Assistant Chief of Police Major Gerald (Jerry) Tolson passed away on November 19, 2012 after a brief illness. At the time of his passing, he was surrounded by his family and several friends.

Chief Tolson came to NOVA in 2005 with an extensive background in law enforcement. He graduated from the Rappahannock Regional Criminal Justice Academy in 1981 and served as a patrol officer in the towns of Quantico and Dumfries. He became a deputy in Stafford County and later in Prince William County. He returned to the Town of Quantico where he served as the Chief of Police for five years until he joined the NOVA Police Department. Chief Tolson was always committed to public safety, also having served as a dispatcher, a fire fighter, and an Emergency Medical Technician.

During his law enforcement career, Chief Tolson mastered every aspect of policing. He was certified in many areas, including: general, firearms, and driving instructor; rescue diver; hostage negotiator; homicide investigator; dispatcher; and crime scene investigation.

His vast experience, people skills, attention to detail, and dedication were responsible for his rapid rise in the department from patrol officer at the Medical Education Campus, to sergeant at Alexandria, to Lieutenant responsible for police operations department-wide, and eventually to Assistant Chief overseeing all the department’s day-to-day activities.

“Jerry was the heart and soul of the NOVA Police Department”, said Chief Dan Dusseau. “He was the finest officer with whom I’ve ever served, and was the driving force in the continuing evolution of the NOVA Police Department into a professional agency that is well respected throughout the National Capital Region.”
Gone, But Never Forgotten (cont’d)

His stature in the department and throughout the Northern Virginia first responder community was demonstrated by the hundreds of mourners at his funeral on November 26. At the service, President Templin delivered a touching eulogy. (Check pages 5 and 6 for additional photographs of Major Tolson’s memorial service.)

Chief Tolson, a native of Northern Virginia, came from a large family, with a brother and six sisters. He is survived by his wife, Kathy, a law enforcement officer; and his three children: Kaitlin, a college freshman; Lauren, a high school junior; and Gavin, a fifth grader.

Jerry leaves behind many friends in the NOVA community. Friends may donate to the Jerry Tolson Memorial Fund, established by the NOVA Educational Foundation, by sending a check (with “Jerry Tolson” on the memo line) to:

Jerry Tolson Memorial Fund
NVCC Educational Foundation
7630 Little River Turnpike, Suite 817
Annandale, VA 22003

On-line donations will be accepted at http://www.nvcc.edu/foundation/. Click the pledge link; indicate Jerry Tolson in description.)

Rest in peace, Jerry.

Property Protection At NOVA

Larcenies are among the most frequent and persistent crimes on campus because items such as laptops and textbooks can be converted to quick cash at area pawn shops. Wallets and the information they contain represent a treasure trove for identity thieves. To protect your property, please observe the following tips:

General Protection:

- Do not leave your possessions unattended, especially in the library, classrooms, or eating areas. A backpack or purse further away than arm’s length is unattended.
- Write and store product serial numbers in a safe place.
- Write your name or unique identifying information on your property. (Contact NOVA’s Crime Prevention Officer, tong@nvcc.edu, to assist you in marking your property.)

Cell Phone Protection:

- Always be aware of your surroundings. Thieves may be watching you.
- Use your cell phone security lock.
- Avoid becoming distracted by your cell phone conversation or texting when walking.
- Keep your cell phone out of site. Don’t hang it from your purse of jacket.
- Switch the ringer off to avoid attracting the attention of thieves.
- Never lend your cell phone to strangers. In case of an emergency, offer to make the call for them.
- If your phone is lost or stolen, report the loss immediately to your cell phone service provider and the police.
Property Protection At NOVA (cont’d)

Vehicle Protection:

- Park in well-lighted areas and check your vehicle before entering it.
- Close all windows, lock all doors immediately upon entering your vehicle.
- Activate any theft deterrent device you may have.
- Leave valuables not needed for daily activities out of sight (preferably in the trunk) in your vehicle.
- Do not leave license, registration or title in car. If recovered, thieves can use these documents to sell your car, or to impersonate you if they are challenged by police. Owners who leave keys, registrations and other identifying materials in their vehicles may return to their residence only to find they have been burglarized.

Safety At NOVA

The NOVA Police Department offers many resources to the NOVA community to keep it secure and safe. One of our missions is to provide relevant training toward this end. Below are lists of some past training classes along with available NOVA resources. NOVA Police work closely with our community to respond to safety concerns and to find new ways to combat crime and improve safety. We invite you to share any concerns you have as well as recommended corrective actions. We will compile your concerns and discuss what we are doing in future newsletters. Please submit your suggestions to tong@nvcc.edu.

Remember: You are the eyes and ears of NOVA!

NOVA Police Outreach Training: (If you wish to schedule this training, contact tong@nvcc.edu)

- How to deal with difficult people
- How to stay safe at NOVA
- Active shooter response
- Clery Act training
- SAFE – Women’s self-defense training
- Identity theft
- Gang awareness
- Property protection workshops
- Drugs, alcohol, and substance abuse
- Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, and Stalking workshops

Other Safety Resources:

- Monthly public safety newsletter that provides updates and relevant information on NOVA safety, http://www.nvcc.edu/current-students/police/psnewsletters/index.html
- College safety videos, http://www.nvcc.edu/police/or/emergency
- Security assessments on selected campus areas, Tong@nvcc.edu
- Police escorts to vehicle, (703) 764-5000
- Emergency call boxes located in parking lots, garages, and inside buildings
- NOVA Alert, http://alert.nvcc.edu
- 24/7 Dispatch, (703) 764-5000
- NOVA emergency radio broadcast, 1630 AM
Recent Police Outreach—Training Workshop & Red Flag Campaign

In November, NOVA Police worked with the off-campus organization SAVE [Stop Abuse, Victim Empowerment], NOVA’s Sexual Assault Services [SAS], and NOVA’s Office of Pregnant and Parenting Student Support [OPPSS] to educate the NOVA community on sexual assault, domestic violence and stalking issues.

Attendees at each of NOVA’s six campuses ranged from individuals who had little to no knowledge on the topics to primary and secondary survivors. Guest speakers Christi Adams (President) and Ashley Adams (Vice President), the founders SAVE, a non-profit organization created to provide financial, emotional and spiritual support for victims and survivors of domestic violence, addressed seminar participants at the Alexandria and Annandale campuses. Christi talked of her experiences as a domestic violence survivor and, with her sister, identified the resources and forms of support she found most helpful during her healing process. The women answered questions and counseled students individually.

The NOVA Police provided training on the legal definitions of these crimes and their penalties. Also discussed was the importance of reporting these crimes to police and misconceptions regarding police involvement and statistics.

Both OPPSS and SAS discussed the importance of having immediate low/no-cost support available to victims and survivors. They informed participants of many available free and confidential resources, both on and off campus, and helped attendees learn how to recognize when someone may be in danger or in need of assistance. NOVA Police hope to repeat these seminars in the future and thanks all attended.

Throughout October, NOVA celebrated a Red Flag Campaign at all six campuses. This campaign provided information on intimate partner abuse. Each campus selected a Red Flag week and then chose specific activities to raise issue awareness. Each campus had an outdoor display of small red flags with the campaign’s slogans, a poster display, and information tables with handouts on intimate partner violence and what we can do to assist victims. Alexandria’s intimate partner workshop was led by Shannon McGregor from the Alexandria Community & Human Services Center for Children and Families. Alexandria also sponsored a student poster contest. Annandale held an Aikido demonstration to promote a sense of student strength and well-being.
Major Tolson’s Memorial Service
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