



American Criminal Justice Association Lambda Upsilon Nu

Loyola University New Orleans

Stalling Hall, Box 42

6363 Saint Charles Avenue

New Orleans, LA 70118

504-865-2694

Email: lun@loyno.edu

History of the American Criminal Justice Association

The American Criminal Justice Association has come a long way since its beginning in the 1920's. Before this time, there was no actual training for police and law enforcement officers. However, a man named August Vollmer began to study various aspects of policing and criminology. As his studies progressed, more people became interested in this field. By the 1930's, a small amount of resources had been put together to teach officers about their field at San Jose State College.

In 1937, a school teacher and laboratory expert, Frank Gompert, was appointed chairman of a group of graduates that were studying the probability of establishing a "brotherhood or fraternity". The organization would consist of trained officers that could spread their acquired learning through their participation in the school.

On December 18, 1937, the first meeting of the Association was held with 24 people in attendance. All students and teachers were invited. The first order of business was to write a Constitution. Their charter membership was the Alpha Charter of the Lambda Alpha Epsilon Fraternity. The initiation fee of 10.00 was there dues until July 1939 and could be paid in three monthly installments.

On July 13-15, 1938, the first Annual Convention was held in Lodi, California. The convention drew members from all over the state of California. Many law enforcement executives attended the conference. However, the emergence of additional

chapters begins at the third Annual Convention in 1940. A group of members from Los Angeles petitioned to form a new chapter. On April 25, 1941, the Beta Chapter was established in Los Angeles.

By the next year, many of the members were serving in the military and naval services. Eight years later, LAE discovered that its membership had spread throughout the world on the battlefields. The remaining members at home began to draft new curriculum suggestions for various subjects to be taught, while striving to uphold the goals of LAE.

Upon the end of World War II, veteran members returned home and LAE opened membership to any college graduate that was either employed full-time in a police agency or had completed at least 30 hours of police science with a “B” or better. Between 1945 and 1950, subordinate chapters were established in both San Francisco, the Delta Chapter; in San Jose, the Gamma Chapter; and the Sacramento, the Eta Chapter.

As time passed, LAE grew and changed. In 1952, the establishment of the Zeta chapter brought membership all the way to Indiana. In 1953, the Theta Chapter established a women’s chapter. In 1965, the Annual Convention saw its first formal competitions.

However, it was in 1969 that big changes came to LAE. A permanent National Headquarters was established in Sacramento, California. It was during this time that LAE underwent a reorganization. Meetings were outlined with the number and types to be held; the division of regions was advocated; the election and terms of officers were established; as well as voting procedures, organizational structure, and memberships. Finally, in October of 1970, it was declared that the by-laws had been written. Therefore,

in 1974-1975, the name changed from LAE to ACJA/LAE to reflect its change from a national rather than a local association.