

MIDWESTERN CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSOCIATION

THE MCJA MINUTE

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EDITOR: J. MICHAEL VECCHIO, CRIMINOLOGY & CRIMINAL JUSTICE, UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-ST.

WELCOME TO MCJA MINUTE!

Dear MCJA Members:

Welcome to a new semiannual publication – The MCJA Minute. The purpose of The MCJA Minute is to provide members with information and updates about MCJA, its publications, and our region. The MCJA Minute is just one more way MCJA is demonstrating its commitment to its members and the study and practice of criminal justice. Issues will be delivered to members via email and will be available online at www.mcja.org.

Please feel free to contact me with updates, announcements, or other items that would be of note to members.

Sincerely, J. Michael Vecchio

FROM THE PRESIDENT

JUSTIN PATCHIN

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EAU CLAIRE

What is the Midwestern Criminal Justice Association to you? To me, the MCJA is a platform from which to discuss and disseminate the latest research in the field. This is most visible through our annual conference and the *Journal of Crime & Justice*. Those of you who have been to our annual conference know that it is a warm and collegial environment in which to share and learn. Our journal showcases some of the best research being conducted from all around the globe. Without a doubt, our small regional association permeates an area much wider than our geographic jurisdiction.

MCJA also serves as a conduit that links many of us from around the region. Research collaborations are developed, fostered, and pursued at our annual meeting and through connections made among members. Even though there are some colleagues I only see once a year at this gathering, I still consider them all to be close friends. Like distant relatives returning to the family homestead, the annual conference is a reunion of sorts for many of us. Even some who have moved outside of the region are called back to assemble with associates.

I am honored to have been able to serve the Association that has given so much to me over the past several years. In my time on the Board we have seen several improvements: increasing meeting attendance, improved organizational efficiency, and better communication with members, to name just a few. There have also been, and continue to be, many

challenges. After many years of being enslaved to a contract that nearly bankrupted the Association, Lexis-Nexis will no longer be publishing our journal. Unfortunately, it is bad economic timing to be searching for a new publisher of a small regional journal. The MCJA Board is working closely with Michael Leiber, editor of the *Journal of Crime & Justice*, to identify the best possible course of action. We are still working through the options and hope to have a recommendation to make to members at the 2010 annual meeting. In the meantime, Dr. Leiber continues to receive and

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review submissions, and so please consider our journal as an outlet for your scholarly work.

Another frustration has been the relative lack of participation in the Association by criminologists, criminal justices, and practitioners from around the Midwest. Of course, all of you who are reading this column recognize the benefits of attending the annual meeting, but how do we convince all of the others to become involved? What are the biggest barriers? Clearly “they” don’t know what they are missing. Take it upon yourself to let them know. Bring a colleague or student or your local community police officer to Chicago this fall. We know travel budgets are decimated, but you are certain to get the greatest “bang for your buck” by attending the MCJA meetings.

In short, MCJA is about the people: The hard-working and fun-loving people from the Midwest, and beyond, who are interested in issues of crime and justice. Reconnect with them this fall in Chicago. I’ll see you there.

UPCOMING MCJA CONFERENCE: SEPTEMBER 23RD TO 25TH

ERIC LAMBERT
WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

Greetings! I hope that you will be able to attend the upcoming annual meeting of the Midwestern Criminal Justice Association (MCJA). This year’s meeting will be held from Thursday, September 23, to Saturday, September 25, 2010, at the Inn of Chicago in Chicago, Illinois. It is an excellent place to present papers and research findings. The conference is meant to showcase the important work being done across the region. It is also a chance to meet old friends and to make new acquaintances. The Inn of Chicago is at the heart of Chicago and is one block from the Michigan Avenue shopping and entertainment area known as Magnificent Mile. There are many great things to do in the area.

Furthermore, Dr. Edward Latessa, Professor and Director of the School of Criminal Justice at the University of Cincinnati, is scheduled to be the Keynote Speaker this year. He is a well-known scholar and an excellent speaker. I have heard him present several times, and each time I found his presentations to be informative and enjoyable.

Moreover, I hope that you not only attend the 2010 MCJA meeting, but also make one or more presentations.

Each presentation is part of a panel of about four presentations. Each presentation is about 15 to 20 minutes long, and an entire panel is one hour and fifteen minutes. If you are interested in submitting one or more presentations for the 2010 MCJA meeting, please e-mail me your abstract(s) and contact information by **August 15, 2010**. My e-mail address is dz9258@wayne.edu. You will find information to register for the 2010 meeting and booking a room at the conference hotel at the MCJA website. Please let your colleagues and students know about the upcoming MCJA meeting and how to submit abstracts for presentations at the conference.

In addition, not only do I want you to attend the 2010 MCJA meeting, I invite you to become a member of the MCJA or to renew your membership if you are currently a member. For more information on how to become a member of the MCJA or how to renew your membership, please visit the MCJA website or contact Michael Gizzi, Treasurer of the MCJA, at mgizzi@ilstu.edu. I am looking forward to seeing you at this year’s MCJA meeting.

STUDENT PAPER COMPETITION

MCJA would like to encourage all students to consider submitting an individually written paper for the student paper competition. To be eligible for consideration you must be a full-time student and be presenting the paper at the upcoming annual meeting. Papers should be directly related to any area of criminal justice or criminology. It is preferred that the JC&J format be used for the organization and preparation of text, citations, and references and should not exceed 7,500 words.

Paper submissions should be submitted electronically (by **September 1, 2010**) along with a letter indicating student enrollment status. Submissions should be sent to Eric Lambert at: dz9258@wayne.edu. A \$150 award for the best graduate and undergraduate paper will be awarded during the MCJA business meeting. Outstanding submissions will receive consideration for publication in the Journal of Crime & Justice (JC&J). For more information on the competition, see www.mcja.org.

UPDATE FROM ACJS REGION 3—MIDWEST

KEN NOVAK

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-KANSAS CITY

As the Region 3 Trustee to the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS), I represent the Midwest region on the Executive Board during board meetings throughout the year. This year I authored an essay in the recent *ACJS Today* outlining the relationship between the Academy and the regional associations. This came about after several frustrating discussions between board members, the ACJS Executive, and various members of regional associations. It seems that often regional associations become frustrated that ACJS “doesn’t do more for us” financially, and frankly, I often felt the same way. But after exploring policy more fully, it seems the formal relationship precludes the Academy from ‘doing more’. I learned quite a bit by carefully reviewing policy, by-laws and the constitution (who knew that was possible!) so this essay was designed to demystify and summarize things for those of us who do not have time to pour over policy. Those interested can find the article at: http://www.acjs.org/pubs/uploads/ACJSToday_June_2010.pdf

I have also been working with Immediate Past President Janice Joseph on identifying my possible successor. My term is up in March 2011, and the election this fall should include at least 2 people for regional members to consider. The slate is not official until the board votes on September 11, 2010. It is important to note that ACJS members who have professional affiliations within the Midwest Region are eligible to vote on this position – people need not be member of MCJA to vote, and MCJA members must also be members in good standing with ACJS to be sent a ballot.

The ACJS Executive Board will hold its mid-year meeting in Baltimore September 10 to 12. I will be submitting a Region 3 report by August 20. I have solicited feedback from MCJA executive board members for this report, however any Region 3 member can direct concerns/issues to be raised at the mid-year. Finally, the 2011 annual meeting of ACJS will be held in Toronto, Ontario from March 1st to 5th. Information can be found at www.acjs.org and abstracts are due by September 24th. I look forward to seeing you there.

MOVING FROM THE MASTERS TO DOCTORAL LEVEL

J. MICHAEL VECCHIO

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI-ST. LOUIS

The decision to work towards a terminal degree in the field of criminology and criminal justice is not one to be taken lightly. While graduate school may initially seem better than getting “a real job,” it is important to remember that school really will be your job for the next years of your life. Here are some pointers for those of you that are interested in the process of working towards a doctorate.

First things first, you need to decide to which programs you will apply. Deciding where to apply should be based on your: GRE scores, GPA, letters of recommendation, and research and professional interests. *U.S. News & World Report* provides a popular ranking system which is free to the public. Work down the list and see which programs offer classes and have faculty members which are topically close to your research interests. Also keep in mind the kind of students that the programs graduate (are they going to research one, two, or strictly teaching schools).

So you’ve heard back from the programs to which you applied. You got into some and maybe were rejected from others. When you go to accept an invitation to attend a program, don’t be overly distracted by location, ranking, or the amount funding you receive. Instead, choose the program you think is the best overall fit for you.

What should you expect coming into a doctoral program? Well, what your professors have been telling you is right; you will spend the lion’s share of your time in a new city (for most) consumed by the expectations for your classes. Reading and writing demands increase dramatically, but you will adjust to the new standards just like you did when you settled into your masters program. Remember that everything you do should help you leave with a degree in hand.

While working towards the degree will be a long and grueling process, it can be a fun and rewarding experience. Remember to take the time to explore your new city and make long-lasting friendships with your fellow students.

FROM THE EDITOR

MICHAEL J. LEIBER
UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA

The *Journal of Crime & Justice*, the official publication of the Midwestern Criminal Justice Association, is a biannual peer-reviewed journal featuring original scholarly work in the area of crime and criminal justice. *JC&J* welcomes quantitative and qualitative articles, theoretical commentaries, and book reviews. Special topic issues are also welcomed.

Prospective authors should send a cover letter with contact information and the manuscript electronically to Michael J. Leiber, Editor, mjleiber@usf.edu. A \$10 submission fee (payable to the *Journal of Crime & Justice*) should also be sent, to: Michael J. Leiber, Editor, *Journal of Crime and Justice*, Department of Criminology, University of South Florida, 4202 E. Fowler Ave – SOC 107 Tampa, Florida 33620-8100.

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GET YOUR BUTTERFLIES FLYING IN FORMATION!

JAY KENNEDY

UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI

A former colleague of mine suggested that when I was nervous about speaking, I should “get my butterflies flying in formation!” The point is that you will probably always have a bit of nervousness when you are speaking to a room of people. Whether it is a room full of 300 people, or just 3, speaking in front of people can sometimes be a challenge. The trick is not to try and get rid of the butterflies, but to keep them under control by training (preparing) them for the upcoming event. If you are not totally comfortable with the idea of your upcoming classroom interaction, try using some of the following tips to prepare your butterflies to fly in formation!

Be Prepared! The Boy Scout motto is probably the best way to get over the initial anxiety of being a first-time instructor. Diligent preparation of notes, lecture outlines, PowerPoint slides or other materials, combined with a thorough understanding of the background material will go a long way. The most important thing to remember is that you don’t want to script your instructional time, out-

line it and practice addressing the main points.

Leave the tricks at home. Don’t picture students in their underwear, or some other embarrassing state of undress. Besides the enormous mental energy that it would take to imagine all of this, it probably won’t help you all that much. In addition, unless you can seamlessly infuse wit and humor into all of your everyday conversations, leave the joke book at home. When you are in the sometimes uncomfortable position of being the classroom instructor, you want the experience to be more like a personal interaction with many people. Make eye contact with the people in your room. Don’t get fixated on just a few people, but scan the room and give everyone a little bit of attention. Keep your delivery natural. When you try to force things, people can see through it, so just be yourself and deliver the information.

MCJA SPONSORING REQUEST

MELISSA W. BUREK

BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY

Would your program, department, school, and/or college help sponsor the upcoming annual meeting of the MCJA in Chicago? Our past successes have been due in part from academic programs willing to sponsor the MCJA and people exactly like you, your colleagues, and students becoming members. The sponsorship by academic programs is vitally important for the annual meeting of the MCJA. Your support of the MCJA is significant. Any patronage your academic program is willing to provide would be greatly appreciated. There are several different sponsorship options available ranging in price from \$50 to \$750.

You could use your space in the conference program to:

- *Advertise your undergraduate and/or graduate program(s)
- *Announce new faculty positions
- *Announce new programs or emphasize existing programs
- *Highlight notable faculty and student publications and other accomplishments

I would also like to take this time to tell you about two new events we are having at this year’s annual meeting. First, representatives from the Target Corporation will be available Friday morning serving a light breakfast and offering a Q&A session on career opportunities in the private sector geared to faculty (but also open to students) so we can better assist our students with internships and post-graduation. Second, Pearson Publishing is treating us to lunch on Friday while “edu-taining” us with their new interactive product lines. Yes, this conference is definitely one to have your school’s name advertized in the program and at the meeting. There will be more professional events, more food, more networking, and more great scholarship than ever before at the MCJA conference. There truly is something for everyone with MCJA!

Final Deadline for Ads is:

Wednesday August 18, 2010. After that date, ads will be included as program inserts. Please email mwburek@bgsu.edu for more information.

Membership Application and Meeting Registration Midwestern Criminal Justice Association 2010-2011

Name:	Title:
Affiliation:	
Mailing Address:	
City:	State/Country:
Zip code:	
Email Address:	
Work Phone:	Home Phone:
Current Professional Status:	
Educator ☐ Practitioner ☐ Other ☐ Student ☐	
Application Status:	
Renewal ☐ New Member ☐ New Contact Information? ☐	
Membership Dues with subscription to MCJA Journal included:	
\$55 Regular Member ☐ \$35 Student Member ☐	
Membership Dues without subscription to MCJA Journal (students only):	
\$5 Student Member ☐	
Conference Pre-Registration (must be received by September 14, 2010)	
\$50 Regular Member ☐ \$70 Non-Member ☐ \$5 Student Member ☐	
Conference On-Ste Registration	
\$60 Regular Member ☐ \$80 Non-Member ☐ \$5 Student Member ☐	

Total Amount Enclosed: _____

Mail completed form and check payable to MCJA to:

Michael C. Gizzi
Department of Criminal Justice Sciences
Illinois State University
Normal, IL 61790-5250
(309)438-5001
mgizzi@ilstu.edu

For more information and updates, please visit our website at www.mcja.org

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About the Midwestern Criminal Justice Association

The Midwestern Criminal Justice Association was founded in 1977 with the goal of fostering better communication and collaboration among criminal justice researchers, academics, and practitioners within the Midwestern United States and beyond. We are affiliated with the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, our national organization. We convene an annual meeting every fall which showcases some of the important work being done across the region. We also sponsor the Journal of Crime & Justice as an outlet for high quality articles related to the field of criminal justice.

2010 Conference Fast Facts

Abstracts due by: August 15, 2010 (dz9258@wayne.edu)

Dates: September 23rd to 25th (Thursday to Saturday)

Location: Chicago, Illinois — Inn of Chicago (312-787-3100)

Call and book under the MCJA Rate!!

\$159/night — Single room

\$169/night — Double room

Theme: Assessment, Measurement, and Practice: Justice for the Next Ten Years

Keynote: Edward Latessa (University of Cincinnati)

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