

BACK THE BLUE: MEET PROSPER POLICE DEPARTMENT'S ERIN HUBBARD

BY MELANIE HESS

Chasing a resident's escapee pet goat down Main Street during her first year on the force wasn't what Erin Hubbard expected when she joined the Prosper Police Department as its first female officer. Nevertheless, she admits there's rarely been a dull moment in her 11-years with the Prosper PD.

A police department and community leader, Hubbard's passion for public service runs in her blood. She credits everything she is today to her father, who passed away earlier this year.

"He led by example as a servant leader, serving in Vietnam as a Marine, caring for Veterans for 35 years with the VA, and consistently putting his church and his family before himself," Hubbard said. "Honestly, that's why I do what I do."

Like her father, Hubbard demonstrated her love for her nation through military service. She, however, chose Air Force over the Marines, working as a vehicle operator and civil engineer.

Although two decades of service, four deployments and a long overseas tour, including the Middle East, quash any question about her dedication, one of her reasons for choosing the branch she did is a bit more humorous. "Everyone knows the Air Force has better food," she laughed.

Once she made the decision to leave the military full time, Hubbard consulted with her immediate and extended family, several of whom are police. After explaining what she wanted to do and that she wanted to continue to give back, they suggested she pursue law enforcement. This eventually landed her with Prosper.

In the Prosper Police Department, Hubbard fills many roles, including leading the department's community outreach and mental health efforts. She even works patrol, as do nearly all officers on the Prosper force. For community outreach, Hubbard is in charge of crime prevention and community



outreach programs such as Citizens on Patrol, Citizens Police Academy and the annual National Night Out. She also liaises with the press, something she views as extremely important given the media's negative portrayal of police in recent years.

One of the things Hubbard said she wishes people better understood is that officers may sometimes come off cold, especially with people they've never met because they don't know the individual's intentions. "I think some people forget our primary goal is safety, not to accuse you, just to find out what's going on," she explained. "That's the reason why we give instructions and ask questions."

While she has a vested interest in mental health as a veteran and an officer, she also accepted the role of primary Mental Health Officer for another reason. "My youngest sister is special needs," Hubbard explained. "She's semi-independent but needs supervision. She lives in a private residence with five room-

mates and she goes to work. Right now she is building home construction pieces being sent to help victims of Hurricane Dorian. We are real proud of her."

When she's not working, Hubbard enjoys kayaking, spending time with her two Irish setters and relaxing on the back porch like she used to do with her late father. While her parents, former residents of Prosper, are no longer around as of this year, Hubbard's love for the town hasn't wavered and even though she's moved around a significant amount herself with the military, she feels more at home in Prosper than she does anywhere else. 🐾

*"They were Prosper,"
she said, referring to her parents.
"I am Prosper. We are Prosper."*