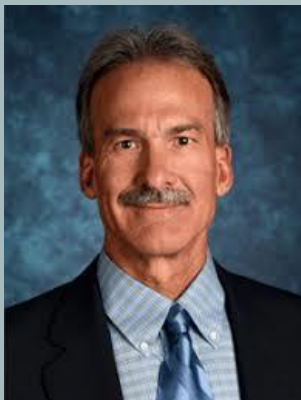


## Message from the Department Head



[Dr. Dennis Giever](#)  
CJ Department Head

Wow, what an exciting time to be in the department and the field of Criminal Justice. When Professor Dimitrijevic sent me her outline for this newsletter I was struck by how many differing articles she was planning on including in this edition. There is just so much happening in the department.

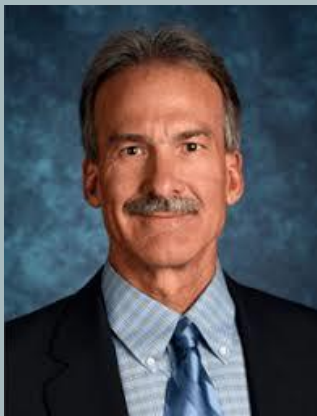
First, some exciting news. We had two new faculty members join our department this summer and two more who will be joining us starting in January. We also have a new student worker helping to make sure that we meet the needs of our faculty and students. As NMSU Global continues to grow, I expect to be adding a few more new faculty members to our department, just to keep up with this growth. I am also excited about all the work that is being undertaken by our faculty. This includes the [Clothesline Project](#) which is in its third year. This event is undertaken each October in recognition of National Domestic Violence Awareness Month. This event has continued to grow, in large part, because of Dr. Cho's passion for the project. The Clothesline Project has brought attention to this serious problem in our communities, and has brought much positive recognition to our university and department.

I am also thankful to all faculty members who continue to use cutting edge technology in their classes. Professor D'Antonio works with [VR in her online](#) courses and has been recognized by Meta for Education. She has also continued to act as a faculty advisor to our [Humans for Humans Student group](#). They have several upcoming events on campus to bring public awareness to the problem of human trafficking.

I am also excited to announce that our department is in the process of reestablishing our chapter of the American Criminal Justice Association – LAE. Many of our Alumni will have fond memories of this organization and the fellowship that it afforded. As a proud alum, I remember the passion that Ron Pincomb had for the organization and remember him serving as the National President. If my memory serves me, I believe it was Ed Faris who established our chapter, but to be honest, I don't remember what year that was (most likely before my time in the department). Dr. Mari Edwards has been critical in reestablishing this organization in the department. More on this student organization in the future.



## Message from the Department Head



[Dr. Dennis Giever](#)  
CJ Department Head

The objectives of The American Criminal Justice Association – Lambda Alpha Epsilon, according to their website are:

1. To improve criminal justice through educational activities.
2. To foster professionalism in law enforcement personnel and agencies.
3. To promote professional, academic, and public awareness of criminal justice issues.
4. To encourage the establishment and expansion of higher education and professional training in criminal justice.
5. To provide a unified voice for professionals and students of criminal justice.
6. To promote high standards of ethical conduct, professional training, and higher education within the criminal justice field.

It is my hope that this organization will provide some outstanding opportunities for our students and give us an opportunity to work with criminal justice agencies in the region. Those of us who were actively involved in this organization had the opportunity to work closely with individuals in the field and make lifelong connections.

I promised Marija that I would keep this addition of my chair message short as we have so much else to write about. As always, I would ask each of you to reach out to our department and let us know how you are doing. I would also challenge you to share a memory of our chapter of LAE. We might be able to share those in upcoming newsletters. Many of you traveled with Professor Pincomb to national events and I know many of you returned with national awards. It would be nice to hear from you!

I hope everyone has a wonderful holiday season!! My best to you!

Dennis Giever

[dgiever@nmsu.edu](mailto:dgiever@nmsu.edu)

575-646-1632



**BE BOLD.** Shape the Future. | **New Mexico State University** | <https://crimjust.nmsu.edu/>

## New Faculty



[Dr. Emily Spivey](#)  
Assistant Professor

## Welcome CJ Faculty

Emily joined the criminal justice faculty in Fall 2024. She earned a B.S. and M.S. in Criminal Justice from the University of North Texas in Denton, TX before moving to the Central Texas region to earn a Ph.D. in Criminal Justice & Criminology from Texas State University in San Marcos, TX.

As a scholar, she is passionate about criminological theory as well as research on reentry, or the process of returning to society after a period of confinement. Since reentry affects us all, she believes that substantially improving reentry outcomes requires further knowledge and understanding of the reentry process. She is excited to grow her research agenda at NMSU.

As an instructor, she prioritizes student engagement and critical thinking in the classroom. A daughter of two educators, she truly values the art of teaching, and she consistently seeks methods of improving her instruction. In this vein, she has taken advantage of the various workshops and book groups offered by the Teaching Academy here at NMSU. She looks forward to continually evolving and challenging herself as an educator.

Overall, she views this assistant professorship at New Mexico State University as a position where she can establish herself in the field and further develop her skills and research alongside her exceptional colleagues. Go Aggies!



## New Faculty



[Scott Garland](#)  
College Assistant  
Professor

## Welcome CJ Faculty

NMSU is pleased to welcome Scott Garland as a new faculty member. He has been an adjunct instructor with NMSU since 2019, and he recently joined the faculty in a full-time capacity, where his real-world experience will further enrich the university's criminal justice programs.

Originally from Pennsylvania, Scott now resides in Somerset, Kentucky, and brings over 18 years of extensive law enforcement experience to the classroom. He holds both a Bachelor's and Master's degree in Criminology from the Indiana University of Pennsylvania, which he earned in 2008 and 2009, respectively. Additionally, he continues to serve as an adjunct instructor at Southern New Hampshire University.

Scott began his career with the U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP), in 2009 as a Correctional Officer at USP Hazelton, a high-security facility in West Virginia. Over the years, he has held a variety of leadership roles, including Senior Officer, Case Manager, and Case Management Coordinator. His expertise led to his appointment as the National Victim Witness Program Coordinator at the BOP's Central Office in Washington, D.C., where he managed victim witness programs and served as a liaison with federal judicial and law enforcement entities.

Most recently, Scott has served as Associate Warden at both the Medical Center for Federal Prisoners in Springfield, Missouri, and the United States Penitentiary McCreary in Pine Knot, Kentucky. His experience spans all security levels and includes work in both male and female correctional institutions. Before his employment with the BOP, he served as a Deputy Sheriff in Blair County, Pennsylvania.

Outside of his professional endeavors, Scott is an active member of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, the American Society of Criminology, and the American Correctional Association. He has also been recognized with the National Federal Bureau of Prisons Assistant Director's Award for his contributions to specialized programs at FCI La Tuna.

Scott is not only an accomplished professional but also a dedicated family man, with a wife and two young daughters.

NMSU is excited to have him on board, where he will no doubt enrich the educational experience of his students with his practical insights and broad field expertise.

Welcome, Scott



## New Student Aide



Liz Oquendo  
New Student Aide

## Welcome Student Aide in the CJ Department

Hi, my name is Elizabeth, but you can call me Liz. I was born and raised here in Las Cruces New Mexico and hope to be a dental hygienist.

I'm the student aide in the CJ department and love the simplicity of the office, some days are busier than others, but I enjoy the subtle change. From checking the mail to paperwork working here allows me to be productive without stress.

I've noticed I'm a lot more outgoing and open to conversation with people I barely know since I interact with many different people daily. The CJ staff are so nice and have done an excellent job welcoming me.

I attend DACC and work here after classes. I try to balance school and work by studying or doing homework when I have free time at work so that I don't feel overwhelmed later.

Extra time outside of my responsibilities, I live a mostly chill life. I love playing video games and watching TV. Occasionally, I try my hand at art and other crafts. Recently I started watching How I Met Your Mother (little late, I know) and I really like it, often binge watching it with my boyfriend.

Honestly, working here is awesome, there are simple daily tasks and new things too, but I have time to do other stuff as well. When I'm done with school and (hopefully) become a dental hygienist, I plan on moving out of Las Cruces to wherever life takes me.

Special thanks to Dennis and Andreia for this opportunity. And thank you to all the CJ staff/faculty who are always willing to help the newbie out!



## New Faculty



### [Dr. Carlos Posadas](#)

Professor  
Assistant Department  
Head

## CJ Faculty Focus: **Dr. Carlos Posadas**

Dr. Carlos Posadas is a criminal justice professor and assistant department head who grew up on the border in El Paso. He received a bachelor's degree at NMSU and continued his graduate studies at Arizona State University. He is now in his 19th year as a faculty member in the Department of Criminal Justice at NMSU.

In addition to his teaching, research and administrative duties, Posadas chairs the Faculty Affairs Committee for the College of Arts & Sciences and serves as a member of NMSU's Institutional Review Board, NMSU's Hispanic Faculty and Staff Caucus, and NMSU's Employee Council.

He also serves as mentor in Jardin de los Niños' Flourishing Families Parent Mentoring Program.

"I love serving students and my colleagues," he said. "I have done and continue to do a lot of service work within and outside of NMSU. The work that I am most proud of is the work I have done with students in the Department of Criminal Justice. It is quite the privilege to play a small part in their journey to fulfill their academic goals. Seeing them successfully complete challenging courses, overcome life's challenges, graduate and go on to their professional lives has been incredibly rewarding."

Posadas was the recipient of the Donald C. Roush Award for Teaching Excellence in 2010, was recognized as a Star Teacher by the Teaching Academy in 2017 and received a Senior Faculty Outstanding Service Award from the Hispanic Faculty and Staff Caucus. He was promoted to a full professor in 2022.

"Within my department, I get to interact with my colleagues through various opportunities including as a peer, as a mentor, as a co-author on research projects and as a cheerleader for the great things they are doing for our students and community," Posadas said.

Posadas' most recent publication is "Juveniles in Contemporary Society: Understanding Juvenile Justice and Delinquency," a textbook co-authored by Sandra Trujillo and emeritus professor Tom Winfree and published by Aspen Publishing.



# CJ Student Success Spotlight: Callie Burrow



Callie Burrow

Born and raised in Roswell, NM, Callie Burrow is a shining example of dedication and achievement at NMSU!

## **Academic Journey:**

May 2023: Graduated as a Crimson Scholar with a Bachelor of Criminal Justice and Bachelor of Foreign Languages (Spanish).

May 2024: Graduated in the Top 5% of NMSU Graduate Students with a Master of Criminal Justice. Her thesis, "Media Framing of US-Mexico Border Immigration: A Content Analysis of National and Border News Articles," was mentored by Dr. Posadas.

## **Honors & Leadership:**

2023-2024 New Mexico Higher Education Department Scholar.  
Proud officer of Humans for Humans for 2 years.  
VP of the Graduate Student Organization (GSO).  
Active member of Alpha Phi Sigma (APS).  
Teaching Assistant (TA) during her studies.

## **Professional Experience:**

Completed two impactful internships with HIDTA and Federal Probation and Pretrial Services.  
Currently serving as a Probation/Parole Officer for the State of NM based in Region III.  
Graduated with PPO Class 52 on August 16th, 2024.

**Her Why:** "Becoming a Probation Parole Officer allows me to make a meaningful impact in my community by guiding individuals toward positive change. I am passionate about supporting those who are trying to turn their lives around, and I believe that providing them with the right resources, guidance, and accountability can make a real difference. This role not only aligns with my desire to serve others but also knowing that I can contribute to a safer and better community."

**Congratulations, Callie,** on your incredible journey and achievements! We're proud to call you an NMSU alumna, and we know you'll continue to make a positive impact in the community and beyond.

# October 15, 2024 – “Clothesline Project” travels to raise public awareness. Special thanks to [Dr. Ahram Cho](#) for bringing this project to life

NMSU Criminal Justice Department held its third annual Clothesline Project on Tuesday, October 15, 2024 in the Corbett Center ballroom, raising awareness about violence and abuse. This impactful event shared the powerful stories and experiences of survivors, with a public display from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The project continues to shine a light on the realities faced by survivors and fosters a community of understanding and support

[Watch the news covering this important event](#)



CORBETT CENTER 3RD FLOOR  
OCTOBER 15TH 2024  
9AM-5PM



# CLOTHESLINE PROJECT

## SHARE YOUR STORY

VISUAL TESTIMONY TO  
THE IMPACT OF ABUSE AND VIOLENCE





# Virtual Reality (VR) integrated in Forensic Law, Comparative CJ Systems and Global Perspectives on Youth and Drug Use Online Classes

Exciting news! [Meta for Education](#) recently interviewed Professor Ida D'Antonio about her innovative use of VR headsets in her online Forensics course.

By incorporating VR, Professor D'Antonio is taking virtual learning to the next level, offering students an immersive, hands-on experience in forensic science. Stay tuned for insights on how VR is shaping the future of education!

Watch the [VR Meta CJ video](#)



## Micro-credentials

[Micro-credentials](#) are focused, credential-bearing courses that allow students to gain specific skills or knowledge in particular areas. These include topics like forensic analysis, human trafficking, human rights, cybercrime prevention, corrections, or community policing.

CJ faculty are currently developing Human Trafficking and Police Writing Microcredentials that will be available in January of 2025.

Earning micro-credentials enables students to showcase their expertise in niche areas of criminal justice, which can significantly boost their employability and professional advancement in a competitive job market.

# Humans for Humans (H4H) Student Organization

NMSU's Criminal Justice [Humans 4 Humans](#) student group presented at fraternity/sorority meetings and educated them on the realities of the sex trafficking industries: prostitution, stripping clubs, and pornography. Besides many other events, the group organized the event Victims' Rights with guest speaker Linda Atkinson.

H4H organized tabling events at NMSU, where they educated the NMSU campus about the critical issue of human trafficking.

Please get in touch with President: Samara Nunez: at [snunez03@nmsu.edu](mailto:snunez03@nmsu.edu) to join this incredible, inspiring group of students.



NMSU Humans 4 Humans

Victims' Rights Empowerment Event



**VICTIMS, LEARN ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS. YOU ARE NOT ALONE!**

FEATURING SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER, LINDA ATKINSON

LINDA IS THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE NEW MEXICO VICTIMS' RIGHTS PROJECT AND A VICTIM ADVOCATE.

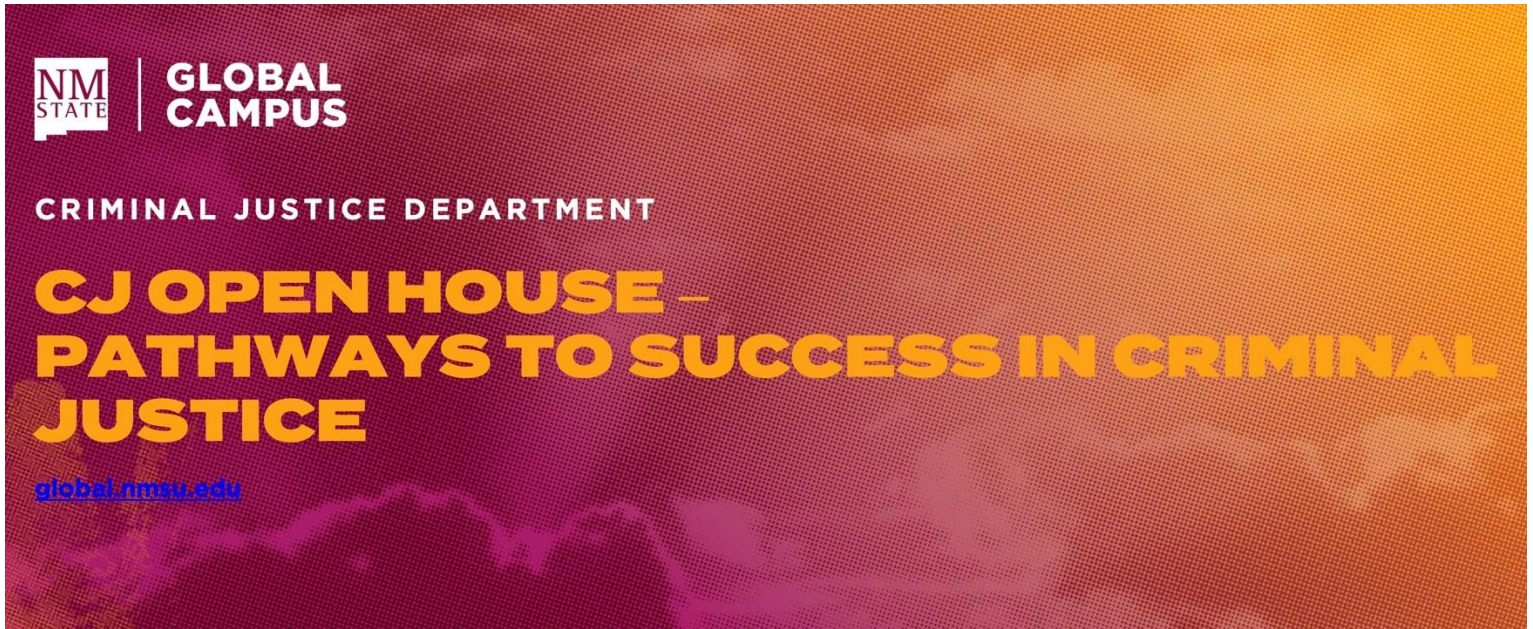
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 14TH - 12:30-2:30

NMSU ATKINSON RECITAL HALL 1075 N HORSESHOE, LAS CRUCES

Learn more on Instagram at @NMSUH4H



# CJ OPEN HOUSES in the Fall 2024 for prospective and current CJ students



CJ Open Houses explore our vibrant Criminal Justice undergraduate and graduate programs. This fall, we had one open house in September and another in October of 2024.

The audience learned about our diverse course offerings, from foundational classes to specialized electives, innovative VR Projects that enhance students' learning experience, employment opportunities, CJ faculty, partnerships, career services, and admissions.



## CJ Mentoring Center

Students can meet with agency personnel for mentoring and advice on internships, employment, and careers. This is a service for students, and the department encourages participation in this resource.

**TIP:** It's important to know what type of career you would like with your degree. Once you've established a career(s) of interest, it's wise to analyze the prospects. Compare positions to the following: Location, salary, skills, requirements, company background

### Top career fields within Criminal Justice:

- Law and Advocacy
- CIA Officer
- Information Security Analyst
- First-Line Supervisor of Police and Detectives
- Immigration and Borderlands Expert
- Criminal Investigator
- Homicide Detective
- ICE Agent
- Forensic Psychologist
- Paralegal and Legal Assistant

### NMSU CJ graduate employers:

- Tulsa PD (Tulsa, OK)
- F.B.I.
- U.S. Customs and Border Protection
- Department of Justice
- New Mexico State Police
- Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)
- Las Cruces Police Department
- Dona Ana County Sheriff's Office
- U.S. Marshals Service
- Department of Corrections
- Local legal offices and firms
- Non-profits and NGO focused on Criminal or Social Justice

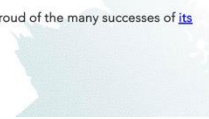
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Founded in 1962, the Department of Criminal Justice at New Mexico State University is one of the oldest Criminal Justice programs in the nation.

It is one of the largest academic departments in the College of Arts and Sciences and as a graduate of our Department, you are part of a strong community of alumni representing an expansive range of positions in premier agencies across the country and around the world.

Our Department is proud of the many successes of [its alumni](#).



## New Mexico State Police Partners with CJ Department



[The New Mexico State Police \(NMSP\)](#) has partnered with the Department of Criminal Justice at New Mexico State University (NMSU) to give students a unique opportunity to kickstart their law enforcement careers. This partnership allows students to gain hands-on law enforcement experience while completing the final 15 credit hours of their bachelor's degree in criminal justice.

"As an NMSU Criminal Justice program graduate myself, I can vouch for the high-quality instruction provided by NMSU educators," said Troy Weisler, Chief of the New Mexico State Police. "By combining their classroom knowledge with the practical experience gained in our academy, students can set themselves up for a rewarding career with New Mexico's elite law enforcement agency, the New Mexico State Police."

Acceptance into the NMSP Academy requires students to pass a competitive application process, followed by the demanding 20-week NMSP recruit academy. Upon successfully completing the program, students will meet the final requirements for their criminal justice degree and be commissioned as New Mexico State Police officers.

For more information on joining NMSP or to speak with a recruiter, visit [www.JoinNMSP.com](http://www.JoinNMSP.com) and follow us on all social media @NMStatePolice

[Read the Albuquerque Journal article](#)

**JOIN NMSP:** <https://www.joinnmsp.com/>

**Watch the video on YouTube:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oEp9qggxMKY>

## Insights from Our Alumni: An Interview with Chief W. Troy Weisler, New Mexico State Police



**W. Troy Weisler -  
Bachelor of Criminal  
Justice, NMSU**

The 23rd New Mexico  
State Police Chief

### **\*What led you to pursue a career in law enforcement?**

Law enforcement was always something I was interested in from a young age. My father was in the Army and later served as a police officer for a few years before I was born. He always had fond memories of that time and was proud of serving his country and community. When I first went to NMSU, I was not sure what I wanted to do, but because of my father, I knew a career of public service was a possibility. My first year at NMSU, I began to pursue a Journalism degree but decided quickly that was not for me. I just happened to take a Criminal Justice class as part of my general studies requirement and once I did, I knew it was going to be the career for me. At that time, I just was not sure what particular avenue I was going to pursue in the field. The person who led me to end up joining the New Mexico State Police was my uncle, Dean Smith, who retired as a Captain from the agency when I was a young boy. A lot of people think of State Police more from a traffic enforcement standpoint, but my uncle spent most of his career working undercover narcotics, so I knew there were tons of different possibilities in State Police which was exciting. The summer before my senior year, my uncle set me up with a ride along with some of the local State Police officers back in Lovington and after that first shift working with them, I was sold.

### **\*How has the law enforcement landscape changed since you began your career, and how has the NM State Police adapted?**

The law enforcement world has completely changed when it comes to the technological aspect of the job. I started with the State Police in 2002, and the equipment in my police car and that I carried on my utility belt were not that different from that of an officer 20 years before that. There had been very little change in the equipment and technology used. That 2002 car or utility belt is almost unrecognizable today because of so many advances. Everything from the advent of in-car computers, body cameras, wireless routers, digital citations, license plate readers, tasers and now various integrated Artificial Intelligence (AI) resources have changed the landscape completely.

State Police has adapted and invested heavily in these areas, to the point where we are now often considered one of the most innovative departments in the country, especially when it comes to agencies with statewide jurisdiction. Our officers often work alone or in rural parts of the state where they have a large area of responsibility. We need to ensure they have the necessary tools with them to deal with any situation that comes up and we also need them to be as efficient as possible. That is why we ensure they have the latest technology to help them do their job more effectively and efficiently.

*Continued on the next page*

## Insights from Our Alumni: An Interview with Chief W. Troy Weisler, New Mexico State Police



**W. Troy Weisler -  
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State Police Chief

Now we are really working to use technology to bring the communities of the state closer together. Our mission is not only to provide public safety in general, but to ensure every citizen of this state receives the highest level of law enforcement services possible. A person should not have to live in a large metro area to be guaranteed a law enforcement response of highly trained and equipped personnel. We want everyone to receive the highest level of service whether they are in the Albuquerque Metro or whether they are in a more rural area like Jal or Glenwood.

**\* What strategies does NM State Police use to build stronger relationships between law enforcement and the community?**

State Police has a role in communities across the state and we have worked hard to build those relationships. As an agency this involves our officers going out and taking part in community events throughout the year. We obviously are involved in well-known things like the State Fair and Balloon Fiesta, but year-round, we are involved with smaller-scale interactions with the public. We regularly go to the schools in local communities, sometimes to educate students on a topic, but sometimes just to hang out and have lunch with the kids. State Police officers are members of the community themselves and want to make sure we are a part of important local events like county fairs, parades and sporting events. We believe these interactions along with our growing social media footprint help build a sense of community and breakdown any barriers some individuals might feel exist between the public and law enforcement.

This past year we started a social media series where we show a biography of a local officer in each district that gives their background and just shows a day in the life of that officer. We have had a great response from the public on the series, because I think it helps humanize our officers and show they are members of the community as well, they just have taken on extra responsibilities to serve and protect.

**\* What advice would you give to students considering a career in law enforcement?**

I would encourage students to not limit themselves. As a young person trying to figure out where to start their law enforcement journey, I would encourage them to explore all the possibilities. As students finish up their college careers, I think one of the hardest things can be to translate their "interest" in the topic into the best job choice.

*Continued on the next page*

## Insights from Our Alumni: An Interview with Chief W. Troy Weisler, New Mexico State Police



**W. Troy Weisler - Bachelor of Criminal Justice, NMSU**

The 23rd New Mexico State Police Chief

For one thing, what we see on television as it relates to cop shows is not always reality and just because someone likes to learn about something or watch shows about it, does not mean they are going to enjoy a particular job. In particular, any time a student can get a real-world glimpse of what different jobs entail, whether this be through an internship, a ride along or some other type of interactive experience they should take advantage. Find out what people in that particular job do 8-10 hours a day, day in and day out. That is where you will truly find out if a particular job is right for you. For example, lots of people want to be an investigator, but most days that job involves being in an office and writing reports or doing other types of paperwork. It helps students to know that beforehand so they can make the most informed decisions possible.

**\* Where do you see the future of law enforcement heading, and what are some key challenges or opportunities agencies like NM State Police will face?**

I see this as a very exciting time for law enforcement in general and the New Mexico State Police in particular. We recently had a challenging few years as a profession, but I think we learned from the experience and have grown and improved as a result. Law enforcement is entering a new era in which I believe our responses to crime and how we provide public safety services is going to drastically improve. There is a growing focus on using a more holistic response to crime and disorder, so that we can use the right tool or resource to deal with a problem and fix it with a longer-term solution. In the past there was sometimes more of a focus on just dealing with the immediate issue and not always looking at the big picture. Part of the reason that happened in the past though was due to limited resources or not having the proper tools to deal with some problems. Law enforcement became a catch all to deal with all manner of problems no one else wanted to handle and we often were not equipped for that. Public safety has added a lot of other tools to the toolbox in the past few years, so that we can start using the most appropriate tool to deal with problems. Sometimes that tool will be law enforcement and sometimes it will be some other type of resource like a social worker or mental health expert. This allows law enforcement to focus on what we do best and the other resources to focus on their area of expertise. The biggest challenge in the short-term is continuing to build out this alternate response capacity.

*Continued on the next page*

## Insights from Our Alumni: An Interview with Chief W. Troy Weisler, New Mexico State Police



**W. Troy Weisler -  
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State Police Chief

I think the most exciting thing about the future of law enforcement though is in the technology realm. Things are evolving so quickly and changing on almost a monthly basis. Law enforcement is becoming one of the most high-tech jobs around and there are so many opportunities for someone entering the field today. Technology is changing how criminals operate, and it is changing how we investigate crime in many cases. A few areas where I see massive areas for growth with State Police are in data analytics and the expansion of drone technology. Our agency currently has a statewide Intelligence-Led Policing project that is working to integrate siloed data statewide from various law enforcement agencies. This will give us access to data at a granular level never possible before and allow us to respond to crime more effectively and efficiently than ever before. We are super excited about this program, because no other state is trying to do this at a statewide level. It is a bold and innovative project that we hope will be a model for other states across the country. We also have a robust drone program in State Police, but the possibilities for that technology are only starting to be realized. I believe the next five years will see enormous growth in the use of that technology throughout the public safety world.

W. Troy Weisler -Bachelor of Criminal Justice, NMSU  
The 23rd New Mexico State Police Chief



## Insights from Our Alumni: An Interview with Rosie Medina, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer / Juvenile Probation Department



**Rosie Medina**  
**Bachelor of Criminal Justice,**  
**NMSU**

Chief Juvenile Probation Officer  
Juvenile Probation Department  
El Paso County Texas

### **\*What initially drew you to the criminal justice field, and why did you choose to pursue a degree at NMSU?**

What initially drew me to the criminal justice field was a strong desire to make a positive impact in my community. Growing up in Los Angeles, I witnessed various challenges that individuals faced within the justice system, and I became passionate about understanding the complexities of crime and rehabilitation. I wanted to be part of the solution, helping to create a fair, more equitable and holistic system.

I chose to pursue a degree at NMSU because of its strong emphasis on both academic rigor and community engagement. The program offers unique opportunities for hands-on learning and internships, which are essential for gaining practical experience. I was also impressed by the faculty's expertise and their commitment to social justice. I believe NMSU's focus on research and community involvement aligned perfectly with my goals, allowing me to deepen my understanding of the issues and contribute meaningfully to the field.

### **\*Can you share a pivotal moment or influential experience at the university that helped shape your career path?**

One pivotal moment that significantly shaped my career path was my internship at the Third Judicial District Attorney's Juvenile Pre-Prosecution Diversion Program in Las Cruces. This experience was incredibly influential during my undergraduate studies. I had the privilege of being mentored by Mr. Paul Davis, an NMSU alumni, who guided me through the intricacies of the court system and introduced me to the concept of therapeutic jurisprudence. His guidance then, still makes an impact in my leadership and decision-making skills today.

What truly resonated with me was the program's progressive approach, which allowed youth to have their delinquent charges dismissed upon completing the requirements. This not only provided a second chance to young people but also fostered a more supportive environment for their growth and rehabilitation. Additionally, I was exposed to the drug court model, which has become a significant area of expertise in my career.

This internship solidified my commitment to juvenile justice and also deepened my understanding of effective interventions and the importance of engaging youth and their families in the process. This was a transformative experience which shaped my professional journey.

*Continued on the next page*

## Insights from Our Alumni: An Interview with Rosie Medina, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer / Juvenile Probation Department



**Rosie Medina**  
**Bachelor of Criminal Justice,**  
**NMSU**

Chief Juvenile Probation Officer  
Juvenile Probation Department  
El Paso County Texas

After graduating, I began my career as an Administrative Assistant at the Third Judicial District Court's Juvenile Drug Court Program. This role was particularly exciting because the drug court model was still in its infancy back in 1999. It allowed me to immerse myself in a pioneering program and understand its foundational principles.

During this time, I had the privilege of being mentored by Ann Wallace (Monagan), an incredible NMSU alumna. She imparted invaluable program management skills, including data collection, data analysis, and continuous quality improvement strategies. These skills have been instrumental throughout my career, enabling me to contribute effectively to program development and evaluation.

### *Career Journey and Insights*

#### **\*Can you share your career path and how you came to be a Chief Juvenile Probation Officer?**

My education at NMSU laid the groundwork for this journey by providing me with a strong theoretical foundation in criminal justice and an emphasis on practical application through my internship. The knowledge I gained about juvenile justice principles and other social justice influencing factors impacting communities has informed my work and decision-making in every role I've held since. Each step of my career has built upon the skills and insights I developed during my time at NMSU, preparing me for increasingly responsible positions within the probation field.

In early 2003, I worked for a short period as a DWI Compliance Officer in Dona Ana County and in September of 2023 I was hired by El Paso County as a Program Coordinator where I had the fortune of designing and implementing a Juvenile Drug Treatment Court and a Mental Health Court in 2007. In 2017, I was promoted to Director of Special Programs where I oversaw 7 specialized programs for moderate to high-risk juvenile offenders. Finally, in 2022 I reached the pinnacle of my career by becoming El Paso County's first female Chief Juvenile Probation Officer; an accomplishment I am very proud of, one that is challenging me to learn and positively effectuate change within El Paso County.

My career has afforded me an opportunity to not only work at the local and state level, I have also worked nationally and internationally as a juvenile justice practitioner with a specialty in treatment courts.

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## Insights from Our Alumni: An Interview with Rosie Medina, Chief Juvenile Probation Officer / Juvenile Probation Department



**Rosie Medina**  
**Bachelor of Criminal Justice,**  
**NMSU**

Chief Juvenile Probation Officer  
Juvenile Probation Department  
El Paso County Texas

### **\*What's the most rewarding part of working with youth in the justice system, and what's one challenge that's really shaped your career?**

The most rewarding part of working with youth in the justice system is witnessing their growth and transformation. When young people realize that they can change their paths and make positive choices, it's incredibly fulfilling. I've had the privilege of seeing many individuals who initially faced significant challenges become successful, engaged members of their communities. Being part of that journey and knowing my team and I contributed, even in a small way, is what motivates me every day to encourage the juvenile justice professionals within my organization to strive for excellence. Collectively, we are making a difference.

One challenge that has significantly shaped my career is the systemic stigma that youth in the justice system often face. Many of these young people come from difficult backgrounds, broken homes/disengaged parents, have experienced many adverse childhood experiences and encounter barriers that can hinder their rehabilitation. This has taught me the importance of advocacy and the need to work with our community towards creating a more supportive environment for them rather than relying on the justice system being the sole response to delinquency. It has driven me to focus on developing programs that address their immediate needs while promoting long-term positive outcomes through the implementation of best practices and/or evidenced based practices. Navigating this challenge has deepened my commitment to social justice and fueled my passion for creating meaningful change within the system.

### **Juvenile Justice and Specialty Courts**

#### **\*How do specialty courts, like drug or mental health courts, make a difference for the youth you work with?**

Specialty courts make a significant difference for the youth we work with by providing tailored support that addresses their individualized needs. These therapeutic courts focus on rehabilitation and treatment, which is crucial for young people who may be dealing with underlying issues such as substance use or mental health challenges. By participating in these programs, youth receive access to comprehensive services focusing on the recovery capital within their community, including counseling, education, family skills, and skill-building opportunities. This holistic approach helps to address the root causes of their behaviors, rather than merely the symptoms. It creates a supportive environment where they can make meaningful changes in their lives.

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Additionally, specialty courts foster accountability in a constructive way. Youth are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions while also being provided with the resources and support they need to succeed. This model not only promotes personal growth but also helps reduce recidivism rates, ultimately benefiting both the individual and the community. By focusing on recovery and rehabilitation, specialty courts empower young people to break the cycle of involvement in the justice system and build brighter futures.

### **\*What are some innovative or alternative programs you've implemented or been involved in to support rehabilitation over punishment for juveniles?**

In partnership with the Annie E. Casey Foundation, our department has implemented three capstone goals aligned with their Transforming Juvenile Probation initiative. This partnership has allowed us to shift our focus from traditional punitive measures to more rehabilitative approaches that support youth in meaningful ways. We are working towards redefining the role of a probation officer from being a referee only monitoring court orders and looking for what youth are doing wrong to one of a coach/mentor. The expectation of our probation officers to engage community, walk alongside youth and their families in accessing resources/services and engage in meaningful skill building all the while monitoring a court order.

Our transformational work involves three capstone projects:

1. Revision of the Judgement of Probation: This project narrows the initial 24 conditions of probation to 9 conditions. This revised order affords the probation officers the opportunity to focus more time on working with youth and families more and less on court documentation. We are hoping this goal reduces the number of probation modification and utilization of detention to address probation violations.
2. Creation of a Holistic System of Care: One of the key goals has been to enhance our community-based services, ensuring that young people have access to resources that promote positive development. Through the utilization of offense data we are targeting community development in two zip codes to build capacity for youth referrals to services and pro-social structured activities. In addition, in January 2025 we are introducing a new mentorship through the arts; a partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters of El Paso and Creative Kids Art Studio. This not only helps youth build resilience but also fosters a sense of belonging within their communities.

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3. Enhancement of Diversionary Programming: In the Fall 2023 we conducted a Sequential Intercept Mapping activity. Out of the five intercepts, our department focused on Intercept 0 – Community, and Intercept 1 - Law Enforcement. Within this framework, we looked at top offenses being referred and created a community action plan to divert youth early from entering the juvenile justice system. As a result we have expanded our THC diversion program and will be implementing a Family Violence diversion program and the county's first, First Offender Program being implemented by the Socorro Independent School District which has the highest number of referrals to the juvenile justice system.

Another innovative aspect has been our focus on family engagement. We've developed programs that involve families in the rehabilitation process, recognizing that support systems are critical to a young person's success. By providing family counseling and resources, we empower families to play an active role in their child's journey toward rehabilitation.

Finally, we're integrating data-driven strategies to continuously assess and improve our programs. This allows us to tailor interventions based on the specific needs of the youth we serve, ensuring that our efforts are effective and impactful. Overall, these initiatives reflect a commitment to fostering a more supportive and rehabilitative environment for juveniles, ultimately reducing recidivism and promote positive life outcomes.

### **\*Can you share your thoughts on the importance of community involvement and partnerships in supporting juvenile justice initiatives?**

Community involvement and partnerships are absolutely vital in supporting juvenile justice initiatives. The challenges that youth face often extend beyond the justice system itself, and addressing these issues requires a collaborative approach. By partnering with community organizations, schools, mental health providers, and local businesses, we can create a comprehensive support network that meets the diverse needs of young people.

Community engagement helps to build trust and understanding, which are essential for effective intervention. When local stakeholders are involved, they can offer valuable insights into the specific challenges faced by youth in their area. This collaborative effort allows us to tailor programs that are culturally relevant and responsive to the needs of the community.

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Moreover, partnerships can provide resources that might not be available within the justice system alone. For example, local nonprofits might offer mentorship programs, vocational training, or mental health services that can significantly enhance rehabilitation efforts. These resources empower youth to make positive changes and reintegrate into society successfully.

Ultimately, strong community involvement fosters a sense of collective responsibility for the well-being of our youth. It encourages everyone to play a role in supporting rehabilitation over punishment, creating a more nurturing environment that promotes long-term success. By working together, we can help young people not only navigate the challenges they face but also thrive in their communities.

### **Leadership and Future Outlook**

#### **\*What's one piece of advice you'd give to students thinking about a career in juvenile justice?**

One piece of advice I'd give to students considering a career in juvenile justice is to approach the field with empathy and an open mind. Working with youth in the justice system can be challenging, but understanding their backgrounds, experiences, and the systemic issues they face is crucial for making a meaningful impact.

I encourage students to seek out opportunities for hands-on experience, whether through internships, volunteer work, or community engagement. These experiences will provide invaluable insights and help develop the skills needed to advocate effectively for young people. Additionally, building relationships with mentors and professionals in the field can offer guidance and support as you navigate your career path.

Lastly, stay committed to lifelong learning. The field of juvenile justice is constantly evolving, and staying informed about new research, practices, and policies will enhance your ability to contribute positively. Embrace the challenges and celebrate the successes, no matter how small, as you work toward creating a more just and equitable system for youth.

#### **\*If you could change one thing about the juvenile justice system to make it better, what would it be?**

If I could change one thing about the juvenile justice system, it would be to implement a more comprehensive focus on prevention and early intervention.

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Rather than relying heavily on punitive measures, we should prioritize programs and services that address the root causes of delinquent behavior before it escalates. I strongly believe these efforts must begin in elementary school and be inclusive of parents/guardians.

Investing in community-based resources, such as mental health services, parenting skills, mentorship programs, and educational/vocational support, can significantly reduce the likelihood of youth entering the justice system in the first place. By identifying and addressing issues like trauma, substance abuse, or family instability early on, we can provide young people with the support they need to thrive and make positive choices.

This shift towards prevention not only helps to improve outcomes for youth but also alleviates the burden on the justice system itself. It fosters a more compassionate approach that recognizes the potential for rehabilitation and growth, ultimately benefiting both individuals and the broader community. By prioritizing prevention and early intervention, we can create a system that truly supports youth in becoming productive members of society. Our youth are our future decision makers, we must invest early and equip them with the necessary skills to avoid penetrating into the justice system.

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[Andreia Scarborough](#)  
Administrative Assistant

## *Criminal Justice Spotlight*

### **Andreia Jaramillo-Scarborough**

Andreia Jaramillo-Scarborough, Administrative Assistant in the Department of Criminal Justice.

Andreia is a consummate professional who always has a positive attitude toward all those with whom she interacts. What sets Andreia apart is her positive can-do attitude that she has for all undertakings and interactions. It should be of little surprise that working in an academic environment can be challenging.

Dealing with the differing idiosyncrasies found among highly intelligent persons can be demanding at best.

Andreia has been able to carefully navigate these issues while still providing support to the diverse faculty in the department. One critical factor that sets Andreia apart is her attitude toward our students. She always treats each and every student with the utmost respect. In fact, she always has our students' best interest in mind.

She is truly a vital asset to NMSU and the department of Criminal Justice.

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# Criminal Justice Department



Be Bold. Shape the Future.  
College of Arts and Sciences  
Department of Criminal Justice



[Andreia Scarborough](#)  
(Administrative  
Assistant)



**Liz Oquendo**  
(student  
work/administrative  
assistant)

Thank you Andreia and Liz for taking care of student and faculty needs. Your personal touches and caring for each individual student is absolutely noticed. Thank you both!

Please touch back to us and let us learn about your career and what you have done since you graduated.

Please send a short note or email briefly describing your careers. We might include these in future Newsletters or on our website. It would be nice for our alumni to hear from others and what they have been doing since they left NMSU.

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