

New Sheriff in Town

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Danny Lawless, a Tulane alumnus with more than 35 years of experience with the New Orleans Police Department, has returned to campus as the new director of public safety. Lawless says working at Tulane attracted him because he wanted to stay in police work, and Tulane provided a good organizational structure with which he could be comfortable.



Danny Lawless, new director of public safety, is a Tulane alumnus who brings more than 35 years experience with the New Orleans Police Department to his position at Tulane. (Photo by Mark Hogan)

Lawless served in many positions with the New Orleans Police Department, including as assistant superintendent in the police department's Policy, Planning and Training Bureau, which includes the Homeland Security Division.

He also was the commander of the police department's 3rd District in New Orleans.

Throughout his career, Lawless has received numerous honors and awards in recognition of his contributions to the police department's crime-reduction efforts,

including the prestigious Charles E. Dunbar Jr. Career Service Award.

He also has served as commander of investigations in the Orleans Parish district attorney's office.

Lawless has participated in all aspects of police work — from patrolling on the streets to planning and training behind the scenes. His range of experience and knowledge allows him to bring some new ideas to the table at Tulane, he says. His first agenda — assess the situation. Before he implements any new plans, he wants to learn the ins and outs of campus.

Lawless knows well former public safety director Ken Dupaquier, who retired in 2007 after 23 years with Tulane. And Lawless admires the strides Dupaquier made with the department. Lawless notes the [Department of Public Safety](#) has taken many steps in the right direction since Hurricane Katrina, especially the creation of a task force responsible for analyzing and addressing campus safety problems.

Another step in the right direction has been the enhancement of the university's long-established emergency notification procedures. In addition to campuswide e-mails, an [emergency website](#) and the AlertLine (504-862-8080 or, toll-free, 877-862-8080), Tulane has contracted with NTI, a national provider of mass short-message services, including text, e-mail and voice-mail messaging.

The combination of delivery systems allows the university to send messages to Tulane community members' mobile devices and multiple phone numbers simultaneously and within minutes, as well as via the Web.

A safe campus and improved service to students, faculty, staff and the surrounding community are top priorities for Lawless. And, he says, the way to make that happen is through the science of police work.

"I understand police work, and from my experience, we can always find a better solution," he adds.

Lawless anticipates that under his command the public safety department will be effective and efficient. He expects Tulane police officers to continue to have a visible presence on campus with the ultimate goal of maintaining a secure environment.