



The South Carolina Sheriff

Summer 2020

A special newsletter from your South Carolina Sheriffs' Association



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Who We Are and Whose We Are

**Sheriff Mike Crenshaw, President
South Carolina Sheriffs' Association**

It is an honor and a privilege for me to serve as President of your South Carolina Sheriff's Association. Since I was elected Sheriff of Oconee County in 2012, I've experienced firsthand how important our Association is to law enforcement in South Carolina. Working together, we've seen our General Assembly pass legislation that improves citizen safety and increases law enforcement's professionalism. And in collaboration — as 46 Sheriffs with 1 voice — we can meet the challenges before us, turning them into opportunities.

Last November, many of us attended a memorial service for our Executive Director, Jarrod Bruder's father. Jarrod shared a letter his father had written to he and his brother, entitled Always Remember. Scott Bruder instructed his sons to always remember who they were and whose they were. As a part of the Bruder family, they had an obligation to maintain the family name in honor and dignity. He also wanted his sons to remember their faith — that they belong to their Heavenly Father. Jarrod embraced his father's letter as a warning, a reminder and an invitation. This is a message I have reflected on often. I believe it is equally important for us as Sheriffs' to always remember who we are and whose we are.

As Sheriffs, we hold the oldest law enforcement office in the land, and one that has always been accorded great dignity and high trust. We follow a long line of Sheriffs in South Carolina, men and women who served before us in this capacity for over 150 years. We heed this warning: The decisions we make as Sheriffs impact not only the counties we serve, but law enforcement across our state. As President of this Association, I believe it is important to be reminded who we are — the title we bear, and the office we have sworn to uphold and maintain in honor and dignity.



Sheriff Crenshaw, right, with his family, being sworn in as SCSA President, by the Honorable Thomas Alexander, South Carolina Senate, District 1, left.

Whose we are as Sheriffs is very clear. We are elected to serve the citizens in each of the forty-six counties across South Carolina. We are given our name by the people — they call us Sheriff. We are not given a name of power but, rather a name of great responsibility. Once we as Sheriffs understand whose we are, it makes serving in the capacity of who we are much easier.

And this all adds up to an invitation: Forty-six Sheriffs, united in one voice, can lead South Carolina into the future in areas such as citizen protection, safety, equity, and inclusion. And your strong support for our Association makes this possible. Thank you! Collectively, we are stronger to stand against the evil in our world today and making South Carolina a safer and happier state for us all.

Sincerely,

Mike Crenshaw

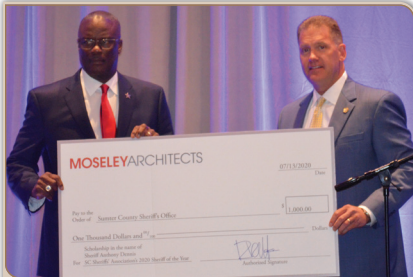
Sheriff Mike Crenshaw, President
South Carolina Sheriffs' Association

A Selfless Community Servant

SCSA's 2020 Sheriff of the Year, Sheriff Anthony Dennis of Sumter County

Sheriff Anthony Davis was born and raised in Sumter County. A graduate of Hillcrest High School, he began his law enforcement career with the Sumter County Sheriff's Office in 1982. He worked his way up through the ranks, serving as both a Shift Sergeant and Shift Lieutenant, and assuming the responsibility of Commander of the Narcotics Division before being promoted to Major of Operations in 1996 and Chief Deputy in 2000. He was elected Sheriff in 2004.

Sheriff Dennis is the first African American sheriff in the history of Sumter County. He has been the recipient of numerous awards, both on the local and national levels, yet he's quick to share the credit for every achievement with others.



Sheriff Faile, right, presents Sheriff Dennis, left, with a check for the Sumter County Sheriff's Office from Mosely Architects, sponsor of the Sheriff of the Year Award.

him speak about the men and women who work 'for' him, but rather you hear him talk about the people who work

'with' him. He truly directs the men and women of the Sumter County Sheriff's Office to operate as a team."

"What truly sets Sheriff Dennis apart," continued Simon, "is how he uses his office for the good of his community."

Each year, Sheriff Dennis hosts special conferences for boys and girls, targeting Sumter County's at-risk youth. Dennis commits to giving away 100 bicycles every Christmas through his Sheriff for Friends campaign, and is an avid Toys-for-Tots supporter. In addition to hosting an annual community-wide prayer breakfast, Sheriff Dennis is also a strong supporter of Joy Prom, a newer initiative providing special-needs teenagers the opportunity to attend a prom.

We congratulate Sheriff Dennis, the recipient of our 2020 SCSA Sheriff of the Year Award. He sets a high bar — and continues to live up to it. He is a tireless advocate for his staff and the citizens he serves. Thank you, Sheriff Dennis, for your commitment and your heart.



Sheriff Dennis, left, accepts the 2020 Sheriff of the Year Award from Sheriff Barry Faile, Lancaster County, right.

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Focus in the Face of Unspeakable Tragedy

SCSA's 2020 Deputy of the Year, Det. Sgt. Adam Creech of Lexington County

On June 4, 2019, after a month of extensive testimony, a jury convicted Timothy Jones Jr. of five counts of murder. Nine days later those same jurors unanimously voted to put Timothy Jones Jr. to death for the 2014 murders of his five children in Lexington, South Carolina. Many assisted in this outcome, but it is due in large part to the tireless and unselfish work of Sgt. Adam Creech.

On September 4, 2014, as a newly promoted detective, Adam Creech was assigned to the missing persons case involving Timothy Jones Jr. and his five children — ages 1, 2, 6, 7 and 8. Sgt. Creech began the investigation by ensuring Jones's vehicle was listed in NCIC along with the children, a decision critical to solving the case, ensuring investigators would be alerted immediately of any contact law enforcement had with Jones. On September 8, Jones and his vehicle were located in Mississippi — the children were not with him. Creech was sent to Mississippi to join FBI and SLED agents to interview Jones.

At the time of Sgt. Creech's interview with Jones, he had already been interviewed several times by senior officials, and to no avail. Creech worked tirelessly, using both his interpersonal and investigative skills, to build rapport with Jones. That rapport led to Jones's confession — he'd killed all five of his children and disposed of their bodies. When efforts to locate the children's bodies came up empty, Sgt. Creech persuaded Jones to assist. Riding together to a site more than 100 miles away, the bodies were recovered.

At trial in May of 2019, Sgt. Creech's two-day testimony recounting Jones's confession painted a vivid picture for the jury. The verdict and sentence handed down in this case were, in large part, due to the exemplary work of Sgt. Creech.

This case garnered national media attention. It was a high-pressure case. Sgt. Creech's attention to detail, work ethic, and pursuit of the truth brought a killer to face justice, and closure to one of our state's most unspeakable crimes. We congratulate Sgt. Adam Creech, our 2020 Deputy of the Year Award recipient.



Sergeant Adam Creech, left, receives the Deputy of the Year Award from Sheriff Jay Koon, Lexington County, right.

Competence, Consistency, and Courage

SCSA's 2020 Detention Officer of the Year,

Senior Detention Officer William Behuniak of Sumter County

This year's recipient of the Jerry D. McDaniel SCSA 2020 Detention Officer of the Year Award, Senior Detention Officer William Behuniak was born in Dover, Delaware, and moved to the Sumter area with his military family; his father was stationed at Shaw AFB. He graduated from Sumter High School and joined the U.S. Army in 2001. He and his wife Sabrina have four children.

Since joining the Sumter County Sheriff's Office Detention Center in 2018, Officer Behuniak has increased his knowledge of detention and law enforcement through training. "Bill is an outstanding officer who shows an attention to detail when dealing with his co-workers and inmates," says Sumter County Sheriff Anthony Dennis. "He consistently displays exceptional competence, sound judgment, and depth of professional knowledge in the execution of his responsibilities. He carries himself as a role model who leads by example."

That professionalism was on display during a recent fire and riot at the facility. Sr. Detention Officer Behuniak fended off multiple inmates in his pod until assistance arrived and rendered help. After sustaining minor injuries, Sr. Detention Officer Behuniak never missed a beat,

showing up for work as scheduled with the same enthusiasm as before. His bravery and work ethic are a testament to his character.

In nominating Officer Behuniak, Sheriff Dennis concludes, "Bill has become a treasure to our detention center and to our community and should be recognized for his personal motivation, excellent teamwork, and the professionalism he displayed over the duration of the calendar year 2019. Furthermore, this exemplary job performance demonstrates his dedication to the Sumter County Sheriff's Office and more importantly to the public which he serves."

We agree. Congratulations Sr. Detention Officer William Behuniak. And thank you.



Sheriff Dennis, Sumter County, left presents the "Jerry D. McDaniel" Detention Officer of the Year Award to Senior Detention Officer William Behuniak, right.



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