

## Security Services Community Relations Patroller

Recent events throughout North America have dispelled the notion that educational institutions are safe havens. At McGill, while security measures such as the installation of card readers and alarm system devices made the campus more secure at night, there remained a need for an increased security presence during the day when students, faculty, and staff are present in greater numbers.

The Community Relations Patroller position was created to address this need. A uniformed security officer now patrols the campus exclusively to visit reception desks, admissions counters, libraries, and other areas where frontline staff are in contact with the McGill community and the public. The officer walks the premises and will not be seen cruising campus on a bike or behind the wheel of a car. More likely, he or she will be standing in a doorway with a smile, asking people how they are doing. The agent's mission is to establish daily contact with university community members and to provide an open channel of communication for safety- and security-related questions or concerns.

The impact of this initiative was immediately realized. Whereas McGill community members usually encountered security personnel *only* in the event of an incident, they now

know the Community Relations Patroller by name and value his or her presence. The Patroller is particularly appreciated on 'summer Fridays' when skeleton staff is working.

The Community Relations Patroller is an important element of the larger public awareness campaign aimed at making security a daily focus. This awareness, education, and understanding not only enable students, faculty, and staff to feel more secure, but are also crucial in the unlikely event of an emergency situation. One patroller summed it up well in a *McGill Reporter* article: "When I first started, I would show up in an office and everyone would say 'What's wrong?' Now, when they see me, they realize it is because something is right."

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