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Caitlin Swenson “does not hesitate to act and faces obstacles head on,” and that earned her the Burleson Police Department’s 2014 Rookie Officer of the Year award.

“I was very surprised and am very appreciative of this award,” Officer Swenson said. “It really means a lot to me to receive this. I am so incredibly grateful for everyone’s support and encouragement every day.”

The 27-year-old Arlington native was hired by Burleson on April 25, 2013.

Swenson “has demonstrated how to handle courage under pressure, which does not come naturally to most officers. In one particular situation, Officer Swenson encountered an intoxicated man during a call. The man was very belligerent and uncooperative but she was able to maintain control until other officers arrived and took the man into custody,” according to the nomination letter. “This officer is always quick to help, offering to work extra shifts when needed and always doing so with a smile. She takes the initiative and applies solid problem solving skills.”

The honoree worked as a detention officer for the Tarrant County Sheriff’s Office, 2011-2013. Swenson earned a bachelor’s degree in general studies (government and criminal justice) from Texas Woman’s University in 2011 and an associate of arts degree from Tarrant County College, also in 2011.

“I wanted to work for a smaller department and in a smaller community that was still close to the big city,” Swenson said of her choice to apply with the Burleson Police Department.

The Rookie of the Year is a member of the Burleson Police Department Honor Guard. Her mentor is Officer Tiffany Bauereisen, who was tapped as the 2012 Officer of the Year and also serves with the honor guard.

“She was my first and last training officer and continues to be there for me whenever I need her,” Swenson said of Bauereisen. “By just having the opportunity to watch her in action, she showed me what it really means to be a good police officer.”

Swenson is not the only family member in law enforcement. Her younger brother is a detention officer for the Tarrant County Sheriff’s Office and her older sister is a dispatcher with the Mansfield Independent School District Police Department. The honoree’s father is a customer engineer with NCR and her mother is a transportation routing foreman with the Arlington Independent School District.