordable, flexible, and high-quality pathway into career mobility.

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Our MAJJ program provides the theoretical and practical applications of juvenile justice research and policy, in a unique yet longstanding program that is sponsored by the Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (JCJC).

Like other state higher-education institutions, Shippensburg University has been impacted by the pandemic. Our operations have changed, our budgets have been reduced, but we remain steadfast and committed to our goal of preparing the next generation of leaders that will bring meaningful change in the operations of the criminal and juvenile justice systems across our Commonwealth and beyond.

We remain hopeful about the future of our graduate programs because even in the midst of the pandemic, our student enrollments have remained steady. This is a testament to the hard work of our faculty and staff. This is also a reflection of the long-standing support that our community has given to the university, and especially the criminal justice department. Above all, we are grateful to our students, who entrusted us to lead this new chapter in their professional careers. We cannot wait to see you back in the classroom this fall. Thank you!

Dr. Arelys Madero
MCRJ Program Coordinator



<https://www.facebook.com/ShipCRJ>

Welcome from the MAJJ Graduate Program Coordinator!

Greetings! Welcome to the Spring/Summer 2021 edition of the *Making Waves* newsletter featuring the graduate education programs in the Department of Criminal Justice at Shippensburg University. The stories highlighted in this edition include achievements from some of our current students and alumni in the Master of Science in Administration of Juvenile Justice (MAJJ) program. The Department is extremely proud of our current students and graduates and we congratulate them on their professional and academic accomplishments. I hope you will enjoy reading the news items in this edition. If you have any stories you would like to share with us and our alumni for our Fall/Winter newsletter, please do not hesitate to contact me at mlricketts@ship.edu. Relationships with our past and current students are invaluable to us. I look forward to hearing from you!

Dr. Melissa L. Ricketts



Academic Calendars

MCRJ Program

Summer Session 2021

Term A: May 24 – July 2

Term B: July 6 – August 13

Fall Semester 2021

Term A: August 23 – October 15

Term B: October 18 – December 10

Spring Semester 2022

Term A: January 18 – March 11

Term B: March 14 – May 6



MAJJ Program

Summer Session 2021

Term A: May 24 – July 2

Term B: July 6 – August 13

Mark your Calendars!

Fall Semester 2021

Classes Start: August 23

Semester Ends: December 10

Fall 2021 Weekend Classes On:

August 28-29
October 2-3
November 13-14

MCRJ Graduate Student Spotlight: John A. Packard

John is a student in the Masters of Science Criminal Justice program at Shippensburg University. Aside from working toward his Master's degree, John has a distinguished 23-year career in law enforcement, currently holding the rank of Lieutenant of Patrol Operations and Commander of the SWAT team for the Frederick County Sheriff's Office in Frederick, Maryland.

Originally from Jersey Shore, PA, John graduated from Shippensburg University in 1997 with a Bachelors of Science degree in Criminal Justice and a minor in Psychology. John was offered a paid internship his final semester with the Department of Environmental Protection - Bureau of Investigations in Harrisburg, PA. Afterwards, he was hired by the Montgomery County Police Department in Maryland. In 2001, John started working at the Frederick County Sheriff's Office.

In 2002, John became a member of Frederick County's SWAT team. There he moved up the ranks, serving as the Team Leader for several years before being promoted to the team's Commander in 2017. In 2005, John was assigned to the Training Division, teaching academy recruits and recertifying staff in defensive tactics, firearms, EVOC, and basic common law. His career also allowed him to spend time on the Community Response Team and as a first-line supervisor on both the Proactive Criminal Enforcement Team and the Narcotics Unit. In 2017, John assisted with delivering the Civilian Response to Active Shooter Events course (CRASE) to both government and private organizations throughout Frederick County.



In 2018, Louisiana State University's National Center for Biomedical Research and Training (NCBRT) hired John as an adjunct instructor. John has traveled throughout the country teaching law enforcement officers, fire/rescue personnel, and civilians methodologies related to the mitigation, planning, preparation, response, and recovery to active threat incidents. In 2018, John assisted with writing the Surviving and Active Threat Incident curriculum offered by LSU/NCBRT, currently being delivered nationally.

John is expected to graduate with a Masters of Science degree in Criminal Justice degree at Shippensburg University in the summer of 2021. Over the years, John has found joy in teaching and educating others. Using his training and expertise, he hopes to help foster and teach the future leaders that will work within the criminal justice system. Future changes in law enforcement's response are on the horizon. John hopes that in the next chapter of his professional life that he can be part of the positive changes that will be developed through education and the creation of community partnerships. Outside of his full-time job and schoolwork, John is a devoted husband and father of two children - Summer (13) and Tanner (9). His passion is the outdoors - solo backpacking local trails as well as trails in the Mid Atlantic Region. One day John hopes to complete the Appalachian Trail in its entirety.

MAJJ Graduate Student Spotlight: Neil McFarland

Q & A

1) Where are you from?

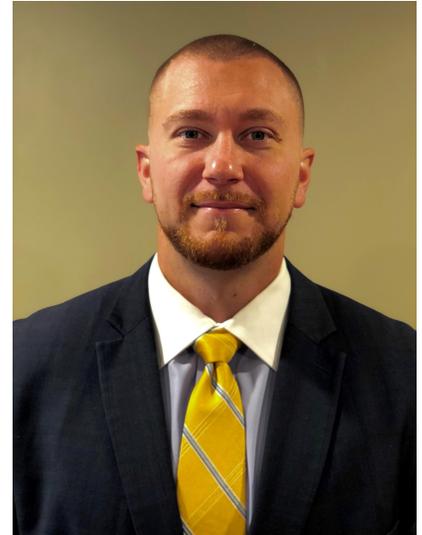
White Oak, Pa (just southeast of Pittsburgh).

2) What is your current position in the field? How long have you worked in that position?

Probation Supervisor for Allegheny County Juvenile Probation; I have been a Supervisor for a little over two years.

3) Why did you decide to enroll in the MAJJ program?

I decided to enroll in the MAJJ program due to the fact that the program was specific to juvenile justice and sanctioned by the Juvenile Court Judges Commission (JCJC). Furthermore, I recognized the fact that I would be in a program and classrooms interacting with other juvenile justice professionals across the state. I felt this attribute of the program was only going to make the program and my learning experience that much more valuable (which it undoubtedly did).



4) What are 3 things that you learned in the program that you utilize in the workplace?

- Throughout the program, the underlying theme of leadership was emphasized in just about every course. Leadership and restorative justice go hand-in-hand. This is paramount in the field of juvenile justice as the mission of Balanced and Restorative Justice continues to evolve. It is paramount to assure that all stakeholders are on board in order for the goals of the court to be executed. In addition, as I am in a supervisory position, leadership plays a prominent and essential role in my everyday decision making.
- I took away more than an education after graduating from the MAJJ program at Shippensburg University. Working full time in a relatively new position as a supervisor while enrolled in the MAJJ program taught me I can push myself more than I thought. Although the program was certainly challenging, it was rewarding. The program strengthened my confidence on both a personal and professional level which allowed myself to feel rewarded with more than a Graduate Degree. In addition, I was also able to interact with great classmates who I now consider my good friends.
- The MAJJ program gave me a deeper understanding of the foundation which juvenile justice is built upon as well as the progression of the courts. With the guidance and intellect shared by the great professors within the program, I can now have more effective conversations with my co-workers and staff members which I directly supervise in order to make sound decisions that are affecting the lives of the youth and families which we deal with on a daily basis.

Criminal Justice Faculty/Staff Kudos

Dr. Laura Beckman

- ★ In 2021, Dr. Beckman published a peer-reviewed article titled, “*Race, Ethnicity, and Official Perceptions in the Juvenile Justice System: Extending the Role of Negative Attributional Stereotypes.*”

Dr. Matthew D. Fetzer

- ★ In 2020, Dr. Fetzer published a book entitled “*The measurement of hate crimes in America*” as a result of his sabbatical research from the spring. This book provides a single source for information on hate crime legislation, the measurement of hate crime in the United States, how hate crimes are unique relative to non-bias crimes, underreporting by victims, and the law enforcement response.
- ★ In 2021, Dr. Fetzer published a chapter titled “Hate crimes: A special category of victimization,” which will appear in *the Handbook of Interpersonal Violence Across the Lifespan*.

Dr. Arelys Madero

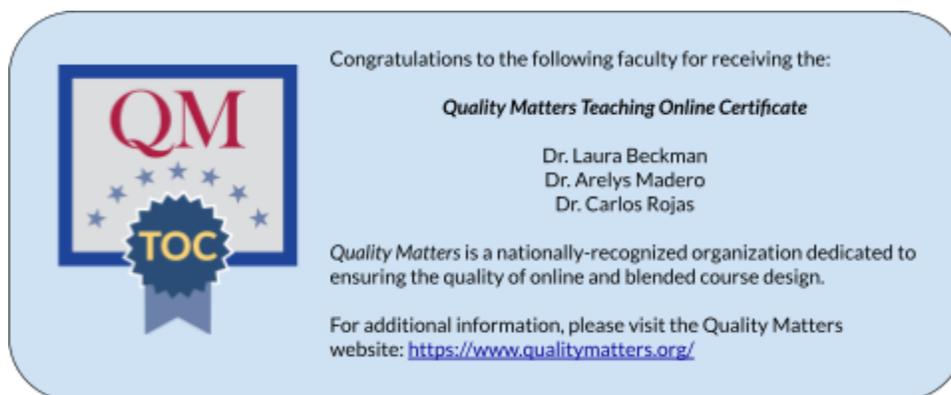
- ★ In 2021, Dr. Madero published a chapter titled “The Ethics of Panhandling: Free Speech Intersects with Social Control” which will appear in the textbook *Society, Ethics, and the Law*.

Dr. Melissa L. Ricketts

- ★ Dr. Ricketts recently co-authored a peer reviewed article entitled, “Self-control, social learning theory, social bonds and binge drinking: Results from a national sample.” This article was published in *The Journal of Substance Use*.
- ★ Dr. Ricketts also attended the following educational forums/trainings: ACES & Trauma Informed Approach sponsored by Randi’s House of Angels and STOP Training: The Batterer as Parent sponsored by Women in Need.

Dr. Carlos Rojas

- ★ In 2021, Dr. Rojas published a chapter titled “Inequalities in the Criminal Justice System at the Intersection of Race/Ethnicity and Crime” which will appear in *The Encyclopedia of Research Methods and Statistical Techniques in Criminology and Criminal Justice*.
- ★ Dr. Rojas was elected as Intake Commissioner of the Borough of Carlisle Human Relations Commission.



Shippensburg University Career Center Blog: Tips & Tricks! How to Tell your Story for Interview Success

By Victoria Kerr, Director of Career, Mentoring, and Professional Development Center

Congrats, you have been offered an interview! As you prepare for the big day you become anxious about the dreaded “Tell me about a time when...” question. While this is a common question, these words expect the interviewer to share and describe past experiences and how they shaped and prepared you for this position.

Don't stress! All you need to do is to “Tell your story!” Telling your story during an interview can be a great way to highlight your skills and tell why an employer should hire you.

Here are a few tips and tricks on how to answer interview questions:

1. Discover your "why".

As you think about sharing your story, reflect on your personal and professional experiences. Consider ... What motivates you? What experiences changed how you think? What makes you, you? The interviewer wants to know what has brought you to the career field you're pursuing.

2. Answer the question.

When asked an interview question, give a short summary at the beginning that answers the question. Use the STAR response method (Situation, Task,

The 3C's of Successful VIDEO INTERVIEWS

CAPABLE

Pro tip: 

Video chats typically drain your battery more than normal daily activity. Make sure your battery is **fully charged**, or plug into a power source if possible.

Know your platform 

 Check equipment before call

Make sure WiFi is strong 

Be aware of your strengths and weaknesses 

 Know your story. Tell your story.

CONFIDENT

Pro tip:  

When you're asked a tough question, tell a story that illustrates your experiences, how you've overcome challenges, what you've learned from mistakes, and how you've **grown**.

CANDID

Pro tip: 

Go above and beyond by practicing in front of a **mirror**, or record yourself to see how you come across to the interviewer. Practice being expressive. Practice hand placements and gestures you can use.

Practice your answers beforehand 

 Grab a friend who can stand in as your interviewer



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Action, and Result) to give an example. Answering the question first will ensure the interviewer is clear with what you are about to discuss.

3. Keep it brief - get to the point.

Be clear, concise, and give some context - this includes providing details to your story. Giving good details is an important part that can either boost your story or cause the interviewer to forget what your main point was. When telling your story, make sure you keep it short and sweet, giving enough detail to get your point across without spending too much time describing every detail. Think STAR!

4. Explain your role.

When responding to a question, make sure to explain your role in the story. Go into more detail about your specific actions, what you did to solve the problem, share your responsibilities, and highlight the skills and qualifications you possess that are relevant to the position. Remain positive when describing a conflict or disagreement. Focus on what you learned and will do differently moving forward, not what others did.

5. Share the results.

As you wrap up your interview response, tell the interviewer how the story ends. Share how your actions impacted the situation (even if your situation did not have a good ending, wrap it all up and talk about the lessons you learned). Connect the skills and values you gained from your story to the position interviewing for.

6. Be confident.

Be confident in yourself! Don't leave the interviewer wondering about whether you can do the role. Be confident in your skills and qualifications and more importantly explain how the lessons learned from life experiences can help you in the position you are applying for.



Telling your story in an interview is an effective way to engage the interviewer and talk about why you are the right person for the job. Remember, the employer asked you to interview for the position. Share your story, showcase your skill sets, and sell your value to the organization.

Photo by [Christina @wocintechchat.com](https://www.instagram.com/wocintechchat) on [Unsplash](https://www.unsplash.com)

Check out more resources at Ship's Career, Mentoring, and Professional Development Center
<https://www.ship.edu/life/career/students/>

MAJJ Alumni Spotlight: Robert Tomassini



Robert Tomassini is the Deputy Director of the Juvenile Court Judges' Commission (JCJC). Mr. Tomassini began his career in 1987 as a juvenile probation officer in Adams County, PA and was promoted to Deputy Chief Juvenile Probation Officer in 1991. In 2010, he was promoted to the position of Director of Juvenile Probation Services in that jurisdiction.

In 2013, Mr. Tomassini was hired by the JCJC as Director of Administration and Grant Programs, overseeing the agency's operating budget as well as management of the agency's Juvenile Probation Services Grant Program, which provides nearly \$18 million of state funding to juvenile probation departments across the commonwealth.

In July 2015, Mr. Tomassini was promoted to the position of Director of the JCJC's Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research (CJJT&R) located at Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania. The CJJT&R houses the agency's training, graduate education, data collection and analysis, research, balanced and restorative justice, and detention monitoring programs.

In 2016, Mr. Tomassini was promoted to the position of Deputy Director of the JCJC. This position is responsible for assisting the Executive Director in the development, implementation, and direction of programs in the areas of juvenile court policy and practice and juvenile probation policy and practice.

Mr. Tomassini also serves as the project coordinator of Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy (JJSES), a statewide initiative introduced to sustain and enhance activities begun under Models for Change and to implement evidence-based practices at every stage of the juvenile justice process.

Mr. Tomassini holds a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice and a Master's Degree in Administration of Justice from Shippensburg University.

MAJJ Practicum Projects

Congratulations to our MAJJ students for the successful completion of their Practicum courses (AJJ 551 - AJJ 552) and research projects.

Countless hours of hard work went into these high-impact research projects. We are confident that through an evidence-based approach to research, the knowledge gained from the completion of these studies will add to our understanding of current issues in the field of juvenile justice while simultaneously helping these professionals understand and inform their work with juveniles and families across the Commonwealth.

- Bertram, Addie “Diversion in Juvenile Justice: Does Diversion Reduce Recidivism?”
- Black, Stephanie “Procedural Justice and Restorative Justice and Their Effects on Victim Views of the Criminal Justice System Through Police Encounters”
- Britton-Roman, Bre’Ana “Mental Health and Trauma Effects Amongst Detained Juveniles”
- Brown, Mark “Does Community-Based Treatment (CBT) help reduce recidivism among African American juvenile court-involved youth in urban versus rural communities?”
- Catrone, Chandelle “Effects of Multiple Placements on Juvenile Recidivism”
- Jones, Damon "Is the Picture Any Clearer? Examining the Impact of Aftercare to Reduce Recidivism of Moderate and High-Risk Male Youth in a Mid-Size County”
- Ramsey, Mark “Juvenile Recidivism: Placement and Probation Based on YLS Score”



Meet Our Faculty

Department of Criminal Justice



Dr. Laura Beckman

Areas of expertise:

Race, ethnicity, and immigration in the juvenile justice; criminal justice systems.



Dr. Arelys Madero

Areas of expertise:

Crime prevention; communities and crime; victimology.



Dr. Matthew Fetzer

Areas of expertise:

Measurement of crime and delinquency; hate crime; violence and juvenile justice.



Dr. Melissa Ricketts

Areas of expertise:

Quantitative methods to substance use; cybercrime; school violence.



Stephanie Jirard

Areas of expertise:

Constitutional law; capital punishment; race and gender in popular culture.



Dr. Carlos Rojas

Areas of expertise:

Race, ethnicity, immigration, and crime; environmental criminology.



Dr. Cynthia Koller

Areas of expertise:

Juvenile justice; white collar crime; judicial corruption; sentencing disparities.

Attention New MCRJ Students!
Save the Date:

Graduate Student Orientation

August 2th at 10:00 a.m.

Hosted via Zoom, link to follow

Meet fellow classmates, faculty, and staff
Get tips on how to make the most out of the program
Hear from current students or alumni

QUESTIONS? EMAIL anmadero@ship.edu

Interested in one of our Masters Degrees?

MCRJ Program

Be the change you wish to see in the world with a Master of Science in Criminal Justice. This program is a 100% online program and meets the needs of both traditional graduate students and working professionals. Full-time students can earn their degree in one (1) year, while part-time students can do so in two (2) years.

What will I learn?

The program's major strengths are its applied perspective and strong emphasis on theory, policy, research and analysis. Courses provide you with the knowledge and skills to undertake independent, critical investigation of issues related to crime control and justice policy.

What are the requirements?

- A bachelor's degree in criminal justice, administration of justice or related social science field from a regionally accredited college or university.
- Minimum grade point average of a 2.75 on a 4.0 scale. Applicants with less than a 2.75 undergraduate GPA will be required to take the Graduate Requisite Examination (GRE) and provide a sufficient score before they are eligible for admission. They may also take the Millers Analogies Test (MAT) and provide a sufficient score.
- A statement of interest (500 words or less) indicating your reasons for pursuing this program, your professional goals and how this degree will help fulfill said goals.
- A resume is optional.

Ready to Apply?

Go to <https://www.ship.edu/programs/criminal-justice-ms/>

Questions?

Please contact the Program Coordinator, Dr. Arelys Madero, via email at anmadero@ship.edu or call (717) 477-1773.



MAJJ Program

The Master of Science in Administration of Juvenile Justice program represents a unique collaboration between the Pennsylvania Juvenile Court Judges' Commission, its Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research and the Criminal Justice Department of Shippensburg University. This one-of-a-kind program offers classes through a hybrid format, combining face-to-face sessions and online course content. Classes meet three weekends each semester during the fall and spring semesters. During the summer terms, all coursework is completed online.

What will I learn?

The program is competency-based. The faculty who teach in the program are committed to providing a high quality education that will prepare you to provide evidence-based services that are ethical, impartial and effective in a rapidly changing and increasingly diverse society.

What are the requirements?

The program is available to full-time county juvenile probation officers in Pennsylvania who graduated from an accredited college or university with at least 18 credits in the behavioral or social sciences, and who have been, or will be, employed in the juvenile justice system for at least two years prior to admission. As space allows, county juvenile detention staff (and other juvenile justice professionals, on a self-pay basis) may be admitted to the program upon the recommendation of the Juvenile Court Administrative Judge.

Students must agree to attend the program continuously for two calendar years and to maintain their current employment status for the duration of the program and for at least two years after graduation. Students who fail to meet these conditions will be required to reimburse the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for all, or a portion of, tuition costs paid on their behalf.

Ready to Apply?

Go to <https://www.ship.edu/programs/administration-juvenile-justice-ms/>

Questions?

Please contact the Program Coordinator, Dr. Melissa Ricketts, via email at mlricketts@ship.edu or call (717) 477-1550.