

Biography - Chief Donn G. Peterson

Chief Donn G. Peterson was born in Santa Maria, California and grew up in Sonoma County, attending high school in Sebastopol. After attending Purdue University, he moved to South Florida, where he spent the next 30 years serving the Broward Sheriff's Office.

The Broward Sheriff's Office is the nation's largest full-service accredited sheriff's office and his career with them began in January 1985. He later moved to regional investigations where he served in the Career Criminal Unit, tracking and pursuing the county's most violent repeat offenders. His leadership journey began when he was promoted to sergeant and transferred to Lauderdale Lakes, where he served as a patrol sergeant and then headed up the district's criminal investigations unit. Donn was promoted to lieutenant and remained in Lauderdale Lakes as the executive officer (assistant chief), where he first began to work closely with city staff and elected officials in a collaborative way to accomplish broader-based goals beyond just law enforcement. Donn was promoted to captain and given command of the South Broward District, which included unincorporated areas, the Town of Pembroke Park, and what would eventually become the City of West Park. He was instrumental in the incorporation process West Park undertook to become Broward County's 31st city, serving as their first chief of police and serving too on the city manager selection committee. Donn was assigned to Dania Beach as a captain in 2007 and led that city as their chief of police for the next five years before being promoted to the rank of major in early 2013. During that period of time in his career, Chief Peterson also commanded BSO's Special Weapons and Tactics Team. As a major, Donn served in a number of executive-level leadership positions with responsibility for county & domestic security, countywide school & support services, countywide regional support services, contract administration, and command of Broward County's Central Patrol Region, which incorporated six separate commands.

Returning to Northern California, Donn was sworn-in as Humboldt State University Police Department's sixth Chief of Police in January of 2015. Serving as Chief of Police at Humboldt State University has enabled Donn to transition from county and municipal law enforcement into the unique and specialized field of providing police services on a California State University campus. Through this experience, he has learned a great deal about the challenges of being a campus police chief in the California State University System, the largest and most diverse university system in the country. Concurrent with his duties as Chief of Police at Humboldt State University, Donn also serves as the President of the California College & University Police Chiefs' Association, President of the Law Enforcement Chiefs' Association of Humboldt County, and as 1st Vice President of the NAACP, Unit 1036.

Donn is married to Renee' and they have a son, Corey and twin daughters, Noa & Ava. Donn served in the United State Marine Corps. He earned his degree in Criminal Justice Management from Union Institute and University and is a graduate of the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy, as well as the Broward Sheriff's Office Institute of Criminal Justice Studies Executive Leadership Program.