



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

“To Protect and Serve”

Office of the Commissioner

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Officer Made Lateral Transfer was Sworn into VIPD on St. Thomas

St. Thomas, USVI – On Friday, June 2, 2023, the Virgin Island Police Department swore in Officer Erin Harvey, a decorated transfer Police Officer from Los Angeles, California. After serving a little over twelve years with the Los Angeles School Police Department as a Senior Police Officer and Field Training Officer (FTO), she was instrumental in creating several programs and making an impact in the Los Angeles community. One such program Erin was vital in its creation is the specialized unit Mental Health Evaluation Team (MHET), where she dedicated 5 years. Officer Harvey also co-founded the Sports N’ More softball program for lower income students, as well as co-founded the AMP’S program, an Anger Management Program for Students. Her community outreach programs and efforts helped students understand the true mission of a police force and what it means to be a community police officer.

Officer Harvey brings a depth of training and experience in mental health, youth intervention programs, victim advocacy, crisis intervention, field training, undercover operations, narcotics, active shooter training, recruitment, criminal investigations, and honor guard.

During her tenure as part of the LASPD, Officer Harvey’s contributions to the community through educational and recreational programs. This past January 2023 Officer Harvey and her wife moved on island to relocate and join the US Virgin Islands Police Department, St. Thomas District. Erin hopes to continue being able to serve the community with integrity and diligence.

Officer Harvey made a lateral transfer to VIPD, where she was required to complete the lateral transfer training programs, which is a minimum of six weeks. Within that program, Officers are required to become familiar with VIPD Rules, Procedures, and Policies. Training also includes certification with all of the department’s equipment (firearms, OC, baton, and taser) and becoming proficient with our local laws and ordinances. Officers are tested on their proficiencies both hands on and written examinations, which requires successfully passing as a requirement to complete the training.

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The Virgin Islands Police Department welcomes Officer Erin Harvey to the department and looks forward to working with her. Captain Maria Colon-Wattley, Officer in Charge of the Training Bureau said, “Officer Erin Harvey comes with a good background that will be very useful to the Virgin Islands Police Department and the community, the VIPD Training Bureau welcomes her and wish her many success in her new assignment. She will do great!”

The Virgin Islands Police Department provides an opportunity for lateral transfers for officers relocating to the territory. Lateral entry refers to the ability of a police officer in one geographic location or department to join the Virgin Islands Police Department (VIPD). In this practice, the officer's salary at the VIPD will be based on their experience as a full-time Peace Officer. Lateral entry brings numerous benefits, not only to the officers themselves but also to recruiting efforts and the expansion of the pool of qualified personnel within law enforcement agencies.

Dwayne Richards, Director of Human Resources said, “By embracing lateral entry, our department can effectively address staffing shortages and fill critical positions with experienced professionals. This not only saves time and resources on training new recruits but also ensures a smooth transition as lateral entry officers can quickly acclimate to their new roles and responsibilities. They bring with them an understanding of the intricacies of police work and the ability to make informed decisions in high-pressure situations.”

For more information on joining the VIPD, visit www.jointhevipd.com.

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