



# Ft. Pierce Police Department News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**R. Sean Baldwin**

*Chief of Police*

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Volunteer undaunted by obstacles to achieve dream  
of becoming a police officer



**FORT PIERCE** – For the past 15 years, Mandral Gibson has dreamed of being a police officer. After July 23, 2008, she is one step closer to her dream becoming a reality.

Gibson, 22, was sworn in as a citizen of the United States on Wednesday, a day she will always remember because it was her birthday. In two weeks she is scheduled for an interview at the Fort Pierce Police Department.

“It made it even more special being sworn in on my 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday,” she said. “One of the first things I am going to do is register to vote so I can vote in the presidential election.”

In order to be a police officer, one of the requirements is that the individual must be a U.S. Citizen. Prior to her swearing in ceremony, the Turks and Caicos-born Gibson had only achieved permanent residency status. Gibson was among 198 immigrants, representing 52 countries that were sworn in at the Immigration Office in West Palm Beach.

“Mandral is a model citizen,” said Chief R. Sean Baldwin. “She is someone who truly cares for her community and she has proven that through her service as a volunteer for the police department. We hope to pin a badge on Mandral and put her to work protecting the community we serve.”

Though it has taken what seems to be a long time, Gibson was not deterred from accomplishing her goal. Even after finding out she needed to be a U.S. Citizen, Gibson continued as a member of the Port St. Lucie Police Department Explorer Post 441 where she rose to the rank of Master Sergeant First Class during her 6 years of service. After graduating from high school, she graduated from IRCC with an A.S. degree in Criminal Justice, became the youngest member of the Fort Pierce Police Athletic League Board of Directors at the age of 18, volunteered in the department’s Records Division and she went on numerous ride-a-longs with police officers.

“At first I was mad,” Gibson said. “Then I just told myself that this gives me more time to learn the job, so when it happens I will be ready.”

Frustrated with the delay in her application for citizenship, Gibson contacted the office of the Honorable Congressman Alcee Hastings. Gibson said had it not been for Congressman Hastings’ intervention she might be still waiting to hear from immigration.

“When I received the letter to get my fingerprints done, I knew it would only be a matter of time,” Gibson said. “Then when I got the letter informing me of my test date I was like oh yeah it’s gonna happen. I was ecstatic when I got the letter for the swearing in ceremony.”

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