

National Leader eyes-up policing career

SADD National Leader Dathan Barkhausen is hanging up his school bag early and taking his next step towards a career with the New Zealand Police.

The 18 year-old from Christchurch's Shirley Boys High School heads to Wellington this month to start a certificate in Pre-Police Proficiency. Dathan says he's been interested in the police since childhood, but owes it to SADD for solidifying his decision.

"When you go to the SADD National Leadership Programme workshops and Conference there's normally police around helping, so I have time to sit-down and talk to them about their job and even see their vehicles and equipment. That really helps me think 'yeah, I can do this. I want to do this'".

Dathan was motivated to apply for the National Leadership Programme (NLP) in 2018 after his positive experience at SADD's Dunedin conference earlier that year.

"If SADD hadn't grabbed my attention at the conference I would have never applied for the NLP," he says.

While he values the friendships and people skills he's developed as a National Leader, Dathan also sees the benefits SADD has for anyone looking to join the police.

"This organisation is purely focused on road safety and there is a massive amount of road policing you need to learn. You learn the stats, skills and you do learn a lot of prevention strategies - that's what SADD does with its [six] principles and activities.

"Everything we're doing here, I think, has value towards going into the police".

In early July, Dathan was able to attend the Auckland National Leadership workshop. Luckily for him it was hosted at the Harbour Bridge Police Station. As well as working alongside seven other leaders on refreshing SADD's six principles, he was able to learn more about road policing under the watchful eyes of Senior Sergeant Rod Salt. He even got to practice laying road spikes.

Dathan said his favourite part of the workshop was the leadership activity hosted by Waitemata Police's Field Learning and Development Manager, Snr Sergeant William (Billy) Lawrence.

"He was amazing. Billy got us working closer together and pushed us as a team," Dathan says.

With his sights set on the police, Dathan says he would love to come back and work alongside SADD one day. Even if he doesn't end up in road policing, he still wants to be involved somehow with the charity - whether it's at Conference or as a guest speaker.

Dathan's pre-policing course starts on July 22nd at the New Zealand Institute of Sport. After six months Dathan will be that much closer to securing a spot in the New Zealand Police.



Snr Sergeant Rod Salt gives Dathan Barkhausen the run-down on laying road spikes at Auckland's Harbour Bridge Police Station.



Snr Sergeant William Lawrence (centre back) with the group of national leaders after taking them through a leadership activity.