

WHAT'S *New*

IN THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT

A weekly update for residents, visitors, and workers in the District of Columbia



Friday, May 27, 2016

"WHY I SING THE NATIONAL ANTHEM:" MPD MEMBER REFLECTS ON HER SERVICE AS MEMORIAL DAY APPROACHES

"The National Anthem reminds me of freedom," said **Officer Charlotte Djossou**, who first started singing when she was seven. "It reminds me of peace, harmony, and the pursuit of American happiness." These are all the reasons Officer Djossou sings the National Anthem, and it is also the same reason she serves others.

Djossou has safeguarded her country as an active duty soldier for four years in the Army and four years in the Army National Guard. Now, she is serving her community as a Sergeant at the Metropolitan Police Department's (MPD) Criminal Interdiction Unit- Narcotics Special Investigations Bureau (NSID).

"Military members have relevant skills that can be a perfect match for a law enforcement career," said Sergeant George O'Bryant. "Djossou and other veterans have a lot of the attributes MPD looks for when recruiting, including discipline, experience dealing with difficult situations, and attention to detail."

"I've been singing the National Anthem for MPD graduation ceremonies for 12 years," continued Djossou. "The first time I sang for MPD was for my recruit graduation in 2004."

Djossou has sung our nation's Anthem at other events such as the National Police Memorial Week in honor of fallen officers, which takes place every year in May. She has also sung during Memorial Day services in honor of members of the United States military who died while serving.

"Memorial Day means a lot to me. Remembrance is observed for those who died in Active Military service. I was blessed to make it home safely, as many did not. I'm grateful to be alive, for the opportunity to have served, and for the life changing experiences during my deployment. I will always have love for the men and women who sacrificed their lives for others."

Djossou will sing those patriotic words at the Rolling Thunder event that will take place on Sunday May 29, 2016 during the Memorial Day Weekend. Throughout the ceremony, motorcyclist will join a police escorted ride to the Pentagon. Memorial Day is the federal holiday that honors the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military.

"When I sing the Anthem at events like these, I close my eyes occasionally and imagine love, humanity, and life. I feel the words and sing the Anthem with spirit. It has become my meditation, and I enjoy it. I'm present when I sing and being present makes me feel good. Nothing around me matters when I sing. Singing is my place of peace."



» Read the complete press release to learn more about Officer Charlotte Djossou at:

<http://mpdc.dc.gov/release/why-i-sing-national-anthem>

» MPD has expanded its recruiting efforts of military veterans and are pursuing qualified applicants who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States, including the Organized Reserves and National Guard, for at least two years on active duty, to join the Department. Learn more or start the application process at:

<http://dcpolicejobs.dc.gov>

» Check out our video: "It's a great time to be MPD. Are you the one?" at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iQa5jcyjW-U>



Djossou is just one of the hundreds of military veterans that work at MPD. Through the Experienced Officers Program and Expansion of Recruitment of Military Veterans, MPD continues to hire experienced police officers and military veterans. MPD has expanded its recruiting efforts of military veterans and are pursuing qualified applicants who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States, including the Organized Reserves and National Guard, for at least two years on active duty, to join the Department.

PLAY IT SAFE WHEN USING YOUR VEHICLE THROUGHOUT THE HOLIDAY WEEKEND

During this holiday weekend, and throughout the summer, many drivers will be hitting the road to reach the destinations of their choice – be it a vacation getaway or a day at a friend’s barbecue. Regardless of where you go, if you drive, remember to do so responsibly. Police will be out in force over the holiday trying to keep the streets and highways safe. They’ll be enforcing all the rules of the road, so it’s important that all drivers out there remember to obey the law. This means absolutely no drinking and driving and no aggressive driving. Everyone in the vehicle should also be properly buckled up whenever the vehicle is moving. Alcohol-related crashes result in thousands of fatalities every year. The legal limit for Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) in DC is .08 percent. It’s illegal for anyone to have a BAC over that limit; however, if a person under the age of 21 is found to be operating a motor vehicle with ANY measurable amount of alcohol, he or she will be placed under arrest and charged with Driving While Intoxicated (DWI).

Aggressive driving is described as a combination of unsafe and unlawful actions that demonstrate a conscious and willful disregard for safety, including offenses such as running red lights and stop signs; following too closely, or tailgating; changing lanes unsafely; failing to yield the right of way; improper passing; and speeding. Don’t let your anger get the best of you if you’re driving. Always allow extra travel time, because traffic congestion — and the related delays — is among the primary factors that lead motorists to drive aggressively. By leaving extra travel time, you will be less inclined to drive aggressively in order to make up for time lost in congestion.

Remember to signal your intentions, concentrate on your driving (not your cell phone, stereo, passengers, or other distractions), and extend common courtesy to other drivers at all times. Finally, keep everyone in your car safe by reminding them to wear their seatbelts. Drivers will be pulled over, ticketed, and fined for not obeying the seat belt laws. Penalties include the assessment points on your driver’s license and fines ranging from \$50 to \$150 for offenses.

- » Penalties for drinking and driving include fines, suspended licenses, and jail time. Get details on the offenses and penalties at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/dui>
- » Each year, the MPD participates in the Smooth Operator program, targeted at reducing the number of aggressive drivers on the road. Get details on the program as well as ten basic rules of courtesy and safety while driving at:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/smoothoperator>
- » Remember: Click It or Ticket runs through June 5. Buckle up and encourage your loved ones to do the same. You’ll save the cost of a ticket and may even save a life. To learn more about Click It or Ticket, go to:
<http://www.nhtsa.gov/nhtsa/ciot/index.html>
- » Every child under the age of eight years of age must be properly seated in an installed infant, convertible (toddler), or booster child seat. For details on Child Safety Seat violations and penalties go to:
<http://mpdc.dc.gov/childrestraintlaw>

NEWS & NOTES

Also Noteworthy

Annual Truck Touch Set for June 4. Mark your calendars! DC’s summer kick off and citywide “Truck Touch” is next Saturday, June 4, 2016, from 9 am to 2 pm at RFK

Stadium, Lot 7. The event will feature a variety of free activities for kids and adults. A host of DC agencies will have vehicles at this event, including several from the Metropolitan Police Department. Free boxed lunches will be provided to kids age 18 and under. [http://dpw.dc.gov/release/mayor-bowser-hold-](http://dpw.dc.gov/release/mayor-bowser-hold-summer-kick-city%E2%80%99s-annual-%E2%80%9Ctruck-touch%E2%80%9D-sat-june-4-rfk-lot-7)

[summer-kick-city%E2%80%99s-annual-%E2%80%9Ctruck-touch%E2%80%9D-sat-june-4-rfk-lot-7](http://dpw.dc.gov/release/mayor-bowser-hold-summer-kick-city%E2%80%99s-annual-%E2%80%9Ctruck-touch%E2%80%9D-sat-june-4-rfk-lot-7)

Information, ideas, or comments about this service?

Send an e-mail to **KAYLIN CASTELLI**, Manager of Internet Communications, at kaylin.castelli@dc.gov

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