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## HPD Hosts 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Citizen Police Academy

Harrisonburg, VA – The Harrisonburg Police Department (HPD) will soon be hosting its 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Citizen Police Academy. This program is an opportunity for community members to learn about the various duties and responsibilities of HPD through hands-on and classroom learning experiences. The academy is open to both residents of the City of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County.

Not only do participants receive an in-depth knowledge of HPD, they will also get insight on how the department functions through a multitude of scenarios that apply to policing in today's society. Participants will have an opportunity to learn about Criminal Investigations, Police K-9's, SWAT and Crisis Negotiation, Drug and Gang Units, complete a ride along with a patrol officer and shoot department weapons in a controlled environment. This academy is an excellent opportunity for those who want to gain more insight as to how HPD functions and the different services the department provides.

The Citizen Police Academy enhances community partnerships and strengthens the police department's focus while providing an opportunity to educate citizens. "If you have ever wondered why the police took a specific action or perform certain duties, this academy is an excellent opportunity to not just see how we operate, but the reasons why we operate the way we do," says Officer Brooke Wetherell. "I strongly encourage the community to engage in this program to help us create a city where our actions, policies, and voices are united toward a goal of stronger relations and safer communities."

The academy will be held every Thursday evening at the Public Safety Building, 101 North Main Street, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Additionally, there will be one Saturday morning scheduled on April 2 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Applications will be made available online at [www.harrisonburgva.gov/police](http://www.harrisonburgva.gov/police) or at the Public Safety Building lobby. Completed applications need to be returned by Monday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Selected participants will attend classes beginning March 3<sup>rd</sup> through May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

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