



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Pictured above are MCC's most recent BLET (Basic Law Enforcement Training) graduates. From left to right, in the front row are: Patrick Bond, Taylor S. Campbell, Joseph C. Comeaux, Tracy P. Curlings, Daniel E. Folk, Brandon G. Johnson, Tykelli J. Perry, Jonathan Price and Wayland Mitchell, MCC's BLET Coordinator. The ceremony was held in the MCC Auditorium on January 12. The students came from diverse locales to take this class. Perry is from Merry Hill in Bertie County.

MCC awards law enforcement certificates

WILLIAMSTON - Eight BLET (Basic Law Enforcement Training) students were recognized for successfully completing the 620 hour course of study at Martin Community College (MCC) on January 12. The BLET program is part of MCC's Continuing Education Division.

Those recognized included; Patrick Bond, Taylor S. Campbell, Joseph C. Comeaux, Tracy P. Curlings, Daniel E. Folk, Brandon G. Johnson, Tykelli J. Perry and Jonathan Price. Upon course completion, they were then able to take the State Comprehensive Examination on January 13. Upon passing this test, they will be eligible for employment in all NC law enforcement agencies. Two of the cadets have already been offered positions pending passage of the exam.

Program Director, Wayland Mitchell, welcomed the audience comprised of friends, families of the cadets and instructors. He praised the students for their extreme hard work and determination over the past six months.

Guest speaker, and an alumna of MCC's BLET program, Captain Beth Coltrain, then delivered a powerful message to the cadets as they prepared to embark on their law enforcement careers.

"Today you transition from cadet to officer. Not only will you graduate as a police officer but you are now a doctor, psychologist, teacher, preacher, and whatever else you wind up needing to be. BLET was just the beginning. The road that lies before you will be even more mentally and physically challenging. There will be more sacrifices that you will have to make."

"With this certification you will receive the privilege of seeing life through a whole new lens. You will see people on their absolute worst days. You will see a side of society that the rest of the world is blissfully ignorant to. The side of society that is full of despair, brokenness, and pain. And yes, I call this a privilege."

"Each of you got into this field for a reason and for most of you that reason was because you want to help others. Well, it is in the despair, brokenness and pain of others that you will have the opportunity to help them, to serve them. And, it is in those moments you get to decide what kind of police officer you want to be. You can show them love, empathy and compassion or you can be curt, rude, and emotionless... I challenge you for every bad call that you go to, do something good."

Coltrain also reminded the

cadets to remember their training, stay focused and remain vigilant. She also encouraged them to listen to the people they serve, engage with their fellow officers, continuously pursue training opportunities, stay eager and excited about their work and when at home, put their families first.

And in conclusion, Coltrain stated, "Don't lose faith. Don't lose faith in society and don't lose faith in God. Go to church and stay involved. As law enforcement officers we have a tendency to become withdrawn and to push people and God away. Don't do that."

Captain Coltrain started her career in law enforcement after completing the BLET course at MCC and becoming an officer with the Williamston Police Department in 2006. Since then, Coltrain has earned both her Bachelor's and Master's degrees. She went back to school in 2008 and received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice from Mount Olive University and in 2010 she graduated with her Master's Degree in Justice Administration from Methodist University. She received her Advanced Law Enforcement Certificate in 2012 - which was no small feat for someone, who at that time, had only six years

of experience.

By 2008, Coltrain was promoted to Detective and quickly rose to Detective Corporal. In 2009 she attained the rank of Detective Sergeant and Detective Lieutenant in 2010. She became a Captain in 2013. In 2014, Coltrain, along with others in the Williamston Police Department received special recognition from the Federal Bureau Investigation for assisting them with a multiple murder case in New York that had ties to Williamston.

Instructor Tamesha Woolard then presented the certificates to the cadets. Three special awards were also bestowed on two students who went above and beyond the call of duty in the course of their studies. Jonathan Price received two of the awards. He was recognized for his academic achievements as well as the Iron Man award for his ability to handle the program's demanding physical fitness training. Brandon Johnson received acknowledgment as the most improved in the class.

Class Sergeant, Daniel Folk, then presented Mitchell with a plaque from the entire class in appreciation of his hard work and commitment to coordinating great instructors and activities to make them the best law enforcement officers they could be.

The NC BLET program covers 620 hours of study within 36 total blocks of instruction including; Physical Fitness, Firearms, Law Enforcement Driving Training, Laws of Arrest, Search and Seizure, Motor Vehicle Law, Techniques of Traffic Enforcement, Patrol Techniques, Sheriff's Responsibilities, Rapid Deployment, etc. The course contains the most current law enforcement information available and is filled with practical exercises and an extensive ethics section that is woven throughout the training experience. It takes approximately 16 weeks to complete and concludes with a comprehensive written exam and skills testing. This course of study is mandated by the state for all certified law enforcement officers and is offered through the Division of Continuing Education at MCC.

A new BLET class will be starting on Feb. 7. Those interested in applying for admission to the BLET program must complete and submit a packet of information and forms. The packets may be obtained in person from Wayland Mitchell or online at www.martincc.edu. To obtain a packet or for more information about the BLET program at MCC, contact Mitchell at wmitchell@martincc.edu or 252-789-0267.

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