



## My Post Experience: Celeste Robitaille, learning to lead

Alumni Insights, Blog

Leadership skills are important in every office and in every profession, but when your employees show up to work every day putting their lives on the line, strong leadership is a requirement.

Post student Celeste Robitaille, one of the leaders of the Stratford, CT Police Department, knows how important leadership is to keeping her officers safe in the line of duty. For this reason, Robitaille sought out higher education to help



Celeste Robitaille

her become the best law enforcement officer and leader she could be.

Robitaille started at Post in 2008, earning her **Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice** in 2011. She transitioned into her graduate program soon after and will earn her **Master of Public Administration** degree next week.

As a member of the Stratford Police Department for over 20 years, serving as a Lieutenant for the past seven years, Robitaille feels she has been able to become a well-rounded supervisor with the tools to improve the quality of work in her department.

“The Criminal Justice and MPA programs really showed me how to relate to my officers and taught me how to help them through certain situations they may be struggling with,” she said. “I try to be a situational leader and because my set of skills have been polished and improved so much, I can help my officers in a variety of different ways.”

The Stratford, CT native came to Post with leadership in mind, but found that she left with a professional toolbox that helped her in several areas of her career.

“There’s such a wide variety of topics covered in the MPA program that it really builds and polishes so many sets of skills— from leadership to organizational skills, to understanding the culture within a workplace, and even financial and budgeting aspects.”

Robitaille is currently working on her capstone project on rebuilding and maintaining positive police and community relations, which she hopes to bring back to her police department to help them move ahead of the curve.

“The project is really how you view your community differently and work with them effectively,” she said. “It’s not just: we’re the police and you’re the community; it’s how interactions effect these relationships.”

As a full-time lieutenant and an adult learner looking to further her career, Robitaille set out to attempt to earn her bachelor’s degree seven years ago. After experiencing the flexibility of her online undergraduate program at Post, she continued her studies in Post’s online MPA program.

“With my schedule, I wouldn’t have been able to complete school without Post’s online format,” she said. “The support from the professors, the flexibility of the programs, even all the support I received outside of the classroom—from the finance office, to my advisors and the writing center—all of that contributed to my success at Post. My experience has really been unparalleled.”

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