



Richardson Appointed as permanent Morristown Police Chief

Morristown's first black PD chief, capping a career over 30 years

In conjunction with the Morristown Bureau of Police, the Town of Morristown is proud to announce that Darnell Richardson was officially appointed Chief of Police on December 13, 2021, dropping "Acting" from his title. This appointment makes Chief Richardson the first African-American Police Chief in the Town's history.

At the upcoming Reorganization Meeting, to be held on Saturday, January 1, 2022 the Town will celebrate Chief Richardson's ceremonial swearing-in.

"I am humbled and honored to serve as the next Chief of the Morristown Police Department. To be selected as the first African-American Police chief is a monumental accomplishment for not only me but for Morristown," said Chief Richardson, who went on to say, "My only goal was to become a police officer in my hometown as a child. To hold the title of being the first African-American is something I never foresaw. I stand on the shoulders of other African American supervisors; Lt. George Jenkins, Lt. Willie Caldwell, Sgt. Timothy Jones, and Sgt. Melvin Dumas, who lead before me. This promotion is an honor and an acknowledgment of how far the department has come and how much further we can go."

This appointment is a sterling achievement in Morristown's rich history of evolving beyond segregation, which included the work from local activists such as former-councilwoman, first elected woman and person of color elected in Morris County, Beatrice Jenkins, and her husband, George Jenkins Sr., one of Morristown's first black police officers.

In 2019, Chief Richardson assumed the acting chief role after then-chief Peter Demnitz retired from a 36-year career. Chief Richardson told Morristown Green's Kevin Coughlin at the time his life's dream, beginning as a kid, was to become a police officer.

Chief Richardson followed that dream and began his career over thirty years ago, in November 1989, working as a uniformed officer for Morristown. 2007 saw his first promotion to police sergeant, followed by an appointment to Lieutenant in 2011 and Captain in 2015. He assumed the acting chief position in the same year of his 30th anniversary with the Bureau.

Mayor Dougherty said, "I couldn't be more proud of the appointment of Darnell Richardson as Chief of Morristown's Bureau of Police. He has proven his capability and dedication to our citizens, and earned this prestigious position. I look forward to continuing our work together for the safety of all Morristownians."

