Niagara County Law Enforcement Academy
Now Offered at Niagara University

County Law Enforcement Training Program Commences at NU on Feb. 28

NIAGARA UNIVERSITY, N.Y. (February 25, 2011) – Niagara University is the new home of the county’s approved training program for law enforcement officers.

The university, along with the Niagara County Sheriff’s Office and the Niagara Falls Police Department, announced today that the Niagara County Law Enforcement Academy (NCLEA), which provides extensive training opportunities for active police officers, sworn recruits and pre-employment civilians, will begin conducting classes at NU on Feb. 28. At that time, Niagara will become the only 4-year, private college in New York to host a full-time police academy.

“We are both pleased and honored to enter into a new partnership with the brave men and women that make up our local law enforcement agencies,” said the Rev. Joseph L. Levesque, C.M., president of Niagara University. “This venture is the latest example of Niagara’s continuing efforts to strengthen its relationships within the Western New York community by functioning as a primary resource for education, service and workforce development.”

Founded in 1973, the NCLEA was originally formed to serve the police agencies of Niagara County, but is now assisting law enforcement departments in Erie, Orleans, Genesee, Wyoming and Livingston counties as well.

“Law enforcement in Niagara County has entered into a partnership with a world-class university,” said Niagara County Sheriff James R. Voutour. “NU has provided a state-of-the-art classroom, full of technology, to create a first-class learning environment for police recruits. Within a few short years, the police agencies of Niagara County will be able to hire trained police officers that can go right on the streets, saving thousands of dollars in academy costs to county taxpayers.”

The NCLEA curriculum includes basic courses for police and corrections officers, including firearm instruction, civilian dispatch training, DWI detection, accident investigation, radar operation, TASER use and fingerprinting as well as seminars on developing topics such as homeland security.
"This is a significant phase in the long, successful history of the NCLEA,” stated Niagara Falls Police Superintendent John R. Chella. “With the ever-changing, evolving duties of law enforcement, the facilities at Niagara University will allow officers to receive the most technological, up-to-date training available. I want to thank Fr. Levesque and the administration of Niagara University for their efforts in making this great partnership a reality."

Coordination of the program on Niagara’s campus will be undertaken by the university’s Office of Continuing Education and criminal justice department. The full-time day academy, the first of which takes place from Feb. 28-Aug. 1, will be offered to sworn recruits and pre-employment students. The university is also exploring the possibility of offering a non-traditional evening and Saturday pre-employment academy in cooperation with local law enforcement agencies.

Academy participants will have the opportunity to earn credits through Niagara’s criminal justice department. Meanwhile, integration of the program into the criminal justice curriculum for NU students is currently being explored.

Niagara County Sheriff’s Sgt. Kevin Smith and Niagara Falls Police Officer Nicholas Ligammari will oversee the program. Instructors approved by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services will teach all NCLEA courses while pre-approved specialists may also be called on from time to time.

Niagara University’s Marian House will serve as the location of the NCLEA’s administrative offices and classrooms. The university’s Kiernan Recreation Center will be utilized to conduct physical training and defensive tactics instruction. Firearms training and emergency vehicle operation courses will take place off campus.

For more information, please contact the NCLEA office at 716.286.8759 or nclea@niagara.edu.

**Niagara University**

Founded by the Vincentian Community in 1856, Niagara University is a private liberal arts university with a strong, values-based Catholic tradition. Its four academic divisions include the colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Education, and Hospitality and Tourism Management. The university also maintains an Academic Exploration Program that provides a learning community for students who are undecided about their major, as well as numerous opportunities through Continuing Education.

-30-