

‘To the best of my ability’

Simpsonville native hired as new victim’s advocate

At 26 years old, Emily Smith has more life experience than many people twice or even three times her age. Smith is a College of Charleston alum, Peace Corps veteran, trained masseuse, mental health professional and now the new victim’s advocate for the Simpsonville Police Department.

“I’ve always been passionate about mental health and general wellness, so I pursued jobs in those fields,” said Smith, who earned a public health degree from the College of Charleston.

After graduating college, Smith—who has a passion for traveling and learning about new cultures—put her degree and Spanish language skills to work as a Healthy School Coordinator in Guatemala,

“Overall, I want to build upon the community presence the last victim’s advocate had and do the best to provide victim’s with the assistance they deserve.”

-Emily Smith, Victim’s Advocate

where she worked with local community members to improve the hygiene of schools, build school gardens and lead fitness programs.

“After my Peace Corps time came to an end, I felt compelled to work directly with mental health and found a job as an AmeriCorps VISTA for the National Alliance on Mental

Health and Mental Health America,” Smith said. “With NAMI, I was able to build partnerships with other local behavioral health organizations, organize community events, conduct training for the Greenville Police Department and enhance services for Spanish-speaking communities.”

Smith worked as a trained crisis intervention specialist on the Suicide Hotline at Mental Health America, answering phone calls from people who were experiencing a mental health crisis, which ranged from suicidal ideations to a desperate need for local resources or to “someone who just needs to feel heard.” Following her experience as a mental health professional, Smith studied at and graduated from the Western North Carolina School of Massage with specialized skills in multiple massage techniques, including Swedish, neuromuscular, reiki, hospice and oncology.

“I realized I wanted to have more technical skills to help people with anxiety and depression,” Smith said regarding her motivation to attend massage school.

Then in February, the City of Simpsonville hired Smith to fill the open victim’s advocate position. Smith said another opportunity to help people and create com-



Emily Smith is the new victim’s advocate for the Simpsonville Police Department | Courtesy of Emily Smith
community attracted her to the role.

“During my professional experience, I felt the most fulfilled when I was working in crisis intervention and networking with the community,” Smith said. “The victim’s advocate position gives me a chance to build upon both of these skills. I’ll be working one-on-one with victims, whether by providing empathy, walking them through the legal process, connecting them with resources or using active listening skills for someone going through a crisis. It also gives me a chance to network and partner with organizations and community members to bring the best resources to victims of crime in Simpsonville.”

Smith’s plans for the victim’s advocate position include expanding resources for victim’s by working with criminal justice or social service agencies; giving victims the most up-to-date accurate information about their case and resources and participating in community outreach to provide *(continued on Page 12)*

(continued from Page 11) education about crime prevention and the cycle of abuse that victims find themselves in.

“Overall, I want to build upon the community presence the last victim’s advocate had and do the best to provide victims with the assistance they deserve,” Smith said. “I plan on doing this by working closely with other victim’s advocates in Greenville, building more community connections and advocating for victims to the best of my ability.”



When Smith is not working to make the world a better place, she enjoys running outdoors, salsa dancing or playing soccer.

Newly hired Victim’s Advocate for the Simpsonville Police Department Emily Smith participated in the Peace Corps as a Healthy School Coordinator in Guatemala. Smith has a passion for traveling and intends to visit at least one new country every year | Courtesy of Emily Smith

COURT: IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO KNOW

Q: How do I pay a traffic ticket issued by a Simpsonville police officer?

A: Traffic tickets can be paid online by visiting simpsonville.com/court and selecting Court Fines or in person at Simpsonville City Hall on Monday - Friday at 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Acceptable forms of payment at City Hall include credit card, debit card, cash, certified check and money order. There will be a surcharge on all credit and debit card payments.

Q: What is the difference between Simpsonville Municipal Court and Fairview-Austin Summary Court? Are they the same?

A: Simpsonville Municipal Court at 118 N.E. Main St. and Fairview-Austin Summary Court at 205 N. Maple St. are not the same court. Municipal Court addresses cases that happened inside Simpsonville city limits and originated with an officer with the Simpsonville Police Department. Summary Court is a part of the magistrate courts system of Greenville County and addresses cases that happened in Greenville County or originated with a trooper from the S.C. Highway Patrol or a deputy from the Greenville County Sheriff’s Office.

Q: What do I do if I have a court date?

A: Anyone with a Simpsonville Municipal Court date should check their ticket for the date and time (in [military time](#)) of their court appearance and verify the address is 118 N.E. Main St. Members of the public should use the rear entrance of City Hall and must wait in the parking lot until a police officer unlocks and opens the door.

Q: When is court held?

A: Court is held the second and third weeks of the month; check your ticket for which day of the week your court date falls on. Night court is held at 5 p.m. on Wednesdays.

Questions can be directed to Assistant Clerk of Court Ariel Rogers at 864-967-9526 ext. 104.

