

I am a Woman, Mother and a Denver Police Officer

Commander Rhonda Jones, #79025

In life, we identify ourselves through the many roles we play. I am a mother, a daughter, a sister, an aunt, and a police officer who is now the Commander of District Two. I have been a police officer for twenty-seven years. I have been a mother for twenty-three of those years. My son is also a Denver Police Officer. I am extremely proud of all of these roles.

When I was twenty-two, I was working for a grocery chain, struggling to find myself. I stumbled upon the Denver Police Department and decided to apply to see if I would like it. I have loved every minute of my career. I never imagined it would be such a calling, such a passion, so fulfilling. My son wanted to be a fire fighter when he graduated from high school. He never talked about the police department. He became a cadet and after a police ride, he came to me one day to sell me on the idea of him becoming a police officer instead. He named many of the same reasons I love my work. How could I dissuade him from becoming involved in a profession I am so passionate about?

The majority of my career has been in patrol. That's what police work is all about, and where all of the fun is. I have worked in Districts One and Four as a patrol officer and training officer, District Two as a sergeant and training coordinator, Internal Affairs as a sergeant, training sergeant and lieutenant. I served as the aide to the Deputy Chief of Operations and helped start the Professional Standards Unit. I was fortunate enough to be chosen to attend the FBI National Academy. I was then appointed as the Commander of District Two, which totally broke my glass ceiling as that was leaps above my hopes and dreams at the time.

I not only am proof, but will profess, that anything is possible for a woman with the Denver Police Department. The opportunities are vast, the experiences endless, and the rewards tremendous.

Sergeant Betty Hale, #92026

Betty Hale began her career with the Denver Police Department in 1992. She received the "Outstanding Recruit" of the 92-1 recruit class.

Her policing experience includes Impact Team Officer, Academy Instructor, and Sergeant of Patrol in District's Six, Five, and the Combined Communications Center. Betty is a Crisis Intervention Team Member and is currently assigned to the Internal Affairs Bureau. Betty has an AAS degree and is working on a BS at Denver Metro State College.

She is on the PAL (Police Athletic League), and BPO boards. She enjoys being involved in community activities. Her favorite pastimes are running and spending time with her

grandchildren.

Betty says “As a mother of two young black men, she has faced the adversity and struggles of parenthood, and has persevered and continues to be a loving mother and bares a strong desire to motivate other females to join and succeed in a career with the Denver Police Department”.

Detective Teri Chavez, #83042

I am a mother to Josh (age 28), and a soon to be grandmother. I raised my son by myself while working as a Denver Police Officer. He was six years old when I came on the job. I am currently married to a Denver Police Officer.

Currently I am assigned to the Narcotics Bureau & Metro Gang Task Force as a Detective. Prior to being assigned to Metro Gangs, I organized the Clandestine Lab Response Team. I continue to respond to all Clan Labs in the City. I also teach Clan Lab Operations & Response to Police and Fire Departments all over the State of Colorado and at the Denver Police Academy.

Some of my assignments prior to that have been at the Denver International Airport, Police Districts 1, 2, 3, and 4. I have worked on the Impact teams and also served as a Field Training Officer. I have also worked in the Gang Unit and the C.O.R.T. Unit.

I could go on and on about various undercover assignments and investigations I’ve been lucky to have been involved throughout my career, but that would take too long. It’s been a great job for me and I have met many wonderful people both on and off the job as a result of me being a Police Officer. There isn’t anything else I would have been happier doing. It wasn’t always an easy job, but all in all, I wouldn’t trade my experience for anything!

Technician Kristine Caston, #90053

As a self sufficient, independent, caring, understanding, empathetic and concerned women I’m glad that after graduating from Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado with a B.S. degree in Human Development and Family Studies that I chose a career with the Denver Police Department.

A lot of my friends from college thought it was a mismatch career choice but I’m glad I took the challenge and did something out of my comfort zone. What I found out is you make the job what you want.

Some of my assignments have been Patrol in District Three, Two and Six, Neighborhood Police Officer, D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse, Resistance, Education) Officer and currently Juvenile Intake Officer. I still hope to fulfill some of my career goals as my youngest son Marcellus who is ten now gets older. My husband and I are blessed with a total of six children, and three grandchildren, ranging in age from 2 to 25.

I think the best experience I have had with this career is meeting the variety of people that make up our wonderful community and being touched and changed by them all.

Officer Lisa Aitken-Nelson, #98008

I have been a Denver Police Officer for nine years and am a full time mother to my two small children and a wife to my husband of seven years. From an early age I always wanted to be a Denver Police Officer. My father was a Denver Police Officer and died when I was young. As a child I was involved closely with the Denver Police Department and more specifically the Denver Police Orphan's fund as they paid my way through college.

I graduated from the University of Northern Colorado with a Bachelors degree in Kinesiology and a Colorado teaching certificate. I was always very impressed with the professionalism and the quality of people that I came into contact with from the Police Department. I soon knew that I wanted to be a part of that "family".

I first started off as a Denver Police Reserve Officer. After 2 years I proceeded through the testing process and was hired as a full time Denver Police Officer. My first assignment was in District 6 working a patrol car. I was then selected as one of only two women to work with the ESCORT Unit (Eliminating Street Crime on Residential Thoroughfares) who was assigned to the Colfax Corridor. My unit worked closely with the Vice/ Narcotics team, Nuisance Abatement, and Liquor Enforcement. I was able to work various undercover operations making arrests for narcotics and prostitution.

In March 2003 I was selected for a position on the Downtown Motorcycle Unit and at the time was only one of four women in Colorado in a motorcycle assignment. We work closely with the Business Improvement District and the merchants on the 16th St. Mall in addition to the LoDo bar crowds. The unit is a patrol unit as opposed to a traffic unit and is responsible for radio calls and public order crimes.

I have found that the Denver Police Department is everything I thought that it would be. The people are great and the work is fulfilling. I truly have found it to be a family.