



Mittie D. Southerland
39th ACJS President
2001-2002

Mittie D. Southerland was born on November 23, 1950, and raised in Paducah, Kentucky. After graduating high school in 1968, she attended Paducah Community College, Murray State University, and Eastern Kentucky University where she earned her B.S. in law enforcement in 1972. She then pursued graduate studies in criminal justice through an HEW Fellowship at Eastern Kentucky University, earning her M.S. in 1973. After completion of her M.S. degree, Southerland worked for one year as a Criminal Justice Planner for the Columbia Region Association of Governments in Portland, Oregon. She then worked as a Juvenile Counselor for the Kentucky Department for Human Resources, Bureau for Social Services (1975-1978).

Southerland entered academia in 1978, serving as Instructor of Police Administration and Coordinator of the Ft. Knox Extension of the College of Law Enforcement for Eastern Kentucky University (EKU). In 1984, she moved to the main campus. During the course of her career at EKU, she began and completed the Ph.D. (University of Kentucky, 1984), worked her way through the ranks to Professor, and eventually assumed the role of Director of the Criminal Justice Graduate Program at EKU in 1994. Due to family reasons, she next took a position in the Department of Political Science, Criminal Justice, and Legal Studies at Murray State University (MSU), where she served as Professor and Director of Criminal Justice at MSU from 1995 until 2003. Near the end of her tenure at MSU, the MSU President called Dr. Southerland to service as the Interim Director of Public Safety at MSU where she gladly served for two years (1999-2001).

Early in her career, Southerland became actively involved in both the Southern Criminal Justice Association (SCJA) as well as the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences (ACJS). In SCJA, she served as the Secretariat (1986-1987) and as the Association's President (1987-1988). In the Academy, Southerland served on numerous committees, including the Professional Development Committee, the Academic Review Committee, and she chaired the Committee on Minimum Standards. In 1990, Southerland was elected to serve as the Region II Trustee, in 1995 she was elected as Trustee-at-Large, and in 1999, she was elected Second Vice President, and after serving as First Vice President, Southerland became the 39th President serving from 2001 to 2002.

During her tenure as President of ACJS, the Academy adopted Midnight Blue as the official color for criminal justice/criminology regalia, made the Academy's journals available and searchable in an online format, created the first ad hoc committee on assessment, moved the ACJS Policy Manual to an electronic format, and the Academy reexamined the process for site selection.

After her tenure as President, Southerland continued to teach at Murray State University before retiring in 2003 when she was named Professor Emeritus. In 2005, she became the first Executive Director of the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences, a half-time position. Southerland continued to serve the Academy in this role until she stepped down in 2012, and became the first Executive Director Emeritus of ACJS.

Southerland has received numerous awards including the Educator of the Year Award in 1997 and the Richter H. Moore, Jr. Founders' Award in 2005 from the Southern Criminal Justice Association. In 2004, Southerland was awarded the ACJS Founder's Award.

Southerland is wife of Joel L. Southerland and mother of Rachel and Harper. Joel and Mittie live in Melber, Kentucky.