

# Law career not in order

*By Peter Marval*

Many people, at some point in their lives, have dreamed of becoming police officers. For law and security administration students who may be pursuing a career in the police force, that dream may go unrealized.

The Waterloo regional police force, covering Kitchener-Waterloo, Cambridge, Elmira and New Hamburg, will not be accepting applications until the end of July.

The OPP is still accepting applications, but will not be hiring anyone for at least a month, and have already hired 27 people this year.

However, the future is not as bleak as it seems. The field of law is large and encompassing, with most jobs for LASA graduates available in the private sector, says Bob Hays, program co-ordinator and founder of the law and security program.

Hays says private sector investigation is the major program focus. He realizes the days of obtaining a high-paying job after graduation are over. Instead, students will likely have to settle for \$20,000 a year in the private sector.

"It used to be you could come into the college system and do a reasonably good job at the program and waltz out of here making \$25,000 - \$30,000 in the first year," says Hays.

Professions in the private sector, such as private investigation and corporate protection, are some of the fastest growing areas in Canada, says Harry Stavrou, an instructor in the program.

"Essentially, it's the same job the police officer performs, but without the badge and headaches.

"The pay may not be as good at

first, but students must understand that they have to start at the bottom, and with their education and training, they can move up."

Brian King, a LASA graduate in 1978, did just that. In 1984, he and another LASA graduate, Mark Reed, established King Reed and Associates Ltd., a private investigation firm dealing mainly with the insurance industry and patent and trademark infringements.

Twelve years later, King Reed and Associates developed nine offices, becoming one of the biggest private investigations firms in Canada.

King has also established a company called Investigations Canada, a partnership with 12 other investigation firms across Canada.

King, 38, says he was too young to be hired by the police department after graduating, so he got his license in private investigation.

Three years later, when the police department asked him if he would consider working for them, he said no.

King says private investigation allowed him "to work in a detective or plain clothes position without having to go through the years of uniformed work on the police department."

King, who still likes working on larger investigations to avoid getting rusty, says government cuts have led to police departments dealing less with crimes by corporations, creating a surge of jobs in the private investigation field.

King suggests that LASA graduates be persistent.

"There are jobs out there in the field, graduates will just have to look harder and not take no for an answer."