New Chief of Police settles in his new nest

Brianna Wallen
News Editor



PHOTO | BRIANNA WALLEN

Police Chief Makiem Miller in his office at the university Police Department on Aug. 6.

While there are new faces on campus and a new freshman class, there is also a new addition to the university Police Department. On June 7, Makiem Miller was sworn in as the fourth Chief of Police and Director of Public Safety.

Miller, who was born and raised in West Haven, retired in 2016 from the New Haven Police Department where he served 20 years.

As a new Owl, Miller spent his time last spring getting acclimated to the university setting.

"I got time to meet a lot of the faculty and staff, so it was a lot easier to move around, learn the campus, attend some events, attend some meetings," Miller said. "It was at a much lower pace, which gave me time to adjust a little better."

Despite his recent arrival, Miller is ready to get the ball rolling.

"From the inside, we're looking at hiring. We're looking to add about three or four men and women to the force, and some promotions from officer to sergeant," Miller said.

These plans also include adding entry-level officers to the police academy and hiring a few lateral officers to the force.

Miller also has external plans to enhance the community events.

"We have a big Trunk or Treat event and sports team events coming up, so we'll be setting up some community tables, a lot of stuff for just our presence, also for recruitment purposes, and just having that interaction with the community," Miller said.

The university chief places high emphasis on community, as he said that he wants staff and students to have a connection with the department and be aware of their presence on campus.

"We want to be invited to things," Miller said. "We see the same people every day, just like you all see each other every day, so we want to be part of that."

After learning about a new police chief, students are open to meeting him at upcoming events.

Business major Juwell Clay, a sophomore, said that she trusts the department regarding her safety.

"I haven't met the new chief yet, but I do. I feel secure that campus police will keep me safe," Clay said.

As Miller adjusts to campus, the department must be acclimated to a wave of change, too.

Administrative Assistant for the university Police Department Tonya Nelson is not new to change. Nelson has been in the department on campus for 37 years and has seen many position changes.

Nelson said that the department is still in the transition process.

"We're getting used to how he likes things, and he's getting used to how things run here," Nelson said.

The administrative assistant said that she hopes the department continues to flourish under the new chief.

"I hope the department continues to grow under his leadership because we've come a long way from when I first started working here, and we're going in the right direction," Nelson said.

With confidence from Nelson and Miller, it is exciting to see what the future holds for the department and university.

"I feel very confident that it's going to be a good year," Miller said.

New construction project is underway at Chase Hall

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As the Owls returned, they observed a notable change on campus. There is construction being done behind Chase Hall.

Beginning in the first week of August, the university underwent a project to correct the water pipes for the residence halls near the residence quad.

"The pipes that are in the ground, we can't use that right now because they're broken. They're cracked, so they had to do a big project on that," Chase Residence Hall Director Juwan Givens said.

The pipes are inoperable, so the trailers located near the residence halls are their primary source of heated water.

"Once the pipes are fixed, everyone will be able to have hot water and everything from them," Givens said.

Despite the construction site's location, the project benefits all the halls surrounding Chase Hall. This includes Wilkinson Hall, Farnham Hall, Neff Hall and Hickerson Hall.

Their goal is to solve the ongoing water temperature issues that derived from the damaged pipes.

"Last year, we noticed there had been a couple issues. Sometimes, the water would be cold, and it would just be a struggle," Givens said. "I think that's when they noticed that this is a deeper problem."

Nursing major Simone Dwyer, a sophomore, was a resident in Chase Hall last semester.

Dwyer said that while living there she had experienced multiple problems with the water.

"At times, the water was great, but then there were times when there was cold water for 2 to 3 days," Dwyer said.

Dwyer, who is now a resident of West Campus Residence Complex, said that she is proud that the water issue is now being solved, as she used to be frustrated with her living situation.

"I had to walk to Farnham or Wilk to shower in warm water, and I feel like I shouldn't have to do that," Dwyer said. "It is an inconvenience to bring my shower caddy and towel to another hall when I should have hot water in the building I am paying a lot of money to stay in."

Residents currently in Chase Hall face similar issues with the water.

Sociology and criminal justice major Jashaun Lee, a freshman, said: "Sometimes, it would be way more cold than hot while I'm in the shower."

With many complaints from residents, it is no surprise that they are eager for the new pipes to be put into action.

"Once the project is complete, residents will be able to enjoy some nice hot showers and won't have to worry about cold water," Givens said.

The project is estimated to be completed by January of 2025. Until then, Givens recommends that residents alert their hall director if they face any issues.

"If you have any issues with your water, just let your hall director know, and they'll fix it right away," Givens said.



PHOTO | BRIANNA WALLEN

Construction project located behind Chase Hall on Aug. 6.



Trailer located beside Chase Hall.

SOUTHERN NEWS

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