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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Three New Local Officers Complete Academy Training** ***One River Falls, two Hudson officers graduate from CVTC program***

**Eau Claire, WI** – New officers for the Hudson and River Falls police departments began full time work in December after graduating from the Law Enforcement Academy at Chippewa Valley Technical College in Eau Claire Dec. 18.

Aaron Alberts and Caleb Kostic have joined the Hudson department and Cody Tomlinson has started in River Falls. All will undergo internal department training programs before beginning regular patrol work.

Being a law enforcement officer in Wisconsin takes a great deal of training. A minimum of 60 college credits are required to enroll in the Academy. Many go through CVTC's two-year Criminal Justice-Law Enforcement program, or through a university or other technical college.

CVTC Associate Dean of Emergency Services Eric Anderson said the 720-hour academy instructs the recruits in six areas: policing in America, tactical skills, patrol procedures, legal context, relational skills and investigations. Completion of training at a Law Enforcement Academy is required to become certified as a law enforcement officer in Wisconsin. However, officers can start work with a department before completing the training.

Kostic, a 2009 Hudson High School graduate, is joining his hometown police force. Kostic earned his bachelor's degree in criminal justice from the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire, then served four years in the U.S. Army. He worked various jobs, before the Hudson Police Department hired him and sponsored his participation in the Academy.

"Law enforcement is something that always piqued my interest, for as long as I can remember," Kostic said. "To give back to the community I grew up in is just a fantastic opportunity."

Alberts attended the criminal justice program at a college in his home area of Green Bay, then received training as a jail officer at Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College in Rice Lake.

"I worked in the jail for the St. Croix County Sheriff's Department for five and a half years, then Hudson gave me this opportunity and sponsored me in the Academy," Alberts said. "I got along with the Hudson department's staff that would come into the jail. And Chief Young is very family oriented."

Alberts and Kostic received honors at the Academy graduation ceremony. Alberts was chosen as the graduate speaker and was top performer in the vertical jump and pushups in fitness training. Kostic received the Top Gun award for firearms proficiency.

Tomlinson, a Durand native, was inspired to pursue law enforcement by a friend. "My best friend is in law enforcement and I liked the passion that he had when he talked about what he did and how he did it," he said. "I needed something like that in my life."

Tomlinson earned a bachelor's degree in criminology from UW-River Falls. The River Falls Police Department hired him in September and sponsored his participation in the Academy.

"Law enforcement is something I can be proud of and enjoy doing every day," Tomlinson said.

The guest speaker for the ceremony was Barron County Sheriff Chris Fitzgerald, who gained notoriety over the past year due to his department's work on the Jamie Closs kidnapping and the murder of her parents. Fitzgerald did not talk about the case, but focused on the profession.

"You're entering into an elite part of humanity as guardians of public safety," Fitzgerald said. "And in the future when you need help, look to the left and to the right. You are part of a family."

With over 155 programs offered both online and on-campus, Chippewa Valley Technical College delivers superior, progressive technical education which improves the lives of students, meets the workforce needs of the region, and strengthens the community. CVTC programs are designed with input of business and industry to prepare graduates for today's jobs, with 95 percent employed within six months of graduation and associate degree graduates earning an average annual salary of \$46,816.

**Cutline:**

Leaders of the Hudson and River Falls police departments attended the Law Enforcement Academy graduation at Chippewa Valley Technical College Dec. 18. On the left, new Hudson officers Aaron Alberts (left) and Caleb Kostic are joined by, from left, Chief Geoff Willems, Sergeant Todd Pearson and Lieutenant Jason Muenich. On the right, new River Falls officer Cody Tomlinson is joined by Chief Gordon Young (left) and Deputy Chief Jon Aubart.

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