

Hampton woman becomes first 18-year-old Navy Region Mid-Atlantic federal officer

by: [Kenzie Finch](#)

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HAMPTON, Va. (WAVY) — A Hampton woman is now the first 18-year-old to ever become a federal police officer for Navy Region Mid-Atlantic.

Kursten Clark graduated high school from Hampton recently. Clark said she knew since she was a kid that she wanted to be a police officer.

“I never knew where exactly, but I knew I wanted to do it, I love helping others out and once I saw and heard the presentation, it sealed the deal,” Clark said.

Clark trained at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, or FLETC, in Glynco, Georgia. She graduated as the youngest civilian officer within the department.

“I want to tell other girls keep your head high, no matter what anyone tells you, you know your truth, and you know what you’re capable of,” Clark said. “If you have goals and dreams, chase them, don’t give up on yourself, you’re capable of anything and everything.”

Photos below courtesy of Navy Region Mid-Atlantic





Navy Region Mid-Atlantic is one of eleven current naval regions responsible to the Commander, Navy Installations Command for the operation and management of Naval shore installations in Wisconsin, Illinois, Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, North Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine.

It is headquartered on Naval Station Norfolk,

Breaking Barriers: The Inspiring Journey of Navy Region Mid-Atlantic's First 18-Year-Old Federal Police Officer

YORKTOWN, VA, UNITED STATES

03.05.2024 Story by [Ninoshka Basantes](#) [Navy Region Mid-Atlantic](#)

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A young woman has shattered age barriers to become the first 18-year-old federal police officer for Navy Region Mid-Atlantic. Meet the resilient and determined Kursten Clark, a recent high school graduate hailing from Hampton, Virginia. Her journey from the halls of New Horizon Educational Center to the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC) in Glynco, Georgia, is not only a testament to her tenacity, but Clark is also a beacon of inspiration for aspiring law enforcement professionals.

Discovering the Dream

Clark's journey began when she attended a presentation at New Horizon Educational Center, where she learned about the opportunity to join the federal police force. The decision to embark on this path is a testament to her courage, also a reflection of her commitment to serving her country. The seed of aspiration planted in those educational halls would soon blossom into a groundbreaking career as a Department of Defense uniformed police officer assigned to Naval Weapons Station Yorktown.

"I knew from when I was a kid, and even my parents told me I wanted to become a police officer," said Clark. "I never knew where exactly, but I knew I wanted to do it, I love helping others out and once I saw and heard the presentation, it sealed the deal."

Nervous Beginnings

The transition from high school to a federal law enforcement career was not without its challenges. As Clark set foot in FLETC in Glynco, Georgia, for her training, she faced the daunting prospect of being away from home for the first time. The nerves were palpable, but Clark's determination and resilience proved to be her guiding lights.

"I was kind of nervous leaving home, but I was also excited to experience new things," said Clark. "It was my first time on a plane, and it was honestly one of the coolest things I've done."

A Crucible of Learning

FLETC is renowned for shaping future law enforcement professionals in the country. Clark embraced the rigorous training with enthusiasm, demonstrating her commitment to mastering the skills required for her new role. From physical fitness to tactical training, she met each challenge head-on.

"Being at FLETC is surprisingly cool. Shooting guns was fun. The PT stuff is okay, but I liked when we learned how to use handcuffs," said Clark. "I really like that the program is hands on, I learn better that way." Clark also mentioned that her favorite part was learning to drive the vehicles and that she was surprised how well she did.



Homegrown Talent

Clarks' story is not just one of personal triumph but also a celebration of homegrown talent breaking barriers. Hailing from Hampton, Virginia, she brings a local touch to the federal police force, embodying the spirit of service and dedication that characterizes her community. Clark is the first to be hired at the age of 18, but also a female.

"I never thought I would be a trailblazer for anything in my life, I am honored to path the road for future young females," said Clark. "I do have to add, it is always nice to see people's reaction when they hear my age," Clark added.

Ready for Duty

As Clark completes her training at FLETC, she stands at the precipice of a groundbreaking career. Her journey from a high school graduate to a federal police officer is an inspiration to those who dare to dream big and pursue their passions with unwavering determination.

"I want to tell other girls, 'Keep your head high, no matter what anyone tells you, you know your truth, and you know what you're capable of. If you have goals and dreams, chase them, don't give up on yourself, you're capable of anything and everything'," said Clark.

NWS Yorktown's Security Officer, Ensign Patrick Moore echoed her enthusiasm and commended her groundbreaking role at the youngest civilian police officer within the installation's security department.

"Officer Clark is an integral part of our Navy Security Force. Her motivation to join one of the finest and uniquely capable law enforcement agencies in the region always impresses me. She has done superbly in every respect, and we are proud and fortunate to have her on the force here," said Ensign Moore.

In the annals of Navy Region Mid-Atlantic's history, Clark's story will be etched as a milestone—a testament to the power of dreams and the resilience of youth. As she takes her place among the federal police officers, we celebrate not just an individual achievement, but also a symbol of potential, breaking barriers, and embracing opportunities. Clark's journey reminds us that with courage and determination, anyone can rise to new heights. The future of law enforcement is bright, thanks to trailblazers like Kursten Clark, who paved the way for others to follow in her footsteps.