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### **Connections: From patrol car to classroom**

Friday, June 14, 2019

Each time Manuel Leston puts on his UT Police uniform or ID badge, he equates it with stepping on stage to perform.

“It’s a method to help me approach what I do at work,” he says. “Once I’m suited up for work it means it’s show time. It’s time to step up on stage and give it my all.”



Leston often shares this approach in the UT Police campus safety classes he leads for MD Anderson and UTHealth.

### **Commitment to our community**

A 16-year veteran of UT Police, Leston originally joined as a patrol officer and later became a crime prevention officer.

Now as a community relations officer, Leston teaches a variety of classes that inform and train our community on measures they can take to ensure the safety of others and themselves. He delivers informative presentations on topics such as how to respond to an active shooter, how to avoid scams and how to de-escalate hostile situations using verbal techniques.

“What I really enjoy is when people have an ‘aha moment’ in one of my classes and can see how to capitalize upon what they’re learning,” he says. “I know these classes have the potential to positively impact people at work or even in their personal lives.”

Each fiscal year, Leston delivers anywhere from 120 to 140 in-person classroom presentations. He also is instrumental in the research and planning behind the creation of each course. Once

he finishes his training, Leston also will become an instructor for our Service Excellence program.

Leston's commitment to education has recently been recognized as Staff Educator of the Quarter by the Educators' Forum. His nominators cited his enthusiasm for his work and ability to find new ways to make his classes more meaningful. After each class, recipients receive an online survey, and Leston is consistently ranked highly for his professionalism, engaging content and quality of instruction.

"We influence others with how we perform at work. My hope is that we all can influence others for the better," he says. "Each day we have the opportunity to give the greatest performance of our lives."

*Connections is a series in Employee Notes featuring our employees and their connection to our mission. Do you have a story you want to share? Contact Internal Communications at [Internal\\_Communications@mdanderson.org](mailto:Internal_Communications@mdanderson.org).*

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