



East Hartford Police Department Press Release

For Immediate Release: Monday, May 11, 2020

EAST HARTFORD POLICE WELCOME NEW OFFICERS

The East Hartford Police Department kicked off National Police Week with the welcoming of its newest Police Officers today, but not in the traditional manner. While COVID-19 has canceled Police Week ceremonies across the Nation this year, it has also forced adjustments to other police events – including swearing-in ceremonies for new Officers. In order to maintain social distancing health and safety guidelines, eight new recruits were administered the Oath of Office outside the East Hartford Public Safety Complex with minimal attendance, instead of the East Hartford Town Hall where the ceremony is traditionally held in the presence of family and friends.

East Hartford Town Clerk Robert Pasek, overseen by Mayor Marcia Leclerc and Deputy Police Chief Mack Hawkins, administered the Oath of Office to the new Officers outdoors at the East Hartford Police Memorial, just outside the entrance to East Hartford Police Headquarters.

*"The oath affirms their standards of integrity, bravery and honor to the community and law," said **East Hartford Police Chief Scott Sansom**. "Officially swearing them in at the memorial is fitting, especially during Police Week."*

*"It's an honor to welcome our newest police officers to the community," said **Mayor Marcia Leclerc**. "I wish them the best of luck as they embark on this professional journey at the East Hartford Police Department. I am confident they will be a great asset to the Town of East Hartford."*



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From left: Officer Daniel Guilfuchi, Officer Walter Cunningham, Officer Paulyna Pham, Officer Igor Celzner

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From left: Officer Jerry Cao, Officer Daniel Zak, Officer TaylorMarie Prahach, Officer Mark Visconti

East Hartford's newest Officers come from a diverse background. **Officer Jerry Cao**, 35, is a long-time Connecticut native previously employed as a Bail Bondsman. **Officer Igor Celzner**, 37, was born and raised in Bosnia, and also has prior military experience in the Bosnian military. He has worked largely in the fitness industry in Connecticut for the last 10-years, and is the second naturalized citizen to join the ranks of East Hartford Police. **Officer Walter Cunningham**, 22, is a New York native and has lived in Connecticut for the last 4-years working as a private investigator. He also holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from the University of New Haven. **Officer Daniel Guilfuchi**, 27, is a life-long Hartford area resident. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Central Connecticut State University, and served as a Connecticut Judicial Marshall before joining East Hartford

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Police. **Officer Paulyna Pham**, 26, is a life-long Hartford area resident and worked as a civilian Administrative Clerk for the East Hartford Police Department until last week. She also previously worked in the Town of East Hartford Tax Office and has studied Criminal Justice at Manchester Community College. **Officer TaylorMarie Prahach**, 26, has lived in Connecticut most of her life, but also lived three years in New York City. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Justice and Law Administration from Western Connecticut State University, and a Masters degree in Public Administration from John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York, New York. **Officer Mark Visconti**, 22, is a long-time Connecticut resident who also lived in New York for three years. He holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Holy Apostles College and Seminary where he studied philosophy and history. **Officer Daniel Zak**, 21, is a life-long Hartford area resident with extensive experience in property management.

The new Officers will begin Academy training this Friday via distance learning. A formal ceremony will be planned for a later date.

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