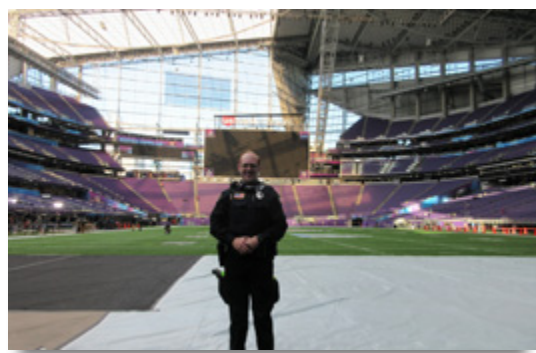


News Release

Super Bowl Safety Brings U of M Crookston's Matt Blair to the Big Game

By Elizabeth Tollefson on Tuesday, February 6, 2018

Six days before Super Bowl LII, Matt Blair was working perimeter security at the U.S. Bank Stadium. Blair, who works for security services at the University of Minnesota Crookston, spent the week roving through different positions around the fenced area and at the gates.



A 2011 graduate of the U of M Crookston, Blair has worked part time for the Hill City Police Department since May 2017. He learned about an opportunity to work security at the Super Bowl soon after he started there.



"I was asked if I was interested by my chief at the Hill City Police Department, and I quickly responded 'yes' without any hesitation," Blair says. "I met the necessary requirements as a licensed officer in the State of Minnesota in good standing, and it was an incredible thing for me to have this chance."

While S.A.F.E. (Security, Athletic Facilities & Events) Management was in charge of security at the game, more than 600 law enforcement personnel also played an important role in the effort. Along with Blair, more than 100 officers worked the perimeter, which consisted of two four foot barricades topped by an eight foot fence. "We did have a few people who tried to get over the fence, but that is the reason we are there to help enforce that perimeter, and to help ensure the safety of all the players, fans, and everyone involved," he says.

During the week, Blair had opportunities to take tours, step onto the sidelines, and to watch some of the set up take place, and even caught a glimpse of Justin Timberlake preparing for his half time performance. He says he isn't a big football fan, and once the Vikings were out of contention, he didn't care who won the game. "Being neutral was a good thing though, and I was happy for the winner no matter which team won," he remarks.

The day of the game, Blair was stationed at one the entry gates where vehicles with VIPs, some of the team members and cheerleaders entered, along with buses. His shift on Sunday started at 6 a.m. and he wasn't off duty until nearly 8:30 Sunday evening. "I enjoyed working with everyone and being a part of making this huge event successful," Blair says.

"It was fun to see everyone enjoying themselves, and watch the whole thing come together," he continues. "It took everyone working together to pull it off, and for the most part, it went perfectly."

The University of Minnesota Crookston now delivers 34 bachelor's degree programs, 22 minors, and 40 areas of emphasis on campus as well as 14 degree programs entirely online. These degrees are offered in the areas of agriculture and natural resources; business; liberal arts and education; and math, science and technology. With an enrollment of 1,800 undergraduates from more than 20 countries and 40 states, the Crookston campus offers a supportive, close-knit atmosphere that leads to a prestigious University of Minnesota degree. "Small Campus. Big Degree." To learn more, visit www.umcrookston.edu.

Contact

Elizabeth Tollefson

University Relations

218-281-8432

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2900 University Ave., Crookston, MN 56716
800-862-6466 | 218-281-6510 | umcinfo@umn.edu

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