



W. Wesley Johnson
46th ACJS President
2008-2009

W. Wesley “Wes” Johnson, was born and raised in South Carolina. Upon graduation from high school, he attended Georgia Southern University where he earned a B.S. in criminal justice in 1974. Johnson then went to work as a Youth Counselor for the Department of Youth Services at the John G. Richards School for Boys in Columbia, South Carolina, before taking a position as a Case Manager for the Beaufort County Department of Social Services, where he served a year. In 1976, he began the year as a Court Intervention Specialist with the Beaufort County Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse. In the fall, however, he accepted a position as an Instructor with the Criminal Justice Department at Beaufort Technical College. Johnson then enrolled in the Master of Criminal Justice program at the University of South Carolina, graduating there in 1980. He then obtained a position as Coordinator/Instructor of Criminal Justice at South Carolina State College in Orangeburg, South Carolina. He remained there until 1988, when he again furthered his education in the Ph.D. program in Criminology at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida. He graduated in 1992.

Dr. Johnson then obtained a position as Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice in the College of Criminal Justice at Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, Texas. In 1997, he was promoted to Associate Professor and became the Assistant Dean of Undergraduate Studies (1997-1998) before becoming Assistant Dean of Graduate Studies (1998-2000). In 2000, Johnson became the Associate Dean of the College and was promoted to Professor in 2003. While in Huntsville, Johnson served as president of the board of The Boys and Girls Club – Walker County, Texas. Since the fall of 2007, he has served as Professor and Doctoral Program Director in the School of Criminal Justice at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. In 2011, he was instrumental in the establishment of the first mental health court in Mississippi. In 2012, he facilitated Crisis Intervention Team training for MS law enforcement officers. He is actively involved in the National Alliance of Mental Illness- Mississippi, serving as board president 2012-2013.

Johnson became involved in a number of organizations early in his career, including the American Society of Criminology, the Southern Association of Criminal Justice, and the Southwestern Association of Criminal Justice (SWACJ). He was most active in SWACJ, serving as the Secretary/Treasurer (1995-1998), President (2000-2001), and as the Regional Trustee to the Executive Board of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS). In ACJS, Johnson served on numerous committees, including the Nominations and Elections Committee (1999-2000), Section Chair (1999-2001), and in the Corrections Section as an Executive Counselor (2003-2006). In 2006, Johnson was elected Second Vice President. After serving as the First Vice President, Johnson became the 46th President of ACJS, serving from 2008 to 2009.

During his tenure as ACJS president, Johnson oversaw the survey of membership regarding the journals and negotiated second five-year contracts with Taylor & Francis, facilitated the creation of the Restorative Justice Section, conducted an in-depth review of the ACJS Ethics Policy, and supported and promoted the recognition of March as Criminal Justice Month by the U.S. Congress.

Since his tenure as president of ACJS, Johnson has continued serving both academic and practitioner communities, serving the doctoral program at the University of Southern Mississippi, conducting research, and publishing widely in academic journals. He is also the co-author of *Criminalization of Mental Illness: Crisis and Opportunity for the Justice System*, 2nd ed. (Carolina Academic Press, 2013).