

MATT REJIS

B.A. COMMUNICATION '10

Matt Rejis' decision to become a police officer came as a surprise to everyone, including him!

Rejis grew up in a quiet, rural area bordering Los Angeles and played with computers to pass the time. After obtaining a degree in communication from CI and completing an internship in social media, he started a career in marketing with Apple. Things looked good, but something didn't seem right.

"One day, I was sitting at my desk and just had an epiphany," says Rejis. "Our time here is so limited; what is my stamp on the world going to be?"

Moments later, he recalled a friendship he'd developed with a CI campus police officer. Rejis admired the role and saw its potential span of influence. He entered the police academy within six months and has worked for the LAPD for five years.

One of his favorite things about being a cop is changing public perception of law enforcement.

"When I pass someone on the street, I say 'Hi,'" says Rejis. "There's that one second where the person pauses and thinks, 'Oh, am I supposed to have a normal conversation?' Then, they see past the uniform to a human being."

Today, Rejis experiences that personal exchange on a much broader basis by handling all social media for the LAPD. His efforts to increase the department's transparency and communicate everyday things officers do to serve the community – like helping change a tire or find a lost dog – earned him commendation from U.S. Attorney General Loretta Lynch (pictured).

"After leaving Apple, I never thought I'd work in digital media again," says Rejis. "It's funny how life has a plan for you."

NOTE: Rejis credits CI with giving him the ability to connect with people with different perspectives and to work with diverse communities. He intends to pursue a master's degree in organizational leadership from USC in 2017.

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