

Movin' on Up: Two officers get promoted in Alton Police Department

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ALTON – Two officers were promoted within the Alton Police Department Tuesday afternoon.

Sergeant Pete Vambaketes and PFC. Mark Conrad were each promoted in the Alton City Courtroom Tuesday afternoon. Vambaketes is now wearing lieutenant's bars, which he inherited from Lt. Gary Cranmer, who recently retired from his position as chief of detectives, and Conrad inherited Vambaketes's sergeant bars.

Vambaketes hired onto the Alton Police Department in 1999 after working as a Madison County jailer. He was also in the U.S. Marines and Alton Police Chief Jake Simmons said he was “highly-decorated,” having served from 1992-1996.

Upon joining the force, Vambaketes worked in patrol until 2005, when he became a detective. He was named Officer of the Year in 2007 for helping to solve two city bank robberies. He was moved to drug enforcement in 2011, and has most recently worked as a training officer in the department. He has also worked in the Major Case Squad and has been instrumental on solving more than a dozen murders.



Conrad has also been instrumental in training new officers. Simmons said each new hire is asked to spend a portion of their training time with Conrad. He said Conrad has helped instruct as many as nine officers in the Alton Police Department.

Outside of training, Conrad has also been involved on the Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System (ILEAS) specializing in weapons of mass destruction and being a trained sniper.

Simmons said Conrad “demonstrates the tenants of community policing, knowing one act of kindness can create ripples.” Conrad was named “Officer of the Month” in Nov. 2017. Like Vambaketes, he was instrumental in solving bank robberies. Conrad discovered a note left by last year's serial bank robber, which eventually led to his Atlanta arrest due to fingerprint analysis.