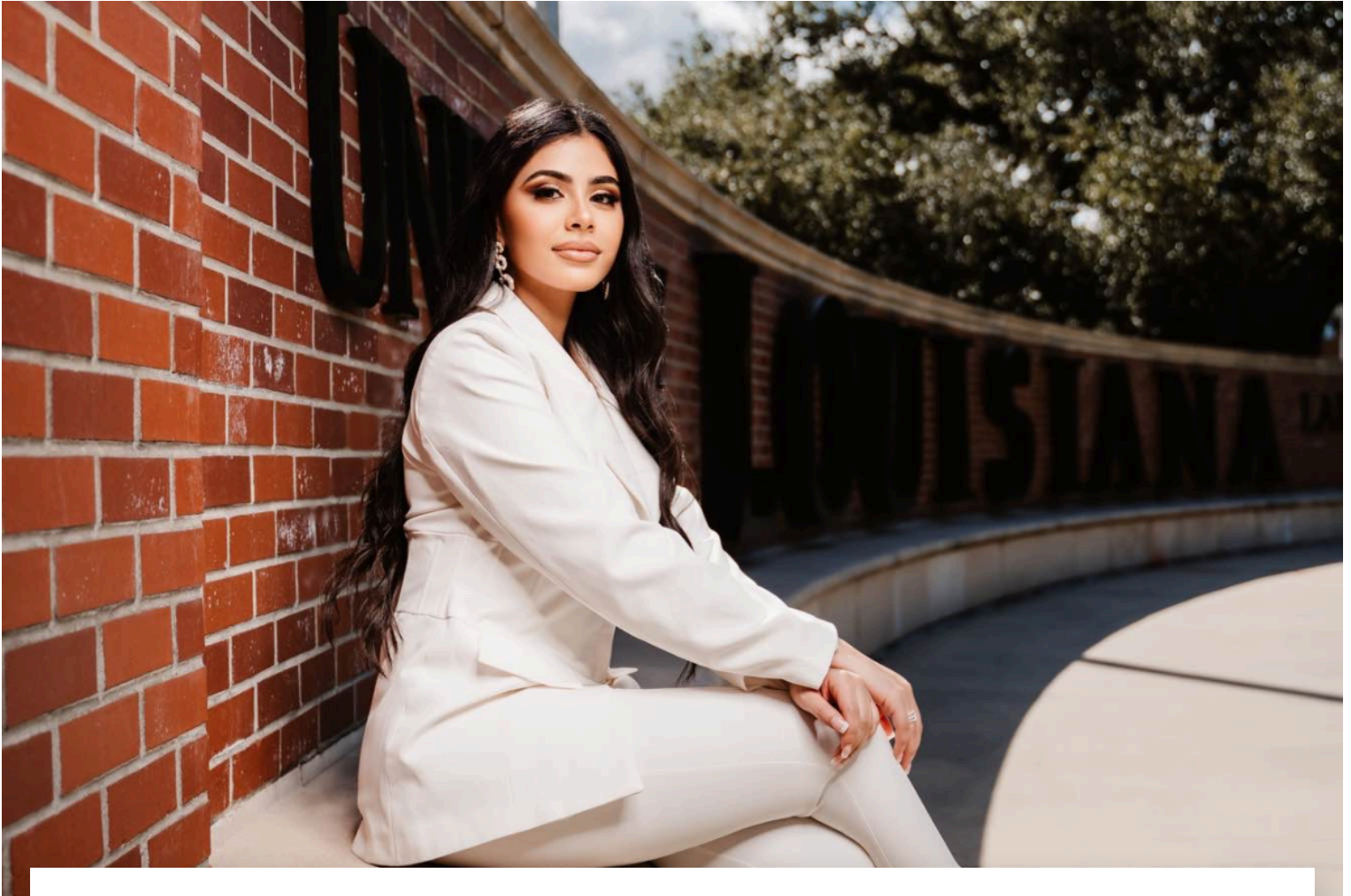


Alumna Proves Potential in Criminal Justice

WRITTEN BY | Hope Aucoin



"Keep an open mind and know that there's more to the field than out-in-the-field law enforcement. This job that I have now is a hidden gem, and there's tons of jobs like this. You just have to put yourself out there."



Tala Tobeh

GRADUATION YEAR
2022

MAJOR
Criminal Justice

Criminal justice is so much more than street policing.

That was something Tala Tobeh knew she wanted to prove when she enrolled at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette and chose the field over her family's pick of health care.

"I switched my major to something I absolutely loved; I had an interest in it," she says. "A lot of people were telling me I'd only be able to get one type of position, but I just knew I wanted to get into the criminal justice field. It was the best decision I've made."

Upon completing her B.S. in Criminal Justice in 2022, Tobeh accepted a position as an investigative specialist with the Louisiana State Analytical and Fusion Exchange.

Tobeh describes the role as a "hidden gem" that she was able to secure by preparing during her undergraduate studies and networking on LinkedIn.

What is Criminal Justice?

The criminal justice degree program at UL Lafayette is designed to prepare students for all avenues of criminal justice, from law and the court system to criminal behavior and investigation to advocacy and social justice issues.

Tobeh says this breadth empowers students to focus on areas that are meaningful to them and the careers they want to pursue.

"It gave a lot of options for us to choose from, depending on what we were interested in, and it all helps in a different way," says Tobeh. "Like courts process, for instance. Now that I'm in the field, I need to know things about the court process. UL Lafayette helped me to have that information to apply to my career."

Likewise, instructors in the degree program — offered on campus and 100% online — bring both research and field experiences to their content, connecting the two to deliver rich insights into criminal justice in Louisiana and across the U.S.

"They're taking what they know, and they're teaching that to us so we're able to apply that to our careers," says Tobeh.

Finding the Right Role

Long before she graduated, Tobeh was determined to find a position in criminal justice that would also fit the lifestyle she wanted.

Tobeh frequented job fairs to network and took advantage of the University's [Office of Career Services](#). She was able to meet one-on-one with someone in the office who helped her with her resume and encouraged her to get active on LinkedIn.

"I started adding all kinds of law enforcement professionals in Louisiana and Texas, and I came across some people that I actually work with now and connected with them," says Tobeh.

In making those connections, Tobeh learned about the [state fusion center](#)  and its work.

"I was like, 'That's perfect,'" she says.

As an investigative specialist, Tobeh and her colleagues assist with case support for local, state, tribal and federal agencies by collecting, evaluating, analyzing, and disseminating information and intelligence data regarding criminal and terrorist activities.

"I would say it's very rewarding," says Tobeh. "The cases that we work are sometimes very complex and sometimes disturbing and very sad. So coming up with that information and giving the investigators or the officers what they need feels like we're doing something that is helping in a way."

Plus, Tobeh has been able to consistently grow in the span of only a year, moving up in her position and specializing in domestic terrorism and extremism. She's also a trainer for incoming employees.

"There's definitely a lot of room for growth," she says.

For those interested in criminal justice, Tobeh says there are tremendous opportunities.

"Keep an open mind and know that there's more to the field than out-in-the-field law enforcement," says Tobeh. "This job that I have now is a hidden gem, and there's tons of jobs like this. You just have to put yourself out there. Attend career fairs, go out on LinkedIn and Handshake. Just put yourself out there, and you'll find it."

Develop the knowledge and skills to design better approaches to address crime and related issues. Learn more about the [B.S. in Criminal Justice online](#) at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

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