



NATIONAL SHERIFFS' ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCE APPOINTMENT OF JUSTIN SMITH AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CEO

June 20, 2025 – (Alexandria, V.A.) The National Sheriffs' Association (NSA) is excited to announce the appointment of former sheriff Justin Smith as its new Executive Director and CEO. Smith will take over for Jonathan Thompson, who will be retiring at the end of 2025 after serving in the role for 11 years.

Justin Smith brings an impressive 36 years of combined law enforcement and public safety experience to the table. After serving in the office for over 20 years, Justin was elected as Larimer County's 27th sheriff and took office in 2011. He served a total of three terms (12 years) as sheriff until he was term-limited in 2023.

"Having served both as an elected sheriff and as an NSA leader over the years, Justin brings the perfect combination of experience to the important role, says NSA President Sheriff Kieran Donahue. "Americas Sheriffs' interests in Washington and across the country are in good hands."

Justin Smith added, "I have gained a tremendous respect for the Office of Sheriff and for the men and women who serve in that role. I look forward to serving and supporting America's Sheriffs and their Offices as they face many formidable challenges in the years to come."

Justin was born and raised in central Kansas, where he attended Wichita State University (WSU) and graduated with a bachelor's degree in administration of justice in 1991. While at WSU, he served as a student officer at the university as well as an explorer and reserve deputy with the Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office (KS).

Upon graduation, Justin accepted employment with the Larimer County Sheriff's Office, starting as a patrol deputy in a mountain district. Over the following 20 years, Justin promoted through the ranks and served in every division of the sheriff's office.

Justin earned his master's degree in criminal justice from the University of Colorado's Graduate School of Public Affairs in 2003. From 2004 to 2010, Justin served as a part-time adjunct professor of criminal justice at Colorado State University.

Justin is a graduate of the FBI National Academy, the National Sheriff's Institute, and the FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Seminar.

Justin's experience and influence in the field of law enforcement have extended beyond Larimer County. He has served in leadership roles in several prominent organizations, including president of the County Sheriffs of Colorado and Colorado Jail Association, board member and president of the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the FBI National Academy Associates, and a board member and member of the executive committee for the National Sheriffs' Association.

Justin and his wife Anne plan to relocate to the Washington D.C. area.

About the National Sheriffs' Association

The National Sheriffs' Association is one of the largest associations of law enforcement professionals in the U.S., representing more than 3,000 elected Sheriffs across the nation, and with a total membership of more than 13,000. NSA is a non-profit organization dedicated to raising the level of professionalism among sheriffs, their deputies, and others in the field of law enforcement, public safety, and criminal justice. Throughout its eighty-four-year history, NSA has also served as an information resource for all law enforcement, as well as state governments and the federal government.

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