

# Growing the Future Coast Guard

By BMC Matt Disco

MSU Paducah



Caitlin piloting the 25ft RBS under the supervision of BMC Disco, mile 10 UMR.

In October, the crew of Marine Safety Unit Paducah had the opportunity to interact with a young teenager from the community in a very meaningful way. Caitlin Croft, who also happens to be the step-daughter of a Marquette employee, David Varvel, has had a growing interest in the Coast Guard and possibly joining the service upon graduation from high school. It only made sense to give her a first hand look at what spending the day as a “Guardian” would be like. Caitlin began her day shadowing LT Charlotte Keogh, Chief of Prevention, with some Physical fitness training at 0730 with a 2 mile run. From there, she completed vessel checks of both MSU Paducah Response Boats; noting zero deficiencies. By 1000, Caitlin was set to accompany the Boat Crew on a typical patrol. As fate would have it, a vessel grounding occurred in the Upper Mississippi River requiring immediate response by the Coast Guard.



Caitlin served as a vital crewmember during the event, assisting in the launching, piloting, navigation, documentation, and recovery of the entire sortie. Caitlin’s family has a recreational boat and her knowledge of the local waterways was evident. She was comfortable and confident behind the helm.

At the end of the day, Caitlin spent a total of 13 hours with MSU Paducah members. She seized the opportunity to explore her desire of becoming a Coast Guard member. Her knowledge and “can do” attitude made her a vital part of the team at MSU Paducah.



MSU Paducah enjoyed the experience and looks forward to watching Caitlin carry out her dream of joining the Coast Guard in the future.