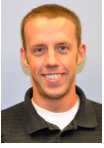


Erik Young is new deputy

Written by Chris Lee



Phillips County has hired Erik Young as a new deputy with the sheriff's office.

Young brings the force back up to four officers following the departure of deputy Barry Winckler, who accepted a job with the Sterling Police Department in August.

Young grew up in Lakewood and graduated from high school in 2006. He attended University of Northern Colorado in Greeley where he earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice in 2011. Later that year he graduated from the police academy at Arapahoe Community College.

For the last three months he has worked in a halfway house.

Young chose to pursue a career in Holyoke after living in Windsor during college. He fell in love with the small-town life and is excited to get started in Holyoke. Saturday night, Sept. 15 was his first night on the job. He is currently working with undersheriff Thomas Elliott as he learns the ropes.

When he was little, Young always wanted to be involved in law enforcement. When he went to Greeley for college, he began studying business. "That was too boring for me," Young said.

During a trip home that first year, he pulled out a journal he had written as a youngster where he wrote about wanting to be a police officer.

He went on a ride-along with the Lakewood Police Department and it was solidified—he had a new goal. "I knew what I wanted to do," Young said.

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He is really looking forward to getting out and meeting the folks of Phillips County. He noted waving to strangers on the road is something that doesn't happen back home in Lakewood.

He can't wait to become a part of the community. He also wants residents in Phillips County to know that the sheriff's office cares about and is there to serve the people. He said he is an approachable guy and encourages the public to reach out to him.

Law enforcement isn't something that runs in his family. Young is the first to pursue a career as a police officer. "My parents are a little nervous about it," he admitted. "That's expected, right?"

Young is currently looking for a place to rent in Holyoke. In his spare time, he enjoys playing basketball, hiking, biking and spending time outdoors. The new deputy also enjoys reading when he is forced to stay inside. He also delves into video games every now and then.

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