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Mercer County Prosecutor Appoints Jessica Plumeri as Chief of County Detectives

TRENTON -- Mercer County Prosecutor Angelo J. Onofri recently announced the promotions of six members of his investigative staff, including the second female chief of detectives in Mercer County history.

Jessica Plumeri was sworn in as chief of county detectives on July 31. Plumeri takes the helm after the August 1 retirement of Tracey McKeown, who was the prosecutor's office first female chief.

"Jessica demonstrates the highest standards of professionalism, dedication to the safety of Mercer County residents, and a tireless pursuit of justice," Prosecutor Onofri said. "She continues to break glass ceilings in law enforcement and our investigative staff is in good hands with her leadership."

Born in Trenton and raised in both Trenton and Hamilton Township, Plumeri graduated from Hamilton High North (Nottingham) in 1990 and attended Mount Saint Mary's University in Emmitsburg, Maryland, graduating in 1994 with a bachelor's degree in sociology with a concentration in criminal justice.

After college, she was hired as a detective with the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office (MCPO) and, after graduating from the New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice Academy, was assigned to the Grand Jury, Trial and Megan's Law units. As her career progressed, Plumeri was assigned to the Special Investigations Unit where she began her passion for investigations involving the illegal distribution of narcotics.

While with the MCPO, Plumeri continued to advance her knowledge and skills by completing the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Basic Narcotics School, "Top

Gun” Narcotics School and the REID Basic Interrogation Course. She also completed the New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice Physical Training Course and is certified by the Police Training Commission as a certified New Jersey physical training instructor.

In 1999, Plumeri entered the graduate program in education at The College of New Jersey. She attended classes at night and graduated with her master’s degree in teaching in 2001. The following year, she was hired by the Hopewell Township School District as a second-grade teacher. It did not take the community long to appreciate her love of teaching, and in 2010, she received the Teacher of Year Award from the Hopewell Township Board of Education.

While teaching was a rewarding and fulfilling experience, there was still something missing. After much thought, Plumeri realized her true passion in life was law enforcement, so she returned to the Mercer County Prosecutor’s Office. As a returning law enforcement officer, she had to complete training at the New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice Academy, and received the Police Training Commission Distinguished Recruit Award in 2011.

Upon returning to the prosecutor’s, Plumeri was assigned to the Trial Unit, assisted in homicide investigations, and returned to the Special Investigations Unit, where she served as a member of the Mercer County Narcotics Task Force. As a detective in the SIU, Plumeri participated in more than 3,000 narcotics investigations, 300 of which were undercover. These investigations involved the distribution of narcotics and guns with the Mercer County Narcotics Task Force, the DEA, the FBI, the U.S. Marshals Service, the New Jersey State Police, and various state and local agencies in New Jersey, Pennsylvania and New York. Plumeri again completed advanced training and became a certified undercover officer through a prestigious program hosted by the New Jersey State Police and FBI. She is also an instructor at the Mercer County Police Academy and the state Division of Criminal Justice Academy. She has instructed at the Undercover Narcotic Investigative Training School (U.N.I.T.) hosted by the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General.

In 2016, Mercer County Sheriff John A. Kemler appointed Plumeri undersheriff of the Mercer County Sheriff’s Office (MCSO), where she was responsible for the origin and coordination of the MCSO Tactical Response Team, policy development and training, court security, security for the Trenton-Mercer Airport, and numerous other essential duties related to warrant services and fugitive apprehension.

In 2019, Plumeri returned to the Mercer County Prosecutor’s Office as deputy chief of detectives and has been responsible for the oversight of major crimes investigations throughout the county.

During her law enforcement career, Plumeri has received numerous awards from the Mercer County Prosecutor’s Office, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and local and state law enforcement agencies, including a 2001 certificate of excellence from the West Windsor Police Department for an undercover operation that benefited the entire

community. She has also assisted the DEA as an undercover officer resulting in the seizure of large amounts of narcotics.

Also promoted were Captain Tarek Elkachouty to deputy chief; Lieutenant Matt Norton to captain; Sergeant Natischa Clark to lieutenant; Detective Brian Kiely to sergeant; and Detective Michael Castaldo to officer-in-charge.

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Mercer County Prosecutor Angelo J. Onofri presents credentials to new Chief of County Detectives Jessica Plumeri.