

METRO

Mom and daughter motivate each other to climb NYPD ranks

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Police Cpt. Lavonda Wise (right) poses with her mom, NYPD Det. Laverda Pugliese-Phillips.

Chad Rachman

A mother-daughter crime-fighting duo have inspired each other to climb the ranks of the male-dominated NYPD.

Detective Laverda Pugliese-Phillips — a single mom who joined the force after she was mugged in Brooklyn nearly 30 years ago — has stuck with the job with the support of her eldest daughter, Lavonda Wise.

Wise, 34, who is now an NYPD captain assigned to school safety in Queens, is grateful this Mother's Day for a strong female role model as a kid growing up in Brooklyn.

"I just remember being extremely proud of her and saying wow, you know, when I grow up I want to be a woman like that. Everyone in the neighborhood was proud of her because there was no one really doing positive stuff with their lives at the time," said Wise, who is assigned to Long Island City's 108th Precinct.

'I just remember being extremely proud of her and saying wow, you know, when I grow up I want to be a woman like that.'

- Cpt. Lavonda Wise says of her mom, Detective Laverda Pugliese-Phillips

Pugliese-Phillips, 52, was inspired to become a cop when she was robbed on the street in Bedford-Stuyvesant in the early '80s.

"I was working closely with the detective, out there trying to find the perpetrator. And I felt like

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specializes in domestic-violence cases in the 88th Precinct in Fort Greene.

She was first hired to work a desk job in 1988 in Bed-Stuy's 79th Precinct station house, where she would bring Wise as a young girl.

In 1992, she hit the streets on the midnight shift to patrol the crime-ridden neighborhood.

The NYPD made few accommodations for officers with families at the time — but her daughter stepped up to help at home, said Pugliese-Phillips, a mother of five. "When I came on this job, it was no if, ands or buts. You did what you were told, and they didn't care. Now it's a little more accommodating," said Pugliese-Phillips, adding she couldn't have managed the schedule without her daughter's help.



NYPD Det. Laverda Pugliese-Phillips (left) and Cpt. Lavonda WiseChad Rachman

“I had the support of her, even as a little girl,” Pugliese-Phillips said.

In 2001, she convinced Wise to leave her job as a banker and join the NYPD. Wise steadily moved up the ranks.

“My mother was very adamant about me taking the test. I listened to her because she never guided me wrong,” said Wise, who is now the mother of a 2-year-old girl named Madison.

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