

CIT Law Enforcement Administrator of Year

Director Ken Collins of the Lorain County Community College Campus Security office oversees the direction, management, and training of all Security personnel at the college. With experience as an instructor in Criminal Justice, almost 20 years of service both in Campus Security and as a patrolman in a neighboring city, Collins has demonstrated his dedication to education, public service and safety. Since gaining the role of director, there has been a marked increase in training and an emphasis on not only emergency preparedness, but also behavioral, mental health and cultural awareness.

Director Collins is passionate about continuing education—it's something that permeates the office. Current topics, trends, research studies, and case histories are all added to our work binders to ensure we stay up to date and informed. One of the biggest challenges we faced in the last few years as a college security office is the noticeable increase in calls and reports regarding mental health and behavioral disorders. These cases have increased exponentially.

To continue to provide the best service possible, Director Collins now has a CIT coordinator and CIT dispatcher on staff on a full-time basis. He encourages all his personnel to be CIT trained and take an active role within the community. He has improved officer safety by redesigning officer uniforms and adding duty belts (no weapons). Director Collins has also established excellent relationships with outside police and mental health agencies, developing a more solid partnership of services within the college, and offering many more training opportunities to increase awareness and enhance techniques we can use every day.

We now as a college have a vibrant and accessible crisis system which involves Security, a crisis counselor, enrollment/academic coordinator, and accessibility needs representative—to ensure that multiple offices can coordinate a response. This helps people with mental disorders, addiction and behavioral issues have access to treatment rather than automatically removing them from the college altogether.

Director Collins has welcomed advocates to campus from outside agencies who specialize in homelessness, hunger, mental health, women's issues, drug and recovery services, and human trafficking awareness. He meets with law enforcement leadership regularly to maintain an open and communicative relationship in what the community is experiencing and how law enforcement has been involved. Director Collins monitors state, county and local issues that may affect community crisis services. He maintains continuous working relationships with community partners, with specific emphasis on mental health and advocacy partnerships. This has facilitated more open discussion about what crisis looks like, who is involved, and how we can tackle it as a united community.

Director Collins has truly improved our office. Crisis intervention is now a key component to our policy and procedures. It has changed the approach, the mindset and the narrative—and isn't that what CIT is all about?

Lorain County-Morning Journal Article:

https://www.morningjournal.com/news/lorain-county/campus-security-elyria-police-officers-win-awards/article_c6c71c5c-f1da-11e9-aa5a-2fd87d968a48.html