

I recently had the opportunity to travel to Washington, D.C. for a conference. This conference brought federal agencies together with technical and community colleges. Agencies in attendance included the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms; U.S. Marshals; Department of Homeland Security; U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Border Patrol; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services; and the Federal Bureau of Prisons. Speakers also presented on current topics, including the high risk of addictions and suicide, as well as resiliency training for emergency services. The format was both single presenter and panel discussions. In addition, there was ample time to interact with the presenters and attendees.

All of the agencies discussed where students could learn of openings in their agencies, the qualifications applicants would need to be considered for a position, the process for hiring, and the training required once selected. Also discussed was the prevalence of recent drug use of applicants prior to applying for law enforcement positions. Many agencies and academy directors shared their concern over the poor writing skills of students, applicants and recruits.

As always, one of the greatest benefits was the contacts that I made. One presenter had attended a resiliency symposium. This symposium addressed the trauma, both acute and chronic, that first responders experience. There are many techniques to assist first responders before such events occur, as well as how to address situations after they occur. While academies and agencies are now beginning to incorporate such training for their recruits and employees, I see an opportunity to address this with our students at County College of Morris. Many of my current classes present opportunities to introduce information on this topic seamlessly.

Another need way of assisting CCM students become more desirable candidates in the field of public safety would be to help them with their writing skills. The speakers at this conference made it evident that this is a large-scale problem. Simply sharing this information with my students can help

them to understand that without developing their writing skills, they may not achieve their career goals. Another opportunity to improve students' ability to write would simply be to assign more papers, along with strong encouragement to use the programs that CCM already provides, such as the tutoring center and workshops.

Finally, having spent time with educators from other county colleges who share the same challenges was extremely beneficial. Many motivated educators share my desire to improve the experience of our students. I'm looking forward to continued contact with several of these professionals.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Maureen Kazaba', written in black ink.

Maureen Kazaba, PhD  
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