

As Chief of Police of the Fort Smith (Arkansas) Police Department, I nominate **Sergeant Dawn Sprayberry** to be recognized as the National Internal Affairs Investigator's Association 2013 Internal Investigator of the Year!

As the commander of our Office of Professional Standards, Dawn stood out as a leader immediately upon taking command of this office in January, 2008. Dawn has honored the department, chief of police, and herself through her demeanor and comportment in this key position within the department. Although she reports directly to the chief of police, Dawn goes to great lengths to provide assistance to all functional units—divisions, troops, and individual work units—within the department. She divides her time equally between civilian and sworn personnel to further the department's integrity by upholding our Mission, Vision, and Values.

Dawn is a 22-year veteran of the department and has served in the Office of Professional Standards/Internal Affairs for the past five and one-half years. Dawn is the longest tenured IA supervisor/investigator in the department's history. Dawn's professional approach to carrying out the varied duties of the Office of Professional Standards/Internal Affairs Investigator begins with the application of common sense, a sincere dedication to the citizens of our community, and a genuine respect for all members of the department.

Dawn's tenure as the Office of Professional Standards / Internal Investigator has been marked by many positive changes. Upon taking office, she campaigned for the ability to criminally charge complainants who made false complaints against officers, which in the past had been a demoralizing problem for officers who were confronted with false allegations without an opportunity for recourse. Dawn created a disciplinary matrix designed to help educate employees and give them a better understanding of what disciplinary actions could result from sustained violations of policy and/or rules. Upon her suggestion, the department added two peer officer reviewers to our chain of command reviews of disciplinary actions, including the opportunity for the subject officer to choose one of the two officer reviewers. Most recently, Dawn researched, created, and implemented the KEEP program (Keeping Employees Exceptional Program), which provides department members with career development options instead of negative discipline and is designed to retain our most valuable assets—our people—on the department.

The Office of Professional Standards is comprised not only of Internal Affairs, but also facilitates the department's CALEA Accreditation Team. The Fort Smith Police Department currently possesses accreditation in Law Enforcement (since 2003) and Communications (since 2007) and has recently applied for and is working toward Accreditation for Training Academy's (estimated 2014). Dawn has acquired personnel to bolster the department's required inspections and other accreditation processes to meet the needs of these rigorous programs. To accommodate the large influx of written directives, the department began transitioning to a paperless environment three years ago. As a result of this direction, Dawn has researched and

recommended paperless software applications for administration of the department's written directives and off-duty employment.

Dawn's professional, common-sense leadership and approach to investigating internal affairs' allegations has reinforced the department's integrity, bolstered our standing in the community, and exponentially increased the practice of members of the Fort Smith Police Department to maintain a highly responsive and transparent ethical culture. It is easy to ascertain why Dawn is a valuable member of the department's leadership team, and even easier to see her as this year's recipient of the 2013 Internal Affairs Investigator of the Year.