



**UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTHERN MAINE**

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

PORTLAND • GORHAM • LEWISTON • ONLINE

**Annual Report
2025**





Introduction

Message From Chief Perkins

This past year has been both challenging and transformative for our campus community. Like universities across the country, we have navigated a complex landscape shaped by international protests, local activism, and federally impacted programs, all of which have influenced the rhythm of campus life and the work of public safety. These events remind us that safety and security are not fixed concepts; they evolve alongside the social and cultural dynamics of the world around us.

Amid these realities, the University of Southern Maine Department of Public Safety has continued to make meaningful progress through collaboration, innovation, and resilience. It is my pleasure to introduce the second annual report of the University of Southern Maine Department of Public Safety. This past year has been marked by continued commitment to fostering a safe, inclusive, and connected learning environment.

Our work continues to be shaped by the University’s strategic pillars of **People, Purpose, and Place**, and guided by our **Public Safety SAFER values—Service, Accountability, Fairness, Excellence, and Responsibility**. Together, these principles define not only what we do, but how we do it.

We focus on **People** by prioritizing students, developing the potential of our team, fostering meaningful relationships across campus, and engaging alumni and community partners who share our vision of safety and care. We center **Purpose** by supporting the creation of new knowledge, preparing informed and responsible citizens, serving as a public good, and contributing to a safer, better world through our work. And we strengthen **Place** by championing our communities, being responsible stewards of our resources, leveraging Maine’s unique strengths, and cultivating pride in the spaces we protect and serve every day.

This report highlights how our department has evolved over the last year by documenting the initiatives, collaborations, and innovations that extend beyond our federally required Clery Annual Security and Fire Safety Report. This report provides a closer look at how we’ve adapted to challenges, enhanced partnerships, and advanced our shared commitment to transparency and service. To understand and interpret our crime statistics, it is equally important to understand how we work to address the issues and behaviors behind those numbers.

As we look ahead, we remain dedicated to deepening our relationships, refining our practices, and finding new ways to serve with accountability, fairness, and excellence. Together, we are building a community where every person feels safe, supported, and empowered to succeed.



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Meet the Team

The University of Southern Maine Public Safety Department is a dedicated team that provides continuous service to our campus community, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Our department currently includes nine sworn police officers, with two officer vacancies and one part-time officer supporting operations. They are joined by two Campus Safety Officers and four Communications Dispatch Specialists, all who play a vital role in coordinating responses and ensuring seamless communication across all campuses. We are supported in our 911 responses through our collaboration and working with the Cumberland County Regional Communication Center team.

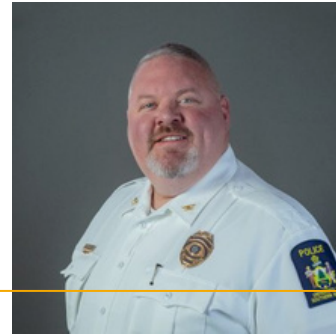
Behind the scenes, our Senior Administrative Specialist provides essential organizational support, helping to manage the many operational, training, and reporting demands of a department that never stops working.



Meet the Team



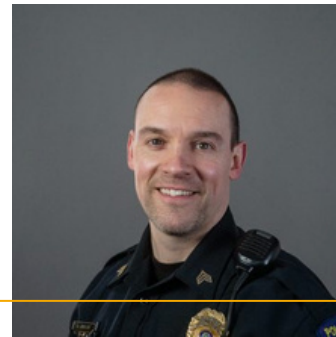
Grainne Perkins
Chief of Police; Vice President of
Public Safety



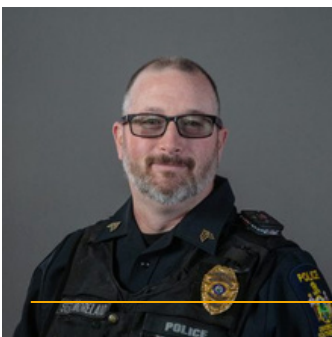
Tim Farwell
Deputy Chief



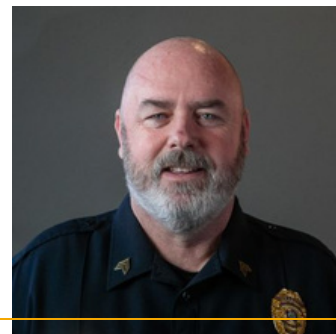
Paul Cox
Police Lieutenant



Derek Abbott
Police Sergeant

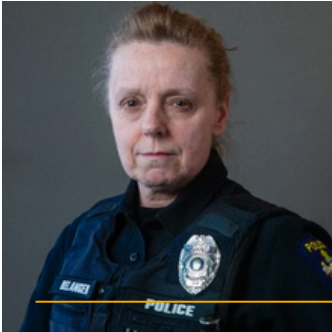


Ben Moreland
Police Sergeant

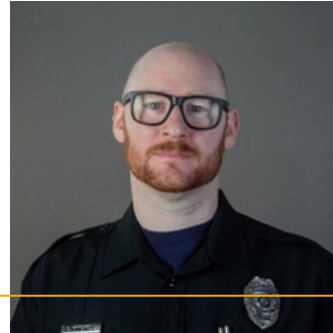


Chris Coyne
Police Sergeant

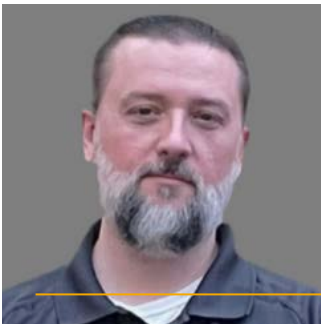
Meet the Team



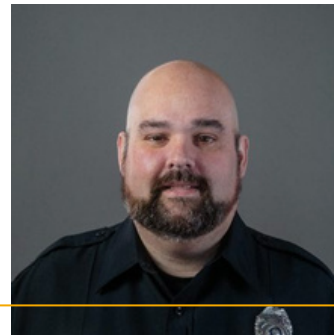
Penny Belanger
Police Officer



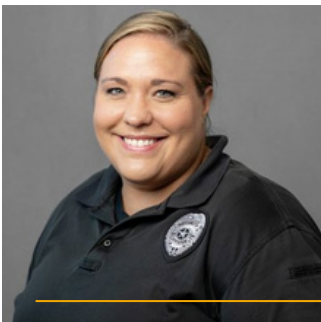
Chris Mitchell
Police Officer



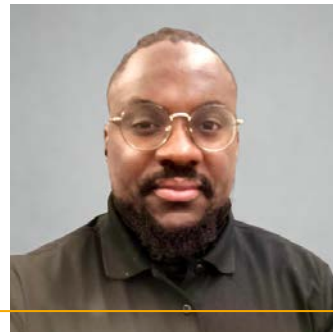
Jacob Wells
Police Officer



Tim Roy
Reserve Police Officer



Melissa Ebert
Campus Safety Officer



Felisberto Alfredo
Campus Safety Officer

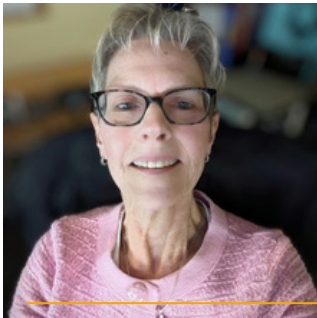
Meet the Team



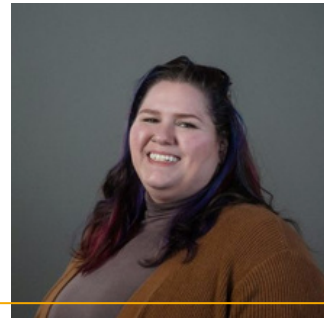
Paula Ward
Administrative Specialist II



Sherrie De Long
Communications Supervisor
Communication Training Officer
Clery Coordinator



Laurie St. Jock
Communications Officer



Amanda Giampetro
Communications Officer



Catherine Johnson
Communications Officer



Developing Potential



Catherine Johnson

Communications Officer

This year, the University of Southern Maine Public Safety Department was pleased to welcome Catherine Johnson to the team. Catherine has been employed at USM for 25+ years as both a full-time employee as well as a student worker for the University Bookstore. She brings with her a wealth of experience at USM and knows the system and people well.

Catherine is deeply rooted in the Husky community, and her long-standing relationships across campus have already strengthened collaboration within our team. She brings a proven record of reliability, strong customer service, and a genuine commitment to supporting students and staff. And with her well-known green fingers, we're confident she'll help our workspace grow in more ways than one. We're delighted to welcome her into this role and know she will continue to be an excellent addition to Public Safety.



Jacob Wells

Police Officer

Officer Jacob Wells was also welcomed to the team this year. Officer Wells joins us with a wealth of law enforcement experience, bringing a strong background in community policing, crisis response, and proactive engagement. His professional approach and calm demeanor have already made him a valued addition to our department.

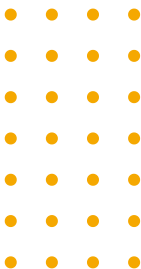
Officer Wells's broad skill set enhances our department's ability to provide responsive, professional service to the USM community. His leadership, mentorship, and practical expertise contribute significantly to strengthening our team's capacity and reinforcing the culture of safety, respect, and connection across all campuses. Please be sure to introduce yourself to Officer Wells when you met him.



Felisberto Alfredo

Campus Safety Officer

We are also pleased to welcome Campus Safety Officer Felisberto Alfredo to the University of Southern Maine Public Safety team. Felisberto brings with him a strong background in security operations and community engagement. Felisberto was a security officer for Maine Health, working primarily on the MMC Bramhall campus but also rotating out to Scarborough and other satellite campuses. He is trained and experienced in de-escalation, patient restraint, MOAB (a healthcare version of MARC), and various other topics.





Developing Potential

Investing in People: Training That Builds Confidence and Capability

At the University of Southern Maine Department of Public Safety, professional growth is not just encouraged, it's embedded in our culture. We believe that developing our people enhances every aspect of how we serve our community. This year, members of our team achieved significant professional milestones through rigorous training, certification programs, and leadership development opportunities that reflect our ongoing commitment to excellence.

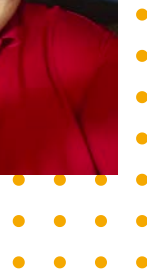
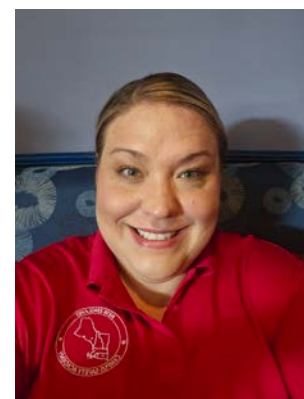
Emergency Telecommunicator Catherine Johnson

Catherine undertook courses this year to strengthen both her technical proficiency and her confidence in a fast-paced dispatch environment. She completed the required CJIS Security Training, reinforcing her knowledge of how to safeguard Criminal Justice Information and uphold strict federal and state standards. Catherine also undertook METRO's Limited Access training, gaining hands-on experience with essential systems including BMV, NCIC, NLETS, and criminal history processes. Most notably, she successfully completed the 40-hour Emergency Telecommunicator (ETC) Certification Course through the National Academies of Emergency Dispatch, a comprehensive program covering caller management, emergency technologies, police, fire, and medical call classification, radio procedures, stress management, and the legal responsibilities integral to public safety communications. Catherine's achievements exemplify how USM invests in its people—providing the knowledge, skills, and support needed to grow with confidence and contribute meaningfully to our mission.



New England Campus Safety Officer Academy: Campus Safety Officer Melissa Ebert

We are thrilled to celebrate Campus Safety Officer Ebert, who recently completed the New England Campus Safety Officer Training, an intensive five-day residential program running from 7:30 AM to 10:00 PM each day. This demanding course challenged participants across multiple disciplines, from emergency response and crisis intervention to community engagement and safety operations. Melissa's dedication, focus, and outstanding academic performance earned her the Academic Excellence Certificate, awarded for achieving the highest aggregate marks across all subjects during the week. Her success reflects not only her personal commitment to professional excellence but also the quality and caliber of USM's Campus Safety team.





Developing Potential

Investing in People: Training That Builds Confidence and Capability

Communications & Administration – Sergeant Ben Moreland

Sergeant Moreland applied and was subsequently selected to attend a specialist Grant Writing and Development Course, designed to strengthen institutional capacity and enhance access to external funding. His selection was based on his extensive prior grant writing experience, the high relevance of this training to his current role, and the significant expected benefit in supporting departmental initiatives.



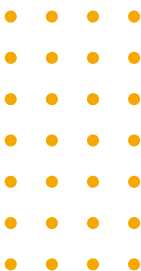
Following successful completion of the course, Ben immediately applied his new skills, submitting two grant proposals on behalf of the department, both aligned with strategic goals to advance safety, technology, and training resources. His initiative and success demonstrate the tangible impact of investing in professional development and the power of applied learning in driving innovation within Public Safety.

Executive Leadership Development – Chief Perkins Scholarship Recipient

Chief of Police Gráinne Perkins, was awarded a full scholarship to attend the Crisis Leadership in Higher Education program at Harvard University in February 2026, jointly offered by the Harvard Kennedy School and the Harvard Graduate School of Education. This four-day executive program equips senior academic leaders with critical strategies to manage crises effectively, protecting students, staff, and institutional reputation through proactive planning, decisive leadership, and clear communication.



Through engagement with real-world scenarios such as campus violence, natural disasters, and public health emergencies, Chief Perkins will gain advanced tools to strengthen USM's crisis preparedness and response capacity. Her participation reflects both personal and institutional commitment to cultivating strong, informed leadership that ensures the University of Southern Maine remains ready, resilient, and responsive in times of challenge.





Developing Potential

Awards

This year, Chief Grainne Perkins proudly accepted the Jesse Harvey Award on behalf of the University of Southern Maine Department of Public Safety. The award honors individuals and organizations who make a meaningful difference in the lives of others through compassion, innovation, and commitment to recovery-oriented work.

Presented in recognition of the department's collaborative partnership with Health Services Division and the Recovery Oriented Campus Center (ROCC), the award highlights our shared dedication to supporting individuals in crisis with empathy and care. Through this collaboration, Public Safety has strengthened pathways for recovery, improved response coordination, and built stronger connections between law enforcement, emergency dispatch, and community health partners.

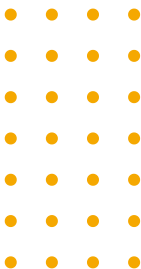




Foster Meaningful Relationships

Wellness on Wheels

This year at opening weekend Campus Safety Officer Melissa Ebert joined resources with the Health Services Department and introduced the “Wellness Wagon” across our campus community. As a core partner in the WELLNESS on WHEELS initiative, USM Public Safety plays an active role in fostering meaningful, trust-based relationships across campus. By joining Health Services in monthly mobile outreach, our team engages students in approachable, low-pressure settings that emphasize care, connection, and community. Public Safety staff help create a welcoming presence, whether through wellness giveaways, light conversations, or simply being available for questions. This approach supports positive daily interactions outside of crisis or enforcement contexts. This collaboration strengthens our visibility as helpers and partners, reinforces a shared commitment to student well-being, and models the kind of cross-department teamwork that defines a healthy campus community.





Foster Meaningful Relationships

The Art of Perception: Seeing What Matters

Building meaningful relationships across our campuses and with community partners is at the heart of how we serve. This year, the University of Southern Maine Department of Public Safety had the privilege of co-hosting *The Art of Perception*, a nationally recognized program developed by Amy Herman, renowned for using art to enhance observation, communication, and situational awareness skills

The event series was a true collaboration between USM Public Safety, the Osher Map Library and Smith Center for Cartographic Education. Together, we offered multiple sessions: a campus-wide public presentation, a specialized session for law enforcement professionals, and an open community session designed to encourage dialogue between students, staff, faculty, and first responders.

These sessions challenged participants to see differently, literally and figuratively, by using art as a lens to examine perception, bias, and decision-making. The program sparked thoughtful conversation and deepened understanding across disciplines, reinforcing our shared commitment to learning, empathy, and collaboration.





Foster Meaningful Relationships

Partnerships that Save Lives

This year marked a significant step forward in our commitment to health, safety, and harm reduction. The University of Southern Maine Department of Public Safety partnered with USM Health Services and the City of Portland Public Health Division to expand access to Naloxone (Narcan) and strengthen our collective response to opioid-related emergencies.

Through this collaboration, USM successfully acquired and deployed Naloxone across all campuses, ensuring lifesaving medication is readily available to our entire campus community. The initiative also led to the department's recognition as a Tier 11 organization under Maine's Naloxone Distribution and Response Framework, formalizing our role in overdose prevention and campus-based response.

In conjunction with this rollout, Public Safety and Health Services jointly led a university-wide educational roadshow to introduce the initiative and provide training on recognizing overdose symptoms, administering Naloxone, and connecting individuals to recovery resources. The sessions were well attended across all campuses, reinforcing a shared understanding that safety is a collective responsibility.





Focus on Students

Employment Opportunities



During the 2023–2024 academic year, the department welcomed a Public Safety Assistant (PSA) through the Student Employment Program. The PSA position offers students often those studying Criminology, Psychology, Social Work, or related fields an opportunity to gain meaningful, hands-on experience within a working public safety environment. These roles provide students with an invaluable bridge between academic learning and real-world application, helping them develop professional skills, confidence, and a clearer understanding of community-focused policing.

Our 2023–2024 PSA, Justin Le, a USM Criminology student, has since joined the Auburn Police Department as a full-time police officer. His success reflects both his dedication and the value of the PSA program in preparing students for future roles in law enforcement and public service.

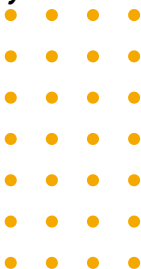


“During my time working for the University of Southern Maine (USM) Police Department, I was able to acquire skills that the classroom lacked. While obtaining my Bachelor’s Degree in Criminology, I was employed by the USM police department as a Public Safety Assistant. While in the classroom, I learned the theories of crime. But while I was at the Police Department, I was able to ask critical questions, observe real-world applications, and gain firsthand experience in the field of law enforcement. While at the USM Police Department, I was able to see the programs and reports that officers were writing, as well as new investigative tactics and skills that would help me in my future career.

Throughout my short stint at the police department, I was able to create a new policy for future Public Safety Assistants, be trained in IMC, and have access to Dirigo Safety Trainings. I was also able to have access to officers who have been on the job for 25+ years, and ask them questions and see what they do on a daily basis.

Shortly after my employment with the USM police department, I was hired by the Auburn Police Department as a Patrol Officer. In that time period, I have also graduated USM with a Bachelor’s Degree in Criminology, and I am continuing to get my Graduate Degree in Leadership and Organizational Study. The combination of academic knowledge and hands-on experience significantly prepared me for the demands of my current role and the continued development of my career in law enforcement.”

**-Officer Justin Le
Auburn Police Department**





Focus on Students

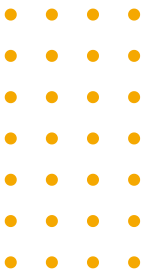
Employment Opportunities



This year, we also welcomed another Criminology student through the Student Employment Program, continuing our commitment to offering meaningful learning opportunities for students from a range of disciplines. Moving forward, we plan to collaborate more closely with the Student Employment Hub to expand opportunities for students from diverse academic areas—such as Nursing, Social Work, and Psychology—to engage with Public Safety initiatives and gain valuable experience in community partnership and response.

Academic Engagement

In addition to operational training, the Department is frequently contacted by undergraduate and graduate students seeking interviews or a podcast participation to support academic assignments and projects from a criminal justice and public safety perspective. This year these projects have ranged from interviews with staff members to podcasts. Staff regularly engage with students across multiple disciplines, providing real-world insight that complements classroom learning while maintaining appropriate professional and operational boundaries. These engagements further support the University's teaching mission and reinforce the Department's role as a collaborative educational partner.





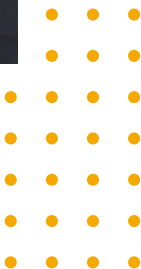
Engage Alumni and Friends

Partnerships that Protect

Apart from creating career pathways for our students, USM PD continue to recognize the importance of engaging alumni and friends who share in our mission to building a safer and more connected university community. This year, a valued USM project manager and proud supporter of campus safety, sponsored an Automated External Defibrillator (AED) for the new Crewe Center for the Arts.

This meaningful contribution not only enhances the safety of our community but also inspired new conversations with the USM Foundation about developing a Public Safety Donor Fund. This initiative will provide a pathway for alumni, partners, and friends of the University to directly support life-saving equipment, training, and community preparedness efforts across all campuses.

The USM Department of [Public Safety gift form](#) is now live and our QR code is :





Create New Knowledge

Over the past year, the Department of Public Safety has continued to invest in creating new knowledge through a series of tabletop exercises and scenario-based workshops. These exercises serve as living laboratories where campus leaders, first responders, and state partners come together to test response plans, clarify roles, and enhance readiness for complex emergencies. Each session strengthens our collective capacity to respond effectively and reinforces USM's commitment to learning through practice.

The tabletop exercises have provided invaluable opportunities to examine our response frameworks, communication protocols, and coordination with regional agencies. They encourage participants to think critically, adapt in real time, and identify practical improvements to emergency management strategies—translating theory into measurable action that supports our emergency management plans.

Active Threats

Sponsored by a \$40,000 grant awarded from the Homeland Security Grant Program to the USM PD in 2024, and as part of our ongoing commitment to preparedness and professional development, the Department of Public Safety hosted a series of active threat tabletop and skills-based exercises designed to strengthen coordination, enhance situational awareness, and improve joint response capabilities across multiple agencies. These events provided critical opportunities to share knowledge, test protocols, and build trust among law enforcement, fire, and emergency management professionals.





Create New Knowledge

Active Threat Tabletop Exercise

Hosted in June by the USM Police Department in partnership with the Maine Chiefs of Police District II Training Council, this tabletop exercise presented a detailed active threat scenario facilitated by Deputy Chief Michael Nault of the Gorham Police Department. The event included a review of the Lewiston mass shooting response by Officer Spencer Simoneau, as well as presentations from the Greater Portland Trauma Intervention Program (TIPs) and Shannon Moss, Public Information Officer for the Maine Department of Public Safety.

Participants engaged in discussion-based scenarios focused on communication, command coordination, and interagency decision-making. Attendees included representatives from USM PD, Gorham PD, Gorham Fire/EMS, Gorham Public Works, Windham PD, Westbrook PD, Cumberland County Emergency Management Agency (EMA), and the Cumberland County Regional Communications Centre (RCC).





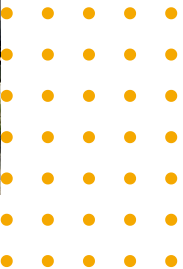
Create New Knowledge

Active Threat Skills Workshop

Conducted in August, and building on lessons learned from earlier tabletop sessions, the skills workshop offered hands-on, scenario-based training for law enforcement and Fire/EMS responders. Hosted jointly by USM PD and the Maine Chiefs of Police District II Training Council, the event focused on coordinated response to active assailant incidents, emphasizing communication, tactical movement, and unified command under stress.

The morning featured focused instruction and collaboration among first responders, followed by an afternoon of simulated practical scenarios to reinforce real-world application. Participating agencies included USM PD, Gorham PD, Gorham Fire/EMS, Windham Fire/EMS, Portland PD, Westbrook PD, the Cumberland County RCC, the Cumberland County Sheriff's Office, the Cumberland County EMA, and Brunswick PD.

These exercises not only enhanced our collective response capability but also underscored the importance of shared learning and continuous improvement. By bringing together regional partners in a training environment, USM Public Safety continues to play a leadership role in strengthening Maine's preparedness and resilience to critical incidents.





Create New Knowledge

Hazmat Exercise Response Workshop

One of the year's most significant exercises was the Ammonia Emergency Response Workshop exercise held in November, which brought together over 55 participants representing state and local partners, including the Gorham and Portland Fire Departments, HazMat teams, Residence Life, Environmental Health & Safety, Athletics and members from the Emergency Operations Center (EOC), and neighboring community partners.

This full-scale discussion-based exercise explored two complex scenarios: a simulated anhydrous ammonia leak at the USM Ice Arena in Gorham and a major chemical release at Oakhurst Dairy near the Portland Campus. The workshop provided participants with the opportunity to navigate realistic decision-making processes—ranging from evacuation and shelter-in-place orders to coordination with external agencies and communication with the public.

Through this exercise, participants identified key areas for improvement, including refining notification procedures, enhancing coordination between the EOC and first responders, and strengthening cross-campus communication strategies. The event demonstrated the power of collaboration in managing large-scale incidents and reinforced the importance of planning together, training together, and responding together. Beyond its operational value, the workshop also strengthened relationships with community partners and reaffirmed USM's role as both a convener and contributor to regional safety efforts.





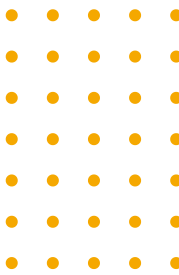
Create New Knowledge

Ethical Leadership

This year, we hosted *What You Do Matters: Lessons from the Holocaust*, a highly interactive course developed in collaboration with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and delivered in partnership with Portland Police Department. Designed specifically for law enforcement, the course focuses on ethical, bias-free leadership and examines how Germany transitioned in less than a decade from a free, democratic, and scientifically advanced society into a totalitarian regime that systematically targeted and murdered its own people. Through a close examination of the “slippery slope” experienced by law enforcement over nine short years, the curriculum offered a powerful and cautionary framework for ensuring that the core values of policing, the courts, and the criminal justice system are actively upheld. Facilitated by experienced law enforcement professionals, the course used historical images, videos, artifacts, and museum-curated materials to foster deep discussion and reflective thought leadership.

***WHAT YOU DO MATTERS
LESSONS FROM THE HOLOCAUST***

What You Do Matters: Lessons from the Holocaust is a highly interactive course developed in concert with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) specifically for law enforcement with focus on ethical and bias free leadership. How Germany changed in less than a decade from a free, democratic, and scientifically advanced community to a totalitarian regime that systematically targeted and murdered their own people is a lesson for every free society. Course examines the “slippery slope” that occurred with law enforcement during nine short years and offers an incredibly powerful curriculum on ensuring that the core values of policing, the courts, and criminal justice system are upheld. All courses are facilitated by law enforcement professionals and utilize historical images, videos, artifacts, and displays selected by museum historians for engaging conversation for thought leadership. The course is like no other course in criminal justice and is supported by years of short-term and long-term survey results.





Prepare Informed Citizens

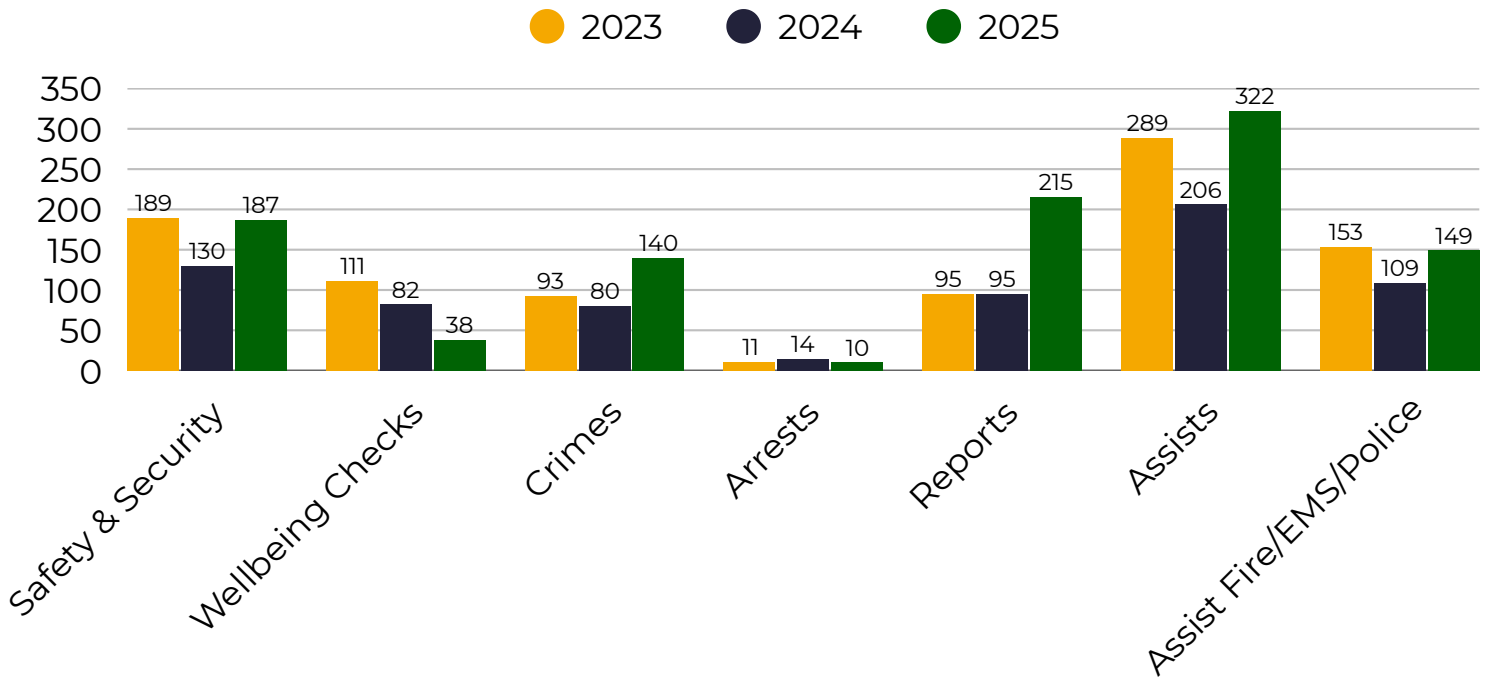
The crime statistics presented in this report include some of the mandatory Clery-reportable figures, providing a comprehensive snapshot of the department's activity. These data are intended to give an overview of the call volume and the wide range of incidents managed by the USM Police Department. By showcasing these statistics, we aim to highlight not only the scope of our work but also our ongoing efforts to ensure campus safety. The Police Department also handles a variety of assistance calls beyond traditional safety concerns. These include responding to student lockouts, ensuring timely access to residential or academic spaces, and addressing facilities-related queries such as maintenance issues or building access challenges. By managing these requests, the department supports campus operations and contributes to a seamless, secure environment for students, staff, and faculty.

Statistics Key:

- **Safety and Security Calls:** Response to alarms, elevator issues, and gas leaks/odors.
- **Wellbeing Calls:** Address medical issues, suicidal individuals, wellbeing checks, and personal injuries.
- **Collaboration with Fire/EMS/Police:** Work closely with Gorham and Portland Fire and Emergency Medical Services, as well as other agencies (e.g., supporting Gorham Police Department) to respond to campus incidents.
- **Crime-Related Calls:** Handle crimes against persons/property, Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) cases, and sex crimes.
- **Arrests:** Includes issuing summons or making physical arrests.
- **Reports:** Generated reports for required for efficiency and centralized information management.
- **Assist Calls:** Provide assistance to community members (e.g., unlock requests) and respond to motor vehicle accidents.
- **Training:** Training classes to the USM campus community.

Prepare Informed Citizens

Calls for Service

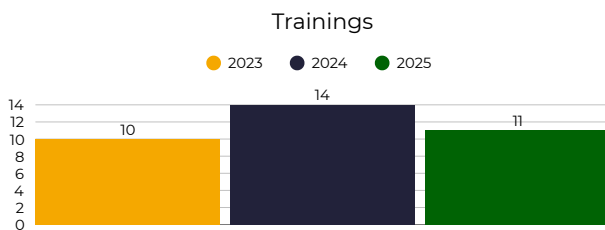


Footnote: Due to changes in the Department’s Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) systems during this reporting period, certain activity data were not captured in a manner consistent with prior years. In 2025, the Department transitioned to a new grant-sponsored records management and dispatch platform. As a result, some call type, for example, “assists calls” are no longer disaggregated to distinguish police-to-police operational support (e.g., assisting municipal partners in Gorham) from citizen or student service requests (e.g., vehicle jumpstarts). Reported wellbeing checks represent a subset of overall residence life interventions, limited to cases where police involvement was requested. Many well being checks are resolved by Residence Life without police attendance and as such are not necessarily captured in these figures. As we settle into the new system, data normalization and clearer categorization will improve in future reporting cycles

Be a Public Good

Trainings

A core service of the Department of Public Safety is the delivery of individualized training tailored to the specific needs of departments, units, and campus groups. Trainings are customized to the environment and function of each space and may include topics such as evacuation procedures, situational awareness, and Stop the Bleed. In 2025, the Department also expanded its training offerings to include CPR instruction, delivered by part-time Officer Tim Roy. Training is delivered with an awareness of differing perspectives on public safety and policing, including the experiences of our international students and the cultural contexts that may shape how individuals engage with police and emergency responders.



From Clery To Quill: The Adventures of Captain Celia Stalwart

Keeping our campus community informed is no small feat—especially when the topic is crime statistics. Let’s face it, few people curl up with a cup of coffee eager to read a Clery report. So, in true USM fashion, we decided to make information both accessible and entertaining. From this challenge emerged Captain Celia Stalwart, our ever-diligent record keeper—part Sherlock Holmes, part Bridgerton heroine, she brings our data to life in the Free Press with wit, charm, and just a touch of investigative flair.

What began as an experiment in creative communication has become a fan favorite. We’ve received positive feedback from the Free Press and beyond, and we’ll continue to encourage the good Captain to keep her quill busy—turning statistics into stories that keep our campus both informed and amused.



Be a Public Good

Prepared Together: A Campus-Created Active Threat Video

This year, the University of Southern Maine Department of Public Safety produced a new Active Threat Training Video created by our campus community, for our campus community. Featuring USM's own staff, faculty, and Public Safety officers, the video delivers scenario-based guidance on how to recognize, respond to, and survive an active threat situation, using familiar locations and realistic examples that resonate with our students and employees.

Funded through a \$10,000 grant from the Homeland Security Grant Program to USM that represents the department's ongoing commitment to innovative, accessible safety education. By producing in-house content with USM's own team, we ensure the message feels authentic, relatable, and specifically tailored to our environment.

The new video forms part of a broader effort to strengthen preparedness across all campuses providing critical information in a format that is engaging, easy to understand, and relevant to the lived experience of our community. This initiative underscores USM Public Safety's continued leadership in proactive education, ensuring that everyone who studies or works here is informed, confident, and empowered to respond effectively in the event of an emergency.



Be a Public Good

Practical Tools for Preparedness

As part of our ongoing effort to make safety information more accessible and actionable, Campus Safety Officer Melissa Ebert developed a customizable departmental safety flip chart designed to put critical information at everyone’s fingertips.

Each flip chart consolidates essential emergency procedures, contact numbers, and safety checklists into one easy-to-use, department-specific reference tool. The design allows each unit across the University to tailor content to their unique environment, from laboratory settings to administrative offices ensuring that emergency response information is both relevant and readily available.

This initiative reflects the department’s commitment to empowering the campus community with practical tools that support preparedness, self-reliance, and a culture of shared responsibility. By simplifying access to vital safety information, USM Public Safety continues to advance its mission to serve as a trusted partner and public good within the University community. This initiative will be rolled out over 2026 to individual departments.





Make a Better World

Smart Systems, Sustainable Solutions

Creating a safer and more sustainable campus means thinking beyond day-to-day operations to how our actions shape the world around us. This year, the Department of Public Safety made significant strides toward digitization and waste reduction, transitioning many of our internal and external processes to electronic systems. From digital report management and online training modules to paperless communication platforms, these changes not only improve efficiency but also align with USM’s environmental goals—reducing paper waste, streamlining workflows, and supporting a greener, more connected university.

Making a better world also means nurturing community and well-being, even during the darker, colder months in Maine. To bring some light and laughter to the season, Public Safety launched its first-ever Campus Snow Student Competition, inviting students, faculty, and staff to build creative snow sculptures across all campuses. The event encouraged outdoor activity, friendly rivalry, and community spirit during winter’s toughest stretch, turning snow days into opportunities for connection and joy.

Together, these initiatives reflect our belief that sustainability and community care go hand in hand. Whether through reducing waste or creating moments of warmth in the cold, we remain committed to making USM a better, brighter place for everyone.





Make a Better World

Supporting Our Community – “Snap into Action” Food Drive



Sherrie De Long
USM PD
Food Drive Organizer

In keeping with our commitment to serve as a public good, the University of Southern Maine Department of Public Safety proudly participated in the “Snap Into Action” Food Drive, a campus-wide initiative responding to the temporary suspension of SNAP/EBT food benefits during the government shutdown. Recognizing the strain this placed on local families and students, our department joined forces with colleagues across campuses to collect food and essential items for the Oakhurst Campus Food Pantry and the Adult Student Success Pantry.

Public Safety staff organized donation boxes, contributed goods, and helped raise awareness about food insecurity and the importance of community support during challenging times. The effort not only helped stock pantry shelves but also demonstrated how small, coordinated acts of generosity can make a tangible difference in the lives of those most affected.

Through this initiative, we reaffirmed our belief that public safety extends beyond emergency response—it’s also about compassion, community, and standing together to meet the needs of our USM family.





Make a Better World

Ethical Leadership

As Chief of Police, Chief Perkins was invited to speak at James River High School's Ethical Leadership Mini-Lecture Series, hosted by The Center for Leadership and International Relations. This engagement provided an opportunity for her to connect with students exploring themes of integrity, responsibility, and service—values central to both policing and civic life. During her session, she discussed real-world applications of ethical decision-making, the importance of accountability in public safety, and the role of leadership in building trust within a community. It was a meaningful exchange with thoughtful young leaders, and she was honored to contribute to their developing understanding of ethical principles in action.

Champion our Communities



Empowering Departments Through Shared Responsibility

This year, we strengthened community safety by developing a clear, accountable, and **community-centered CCTV policy** that gives individual departments ownership of the spaces they manage. Rather than centralizing control, the new framework establishes consistent standards while empowering departments to take responsibility for their own cameras, data management, and compliance obligations. The policy was developed through the established Safety Advisory Board which ensures our campus community is made aware of how and why these policies become part of our management approach. A sub committee was formed to develop the policy before bringing it back to the larger group for further discussion and consideration. This approach promotes transparency, reinforces trust, and ensures that surveillance is used thoughtfully and purposefully supporting safety while respecting privacy. By clarifying roles and expectations, we have created a system that allows each department to safeguard its environment, respond more effectively to concerns, and contribute directly to a safer, more connected campus community.





Champion our Communities



Building Response Capacity

This year, we strengthened campus resilience by formally enacting the **Power Outage Evacuation Policy** through the Safety Advisory Board. This policy provides clear guidance for safely evacuating buildings during prolonged or unplanned power losses, ensuring that students, faculty, and staff have a consistent and reliable process to follow. By defining roles, communication pathways, and evacuation criteria, the policy enhances our ability to respond quickly, support those in affected spaces, and maintain continuity of operations during unexpected outages. Its development and adoption reflect our commitment to championing the safety and well-being of our community through proactive planning and collaborative oversight.



Pursuing External Funding: Grant Applications

As part of our ongoing commitment to strengthening campus safety without placing additional strain on the University budget, Public Safety continues to pursue external fiscal resources through competitive grant opportunities. This year, we submitted a non-match grant application to the Office of Justice Programs' Community Violence Intervention and Prevention Initiative (CVIPI), which is currently under review and would support expanded prevention programming and community-based safety strategies. We also sought funding for additional Automatic External Defibrillators through the Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation. While that application was not successful, it will not deter our efforts. To date, the department has submitted twelve grant applications, achieving a success rate of more than fifty percent—an indicator of our strong proposals, strategic focus, and commitment to finding innovative ways to enhance safety across our campuses.



Steward our Resources



Supporting Our People

The Department of Public Safety is a dedicated team of nineteen individuals, consisting of twelve sworn professionals, two Campus Safety Officers, four Dispatchers and one senior clerical administrator who carry out the essential, people-centered work of keeping our community safe. Like many public safety and higher education agencies, we continue to navigate broad workforce challenges, including increased competition for higher wages, improved work–life balance, and career advancement opportunities. This year, the department experienced three resignations and one voluntary retirement from full-time positions, transitions that reflect both the evolving labor market and the natural progression of a long-serving staff.

In response, we welcomed three new full-time hires and one part-time team member, each bringing fresh skills and renewed momentum to our work. All hiring decisions go through USM’s Position Review Committee (PRC), ensuring that every role is thoughtfully aligned with institutional best practices, equity standards, and long-term operational needs. Despite staffing transitions, our team remained dedicated, resilient, and firmly committed to serving the USM community with professionalism and care.

Steward our Resources



Fleet Management

This year, Public Safety continued its focus on strengthening operational readiness by addressing the significant challenges posed by an aging vehicle fleet. Until recently, our newest operational vehicle dated back to 2014, and due to mechanical limitations, could no longer support patrol functions. Even with the removal of that unit, the youngest remaining vehicle in the fleet is from 2017—well beyond the industry standard for 24/7 public safety use. To ensure officer safety, dependable response capabilities, and continuity of operations, we replaced the 2014 vehicle and continue to pursue a structured leasing model that aligns with best practices.

Building on last year's progress, leasing remains our preferred long-term strategy to stabilize fleet renewal, reduce repair costs, and maintain vehicles on a predictable 5–7 year replacement cycle. This approach offers a fiscally responsible path forward, allowing us to manage wear and tear more effectively, limit downtime, and support a consistent level of service across all three campuses. As we continue to seek leasing options and external funding, our focus remains clear: providing a reliable, modern fleet that supports the safety of our community and the efficiency of our operations.

Steward our Resources



Strengthening Public Trust: Body Worn Cameras

Through three successfully secured grants led by Deputy Chief Tim Farwell, the department has now equipped all officers and management staff with Axon Body-Worn Cameras. This significant accomplishment enhances our capacity for accountability, transparency, and professionalism across all aspects of our work. Body-worn video is an essential tool in modern public safety practice—providing objective documentation of interactions, strengthening community trust, and supporting both officer safety and equitable outcomes. The implementation of this technology represents a major step forward for the department, aligning us with national best practices and ensuring we have the tools needed to uphold the highest standards of service to the USM community.



Enhancing Critical Connectivity: Radios and Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs)

Building on last year's successful award of the \$370,000 Maine Public Utilities Commission grant, the department has now completed the upgrade to our radio system and fully deployed Mobile Data Terminals (MDTs) in our vehicles. These enhancements mark a major step forward in modernizing our communications infrastructure and ensuring seamless, reliable connectivity across our operational footprint. Clear, uninterrupted communication is essential in public safety, particularly within our large, complex buildings where signal strength and reliability directly influence response times and officer safety. The upgraded radio stations now provide stronger coverage and improved interoperability with regional partners, allowing officers to share information efficiently during routine calls and emergency incidents alike. The addition of MDTs further enhances situational awareness by giving officers immediate access to critical data, mapping, and dispatch information while in the field. With these tools now fully operational, the department is better equipped to respond swiftly, coordinate effectively, and support the safety of the USM community.





Leverage Maine's Strengths

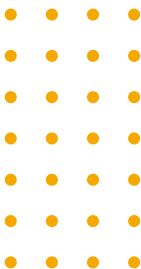
Lifesaving Community Collaboration

This year, Public Safety partnered closely with the City of Portland to expand campus-wide access to Narcan, ensuring this critical lifesaving resource is available not only to police and Health Services, but throughout the broader USM community. Through this collaboration, we placed Narcan in high-visibility, easily accessible locations across campus, empowering students, staff, and visitors to respond quickly in the event of an opioid overdose. By utilizing Portland’s established distribution channels and community health expertise, USM implemented this initiative in a highly budget-friendly way—maximizing impact while minimizing cost. This effort reflects one of Maine’s greatest strengths: the power of community collaboration. Together with our city partners, we have advanced a practical, compassionate, and locally grounded approach to harm reduction that strengthens the wellbeing of our entire campus.



Homegrown Safety Innovation

Building on last year’s successful collaboration, Public Safety continues to partner with the Maker Innovation Studio TEAM (MIST) Lab on the Portland Campus to develop cost-effective, campus-made solutions that directly support our operational needs. The MIST Lab previously designed and produced custom mounting systems for our Body-Worn Cameras—addressing durability and comfort concerns experienced with commercial products while saving the University significant cost. They also created the department’s Ace Award, showcasing their design and fabrication capabilities. This year, the partnership has continued with new projects focused on enhancing campus safety, including the design and development of clear, intuitive signage and directional aids to ensure community members can quickly locate AEDs and Narcan stations. By leveraging our own in-house expertise, we continue to demonstrate Maine’s strengths in innovation, collaboration, and resourceful problem-solving.





Cultivate Pride in Place

Enhancing Operational Readiness

This year marked a significant step forward in cultivating pride in place with the thoughtful expansion of our Public Safety station. As our responsibilities continue to grow, so too does our obligation to ensure we have the space, tools, and environment required to take care of our campus community. The expansion allowed us to create a more functional workspace for our team while also establishing a dedicated **Emergency Operations Center**, a critical asset for managing major incidents and providing a centralized hub for the University’s emergency management committee. We were also able to create a soft interview suite which is dedicated to interviews where individuals feel comfortable without the “feel” of a police station. This suite is offered to other campus community partners who may need to avail of it to meaningfully engage with the community. Importantly, this move was completed at minimal cost, using upcycled furniture and materials from other campus transitions, reflecting our commitment to stewardship, resourcefulness, and sustainability.



Legacy in Leadership

Understanding our past and honoring it in the present are essential to building a sense of belonging and pride in our shared place. This year, the Department of Public Safety took steps to recognize the history, leadership, and legacy that have shaped who we are today.

As part of this effort, the department initiated the process to formally name the street adjacent to the Public Safety building in Gorham in honor of former Chief of Police Ronald G. Saindon. Prior to 2023, Chief Saindon led the department as Chief of Police and served the University of Southern Maine for nearly three decades. His commitment to community policing, mentorship, and compassionate service left an enduring mark on both the department and the broader university community. Rising through every rank—from patrol officer to Director and Chief of Police—his leadership embodied the values of fairness, integrity, and care that continue to guide our work today. The naming of the street does more than mark a location; it serves as a daily reminder of the standards and values we strive to uphold going forward.





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Thank You

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Thank you also to our employees for your continued hard work and dedication throughout the past year. Your passion and perseverance have been essential to our progress, and you should be proud of what you have accomplished together.

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