



## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Pleasanton Police Department Celebrates Two Promotions & Welcomes Two New Police Officers**

*Pleasanton, CA* ---Sergeant Maria Munayer was promoted to the rank of Police Lieutenant and Officer Benjamin Sarasua to the rank of Police Sergeant in a special badge pinning and oath of office ceremony that took place this morning. Recent Police Academy graduates, Matt Harvey and Ken White were also sworn in as Pleasanton's two newest Police Officers. All filled vacancies that were created during the past year.

Lieutenant Maria Munayer was born and raised in Alamo, California. She has been a valued member of the Pleasanton Police Department since 2001 and has served in a variety of assignments to include Patrol, Detective, SWAT and the Special Enforcement Unit. She was promoted to Sergeant in 2009 and has worked in both the Operations and Investigations divisions most recently serving as the Supervisor in the Youth and Community Services Unit. In 2008, Munayer co-founded a non-profit organization called The Bridgewatch Angels. During the holidays, the Bridgewatch Angels patrol the Golden Gate Bridge to engage in suicide prevention. She also recently led a committee comprised of representatives from all disciplines of the organization to develop a new brand logo, tagline and platform for the police department. Munayer holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of San Francisco and a Master of Arts in Leadership Studies from St. Mary's College.

Sergeant Benjamin Sarasua was born in Redwood City, California and moved to Pleasanton as a child, graduating from Amador Valley High School. He enlisted in the Marines and after the terrorist attacks on 9/11, his unit was deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Sarasua joined the Pleasanton Police Department in January, 2007. He has held a variety of collateral assignments which include SWAT/Sniper, FTO, Force Options and Detective. He also served on the Strategic Planning Committee and participated in the newly developed Branding Campaign for the department. Sarasua has recently completed his 20<sup>th</sup> year of honorable service with the Marine Corps. He earned his Bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from California State University, Hayward and his Master's degree in Emergency Management from American Military University.

Officer's Matt Harvey and Ken White graduated from the Southbay Regional Police Academy in San Jose on September 1, 2015. Both competed in a very challenging selection process, participated in

multiple interviews, medical and psychological examinations, and an in-depth background investigation. Harvey is a former Pleasanton Police Explorer and graduate of Foothill High School. White has a background in Loss Prevention and was named Regional External Investigator of the Year for Nordstrom, Northern California in both 2010 and 2011. Both officers will undergo a sixteen-week field training process before being assigned to patrol Pleasanton as solo officers.

Photographs are available upon request.