

lookingback

after 28 years of presidential visits, car fires and flooded hallways retiring Public Safety Officer Rodney Hampton looks back.



Jennifer Branch (left) and Hampton reminisce on crazy moments they experienced while working with Public Safety



Hampton walks the halls of the McAninch Art Center, the construction of which he saw during his time here.

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oing through the hallways of K Building Sgt. Rodney Hampton points out what used to be where. "This used to be the board room," said Hampton, pointing to room K 161. It's shortly after midnight, Wednesday morning. Hampton, who's affectionately called 'the duck' by his coworkers because of the way he walks, is working the night shift, 11pm to 7am. One of the responsibilities of the night shift is to walk through each building and lock them up until the next day begins. Hampton goes on, "This is where the cashier's window used to be," gesturing towards a piece of wall across from the plant shop; the lines still visible from the window.

In December Hampton will be the first officer to ever chose to retire from Public Safety. He is the only officer on the force to be awarded The Medal of Merit which is given to on or off duty officer displaying courage and the Medal of Honor from the Boy Scouts for saving someone's life while at terrible risk to self. A twenty eight year veteran of Public Safety, Hampton is more eager to talk about the history of the college rather than his own. His coworkers aren't as modest. "He's just got a heart of gold, he always willing to lend an ear," said Dispatcher Jennifer Branch. "He has really grown up through the college," Branch went on to say, referring to Hampton's years as a student. Hampton began class in 1974 before he decided to join

the department in 1979. Hampton always planned on being an officer when he started school, he just wasn't sure where. "I always told myself that I would stay with the place that first hired me for at least a few years," Hampton said as he locked one of the doors to the MAC. One thing Hampton rightfully takes pride in his the amount of technical advancements he spear-headed while at the department. Rodney was a major factor in installing and maintaining the equipment on almost every squad car in the department as well as the addition of a closed circuit television system for the campus. Aside from tending to his horses Hampton plans on working part time with another department after retirement.

**Photos and Story by Russell Augustine
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