



# SCHOOL OF CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE

February • 2022



## MEET NEW UNO SCCJ ALUMNUS PATTY GADEA

Patty Gadea, a December 2021 UNO SCCJ graduate, has a lot to be excited about. She received her diploma during the December 2021 commencement ceremony on a Friday and embarked on her new career the very next Monday morning. Patty completed an internship with Lutheran Family Services (LFS) during her last semester of undergraduate studies and was hired in a full time position with the agency and she couldn't be happier! Her position as a Case Manager will have her engaging with new LFS clients by completing intakes to determine what resources they need to be connected with. It's definitely more responsibility than she had as an intern, where she handled social media for the agency in addition to creating a database of services available for clients impacted by homelessness, sexual assault, domestic violence and autism. Good luck Patty!



*"If criminology and criminal justice is your passion, taking part in an internship puts you that much closer toward your passion." - Patty Gadea*

**EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION OF  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE LEADERS**

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# Go Mavericks

## Message from the SCCJ Director

The UNO School of Criminology and Criminal Justice is a nationally ranked program serving the Omaha and Lincoln campuses. Stronger than ever, over 900 undergraduate and 100 graduate students learn alongside our 24 faculty and 61 adjunct instructors. As a valued alumnus, we want YOU to be an active part of our *Friends of the UNO SCCJ* alumni network!

Our award winning alumni excel in leadership positions throughout Nebraska and the U.S.! Collectively, we are deeply engaged with our communities to develop and implement innovative solutions to society's most pressing concerns.

On campus, we inspire our next generation of leaders to sharpen their skills and gain experience through internships and research projects that support our Nebraska communities. UNO SCCJ faculty lead over \$7.5 million dollars in grant funded research and publish findings that advance criminal justice policy. Learn more about our ongoing research!

We hope you will invest in our UNO SCCJ Mavericks, share your good news with us ([unosccj@unomaha.edu](mailto:unosccj@unomaha.edu)) and be part of our events on campus and around the globe. Go Mavs!



UNO SCCJ Director, Dr. Gaylene Armstrong, SCCJ faculty and friends cheer on our Mavericks hockey team at Baxter arena

-GAYLENE S. ARMSTRONG, PHD

### INTERNSHIP PLACEMENTS SPRING 2022

#### IS THERE MAVERICK ENGAGED WITH YOUR AGENCY?

- Omaha Police Department
- Douglas County Sheriff's Office
- Drug Enforcement Administration (volunteer)
- Nebraska State Probation: Douglas Co Adult and Juvenile office, Sarpy Co Adult and Juvenile office, and North Platte office
- Douglas Co Victim Assistance unit
- Sarpy Co Attorney's office
- Lutheran Family Service
- Nebraska Department of Correctional Services
- Juvenile Justice Institute (Research Internship)
- First Responders Foundation
- Cline Williams Write Johnson & Oldfather
- Safe2Help - Boystown
- York County Attorney
- HopeSpoke
- Lancaster Co. Sheriff's Office
- Lincoln Correctional Center
- Nebraska Emergency Management Agency
- Nebraska State Parole
- University of Nebraska Police Department
- Nebraska Legal Aid
- Nebraska Reception and Treatment Center
- Lincoln Fire and Rescue
- Nebraska Child Protective Services
- Lancaster Co. Public Defender's Office
- Nebraska Child Protective Services
- Lincoln Police Department
- Nebraska Supreme Court Ofc. of the Public Guardian
- Nebraska Crime Commission
- Child Advocacy Center

Contact Kim Retzlaff ([KRetzlaff@unomaha.edu](mailto:KRetzlaff@unomaha.edu)) with Internship program questions



# Go Mavericks Alumni Success Spotlight

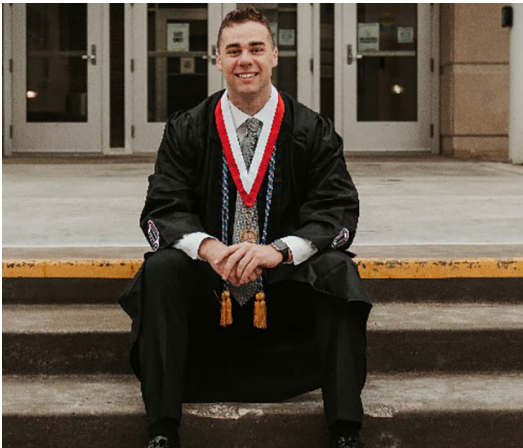
*Congrats!*

**Damon Strong** was promoted to chief probation officer for adult probation in the Fourth Judicial District for the State of Nebraska Judicial Branch. He previously served as a specialized officer, navigation officer, and chief deputy probation officer.



*"First of all, my experience at UNO was wonderful. I think their criminology department is great," Strong said. "Once I graduated—one thing about UNO—once you're a part of that family they always embrace you. They keep up with things that you do in the community, promotions, and so on. Once you're a Maverick, you're always a Maverick." - Damon Strong, UNO alum*

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Virginia born **Ryan Koltas**' love for the U.S. Air Force and the study of criminology and criminal justice made attending UNO an easy choice for him. Koltas is a 2021 graduate who was selected for the AFROTC Educational Delay-In program - he began law school in Fall 2021. Upon completion of law school he will serve as an Air Force Officer in the Judge Advocate General's (JAG) Corp. Learn more about how the AFROTC was a game changer for Ryan [here](#).

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**Sherie Thomas**, UNO SCCJ alumnus and a member of the Omaha Police Department (OPD) since 1998, was recently featured in Metro Magazine's Celebrating Women: Pathfinders article, which highlighted five women in the Omaha-metro area who make a difference in their community and positively impact the lives of those they encounter. Read more about Capt. Thomas [here](#).

## Best of 2021

*October*

SCCJ Alum, Captain Sherie Thomas, recognized as Metro Area *Pathfinder - Women Leading the Way*

<https://bit.ly/captsherie>



## Victimology and Victim Studies Research Lab (VVSRL) launches in the UNO SCCJ

The mission of the VVSRL is to conduct high quality research related to crime victims and crime victimization, inform policy and practice, and help shape prevention and intervention efforts. Learn more about the impactful VVSRL research at [vvsrl.org](http://vvsrl.org) or through the UNO SCCJ webpage.



UNO SCCJ students (now alumni) at a London coffee house during London Study Abroad trip.

## Retzlaff takes on UNO SCCJ Omaha Undergraduate Program Coordinator Role

Professor Kim Retzlaff expands her UNO SCCJ role as the new undergraduate program coordinator for Omaha. (Dr. Sam Clinkinbeard will continue as UPC on the Lincoln campus.) In addition to leading the Internship program, Retzlaff looks forward to supporting our newest student groups including the *Future Law Enforcement Professionals*. This semester Retzlaff will also teach Domestic Violence building on her wealth of experience and knowledge as a former Sergeant with the Omaha Police Department.



Caralin Branscum, UNO SCCJ PhD and VVSRL student presents at the 2021 ASC conference

## London Study Abroad Continues...

Initiated in 1972 by Professor James Kane, and developed by Professor Bill Wakefield for 32 years, the London Program in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice is one of the longest standing of its kind in the United States. Dr. Mark Foxall is now coordinating the program. We remain hopeful the May 2022 trip will proceed!



Prof. Kim Retzlaff, UPC Omaha and Internship Coordinator



Dr. Bill Wakefield with OPD Able-1 operator and SCCJ Director Dr. Gaylene Armstrong

## How's Dr. Wakefield doing?

Perhaps the most common question asked by our alumni... Dr. Wakefield is doing great! Active as our NCAA Faculty Representative and teaching the masters level capstone course, Dr. Wakefield is managing to keep up his golf game between his community engagement activities and hosting our upcoming UNO SCCJ Award luncheon scheduled for April 8th, 2022.

Follow us for news and announcements @UNOSCCJ Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram and Facebook

Share your feedback and suggestions at [UNOSCCJ@UNOMAHA.EDU](mailto:UNOSCCJ@UNOMAHA.EDU)

UNO SCCJ calendar of events: <http://Criminology.UNOmaha.edu>



*Go Mavericks*

## Always a Maverick!

As a UNO SCCJ alumnus we hope experienced several opportunities that helped to launch your career – perhaps internships and international excursions or meaningful relationships faculty and fellow students.

Help us ensure our current students have access to these same great opportunities by giving back your time, treasure or talent to the area on campus that means most to you.

If you are able, please invest in our students through a donation to our SCCJ scholarship fund. Any amount will help retain our top students and ensure they follow your footsteps in success!

### ***Scholarship Spotlight***

2021 UNO/UNL Criminal Justice Education Fund Scholarship Recipient: Emily Wochnick

A high achieving student, Emily volunteers at Open Door Mission when she is not busy with classes and her on-campus job. She hopes to attend graduate school and give back to her community with a focus on criminal justice reform efforts.

*"I want to make a difference for the people that need it the most."*

We love your Maverick spirit Emily!

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CLICK HERE TO

**INVEST IN OUR SCCJ MAVERICKS!**