Job Shadow Reflective Narrative

Gone For a Ride

My family isn’t filled with doctors, lawyers, cops, or teachers; growing up, I never had anyone to look up to for a career or job. Most of my family members finish high school, some don’t even finish, and they don’t pursue for an education afterwards or a career. My parents have myself and my younger brother left as children and as this being my senior year, I will soon leave my family. I can see that my younger brother looks up to me, he watches the decisions I make; I am his role model. I wish to complete my goal in becoming a law enforcer and setting up a trail for my younger brother to follow when he comes to the position I am currently in.

I always wanted to be a law enforcer because I enjoy helping others or doing good deeds, and keep criminals and those looking to harm innocent lives, off the streets and behind bars. On October 30, 2013, I was given the opportunity to shadow one of Lindsay’s police officers; I shadowed Officer Matt McMillan to examine the profession from a first-hand point of view. At one, I arrived to the Lindsay Police Station, let the dispatch lady know I was ready for my shadow, and introduced myself to Officer Matt McMillan. Officer McMillan towered over me in height, so I looked up while shaking his hand; we then proceeded to his police cruiser and left the station. We drove around Lindsay and Officer McMillan had me set an eye on anything suspicious. He explained to me that it doesn’t really get interesting during the day, and most of the “action” or calls, come during the night. Most calls include calls to take in dogs disturbing citizens, assistance to accidents, and assistance in breaking up arguments.

After 20 minutes of driving around scouting for trouble, Officer McMillan got a call to an argument between a mother and daughter, he responded immediately. We arrived to the scene and Officer McMillan and another officer, Officer Romero, promptly went and discussed out the argument. The argument was the mother was mad because the daughter did not want to put the mother as a reference in the daughter’s boyfriend’s job application. Officer McMillan calmly asked questions and tried to safely end the argument and let both the women know to calm down as well. The mother was really loud and of course didn’t want to calm down; but, after negotiations, the tensions were brought down and the officer’s work was finished; I took note at how calmly Officer McMillan reacted to the situation at hand and he later told me that you can’t stop people from arguing, you have to be careful because they can get out of hand too.

At 2:00, Officer McMillan and I responded for assistance in jumping a dispatch’s car; McMillan stated that some calls even require the officers in assisting other officers, and sometimes their cars. He said “We help people in any way we can, even if that means jumping their car,” and he chuckled. After we finished jumping the car, Officer McMillan and I returned back to the station where he showed me the paperwork that had to be filled out after each arrest made. He said although it was a lot of writing sometimes, he loved seeing those arrests follow through, especially if it means keeping the streets just that much safer.

At the end of the shadow, Officer McMillan sat down at his desk and readily looked upon me and prepared himself for the questions I were set to ask. I asked Officer McMillan a number of 10 questions; he thought out each answer and made sure I wrote down what he said. My last question, “What advice do you have for someone looking into your job field?” answered a main question I had for myself. He advised that I can at least acquire a college education and earn a Bachelor’s Degree. I told him about my intentions on enlisting into the military and doing college on the side; he encouraged being in the military because military train discipline, quick reactions, self discipline, and leadership, something he believed an officer should have. He said that and an education can help me or others go a long way, especially in law enforcement.

Overall, job shadowing Officer McMillan gave me the security I was looking for which strengthened my desire to be in law enforcement. I am really happy to know that helping others bestows a person with joy and satisfaction that is far more valuable than money. I believe this job shadow was successful since I obtained a better understanding of what it is that a police officer does. I am now more sure than ever that be in law enforcement is the right choice for me.