



Following an exhaustive nationwide search, Dallas College announced the appointment of Ruben Puente as chief of public safety and security. Chief Puente brings a wealth of experience in higher education and municipal law enforcement, as well as corporate security.

At Dallas College, Puente is responsible for managing and directing public safety operations and initiatives, including campus safety programs, risk and threat management, campus policing, emergency medical response, emergency preparedness and continuity of operations programs. He oversees a force of more than 150 officers as well as policing at all seven main Dallas College campuses and 15 additional centers and offices.

Puente most recently served as assistant director of police for the University of Texas (UT) System, demonstrating a deep understanding of the safety needs of a higher education environment with multiple campuses. He looks forward to his continued work in campus policing.

“In campus policing, there are many positive interactions with the community we serve,” he said. “The work allows for police visibility, relationship-building and positive results. Campus police make a difference that is felt, not just perceived.” Puente hopes to improve Dallas College policing through new technologies and strategies.

Born and raised in Dallas, he held leadership positions with the Arlington Police Department and the Dallas Area Rapid Transit Police. In the private sector, he has overseen corporate security for Frito Lay North America and Major League Baseball.

“Chief Puente’s extensive experience, combined with his commitment to community engagement, make him the ideal leader for our Public Safety Department,” said Robert Wendland, Dallas College general counsel. “I am confident that under his leadership, we will continue to provide a safe and secure learning environment across our campuses and centers for all students, employees and visitors.”

Wendland thanked Dallas College Interim Chief Herbert Ashford and Interim Assistant Chief Mark Lopez who led the college’s Public Safety Department during the national search process. “Their dedication and commitment ensured the continued safety of our campuses throughout this transition,” Wendland said.

Puente has a Bachelor of Science in criminal justice from the University of Texas at Arlington, a Master of Liberal Arts from Southern Methodist University (SMU) and a Master of Professional Development, criminal justice, from Dallas Baptist University. He is a certified court mediator and completed advanced graduate studies in dispute resolution at SMU. He is also a graduate of the FBI National Academy and attended the Law Enforcement Management Institute of Texas Leadership Command College, Texas Police Leadership Series and Institute for Law Enforcement Administration (ILEA) School of Executive Leadership.

A dedicated volunteer mentor, Puente says it was his own positive interaction helping the police apprehend a criminal as a young teen that led to him becoming an officer. “The officer commented that I might have what it takes

to make a difference. The incident resonated with me, and I'm still trying to make a difference," he said.