

Thank you to the members of the City Council and city management for this opportunity. I am honored and extremely humbled to be selected as the Chief of Police for the Gainesville Police Department. When I started here 28 years ago, the thought that someday I would be selected as Chief for this department never crossed my mind.

The past 28 years of my life have been dedicated to this department and in those years I have been very fortunate to have worked with supervisors and fellow employees that instilled in me that without our community's support we fail as a department. In 1829 Sir Robert Peel, considered to be the founder of modern policing developed 9 Principals of Policing. One of the nine principals is simply **"To maintain at all times a relationship with the public that gives reality to the historic tradition that the police are the public and that the public are the police, the police being only members of the public who are paid to give full-time attention to duties which are incumbent on every citizen in the interests of community welfare and existence."**

Simply stated we are all citizens in this community, whether we live or work here. We have to work together, we have to talk together and we have to listen together to improve the quality of life and maintain a safe community for all. We want to continue to earn the trust of our citizens. Communication is our fundamental key in building and maintaining a strong relationship with all citizens. I am confident; we will succeed in this area.

Our officers and members of the Department go above and beyond their duties by performing small deeds such as paying for an unknown person's meal, providing Christmas for a child, checking on our homeless or taking care of a stray animal. To a lot of people these may seem small and not noteworthy but sometimes it's the smallest deeds that help a person get through the day. A small deed changed my life. When I applied here, I hadn't heard anything and I was giving up hope to be hired. I called the HR department and I spoke to Opal, and I told her to forward my application to another agency. I had never met or spoken with her before that day. Instead of just checking a box and hanging up, she took the time to make a phone call to Chief Forrester. That afternoon I had an interview and my life was changed. I challenge all the members of this department to make a positive change in someone's life.

As it is with the community, an open line of communication within our own department is a must in order for us to continue to be one of the best agencies in law enforcement today. I look forward to working with each of you as we strive to protect and serve and you make me proud to say I am a member of the Gainesville Police Department.

I want to Thank You all for being here for this special occasion in my life as this is a once in a lifetime opportunity for me. Many of you in attendance have influenced and guided me throughout my career and have helped me to become the person that I am today.

A special Thank You goes to my family and friends for standing by and supporting me over the years. I know it's not been easy. But without all of your strength and encouragement I would not be where I am today.

Thank you again.