



PALM BAY POLICE DEPARTMENT

NEWS RELEASE

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Wednesday, June 15, 2011 10:27 AM

FEMALE LIEUTENANT AMONG ELITE GRADUATING CLASS OF FBI NATIONAL ACADEMY (Palm Bay)--The Palm Bay Police Department's first female lieutenant to attend the prestigious FBI National Academy (FBINA) is now among the elite class of graduates to have completed the intensive training program in Quantico Virginia. Lt. Diana Blackledge completed the 10 week training program earlier this year as part of the 244th session of the academy. She is one of just under 2,000 females from around the world to have successfully completed the training. "I am honored to have been selected and it was an excellent opportunity to learn from the among the best in the field," said Lt. Blackledge who currently oversees the Department's Crime Suppression Unit, General Crimes Detectives and the 5-man K-9 unit.

Lt. Blackledge joined the Palm Bay Police Department in 1987 working mainly in road patrol and training for the department's K-9 teams. She is internationally recognized for her expertise in police K9 tactics and deployment and was selected as the 1993 Team USA Coach to the Internationale Diensthund Meisterschaft in Augsburg, GE and as one of three canine teams representing the country at the World's Fair police dog competition in 2000. In 2007 Lt. Blackledge joined the Department's Accreditation Management Unit and led the agency through its first successful accreditation assessment through the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation. The process brought the 200-plus member department into compliance with nearly 300 of the strictest law enforcement professional standards in the field. "I hope to contribute to this agency's future success," Lt. Blackledge added. "I want to work with other officers to enhance their tactical and administrative skills to help them achieve their goals while building a stronger and more professional agency."

The FBI National Academy is a professional course of study for U.S. and International law enforcement leaders designed to maximize leadership skills. The curriculum focuses on areas of law, behavioral science, forensic science, understanding terrorism, leadership development, communication and health and fitness. Attendance is by invitation only through a nomination process. Six members of the Palm Bay Police Department have successfully completed the FBINA.

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