



MECKLENBURG COUNTY SHERIFF

GARRY L. MCFADDEN

*Working to influence change by being...
“the difference”*



MCSO Surpasses DOJ Goal to Increase Representation of Women In Law Enforcement By 30 Percent

Charlotte, N.C. - As I reflect on this past Women's History Month, I feel immense pride in the Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) and the strides we've made in ensuring a more inclusive and representative law enforcement agency.

In March of 2021, the Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and the National Police Institute (NPI) launched the 30x30 Initiative, a program designed to increase the representation of women in law enforcement to at least 30 percent by 2030. Historically, this profession has been predominantly held by men, with women making up only 12-14 percent of the workforce. Research shows that increasing the number of women in law enforcement enhances public safety and helps address staffing shortages - two priorities we can all get behind.

I'm proud to say that MCSO is leading the way. As of 2024, women make up 44 percent of our total staff - three times the national average - and an impressive 46 percent of our senior leadership positions. We have women in key roles across our agency divisions, including Chief of Detention, Major over Field Operations, Major and Captain over Courts, Major and Captain over Office of Professional Compliance (Internal Affairs), and Major over the Training Academy. In our Detention Center, we've achieved a 50/50 gender balance, setting a national example for what true representation looks like.

But this isn't just about statistics; it's about making law enforcement better for not just our officers but the community they serve. Studies show that women officers use less force, face fewer complaints and lawsuits, are perceived as more honest and compassionate, and improve outcomes for crime victims, especially in sexual assault cases. By opening doors for women in this profession, we aren't just leveling the playing field, we're strengthening our communities and making law enforcement more effective.

To my fellow agencies around the country: I challenge you to match our numbers. Because it's clear. We need more women and their contributions in the law enforcement industry. Break barriers, promote women officers to leadership roles, create mentorship opportunities for those underrepresented, and most importantly, make all our women staff feel valued and respected.