Criminal Justice News

Georgia Southern University

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Dr. Laura E. Agnich was awarded a $10,000 Faculty Research Seed Award by the University for her project, “Perceptions of Safety and Active Shooter Event Responses in a Rural Community.” The purpose of this study is to evaluate active shooter response trainings provided by the Statesboro Police Department (SPD) for members of the Statesboro community and law enforcement officers.

Several recent events in Georgia including an attempted school shooting in DeKalb County in August, 2013 have many concerned about a possible threat. Furthermore, rural areas with high levels of gun ownership may be particularly susceptible to these forms of violence. Therefore, research on active shooter responses is both timely and important as high profile school shootings are increasing. Since little is known about school shootings due to limited samples and a reliance on case study methodologies, by focusing on active shooter responses in a rural community, this project moves the states of empirical research forward.
Dr. Adam Bossler attended the Peace Officers’ Association of Georgia meetings in Savannah, GA on August 25th and 26th. In the evening of the 26th, he sat on a panel of law enforcement officials, lawyers, and academics and discussed Professor Greg Connor’s new Police Control Model and how it may improve use of force practices as they apply to everyday law enforcement operations in Georgia in comparison to the current Use of Force Continuum. He will be traveling to the Georgia Public Safety Training Center in Forsyth, Georgia in early November as part of a Georgia Use of Force/Control Model group created to discuss how use of force training and practices can be improved throughout the state.

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Dr. Christina Policastro presented her research entitled, “Educating and Preparing Preprofessional Students on Adult and Elder Abuse: Implications for University Curriculum and Insights,” in a webinar for the National Adult Protective Services Association. The presentation focused on the results of a study conducted by Dr. Policastro and Dr. Brian K. Payne (Old Dominion University) that assessed levels of elder abuse awareness among social work, nursing, health professions, and criminal justice students. The results of the study indicated that students, regardless of discipline, report a lack of awareness and knowledge of elder abuse issues.

In addition, The Journal of Criminal Justice Education recently accepted the work of Dr. Christina Policastro and colleagues Sadie Mummert (Indiana University Pennsylvania) and Brian K. Payne (Old Dominion University). This research explored how learning about victimization in the college classroom affects students and found that a sizeable proportion of students realize they have been victimized as a result of exposure to course material. In addition, Dr. Policastro’s recent research collaboration with colleague Helen Eigenberg (University of Tennessee at Chattanooga) exploring college students’ views of justification and blame in cases of intimate partner violence (IPV) was accepted for publication in Women & Criminal Justice. They found that variables assessing negative attitudes toward women, a general tendency to blame victims, and views of relationship violence as justifiable were associated with victim blaming within the context of IPV.
M.A.S.S. Graduate Students Present Research

September 24, 2014

M.A.S.S graduate students Shanna Felix, Justin Hoyle, and Melanie Hart presented their research at the Southern Criminal Justice Association conference in Clearwater, Florida (September 17-21). Shanna Felix, along with Drs. Christina Policastro, Laura Agnich, and Laurie Gould presented a paper titled, “Sex, sexual orientation, and self control: An examination of psychological victimization and dating violence among university students." The authors found that low self-control, sexual orientation, Greek affiliation, and alcohol use were associated with psychological dating violence.

Justin Hoyle working with Dr. Bryan Miller and Dr. John Stogner of the UNC-Charlotte presented his paper “Synthetic Highs: Exploring Predictors of Synthetic Cannabinoid Use in a College Sample,” which looked at competing criminological theories and their ability to predict synthetic marijuana use finding that social learning theory provides a better explanation than strain and low self control.

Finally, Melanie Hart presented her paper, "Mass School Shootings: Predicting the Usage of Firearms in Acts of School Violence," and found that white perpetrators and those who target high schools and colleges are more likely to use firearms to carry out acts of mass violence in schools.
Dr. Chad Posick wins ACJS “New Scholar Award”

September 24, 2014

Dr. Chad Posick is the recipient of the “New Scholar Award” for the Victimology Section of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS). The New Scholar Award recognizes the achievements of a scholar who shows outstanding merit at the beginnings of his or her career. Outstanding merit may be based on a single book or work, including dissertation or a series of theoretical or research contributions to the area of victimology. Eligibility includes scholars who are active ACJS members and members of the victimology section and have held a Ph.D. for less than five years at the time of their nomination.

Dr. Posick’s primary research interests include the intersection of victimization and offending, the role of emotions in human behavior, and measurement issues in criminology and criminal justice. His research has been published in *Psychology of Violence, Justice Quarterly, Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, and the *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*.

In a recent study published in the *Journal of Adolescent Health*, Dr. Chad Posick along with co-author Dr. Gregory Zimmerman of Northeastern University, found that individuals who engaged in high levels of interpersonal violence were unlikely to engage in suicidal behavior. Conversely, individuals who engaged in high levels of suicidal behavior were also likely to engage in interpersonal violence. Several shared (e.g., residential stability, substance use) and distinguishing (e.g., exposure to violent peers, depression) correlates of interpersonal violence and suicidal behavior were detected.

Dr. Posick will be presenting at the Georgia Southern Psychology Department Colloquium on **October 22 from 1:25-2:15pm** in the Carroll Building, Room 2268. His talk is titled “Once More, With Feeling: How a Psychological Focus on Emotions Helps us Understand Victims and Offenders.”

Posted in *Uncategorized*