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PITTSBURGH—Lt. Mike Shippey's seen it all in half a lifetime as a police officer.

Homicides and narcotics were part of his daily routine for 25 years with the Pittsburgh Police Department, he says. Now, as a policeman at Duquesne University, his daily encounters are less severe, but they never cease to amaze him. On a college campus, his calls are often alcohol-related.

"I've seen girls vomit, you know, and then they roll around and it's caked in their hair," Shippey says. "Drunks sitting in urinals... If you could see yourself when you're sober."

But Shippey, 54, reflects on his experiences in a heartwarming manner. He loves being a police officer.

"That's what I always wanted to be," Shippey says. "It's an exciting job. I get to help people. It's like counseling."

After more than 30 years as a police officer, six of which have been spent at Duquesne, Shippey, 54, has made a career of solving problems. There's nothing he'd rather do now than help usher students into their professional lives. It's his preferred approach to counseling.

"With the city, it's always a serious call. You're just putting a band-aid on the problem. Here, you're fixing the problem. Here, you're helping [students] become more productive members of society," Shippey says.

Shippey says interacting with students is a significant reason why he enjoys his job at Duquesne so much. Given his personal background, he couldn't be more qualified as a student mentor. He's the father of eight daughters, aged between 13 and 26 years.

Shippey's role at home translates well to his workplace in Duquesne's Police Department.

"It's like my kids, when they screw up, you leave 'em know that was stupid, but we love you, we care about you," Shippey says.

As the Police Department's Accreditation Manager, Shippey has also taken great strides to make the University's campus a safer place. He is working to improve the level of training for University police officers through an alliance with the Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association, a non-profit organization that provides more than 1200 of its statewide members with a variety of police mentoring services.

“We want to meet standards of professionalism,” Shippey says.

Shippey, whose job involves a bit of office work, is also taking advantage of Duquesne students’ favorite website. Blackboard is now a fixture in Police Department procedures. They use the online academic suite to conduct certain training and testing procedures with officers. It’s modernized his officers’ understanding of department policies and it’s cost-effective, he says.

Shippey’s proud of the work he’s done, but he’s soft-spoken and humble, remarkably dedicated to serving others. His overall satisfaction with his current job may also be influenced by Duquesne’s constant presence in his life. Five of Shippey’s eight daughters either attend or have attended the University. And years prior to coming to Duquesne as a police officer in 2004, he had been a student at the University, a 1987 graduate from the School of Law.

“It’s a good place to work. There’s a sense of community,” says Shippey. “I always liked the fact that [Duquesne] had a Catholic identity.”

Before Duquesne, Shippey’s professional life consisted of service for the University of Pittsburgh Campus Police, Carnegie Mellon University Police, and the Pittsburgh Police Department. His memories from 25 years with the City Police have a special place in his heart, but six and one-half years ago, Shippey wanted a change of scenery. His body, he says, was ready for a new, revised daily routine.

“You don’t heal as quickly when you get older,” he laughs.

Nevertheless, a quarter-century of experience as a Pittsburgh policeman, Shippey says, was worth it. It’s invaluable to his current position at Duquesne.

“We’re here to protect the students,” he says of the Police Department’s role at Duquesne. “Hopefully, I can take my experience with the city and bring it [to Duquesne] for these officers to learn from.”