



## OFFICE OF THE MERCER COUNTY PROSECUTOR

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### **Mercer County Prosecutor Promotes Natischa Clark to Lieutenant 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 and the highest ranking sworn African-American female in Mercer County.

Natischa Clark was sworn in as lieutenant of county detectives on July 31, becoming the first African-American female to be promoted to that rank. Clark was also the first African-American female in the history of the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office to be promoted to the rank of sergeant and the first female to serve as a member of the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office Honor Guard.

"Tischa is truly a trailblazer and a role model for all women in law enforcement," Prosecutor Onofri said. "Throughout her career, she has forged relationships with the business, education, government and public sectors that have been an asset to the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office in its efforts to bridge the gap between law enforcement and the community."

Clark began her career with the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office in 1995 and has served the office over the last 24 years in various units, many of which she has gone on to supervise. Since her promotion to sergeant in 2016, she has supervised the Bias Crimes, Community Outreach, Domestic Violence, Economic Crime, Evidence, Forfeiture, Grand Jury, Human Trafficking, Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC), Identification, Insurance Fraud, Juvenile, Megan's Law, Polygraph, Special Victims and Trial units. In addition, Clark was assigned to help implement the Attorney General's Extreme Risk Protective Order Directive.

A staunch advocate of victim's rights, Clark's passion for ensuring freedom for all people led to her becoming the MCPO's first investigative staff member to be appointed to the Attorney General's Human Trafficking Task Force in 2006. She investigated the first sex trafficking case under the newly-created statute and received a conviction for same.

Clark is also one of the MCPO's liaisons to Attorney General's Community Outreach and Bias Crimes committees, and has served as a sworn member of the Attorney General's Clergy Abuse Task Force. Clark works closely with the Capital City Community Coalition and the Division of Criminal Justice's Prosecutor and Police Training Bureau.

Prior to her current assignment, Clark was assigned to the Special Victims Unit where she was the first line supervisor for the ICAC Unit. As a certified forensic child interviewer, she was instrumental in updating the SVU protocol and interviewing standards to meet the accreditation criteria of the New Jersey Children's Alliance. Clark started peer review in the unit before it was required by the Alliance to ensure that the MCPO's SVU was performing forensic interviews to the best of their ability.

In addition to her investigative contributions to the office, Clark created an anti-bullying curriculum that was widely requested by schools and organizations throughout Mercer County and beyond. She also created an annual art contest that featured the artwork of Mercer County students demonstrating their fight against bullying and cyberbullying through artistic expression. Clark has taught at Mercer County Community College, Rider University, Kean University, and countless elementary, middle and high schools. She is also an instructor at the Mercer County Police Academy.

During her law enforcement career, Clark has been the recipient of numerous commendations. She was awarded the Cherish the Children Professional Recognition Award, along with a New Jersey State Senate Proclamation, for her work with juvenile sexual assault victims. She was also bestowed a proclamation from the Mercer County Executive for her service at Ground Zero after the attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup>. Clark was also the recipient of the Women's Achievement Award from Building Our Youth's Development for her dedication to excellence in her community in 2017.

Clark is a graduate of Rutgers University, and has completed the FBI-LEEDA Trilogy Course and DELTA Leadership Schools. She has also served on the executive board of the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office PBA Local 339.

Also promoted were Deputy Chief Jessica Plumeri to chief of county detectives; Captain Tarek Elkachouty to deputy chief; Lieutenant Matt Norton to captain; Detective Brian Kiely to sergeant; and Detective Michael Castaldo to officer-in-charge.

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*Mercer County Prosecutor Angelo J. Onofri pictured with newly-sworn Lieutenant Natischa Clark.*