

BASILIANPILLAR



Saint Basil Academy
711 Fox Chase Road | Jenkintown, Pennsylvania 19046

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We have all been doing our best to be cautious during this time of quarantine. We need to do schoolwork at home, most parents are working from home, and we can only go out for our necessities. One thing that doesn't stop in the mess of all of this is that we need first responders to keep working so that we all stay safe. My father is one of those who are brave enough to stay at work in order to maintain peace through this horrible situation. He is a Police Sergeant in the ninth district of the Philadelphia Police Department. I feel like not many people realize the toll this job takes on the officers so I decided to ask my dad a few questions that have to do with his job and some that have to do with how the Police Department is protecting its officers from COVID-19.

How did you get into this field?

"I have always wanted to be a police officer. I have been intrigued by the job since I was a little kid. I was interested in being able to help those who were unable to help themselves."



Courtesy of Brittany Quaintance
Sgt. David Quaintance with Faith & Rockland

What education did you receive in order to get there you are?

"After high school, I went to the University of Maryland where I pursued a degree in Criminal Justice and Criminology. Criminal Justice was the path I chose for my desired position but I also loved learning about the Criminology side of things, which is in the Psychology department, where I learned about why people do the things they do rather than just studying their behaviors."

What surprises you the most about your job?

"One thing that surprises me is that you can meet some of the nicest people you will ever meet during some of the worst times of their lives. Unfortunately, the police come into contact with people primarily during traumatic times in their lives. The majority of my career, I spent time in rough and low-income areas of Philadelphia which I would never have visited or experienced if I had not been on this job. I found that the majority of these people are really good people who are stuck in bad circumstances."

What about your job makes you the most proud?

"Obviously, my favorite thing is to make a positive impact on people's lives and help them to better their lives or get out of a bad situation. Specifically, there was a lady who was in an abusive relationship and we would get called to the house all the time. The male was abusive and prevented the female from talking to cops or answering the door when we would come. After

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seeing the pattern, we waited for the young lady to take their child to daycare and offered them a ride, as they would usually walk. She was away from the abuser and was finally comfortable to tell us what the male was doing and how she was afraid for her and her child's life as he threatened to hurt the child if she left and told police. With the help of outside agencies, we were able to get housing and a better life for the young lady and her child and we were able to charge the male abuser. He was taken for a psychological evaluation to see if he had underlying mental issues, but as it turned out, he was just a bad guy who needed to be taken away from his fiance and his child before he harmed them."

What is the toughest thing in your line of work?

"By far, the toughest thing is seeing children being hurt. I'll never forget the time I responded to a call on Roosevelt Boulevard where a mother and her children were trying to cross the Boulevard and were struck and killed from drag racers."

How is the Philadelphia Police Department taking action against COVID-19?

"Covid 19 has definitely impacted my job as we wear masks and gloves 24/7. I am currently assigned to the Center City area and the majority of the population is now gone due to the closing of businesses. We still have a residential area in the downtown area plus Fairmount that require police service. We have seen an increase in burglaries and thefts from the vacated properties in the Center City area, also with the state mandated precautions, a lot of criminals who would be typically arrested, are now being left on the street at the discretion of the District Attorney. This has caused a huge problem because certain criminals continue to commit crimes with no fear and don't even care if police stop them. Some have even told us that there is nothing we can do and that they are going to continue committing crimes after we leave."

How has COVID-19 changed your perspective on what you do?

"The coronavirus does not stop me from doing what needs to be done. Me and my other officers know that the show must go on and we must do our jobs regardless of what's going on. So we take our precautions with protective gear and wash our hands a few extra times but the virus cannot stop services being rendered."

Not only my father, but many brave parents and loved ones have stepped up to take action during this tough time. I would like to thank all of these people for offering their services to people in need, especially when it puts them at a higher risk.

