

January 25, 2019

*Local news. Local stories.
Local advertisers.*

A TURLEY PUBLICATION | www.turley.com

HCC welcomes new public safety director

HOLYOKE – Laura L. Lefebvre of Worthington became the new director of public safety at Holyoke Community College.

Lefebvre, a seasoned investigator, has more than 30 years of law enforcement experience, most recently as senior sergeant in the campus police department at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts in North Adams.

She is the first woman to serve as chief of police at HCC.

PUBLIC SAFETY, 7

PUBLIC SAFETY, *from page 1*

"I'm not unaccustomed to being the first woman," said Lefebvre. "There's a lot of firsts under my belt."

Lefebvre, 56, got her start with the Hialeah Police Department in Dade County, Florida. She began as a patrol officer in 1986, then one of only four women in the 450-person department. She worked in the juvenile sexual battery unit investigating child abuse cases before becoming the first woman assigned to the robbery division. She later moved into homicide as a detective during the era captured in the TV series "Miami Vice."

"We didn't drive great sports cars and we didn't dress really well, but that was the time," she said. "Miami was crazy and fast. The drug trade was high. There were a lot of homicides."

One of her most memorable cases was captured on an episode of the true-crime documentary series "Forensic Files" called "Tourist Trap" (Season 8, Episode 6), where Lefebvre used bite mark evidence to help convict a man who had carjacked and robbed two German

tourists at Miami International Airport, one of a rash of such crimes at the time.

Lefebvre retired from the Hialeah Police Department in 1999 and then moved to western Massachusetts with her husband, Gary, also a retired police officer and two small children, Spencer and Emily, now adults.



Laura Lefebvre

She then spent a few years as an officer with the Hadley Police Department and a police lieutenant at Westfield State University. Before going to MCLA, where she was the first woman sergeant, she worked for 11 years as a fraud investigator for the National Insurance Crime Bureau and the insurance giant Unum.

Throughout her career she has been a field-training officer, teaching at police academies in Florida, Massachusetts, New York and Vermont.

She holds a bachelor's degree from MCLA in interdisciplinary studies in business and sociology and will complete her master's degree in education at MCLA this May.

"I'm a big advocate of professional development," she said. "We should be learning constantly. I'm a lifelong learner. Everybody should be."