



PRESCOTT VALLEY PD'S MICHELLE WOODS BECOMES ONLY FEMALE MOTOR OFFICER IN NORTHERN ARIZONA

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Michelle Woods graduated from Northern Arizona Regional Training Academy (NARTA) Class 48 in May 2020. Three years later, she has passed additional training and is now Northern Arizona's first female motorcycle officer.

Officer Woods moved to Prescott Valley with her family when she was nine. She said she hadn't really planned to be a police officer, but another officer and friend, Cameron Kinsey, encouraged her to apply. A six-year Arizona Army National Guard Ammunition Specialist/Range Control, she was already an expert marksman. She also holds a bachelor's degree in Applied Human Behavior, which helps her in her career as an officer.

For her first years at PVPD, Officer Woods worked graveyard and swing shift patrol. She admired the officers in the Traffic Unit as being knowledgeable in many topics and involved in community events. "I wanted to be on a squad with officers who would challenge me and help me learn and grow," she said.

When the department brought back motorcycle patrols, with the first motors hitting the streets in 2022, there was an opening for an additional officer. Woods knew it was a perfect fit. As a child, her father rode a Harley Davidson motorcycle, and later, she became interested in sport bikes. She now participates in sport bike events such as Femmewalla at the Chuckwalla Valley Raceway in California, an event that embraces women riders from beginner to expert, and raises money for the Unforgettables Foundation, which helps with burial assistance to families who have lost a child.

Before she could join Prescott Valley's motor officer unit, Woods had to complete the motorcycle training that is so tough only 50 percent of students finish. Three weeks of the course taught by Prescott motor instructor Richard Doty was technical track work, with the final week shadowing another motor officer. Training took place at the Yavapai County Sheriff's Office track in Prescott Valley. Once training was complete, the new motors took a "graduation ride" to Flagstaff, where they were pinned with their motor wings.

Officer Woods said she enjoys working via motorcycle for the ease of maneuvering in traffic and quickly getting to accident scenes. She joins PVPD's motor unit with Sergeant Shawn Caswell and Corporal Matt Kline, and can also be found doing traffic enforcement in her patrol car.