



# Front & Centre

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Staff Spotlight

## Meet Sergeant Michelle Small

Sergeant Michelle Small's family line is filled with local leaders – her great-great-grandfather was the Bath City Marshal, her grandfather was an attorney in the City, and her great-uncle was the Sagadahoc Sheriff. They might seem like big shoes to fill, but Michelle is already setting records. She became the first woman on the Bath Police Department to hold a supervisory position when she was promoted to the rank of Corporal in 2013. Small, now a Sergeant, said that she would not have accepted the promotion if they meant giving up the other half of her position: K-9 handling.



"In 2003 I started working with my first dog – Keylo. When I got the position to work with her I was scared to death," Small said. "She was a German shepherd bred in Hungary and selected for police work. All police canines are alphas, which means they are inherently aggressive and energetic. The first time I left Keylo alone, she ate her way through a sheet rock wall."

Keylo retired after 10 years of service, and sadly passed away in December of 2016. "It wasn't until she passed that I realized how deep a connection I had with her," Small said. "They become a huge part of your family."

Small now works with 7-year-old Sampson, another German shepherd who is dual-purpose certified in narcotics detection and patrol. \$5,000 of his \$7,500 price tag was generously raised by the American Legion, and Small assures that he is worth every penny. "People will run all day from law enforcement, but it's completely different when a dog comes on the scene," she said.

In addition to her regular duties as a patrol officer, Small is also an assistant regional trainer with the Maine State Police Canine Unit. With 55 other dog teams across the state, Small helps coordinate training and demonstrations throughout the Midcoast and Southern Maine.

Michael Field, Chief of the Bath Police Department, praised Small for her contributions. "Michelle is an excellent officer," he said. "She has done amazing work with our K-9 program, and her accomplishments have been recognized throughout the state."

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