



## **POLICE DEPARTMENT NEWS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: July 28, 2011

Contact: Lt. Kevin Gunter

The Chapel Hill Police Department announces the creation of a new Public Information Sergeant position as well as the launch of its presence on Facebook and Twitter. Sgt. Joshua Mecimore will be responsible for disseminating information to the public via social media platforms, as well as more traditional media formats. In addition, Sgt. Mecimore will be assisting Lt. Kevin Gunter with daily public information and media inquiries. Sgt. Mecimore has worked for the Chapel Hill Police Department for 8 years. He has worked on patrol and in the Central Business District. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from Western Carolina University. The creation of his position is part of the department's organizational realignment in support of its strategic plan.

"The potential for a rapid and direct connection to the public is not lost on the Chapel Hill Police Department," said Chief Chris Blue. "We will continue to seek innovative ways to connect with our community."

The most recent published information suggests that nearly half a billion people regularly use Facebook, while Twitter has over 200 million users. Social media platforms can help law enforcement agencies reach a large and diverse audience. Among other uses, Facebook and Twitter can be used to disseminate press releases, report on road closures due to collisions or weather related issues, provide suspect information, educate the community with prevention tips and crime trends, promote events, act as a recruiting tool and allow for quick two-way dialogue with readers.

The police department will continue to fine tune their communications as they learn what aspects of social media are most beneficial to members of the community

The Chapel Hill Police Department can be found on Facebook and Twitter at:

[www.facebook.com/chapelhillpd](http://www.facebook.com/chapelhillpd)

and

[www.twitter.com/chapelhillpd](http://www.twitter.com/chapelhillpd)