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Airport Welcomes Newest Employee: K9 Officer Gunner

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Dayton International Airport's newest employee has shown up to work with his feet--all four of them--on the ground and ready to go.

K9 Gunner X318 arrived at the airport last week, where he was greeted by Sgt. Ted Priest, his new partner and handler.

Gunner is a 2-½ year old Labrador Retriever and spent 10 weeks preparing for his role and the responsibilities he is taking on at the airport.

Gunner is now one of three dogs in the airport's K9 Unit. He has big paws to follow as he replaces Darco K038 (better known as Marco, an 11-year-old Belgian Malinois, who died in December from complications during surgery recovery).

"Gunner appears to be eager and ready to serve his task of protecting the airport and the Dayton region," said Terrence Slaybaugh, Dayton International Airport director. "You certainly cannot ever replace a dog like Marco, but we are confident Gunner has great things to share with us and a bright future ahead of him in his new position."



The airport's K9 Unit works with other regional safety agencies through a mutual aid agreement and is on call for response to bomb threats, mass transit threats or any type of threat to large gatherings of people at any venue.

Dayton International Airport established its K9 Unit in 2006 with three K9 police dogs. Each dog must undergo a 10-week course at Lackland Air Force Base, TX. Their handlers also must have a better-than-working knowledge of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and IED components.

Gunner will continue to receive training, with daily coaching and weekly instruction geared toward bombing incident intelligence.

"The dogs within the K9 Unit take their roles in the community very seriously," Slaybaugh said. "And we are grateful that they do, as the tasks they are here to perform are extremely important and valuable to the community. We look forward to seeing Gunner at work at Dayton International."

For more information on Dayton International Airport, go to flydayton.com

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