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School of Criminal Justice celebrates famous alumni

By [Megan Durisin](#) (Last updated: 11/04/10 9:39pm)

When Mike Bouchard graduated from the MSU School of Criminal Justice in 1979, he had no idea he would be managing a department of more than 1,200 personnel 40 years later.

“When I left there, I didn’t anticipate I would be running one of the largest police agencies in America, but I feel very comfortable doing it,” said Bouchard, who serves as the Oakland County Sheriff and ran as a Republican gubernatorial candidate earlier this year.

Bouchard is one of six alumni being inducted into the School of Criminal Justice’s Wall of Fame at 5 p.m. tonight in Kellogg Center’s Red Cedar Room.

The induction ceremony is part of the school’s yearlong 75th anniversary celebration, director Edmund McGarrell said.

McGarrell said the anniversary is particularly significant because MSU’s criminal justice school was the first such collegiate program in the country, starting as a department of police administration in 1935.

Now, the school has nearly 10,000 alumni that work in areas from federal law enforcement and the court system to policing and criminal justice research, he said.

“Our faculty touch virtually everything that goes on in the criminal justice field,” McGarrell said, adding they’ve created a “Spartan network” across the nation.

John Angell, professor emeritus in justice from the University of Alaska, is another alumnus being honored at the ceremony. He received his bachelor’s, master’s and doctoral degrees from MSU, graduating in 1975.

“I probably took more organizational theory courses from MSU than any other student that’s been through MSU,” he joked.

In the 1970s, Angell taught an introductory class in organizational management to about 150 students in the school, and remembers the camaraderie he had with the other professors in the department. Before class, he would write terms his students had to learn at the front of the room.

“If I went out to get a cup of coffee, (the other professors) would change the meaning of the things I put on the blackboard,” Angell said.

“I had to try to go into class and explain everything.”

Once Angell graduated, he took over personnel and training for the Dayton, Ohio police department. He also was in charge of sheriff consolidation in Portland, Ore., before eventually becoming director of the Justice Center at the University of Alaska.

“I really owe Michigan State an incredible amount,” Angell said. “The university has been my life.”

Candy Curtis, the alumni relations coordinator for the school, said the Wall of Fame was started in 2000 and honors 52 alumni.

Criminal justice senior Kevin Fleury will be the keynote speaker at the event and Scott Westerman, executive director of the MSU Alumni Association, will emcee.

After leaving MSU, Fleury said he hopes to work in criminal justice at the federal level, especially in the environmental justice or narcotics enforcement fields.

“I’d like a career where I could lay my head down at night and know that I’ve made a difference,” Fleury said.

Other inductees at tonight's ceremony include Thomas Brennan, who served as a judge in Ingham County, Steven Edwards, a senior police adviser for the Bureau of Justice Assistance, Charles Soltys, a former MSU football player and a special agent with the Drug Enforcement Agency and the late Robert Trojanowicz, a former professor and director of the school for 25 years.

Staff writer Summer Ballentine contributed to this report.

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