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Police Chief Jonathan Fontneau Retiring After 38 Years of Service

STAMFORD, Conn. — Police Chief Jonathan Fontneau announced his retirement after 38 years of dedicated service to the Stamford Police Department and the City of Stamford. Chief Fontneau will retire in spring 2019, allowing time for the City to form a hiring committee and conduct a nationwide search for a new Police Chief.

Fontneau has served as Stamford's 15th Police Chief since Oct. 2012. As one of the longest tenured Chiefs in Stamford history, Fontneau leaves a legacy of modernizing the department, emphasizing strong community policing and a dedication to transparency that contributed to Stamford's reputation as the safest city in New England.

"Stamford's community is very fortunate to have had Chief Fontneau as their Police Chief," **Mayor Martin** said. "He is a professional who brought significant improvements to our police force and a strong leader who's respected both inside the department, and outside in our diverse community. He has respected the challenges confronting the police department in our era."

Chief Fontneau was chosen for the Distinguished Chief Award by the Police Commissioners Association of Connecticut in 2015 for his exceptional community relations and innovative policing strategies. He has also been commended by the United States Attorney's Office for youth leadership programs and the Downtown Special Service District for his role in making Stamford and the Downtown area a safe area to live, work and play

"Chief Fontneau is a man of honor and integrity who has dedicated his life to law enforcement, the department and the Stamford community for more than 38 years," Director of Public Safety Thaddeus Jankowski said. "He has demonstrated extraordinary leadership throughout his career. His experience, leadership and dedication are impeccable. As Chief, his community policing strategies have kept Stamford a safe place to live and the Stamford Police Department as one of the best in the nation. He is a man of character, committed to trust and accountability. He is a true public servant and a great leader – a Chief who truly cares about the members of the department and the community that he has sworn to protect. He is someone who has a great love for the Stamford community and is highly respected throughout law enforcement. It is no accident that

the City of Stamford is one of the safest cities in the United States. His leadership will be deeply missed by me, the department and the Stamford community. I thank him for his years of professionalism and hard work – I wish him the best in retirement.”

Under his tenure, Chief Fontneau oversaw the implementation of modern policing measures including body-worn cameras, improved surveillance around the city, and an anonymous rewards tip line. As well as community liaison programs such as Coffee with a Cop, multicultural community liaison groups, and training programs like Undoing Racism and Fair and Impartial Policing. The department has also increased their work with other law enforcement programs such as the DEA and FBI, regional institutions and other first responder agencies – notably improving active shooter response procedures.

Police Chief Fontneau is a Stamford native and graduate of Stamford High School who attended Southern Connecticut State University. He spent his entire law enforcement career in the Stamford Police Department. He started with the department in 1980, rising through the ranks as patrol officer, sergeant and lieutenant. He was promoted to Assistant Chief in 2010, and later to Police Chief in 2012.

Fontneau is highly decorated with over one hundred awards. He was named Police Officer of the Year with only two years in the department, a multiple recipient of the United States Justice award for excellence, attended the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) National Academy and is a Yale Fellow in Child Development. He has been very successful with initiatives such as community policing, juvenile mentoring and the federal prosecution of violent offenders. He has close professional relationships with United States Attorneys, Federal Task Forces, the DEA, FBI, ATF, and the Secret Service. The Narcotics and Organized Crime Unit under his command was very successful averaging over one thousand arrests per year.

Chief Fontneau wrote the following statement about his retirement:

“It has been a privilege to serve as a Stamford Police Officer and an absolute honor to serve as the Police Chief. These past 38 plus years employed by the City of Stamford Police Department was really never considered a job but rather a calling. Throughout my career I’ve worked alongside so many wonderful people both within the police department and in the community.

I have truly been blessed to have been given this opportunity to have served the City of Stamford as its police chief for the past several years. I have worked alongside such wonderful, dedicated professional police officers that risk their own safety day in, day out to keep the rest of us safe.

Retirement will be an opportunity to enjoy life in a new way, the right to stop working and do the 1,001 things I've always wanted to do but never had the time. I'm looking forward to retiring from work, not from life. It will not be the end but rather a new beginning, an opportunity for growth, creativity, volunteering, and some well-deserved rest.

I would like to thank Mayor David Martin and Director of Public Safety Ted Jankowski for their support throughout the years as well as the Police Commission, the Police Foundation, and city boards. I would also like to thank the residents of Stamford, for the support that they have shown the department and myself throughout the years.

I'm looking forward to new challenges that may present themselves, and spending quality time with my beautiful wife Heidi, my son Michael, his wife Taylor, my daughter Kelly, her husband Zack and our adorable grandchildren. I was born and raised in this great City, Stamford will always be a special place for me."

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