



SANTA CRUZ POLICE DEPARTMENT

155 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

MEDIA RELEASE



DATE: December 5, 2019

Santa Cruz Police Deputy Chief Rick Martinez announces retirement after 30 years of service

He will be honored at a community event on December 18, 2019

SANTA CRUZ, CA - The public is invited to a community celebration of Deputy Chief Rick Martinez, who is retiring December 19 after a 30-year career with the Santa Cruz Police Department.

Deputy Chief Martinez's retirement reception is scheduled to begin at 4:00 pm a day earlier, on December 18, at the Santa Cruz Police Department community room. The program will include remarks from elected officials and invited community leaders.

"As police leaders, we work in a challenging environment, but we also have great opportunities to impact our community positively. Santa Cruz has been very fortunate to have Deputy Chief Martinez on our SCPD executive team," Police Chief Andy Mills said. "This send-off event is a great opportunity for the Santa Cruz community to come out and say Thank You for what Rick has done for our department and our city."

Martinez started his career with the City of Santa Cruz in the summer of 1989, working as a Beach Ranger/Park Ranger for the Parks and Recreation Department. In that capacity, he was asked to help as a first responder on October 17, 1989, following the destructive Loma Prieta Earthquake. His initial earthquake response was in rescue operations before he transitioned into a law enforcement role.

Martinez started his career with the Santa Cruz Police Department, serving as a Reserve Police Officer, in 1990. A year later, he was hired as a Police Officer.

Martinez was assigned to the Investigations Section as Detective in 1995 and was promoted to the rank of Sergeant in 2000, to the rank of Lieutenant in 2004, and to the rank of Deputy Chief in 2010. He has worked in patrol, neighborhood services, investigations, professional standards, police administration, and was one of the first commanders of the Emergency Services Unit.

Deputy Chief Martinez believes strongly in the Community Oriented Policing model and has spent hundreds of hours each year meeting with community members, business owners, and elected officials to address core issues impacting the City of Santa Cruz. As the commander of the Downtown Unit, he drafted key policies relating to high-risk alcohol outlets. He also spearheaded a block-by-block communication model to provide residents and business owners with direct access to local government resources.

During his years with the department, Deputy Chief Martinez has taught safety classes to local students, worked as a liaison to the Commission for the Prevention of Violence against Women, provided gang training information to local schools, and has taught sections of the citizen's police academy. He was also instrumental in the development and implementation of the department's mobile phone app, establishing policies and procedures related to mental health outreach in the field, developing a collaborative Mental Health Liaison pilot program, and the implementing a crisis intervention team model.

He currently serves as a Board Member and is a past Board Chair for the Board of Directors of the Central Coast Chapter of the American Red Cross, co-chairs the north county BASTA Operations Team (Broad-based Apprehension, Suppression, and Treatment Alternatives), is a member of the Smart Solutions to Homelessness Leadership Council, and is part of the Santa Cruz Chamber of Commerce Community Affairs Committee. He is a past Board Member for the Santa Cruz County Mental Health Advisory Board and Women's Crisis Support of Santa Cruz County.

Martinez has earned a number of awards: the Law Enforcement Community Hero Award in 2010, the Clara Barton Award for Meritorious Volunteer Leadership in 2017, and a Lifesaving Award from Red Cross Headquarters in Washington, D.C. in 2019. Chief Mills also awarded him a Lifesaving award for the same action related to an incident at a homeless camp in the city late last year.

"I am both honored and appreciative of the opportunity to have worked with our community and the men and women of the Santa Cruz Police Department," Martinez said. "I retire knowing the department is poised not just to keep Santa Cruz safe, but continue to grow and serve with professionalism."

Deputy Chief Martinez's "Final Radio Call" and "Honorary Walk Out" will take place on December 19, 2019.

Deputy Chief Rick Martinez photo attached.

