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Included below is a press release regarding the naming of Ferris State University's firearms training range The Dr. Robert L. Parsons Law Enforcement Training Center. Parsons, Ferris professor emeritus, founded the university's Criminal Justice program in 1972. Further information is available by contacting Leah Nixon, assistant director of News Services.

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Ferris Honors Dr. Robert Parsons, Criminal Justice Professor Emeritus

BIG RAPIDS – Dr. Robert L. Parsons' name is synonymous with law enforcement education and training throughout the United States.

To honor the man who has dedicated his career to the education and training of police officers, Ferris State University Thursday announced it is naming the university's firearms training range The Dr. Robert L. Parsons Law Enforcement Training Center.

“When people think about a university they think about education, but universities are also about people,” Ferris President David Eisler said. “Dr. Parsons' impact on the Criminal Justice program and the law enforcement profession is still evident today. Ferris State University has the premier Criminal Justice program in the state and he is the linchpin that made this occur.”

Parsons, Ferris professor emeritus, founded the university's Criminal Justice program in 1972. In addition to building a strong academic program from which more than 3,000 students have graduated, he also worked tirelessly to secure grant funding to strengthen the training opportunities for future and current police officers.

He is credited with securing more than \$8 million for Ferris to use in offering training and weapons certification at the firearms training range for Michigan Police Corps cadets. Parsons also garnered more than \$250,000 for the Central West Michigan Law Enforcement Training Consortium, which he began 15 years ago.

“When criminal justice professionals refer to the Ferris State University Law Enforcement Program, they often call it the premiere program in Michigan,” said Michelle Johnston, dean of the College of Education and Human Services, under which the Criminal Justice program is housed. “Dr. Parsons is the founder of the program and to him we owe our gratitude. Not only did he have a vision of excellence for developing professional law enforcement officers, he found a way to implement and sustain that vision.”

While retired from Ferris since 2002, Parsons continues to serve as a police consultant and is

a nationally-recognized legal expert in state and federal court civil liability cases.

“This is a fantastic day, and I am both honored and humbled by the dedication of the range in my name,” Parsons said. “My mission in starting the Criminal Justice program was to change the way in which law enforcement education was offered. This range is a tribute to the program, the success of its students, and the dedication of faculty and staff.”

The firearms training range opened in 2000 and is located in Rogers Heights, just south of the university’s Big Rapids campus. The facility originally was used for training by Michigan Police Corps cadets. Currently, students studying Law Enforcement through the Criminal Justice program use the facility for course work. Other police training courses also are conducted through a National Institute of Justice grant.

More information about Ferris’ Criminal Justice program is available at www.ferris.edu/education by clicking on School of Criminal Justice.

For more information or to make a gift to Ferris State University, please contact The Ferris Foundation at (231) 591-2365 or fsufdn@ferris.edu. Details about establishing scholarships or endowments may be obtained from the Advancement Office at (231) 591-3825.

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