

South Roxana Police Department announces it hires two new officers

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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SOUTH ROXANA - The South Roxana Police Department announced it has hired two new officers at a board meeting.

One of the officers is Vance Wilhelm from Bethalto, who will be hired as a part-time police officer and will attend the part time police academy in February of this year.

Vance is married to Kristen Wilhelm, who is a teacher in the Roxana School District. Vance currently works at Fire Safety in Wood River.

Vance graduated from Franklin University with his bachelor's degree in criminal justice. This will be Vance's first law enforcement job. He previously did an internship with the Roxana Police Department.

Damarre Smith will be the new full-time officer for the village. Damarre currently is finishing up his bachelor's degree in criminal justice from SIUE. Damarre is from the south side of Chicago. Damarre comes from a family of teachers. Damarre does not have any previous law enforcement experience.

The applicants who made it through the process, Damarre and Vance stood out among the rest of the applicants, South Roxana Police Chief Bob Coles said. Damarre will be the first black police officer to serve the village.

"I want to make it very clear, Damarre did not get the job based on his race, but due to the positive impact I believe he will have on our community," Coles said.

"Damarre and Vance will attend the academy together. I think they will do a fantastic job for the police department and the community."