TVC’s Law Enforcement Academy

Training Alaska’s Current and Future Law Enforcement Professionals

Law enforcement is one of the most important fields in the state – yet it is also one of the most difficult to find qualified employees for.

“I can’t think of an agency that isn’t struggling with hiring and keeping employees,” says Dusty Johnson, who recently retired after 29 years with the Fairbanks Police Department and is now the new program coordinator for the law enforcement academy at UAF’s Tanana Valley Campus (TVC). “The pay scale is the same as someone stocking shelves at a local supermarket. Many folks prefer to stay away from danger if they can make the same money in a safer environment.”

Through its law enforcement academy, TVC is working to meet this challenge head-on. Each year, TVC holds two academies, which puts students through 13 weeks of intensive, basic police training. The training covers topics such as physical arrest, weapons retention, handcuffing, ethics, firearms, patrol procedures, traffic stops and more.

At the end of the training, graduates are eligible for the Alaska Police Standards Council certification, which positions them for employment with state or municipal agencies, as well as private security companies.

Johnson says approximately 18 students graduate from each academy, and the majority of graduates are immediately hired by security or police departments around the state.

“The academy receives requests on a regular basis from agencies that are looking for recruits,” Johnson says.

In addition to those looking to enter the field of law enforcement, the academy also serves current law enforcement employees, who are looking to upgrade or learn new skills. For example, Johnson says the current students include several prospective police officers, as well as security company employees, police department employees, and military servicemembers.

One of the unique aspects of the TVC program is that it draws upon industry expertise within the community and around the state to help educate the students. For example, students receive instruction from the Fairbanks Police Department, UAF Police Department, Fort Wainwright Provost Marshall Office, TVC business partners, local attorneys, The Center for Non-Violent Living, and Big Brothers/Big Sisters.

“The academy strives to use the best resources possible to give our recruits the best instruction available,” Johnson says. “I can teach a lot of course material, but there are professionals that live the material they’re instructing. These prospective police officers deserve the best, so they can serve their communities in a way the citizens deserve.”

For more information on TVC’s law enforcement academy, contact:
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