

ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE

STATE UNIVERSITIES OF MASSACHUSETTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Association of Chiefs of Police of the State Universities of Massachusetts (ACOP) strongly supports the Police Department at the Massachusetts College of Art and Design (MCAD) in its bid for MCAD police officers to be armed.

Like all police officers within the Massachusetts state university system, MCAD police officers have statutory law enforcement authority – including the power to make arrests – that is in every way identical to the authority of municipal police. MCAD officers wear standard police uniforms and perform a full range of police duties.

Especially in this day and age, it is imperative that all police officers be armed. The proposition that police officers should – indeed, must – be armed is beyond dispute: an unarmed police officer is unable to protect anyone in a critical situation, not least the officer him- or herself. Indeed, even the phrase “unarmed police officer” is oxymoronic. Arming is more than just a “best practice,” it is a necessity in today’s world.

But because police officers at colleges and universities are often euphemistically referred to as “campus” police officers, the arming issue has become confused. In the minds of some, “campus” police officers are equated with security, not law enforcement. But this kind of thinking is misleading and even dangerous. In reality, there are no “campus” police officers: there are only police officers.

MCAD police officers are bona fide, professional law enforcement officers; and like all other police officers throughout the country, they should have the tools they need to protect themselves and their community. They must be armed.

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