

# Latest police recruit making way through training

By Ron Karten

*Smoke Signals staff writer*

Tribal member Tyler Brown, 22, has been a police officer since June 13, the day he finished 16 weeks of training at the Salem-based Oregon Public Safety Academy, where he won the health and fitness award in his class.

"I am a big fitness nut," Brown says. "I work out about two hours a day or more. That was a huge deal for me, because three years ago that would have never happened."

"Tyler takes his physical fitness very seriously," says Field Training coordinator and Grand Ronde Police Officer Patrick McConnell, "which shows determination and a good mindset."

Successfully finishing the academy training, Brown says, "was a big accomplishment for me. A dream come true."

The five-phase training lasts an additional 14 to 17 weeks or more. It includes everything from paperwork requirements to the operation of police radios and computers to making arrests and booking the arrested into jail.

Brown also is graded on his appearance and dress, attitude, communication abilities and problem-solving skills.

During these five phases, Brown rides with McConnell and fellow Grand Ronde Officers Tim Hernandez and Ron Wellborn, and Sgt. Jake McKnight. He starts by watching the others work, and does more and more work under the supervision of his training officer.

"We have a great group of officers here from the Chief (Al LaChance) all the way down to Tyler," McCo-

nnell says. "We have each other's back 24/7 and trust our lives to each other. Tyler is learning though that cops are never truly off duty, from training on your days off or having to go to court."

Brown was about to begin his fourth week riding with McKnight during the second week in July.

"He's been teaching me the ropes. It's a blessing to have his help," Brown says.

Brown is the latest addition to Grand Ronde Police Department and he says he couldn't be happier. He has wanted to be a police officer his whole life.

"I know it sounds corny," he says, "but growing up, all I wanted to do was protect people and make them feel safe. So, this is a perfect fit for me. You have to be able to give up a lot of things you want for (the benefit of) other people in this job."

Learning the job has taken Brown into some uncharted territory. Of course, he is learning how things are done in the department, but the curve of his people skills is going up fast.

Brown has been learning "how to treat people with respect, the same respect you would want," he says. "I'll have to deal with people a lot, so I'm learning how to take calls, how to handle different people with their issues. Jake's been really good to teach me."

Together, McKnight says, they have been "making traffic stops, taking people to jail, finding people with drugs, taking them to jail, going through the booking process at the Polk County Jail. In cases from Yamhill County, he'll be taking the arrested to McMinnville and the Yamhill County Jail, though he

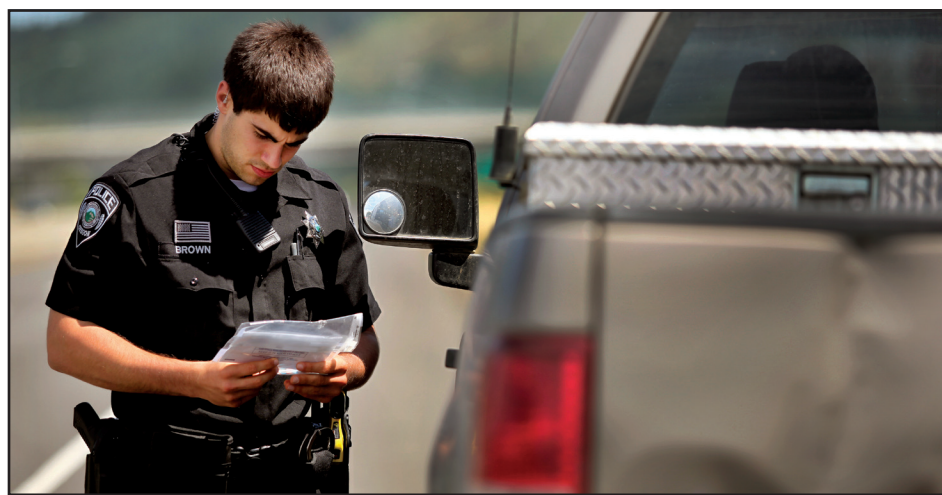


Photo by Michelle Alaimo

**Grand Ronde Tribal Police Department Officer Tyler Brown checks registration and insurance paperwork during a traffic stop in Grand Ronde on Tuesday, July 8. Brown is a Tribal member and the department's newest officer.**

hasn't had to deal with a Yamhill County resident yet."

"It's a lot to take in," Brown says, "but it's a good experience. There's always more to learn. I've learned a lot but there are situations you get into and I don't want to mess up. I don't know how to react sometimes. Everyone wants you to have answers. I'm young and haven't really had this experience before. People older than me are looking to me for answers. That's tough, but nothing I can't handle. I've always liked challenges."

"Tyler is smart, energetic and eager to learn," says McConnell.

When not at work or in the gym, Brown says, "I love sports: football, basketball and mixed martial arts are my favorites." He never saw McKnight compete in the mixed martial arts arena, but he notes, "We train hitting the pads together after work some days."

Brown also has a lot of experience

working in other Tribal departments, including jobs at Culture, cutting trails at Natural Resources and as a pre-school aide.

Brown is the son of Wayne and Phyllis Brown. He graduated from Perrydale High School in 2010 and attended Chemeketa Community College for three years studying personal training, health and fitness, and criminology.

"I also mixed in a few nutrition classes for my own personal benefit," he says.

"My goal," says McConnell, "and the goal of this department is to produce the best officers to serve this community to the highest potential possible. Field training is very stressful for a recruit but it teaches them to be able to work on their own."

That's the next challenge for Brown. When training is done, he says, "I'll be on my own; making my own decisions." ■

# Tribe also creating job opportunities

**DEVELOPMENT continued from front page**

lington, Wash. The company makes drinking cups out of recyclable plastic bottles and has seen its business grow as it contracted with several major airline companies.

Along with the investments, the Tribe is creating job opportunities for Tribal members who live throughout the Pacific Northwest. SAM Medical Products has offered seven new jobs to Tribal members and/or spouses at its Wilsonville facility while Shasta has offered nine positions for possible Tribal employees in Redmond.

On July 1, SAM Medical recruited for four positions in *Smoke Signals* and applications went through the Tribe's Human Resources Department. Asghar said two more positions will be offered by the end of the year.

The Tribe also has been recognized for its "innovative restructuring of deal making," receiving a Deal of the Year Award from the Native American Finance Officers Association in April for its \$10 million equity investment in MicroGREEN. The Tribe also has loaned money to the company at a "significant spread," Asghar said.



Titu Asghar

With the resignation of Finance Officer Julio Martinez earlier this year, Asghar has taken over guiding the Tribe's endowment investments.

Besides stocks and bonds, which are public securities, he also received Tribal Council permission to invest in a private equity fund whose performance is not tied to the performance of public securities. This is called an uncorrelated investment.

"The benefit of adding uncorrelated investments in a portfolio such as our size gives us diversification of risks. It spreads our risks," Asghar said, "and provides better protection of Tribal endowments."

Ultimately, Asghar said, the Economic Development Department wants to bring jobs to the Grand Ronde area for Tribal members. Discussions are currently occurring with MicroGREEN Polymers with that goal in mind, he said.

Asghar added that a SAM Medical distribution or assembly plant near Grand Ronde might be a possibility.

"We want to showcase Tribal properties to bring businesses here," he said, adding that the Tribe will fight to not give up Tribal sovereignty in doing so.

Mercier added that the possible positions would be living wage jobs.

In addition, the Chemawa Station project in Keizer, a collaboration between the Grand Ronde and Siletz Tribes, is closing in on its final leg with the selection of a master developer and contractor.

The Tribe's two major real estate holdings – Cherry City Shopping Center in Salem and the Portland office on Southwest Barbur Boulevard – are showing healthy occupancy rates (84 percent and 78 percent, respectively).

"We have a lease in negotiation right now," Asghar said about the Portland office. "We are keeping an eye on other properties in our ceded lands."

Grand Ronde also is looking to expand its economic relationships with other Tribes across the nation, such as the Seminoles in south Florida. "There is definitely a need for Tribe-to-Tribe collaboration on economic development," he said.

While not investing or analyzing possible investments, the Economic

Development Department monitors where the Tribe's money has been invested.

"All this is in addition to all of the meetings with all of the investments we have done," Asghar said. "Just because we have put in money does not mean our responsibilities are over. We get monthly financials from SAM, Shasta and MicroGREEN, and now that we have invested in the private equity fund we are going to manage that relationship as well. I sit on all of their boards and attend SAM Medical meetings on a quarterly basis. We are passive investors. We don't dictate terms, but we listen and give our opinion to protect our investments."

Asghar added that he is hopeful that the Securities and Exchange Commission will change an accreditation rule that currently does not allow Tribes to invest money as accredited investors.

"Tribes, for all intents and purposes, are left out of that loop, and as a result some of the investments we wanted to pursue to protect our investments we cannot unless we throw a lot of money at fund managers, which we will be not willing to do. It defeats the purpose of diversification." ■