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## Professor of the Week—Dr. James Schaefer

Contributed by Abigail Faber  
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Dr. James Schaefer has been an assistant professor for criminal justice and fire science here at Lake Superior State University for a little over a year; he started teaching at LSSU in August of last year. When asked why he came to LSSU to teach he said, "It is my alma mater. I enjoy being here... the weather, the sports, the area is all welcoming." Dr. Schaefer also commented on enjoying his time here on campus. "The small size of the campus and the good student to teacher ratio is what is most exciting," Dr. Schaefer said.

Dr. James Schaefer began his work in the army. After the military, he came to LSSU and received his BA in fire science. He then went on to join one of Ohio's fire departments and while doing so, received his masters and PHD for fire science at the University of Toledo. Schaefer stayed in Ohio for 13 years, working as a firefighter, and followed by coming to Lake State to teach. When asked why he chose fire science to begin with he told me that he really likes the department. Dr. Schaefer commented saying, "I am in fire science because I love the profession. I grew tired of the ambulance and wanted to stay in fire science without going on medical runs."

When asked about life as a firefighter, whether one always lives in the firehouse, whether the job is frightening, or about other matters, Schaefer told me that everything depends on the fire department. Normally you only live in the fire house when you are on duty, and fire fighters are usually on duty for about 24 hours at a time, then off for about a total of 48 hours. He also stated that, in his opinion, firefighting usually isn't especially scary — though it can be, given the right (or perhaps wrong) situation.

Students who are in the fire science program can complete a bachelor's degree in about 4 years. Professors in the fire science program, Dr. James Schaefer included, educate their students on being the future of the fire science program and how to work well with each other. All of the professors want the fire students to understand that they will one day be the leaders. Dr. Schaefer made it clear that they do not just teach their students what it takes to be a fire fighter, but also how to be a leader. On the other hand, fire students do work with some things, like fire streams--the hydraulics of the water hose.

When students graduate from LSSU with a fire science degree, it is possible for them to go straight into a job. Dr. James Schaefer even commented, "I like to see our students go into a job...I think it's how exciting it was when I started my first job in the fire science."

Dr. Schaefer wanted to tell his students, especially his younger students, that they need to be patient and that, "Eventually the degree will matter. The learning is not as hands on as the students would like it to be, but what you do is just as important."