

Bullet Proof Vest Optional

By Cathy Tyson



From left, Cadet Nicholle Miller, Officer Kevin Mooney, and Anna Mahoney
Photo Cathy Tyson

That isn't the usual description for Orinda Police officers, but it is true for cadets that are interning with an Orinda Police officer. Cadet Anna Mahoney, a Miramonte senior, was lucky, her uncle, a police officer, gave her one. Although the chances of getting shot in Orinda on a Sunday afternoon are slim, no one wants to find out the hard way.

Mahoney's not getting paid for her many hours of service, but its worth it to her because she wants to

pursue a career in law enforcement. The Cadet Program definitely gives her a leg up.

As part of the program Mahoney and fellow cadet Nicholle Miller have learned CPR, radio codes, handcuffing and traffic direction. Officer Kevin Mooney, the Police Explorer Advisor who supervises the cadets said Anna was a huge help on a 211 – home invasion/robbery in progress call. "Someone had burglarized a home and attacked a woman at the residence. She got to see

how police respond to an emergency situation with dogs and helicopters. Anna was there as we cleared the house, searched the area, and conducted interviews."

According to Mooney the cadets learn to take instruction, to respect authority, to be assertive not aggressive, to understand and execute what they are told to do and they help out with things real officers do, like arrange the evidence locker.

"Not only were they a great

help during 4th of July events, but Anna and Nichol were instrumental in the department's move from the old office to the new office. They were essential, working countless hours, day after day, boxing and moving things," explains Chief Bill French. "We are always actively looking for cadets." At the moment, the Orinda Police Department has room for up to six more.

For Mahoney and Miller it's more than just the minimum of eight hours a month. For Anna, it's a chance to explore the family business, both her dad and uncle and a number of other relatives are in law enforcement. "I just love the program and without a doubt, I want to pursue a career in law enforcement." In addition the program has given her a chance to hone communication skills. "I feel much more confident now."

"The cadet program has given me an inside look at how the justice systems works. I would recommend it to other kids," explains Miller. "Putting on the uniform can be transformative. When I'm there with the officers I tend to be more alert, I learn by example." For inquiries regarding the cadet program, call the Orinda Police non-emergency number (925) 254-6820.

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