



**PRESS RELEASE: Ferris State University Strives to Become Anti -Terrorist Training Hub for Police**

**Sandy C Gholston** to: Archive

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Included below is a press release regarding efforts being led by Ferris State University's Greg Vanderkooi, deputy director of the Law Enforcement Academy of Ferris' School of Criminal Justice and an associate professor, to help the University become a hub for anti-terrorist training in the future. Any questions regarding this release can be sent to Sandy Gholston, interim assistant director of News Services.

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**Ferris State University Strives to Become Anti-Terrorist Training Hub for Police**

BIG RAPIDS – In the future, Ferris State University strives to be at forefront of anti-terrorist training for Michigan police officers.

Greg Vanderkooi, deputy director of the Law Enforcement Academy of Ferris' School of Criminal Justice and an associate professor, led the effort to negotiate and sign a contract that will allow the university to provide anti-terrorist training for statewide police agencies. To facilitate this training, Vanderkooi is working to develop continuous modules that he hopes will make Ferris an anti-terrorist training hub for police officers in Michigan and other states.

“We know that we have the capability to deliver this kind of training here in Michigan and here at Ferris,” Vanderkooi said.

Ferris signed the deal with Public Safety Protective Training, a Michigan-based company; to develop and conduct the type of training Vanderkooi and others envision will enhance the skills of officers locally, statewide and nationally. PSPT states that its “programs focus on transferring critical skills which meet the challenges faced by both government and industry in today’s dangerous environment.” PSPT’s capability extends all the way to training that includes preparation terrorists’ use of weapons of mass destruction. Vanderkooi speaks highly of PSPT’s R.W. “Bill” Vandergrift Jr., who has a wealth of experience in this field of training.

“His expertise and knowledge has been invaluable,” Vanderkooi said.

In past years, Vanderkooi says Ferris has worked with local, regional and statewide police agencies in Lansing as well as more locally in Mecosta, Osceola and Newaygo counties. In future years, the university hopes to involve those agencies and others as the depth and breadth of training becomes more important with increased threats.

“We’re hoping that what we’re doing right now, with these efforts, will be the catalyst for a new training center in Big Rapids that will include a mock city with fire safety and a drive track,” said Vanderkooi, whose areas of specialization include policing, police management, problem-based learning in police training, police training and crisis prevention. “We want to be able to deliver this kind of critical training, that we’re developing right here at Ferris, to even more people in Michigan and around the country.”

New Mexico Tech and Louisiana State University have conducted high-profile anti-terrorism assistance programs for the U.S. Department of State. Vanderkooi, as part of his own training, was exposed to the work done at New Mexico Tech and came away confident that similar training could be conducted in Michigan and at Ferris.

“I thought that this was a great program and that it was something that we should look at bringing to Michigan,” Vanderkooi said.

He expects that while individuals in Michigan will be trained on the Big Rapids campus, out-of-state people interested in Ferris’ program will be subjected to on-site training.

“We wanted to make this training available to our local and state police officers, but we also didn’t want to limit ourselves to Michigan,” Vanderkooi said. “We wanted to open ourselves up to the possibility of training nationwide.”

To learn more about Ferris’ School of Criminal Justice and its Law Enforcement Academy, visit: [http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/colleges/educatio/DeptLink\\_desc.cfm?DeptLinkID=76&DepartmentID=3](http://www.ferris.edu/htmls/colleges/educatio/DeptLink_desc.cfm?DeptLinkID=76&DepartmentID=3)

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