

# Kevin E. Walsh, Sheriff

## Onondaga County, New York

Kevin E. Walsh was first elected Sheriff of Onondaga County in November 1994. As Sheriff, he oversees 650 employees including the Police, Custody, and Civil Departments, and an annual budget of \$64 million.

Kevin started his law enforcement career as a Military Policeman in the U.S. Army, serving in Korea and Germany. In 1966, he was sent to Vietnam and served as a helicopter door gunner on over 250 combat missions. He was awarded the Purple Heart and the Air Medal with nine clusters.

Fresh out of the Army, Kevin joined the Onondaga County Sheriff's Office in 1966, and after serving for twenty years, retired as a captain. During his tenure, he served as a Detective Commander, the Director of the Police Academy, and Commander of the Northern Police District. He is credited with founding the Sheriff's Office Abused Persons Unit and the Rape Prevention Program. He attended college on the G.I. Bill and obtained a Bachelor's and Master's Degree. Kevin is a nationally recognized police and corrections instructor and consultant.

After his twenty years of service in the Sheriff's Office, he served as the Director of Public Safety at the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry from 1986 to 1994. From 1990 to 1994, he was elected to the Onondaga County Legislature for three terms, serving as Chairman of the Public Safety Committee. He was also an adjunct professor of Criminal Justice at Onondaga and Cayuga Community Colleges as well as Columbia College, Vermont College of Norwich University, and Keuka College.

From 1995 to the present, during Sheriff Walsh's three terms as the County's "Top Cop", the Sheriff's Office has seen many changes. He managed the successful transition from the troubled PSB Jail to the state-of-the-art Justice Center, and subsequently removed the County from the scrutiny of the Federal Justice Department. Inmates now participate in educational programming and many will learn a trade while incarcerated. Since its opening, the Justice Center has graduated more GED students than the City School District. The Sheriff's Justice Center is a national model of how a jail should be managed.

Sheriff Walsh restructured the department's personnel, taking deputies from behind their desks and putting them back on the street to fight crime. He instituted community policing in targeted neighborhoods, expanded the DARE program, and started Sheriff's bicycle patrols. He founded the Air-1 Task Force, which led to the replacement of an aging airship with a new state-of-the-art helicopter that provides invaluable services in law enforcement, fire, and emergency services. In addition, during the past nine years, Sheriff Walsh has obtained more than \$110 million in Federal, State, and other reimbursements and grants for the Sheriff's Office.

Sheriff Walsh is very active in the community. He is a member of the Volunteer Center, Rape Crisis Center, American Legion, Knights of Columbus, Onondaga Citizen's League, St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee, St. Rose of Lima Church, Vietnam Veteran's of America, Military Order of the Purple Heart, Criminal Justice Advisory Board, and President of the NYS Sheriff's Association.

Sheriff Walsh was raised in Skaneateles and now resides in North Syracuse with his wife Joan, a former emergency room nurse. They have three adult children, Shannon, Kelly, and Kevin, and two grandchildren, Maggie Rose and Daniel.