

City of Newburgh

PRESS RELEASE

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City of Newburgh Fire Department Welcomes Two New Firefighters

Two City residents have joined the ranks of Newburgh's Bravest. After completing training at Westchester Fire Academy, Lee Gordon and Daniel Rohde are on duty in the City of Newburgh.



Daniel Rohde



Lee Gordon

Both firefighters bring unique experience and qualifications to the job. Lee Gordon was a New York City Police Officer; Rohde was a Paramedic with the New York City Fire Department.

Gordon, 26, grew up in the City of Newburgh on Marne Avenue, the son of Robert and the late Nancy Magnarella Gordon. His grandfather, Eddie Gordon, worked for the Newburgh Enlarged City School District as a Buildings and Grounds Supervisor for many years. He graduated from Orange County Community College with an Associates degree in architecture, and a BA in Criminal Justice from John Jay. When he graduated, he took both the Police and Fire Civil Service exams. He served two months with the New York City Police Department as an officer in the South Bronx, when the opportunity arose to become a City of Newburgh firefighter.

“Joining the Fire Department is a dream come true,” said Lee. “It means a lot to be back in Newburgh, helping people where I grew up.”

While at the Fire Academy, Gordon earned the “Esprit de Corps” award.

He said he doesn’t miss being a police officer. “The thing about being a police officer is that people are usually not happy to see you- it’s different in the Fire Department,” he said.

Daniel Rohde earned a degree in history from the University of Wyoming, and has experience as a plumber. But, he said, “I always wanted to be a firefighter.”

He spent three years with the New York City Firefighter/EMS, first as an Emergency Medical Technician, then as a paramedic. In June of this year, wearing his City of Newburgh firefighter uniform, he received the Christopher J. Prescott Medal from Mayor Bloomberg, the highest honor for Emergency Medical Services. Rohde was honored with his partner, EMT Shawn Healy for entering a burning building before the Fire Department could arrive and evacuating 20 people.

Since graduating from the Fire Academy, both Rohde and Gordon have had a chance to put their Fire Academy training to good use at their first fires. When not fighting fires, they are settling into the routine of emergency calls, on the job training, caring for the equipment, inspections, and for Rohde, cooking. They work a “mutual” for each other- 24 hour shifts; when one man is on, the other is off duty.

For both men, the perks of the job not only include a shorter commute, but they are doing a job they always wanted to do. They cited the camaraderie of the Fire Department as an added bonus.

“Both these new firefighters show a lot of promise,” said Chief James Merritt. “They are replacing members who were on long term disability leave. Their presence will be felt immediately by the line firefighters who will now have more help at fires and other emergencies.”