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Scranton Police Department Announces Historic Training and Education Partnership with Lackawanna College

SCRANTON, PA. - Scranton Police Chief Thomas Carroll and Lackawanna College Police Academy Director Kevin Mahoney today announced a historic collaboration between the Scranton Police Department (SPD) and Lackawanna College that will significantly enhance police cadet training while expanding higher-education opportunities for members of the Department.

Under the agreement, police cadets from Lackawanna College's Scranton and Hazleton campuses will gain access to the City of Scranton's cutting-edge, state-of-the-art training technology, including the Axon Virtual Reality systems and the MILO 180-degree immersive range theater, a state-of-the-art, multi-screen training system designed to deliver highly realistic, scenario-based firearms and use-of-force training. The partnership will also expose cadets to modern law-enforcement tools such as unmanned aerial systems (drones), advanced forensic technology, and contemporary tactical equipment, ensuring graduates are prepared for the evolving demands of 21st-century policing.

"We have made it a priority to invest in public safety and ensure our police officers have the tools, technology, and training they need to do their jobs safely and effectively," Scranton Mayor Paige G. Cagnetti said. "Through this collaboration with Lackawanna College, we are creating a direct pipeline for the next generation of officers to learn, grow, and serve at the highest level while also strengthening opportunities for the dedicated men and women already serving in the Scranton Police Department. Scranton is setting the national standard for how a modern police department trains, educates, and supports its officers. We have backed up our commitment to public safety with real investments, modernizing equipment, upgrading our fleet, expanding the force, and ensuring our officers have the support they need to succeed. I am incredibly proud of the Scranton Police Department and the work they do every day. This partnership builds on that momentum and reinforces something I believe in deeply: When we invest in our officers and their training, we are investing in safer neighborhoods and a stronger Scranton."

Since taking office, Mayor Cagnetti's administration has invested more than \$5 million total into the police department, including \$3.5 million in federal grants for police safety equipment and another \$1.5 million invested into the SPD vehicle fleet, with public safety as an essential goal.

"At Lackawanna College, we're focused on driving progress in Scranton, providing the training and educational pathways that help our students find success right at home while building a strong talent pipeline for our local workforce. Our partnership with the Scranton Police Department is a reflection of that commitment," said Dr. Jill A. Murray, President and Chief

Innovation Officer at Lackawanna College. “This program will bring valuable, hands-on learning experiences to our police cadets, ensuring they can confidently begin their careers and make an immediate impact. It also allows us to create new pathways for Police Department members and their families to pursue meaningful degrees and unlock growth opportunities.”

Through the partnership, Lackawanna College will provide four (4) full scholarships annually to members of the SPD. In addition, tuition discounts will be extended to all Department employees and their dependents, reinforcing a shared commitment to lifelong learning and professional development.

“This collaboration is truly a win-win for our officers, future officers, and the community we serve,” said Chief Carroll. “We’re not only delivering the most advanced police services available, but we’re also opening doors to higher education that will benefit our officers and their families for years to come.”

Lackawanna College police cadets will also have the opportunity to participate in ride-along programs with the SPD, providing valuable real-world exposure to patrol operations and community policing initiatives.

“This partnership represents a major step forward in how we prepare future officers for the realities of modern law enforcement,” said Kevin Mahoney, Director of Lackawanna College Police Academy. “By combining advanced technology, realistic training environments, and strong academic support, we are setting a new standard for excellence and professionalism in police training.”

Founded in 1977, the Lackawanna College Police Academy has a long-standing reputation for producing highly trained, professional law enforcement officers. The academy offers access to Federal Financial Aid for qualified cadet applicants and GI Bill tuition benefits for military veterans, further underscoring its commitment to accessibility, service, and educational excellence. Prior to joining the Academy in 2021, Director Mahoney served 25 years with the Pennsylvania State Police and retired as the Criminal Investigation Section Commander for Troop R, Dunmore.

The Scranton Police Department is the largest accredited police department in northeastern Pennsylvania. Chief Carroll is a 29-year veteran of the Department and has championed the integration of advanced law enforcement technology, including body-worn cameras, modern patrol vehicles, real-time data systems, and enhanced training tools, to improve officer safety, operational efficiency, and public trust.

Officials from both organizations emphasized that the partnership reflects a shared mission to invest in training, education, and innovation—ultimately strengthening public safety and the quality of policing throughout the region.

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ABOUT THE CITY OF SCRANTON: Incorporated in 1866, the City of Scranton has a population of approximately 76,000 residents and is the sixth-largest municipality in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Scranton City Hall is located at 340 N. Washington Ave., Scranton, PA 18503. Residents requiring services should visit www.scrantonpa.gov.

ABOUT MAYOR PAIGE G. COGNETTI: Paige G. Cagnetti was sworn in as the 36th Mayor of Scranton in January 2020 and took her third Oath of Office in January 2026. Her administration is focused on public safety, driving economic growth, upgrading infrastructure, government transparency and efficiency, and improving residents' overall quality of life.

ABOUT LACKAWANNA COLLEGE: Founded in 1894, Lackawanna College is the largest private, non-profit, open-enrollment institution in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, dedicated to delivering high-quality education and empowering individuals in their pursuit of personal growth and community enrichment. The College offers over 60 academic programs, including bachelor's degrees, associate degrees, and continuing education and professional certificates. In addition, Lackawanna College is committed to workforce development, educating and preparing workers for advancement in fields such as healthcare, finance, technology and the trades.

Along with its main Scranton campus, the College's geographic reach extends across nine other locations across Pennsylvania and online. In 2024, Lackawanna College announced its intent to merge with Peirce College, based in Philadelphia. On June 30, 2025, the merger was approved by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education, and the two institutions have since entered the integration phase required by the U.S. Department of Education. Lackawanna College is a nine-time recipient of the "Best Places to Work" recognition and was named a "Great College to Work For" in 2023, 2024 and 2025. In 2021, Lackawanna College was recognized as one of the "World's Most Innovative Companies" by Fast Company and as one of the "Fastest-Growing Private, Nonprofit Colleges" by The Chronicle of Higher Education. The College remains focused on delivering accessible and practical education for individuals seeking to better their lives and contribute positively to their communities. To learn more, visit lackawanna.edu.