

NEWS RELEASE

Alabama Department of Public Safety

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Wallace Community College-Selma, Public Safety Team Up to Provide Online Training for State Troopers

SELMA — Wallace Community College Selma and the Alabama Department of Public Safety have teamed up to launch online in-service training for Alabama's state troopers, according to WCCS President Dr. James Mitchell and DPS Director Col. J. Christopher Murphy.

Through the program, WCCS has extended access to its Internet portal to Public Safety, allowing the agency to provide online training opportunities for both troopers and non-sworn employees, Mitchell and Murphy announced.

Mitchell said he and Murphy began discussions in November 2007, aimed at finding ways to use the latest advances in training technology available through WCCS to help fulfill ongoing Public Safety training needs.

“This collaborative partnership initiative will offer greater access and opportunity for the employees of the Alabama Department of Public Safety,” said Mitchell. “Col. Murphy is a strong advocate for education and training.”

Murphy said training determines “the caliber and quality of law enforcement. That is why, from the inside out, we are transforming our training programs and environment. We are very grateful to Wallace Community College and Dr. Mitchell for working collaboratively with Public Safety and allowing access to the cutting-edge technology that will enhance our training.”

All troopers must complete annual in-service training, currently provided during a two and one-half day training regimen at the Alabama Criminal Justice Training Center in Selma. Expansion of online training will reduce travel time and expense and enable troopers to spend less time away from their regular duty stations, Murphy said.

The initial phase of the online in-service training features two, one-hour courses: a legal update and policy governing biased-based policing. All troopers are issued a “tough-book” computer, and they may access the program from any PC. Course instructors at ACJTC monitor the classes online and are available to answer troopers' questions online, by e-mail or telephone.

Murphy said the training center plans to expand Internet-based training opportunities for both troopers and nonsworn staff.

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Chief R. Alan Benefield, executive secretary of the Alabama Peace Officers' Standards and Training Commission, said the Department of Public Safety's online in-service training program includes the required monitoring and testing necessary to meet the commission's requirements on continuing education for Alabama law enforcement officers.

Benefield congratulated the Department of Public Safety and Wallace Community College for working together, using modern technology to provide quality in-service training to Alabama state troopers in an efficient and cost-effective method.

The online training is one result of a developing partnership between Wallace Community College and Public Safety. Central to the partnership is construction of a new trooper training center on the college's campus in Selma, said Murphy.

The new training center, which also includes Department of Corrections training, was funded by the 2007 education bond issue, and completion is targeted for 2010. Murphy credited Gov. Bob Riley and the Alabama Legislature for the new training center and for facilitating Public Safety's partnership with Wallace Community College Selma.

5-6-08



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