



# VALENCIA COLLEGE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Located at 8600 Valencia College Lane in Orlando, a little more than a mile from Valencia's East Campus, the [Valencia College School of Public Safety](#) provides comprehensive education, training and resources for our communities' first responders and emergency personnel — helping Central Florida maintain the finest public safety services to protect its record tourism and growing residential population.

## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT:

### SCHOOL OF PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAMS

The School of Public Safety has three major program areas: [Criminal Justice](#), [Fire Rescue](#), and [Safety and Security](#).

The next generation of public safety professionals are trained using state-of-the-art technology and the latest in fire command and tactical simulation training. By offering programs for firefighters, law enforcement, corrections, and security under one umbrella, Valencia elevates and unifies training standards across all disciplines of public safety. This interdisciplinary approach promotes cross-sector training and collaboration between public safety agencies to help make our communities safer — both in times of crisis and while maintaining peace.

## HIGHLIGHTS

- On December 17, 2014, Valencia's Criminal Justice Institute was officially renamed, and the School of Public Safety was established.
- The School of Public Safety (SPS) serves 36 public safety agencies in Orange and Osceola counties, which includes more than 3,700 law enforcement officers, nearly 1,900 corrections officers and over 2,900 firefighters.
- Each year, SPS serves approximately 4,600 students across all public safety programs: degrees, industry certifications, advanced/specialized training and leadership development.



- Currently, an Orange County Sheriff's sergeant, an Orange County corrections officer, an Orlando police officer and a Florida Department of Juvenile Justice officer are assigned to the School of Public Safety to coordinate state certification academy programs in law enforcement, corrections and juvenile detention.
- In a partnership with the Orange County Sheriff's Office and the Orange County Fire Rescue Department, students use the firearms range, driving range, physical assessment course, fire command simulator and tactical simulator, all owned and operated by these Orange County agencies.
- The Public Safety Leadership Development Certification is the "flagship" program at SPS. Since 2013, SPS has partnered with the Continuing Education Department to host 19 classes to

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nearly 500 sworn and civilian supervisors and managers in 40 regional fire rescue, corrections, police, juvenile detention and private security agencies. Through collaboration, the University of Central Florida offers six credits toward a master's degree in a graduate certificate created by its Criminal Justice Department, exclusively for students in Valencia's Public Safety Leadership Development Certification program.

- The School of Public Safety is deeply invested in our community and serves on the Tri-County Alliance on Human Trafficking, the Orange County Opioid Advisory Committee, Central Florida Crimeline, the Creating a Resilient Community Network, and UCF advisory boards.

- In fall 2020, after the heightened conflict in the community after the George Floyd incident in Minneapolis, the School of Public Safety assembled a 30-member community taskforce in partnership with Valencia's [Peace and Justice Institute](#). The Equitable and Just Policing Education and Training Taskforce reviewed the College's training and education for police officers, and in spring 2021, the taskforce developed the working theory that "Public Safety is what the community experiences," and made recommendations for law enforcement academy training, community collaboration and partnerships, and the public safety workforce. The recommendations are currently being implemented in the School of Public Safety's Impact Plan.



*Fire Rescue*



*Safety and Security*



*Criminal Justice*



*Fire and Situational Simulators*

## PLACEMENT RATES\* AND AVERAGE ANNUAL EARNINGS

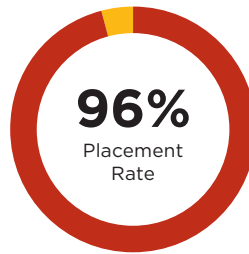
### Correctional Officer Academy

Average Annual Earnings  
\$52,428



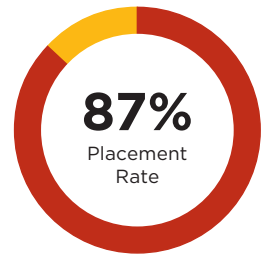
### Law Enforcement Officer Academy

Average Annual Earnings  
\$50,796

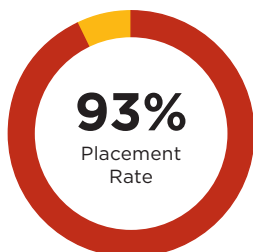


### Fire Fighter Academy

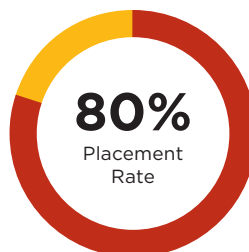
Average Annual Earnings  
\$45,000



**A.S. Criminal Justice**  
Average Annual Earnings  
\$34,284



**A.S. Fire Science Technology**  
Average Annual Earnings  
\$57,184



*\*Placement Rates based on the total number of individuals found employed, continuing education or in the military according to the most recent Florida Education and Training Placement Information Program (FETPIP) data.*

**STUDENT SPOTLIGHT:**  
**JACOB STEARNS**

**From Marine to Orange County Sheriff Deputy, Jacob Stearns has triumphed over his tribulations.**

Currently serving as a school resource officer at Westridge Middle School, the path to becoming an Orange County Sheriff was not easy for Jacob. In 2007, he joined the United States Marine Corp as an infantry machine gunner. While on a combat tour in Afghanistan, Jacob stepped on an improvised explosive device and lost his right leg below the knee

Refusing to give up on his dreams, Jacob was able to qualify for the Paralympic powerlifting team, only two years into his recovery.

Believing in himself and chasing his dream to become a law enforcement officer, in 2018, Jacob joined the Orange County Sheriff's Office and was enrolled in the Basic Law Enforcement Academy at the School of Public Safety. While enrolled in this academy, Jacob actually performed at a higher level than over half of his class. For his inaugural 1.5-mile run, Jacob finished in 14 minutes, and for his final 1.5 mile run the week prior to graduation, he finished in 12 minutes.

Shortly after starting the academy, he realized that his prosthetic leg was not designed to handle the effects of doing dozens of jumping jacks. True to his character and will to succeed, Jacob had his physician make a design change to the prosthetic, which allowed him to successfully complete the required exercises.



On October 25, 2018, Jacob graduated from Valencia's Basic Law Enforcement Academy and was the first amputee to be sworn in as an Orange County Sheriff's Deputy. Before his assignment to Westridge Middle School as a school resource officer, Deputy Stearns was initially assigned to patrol in Sector 4 in Orange County, which included the areas from North Colonial Drive to I-4 West to East Semoran Blvd., and the Orange/Osceola County line.

In October 2021, Deputy Stearns was presented the [Fox 35 Care Force Award](#) in recognition of his hard work, commitment and being an inspiration within the community.

