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“New Police Officer Voted Outstanding Student at Academy”



Derek Fryer, one of Norfolk’s newest police officers, proved his leadership abilities soon after being hired at the Norfolk Police Division. While at the Nebraska Law Enforcement Academy in Grand Island, Fryer was voted Class Leader by his peers and then was pronounced the Outstanding Student at graduation as a result of a vote of the students and instructors.

Fryer was hired along with Amanda Dunbar and Cody Lanagan last November. The three spent eight weeks of classroom time at the Norfolk Police Division learning about procedures and policies from Police Chief Bill Mizner and other senior officers. On January 4, the three moved to the Nebraska Law Enforcement Academy where they spent sixteen weeks of additional training. Fryer was voted as the class leader during week four.

Training at the Academy included intensive classroom work along with driving a police cruiser on a track learning how to react to

various situations. All in all the students had to pass 12 written tests and several hands-on exercises to graduate from the Academy. Firearms training, responding to a domestic violence call, and conducting high risk traffic stops were just some of the topics of instruction.

“Some things were easier than others. I studied at least two hours per night. You have a written portion of a test on conducting a traffic stop and then you are graded as to how you actually conduct a traffic stop. In the final practical exercise we demonstrated what we would do during a routine traffic stop if the driver had a suspended license and a concealed handgun. You deliberately learn how to handle certain situations,” Fryer said.

The trainees stayed at the Academy in dorms during the week and got to know each other fairly well so it was an honor and a responsibility for Fryer to be chosen as the class leader.

“I was the middle guy between the instructors and the class so I was responsible for the students. Everyone had to have their boots polished and pants and shirt ironed each day. We could get a demerit like if some one didn’t

shave and then the whole group got extra duty,” Fryer said. As a military policeman with the Army National Guard, Fryer understands the idea of discipline and teamwork.

“In some of the training we had four to five people on a team and we went through a complete crime scenario. You learn how to talk to the victims and you also learn how to respond quickly to a situation,” Fryer said.

Now that the three officers have finished their Academy training, they will ride along with three different Norfolk certified field training officers for another 12 weeks.

“I love it. It’s been awesome so far. No two days are the same. I’ve learned that we’re always going to be criticized but we have to understand that we’re mostly seeing people in the worst time of their life,” Fryer said, “We’re here to make people safe and to enhance the community’s well being. I’m glad I got afforded the opportunity serve the citizens of Norfolk.”