



WHO WE ARE

The Volusia County Sheriff's Foundation is an alliance of business leaders and community members committed to the ideal that an educated, highly trained and well-equipped law enforcement agency creates a safer, more prosperous community for all. Our goal is to strengthen the bonds between the Volusia Sheriff's Office and the citizens it serves by working together to make our county safe. We were formed to provide funding for the necessary training, technology and equipment that is NOT included in the budget funded by our tax dollars.

The recent discussion around "defunding" certain police functions or cutting law enforcement budgets reveal the need for an examination of current funding levels. According to the Urban Institute, an independent economic and social policy think tank, only 4 percent of state and local budgets provide direct general expenditures for law enforcement. And on average, 97 percent of that funding is dedicated to personnel costs like salaries and benefits. Since 1977, capital spending has NEVER accounted for more than 5 percent of police spending. This reality holds true at the Volusia Sheriff's Office, leaving an extremely small percentage of the budget to provide the education, training and advanced technology required to provide the level of service the public expects and deserves.

One of the reasons Volusia County has not experienced the disruption and unrest seen in other cities across America is the professionalism made possible in large part by Volusia County Sheriff's Foundation funding. The Foundation has paid for deputies to receive advanced training and education at the Senior Management Institute for Police (SMIP), the FBI National Academy, and the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF). These are intense sessions with subject matter experts from both the public and private sector and law enforcement officers from around the world on topics including de-escalation tactics, re-engineering training on police use of force, and re-examining the Warrior vs Guardian mentality. Thanks to Foundation funding, the agency was able to bring in an expert to train deputies on how to more effectively deal with people who have autism. The Foundation's support has better enabled the agency to recruit candidates best suited for the mission of modern policing - to serve and protect not only through use of force, but through the use of critical thinking.

We are proud that the law enforcement leadership of the Volusia Sheriff's Office is progressive and forward in their thinking. Community policing, de-escalation, sanctity of life - the philosophies that are now at the center of our national conversation on law enforcement have already been central to the training deputies have been receiving in Volusia County.

It is up to us as residents and business owners in Volusia County to stand in the gap and provide the additional training, technology and equipment that put the Volusia Sheriff's Office at the leading edge of law enforcement in America. Together, our dollars allow our women and men in uniform to make the Volusia Sheriff's Office a model for the rest of the country to follow.

Your donation to the Volusia County Sheriff's Foundation is not just a show of support - it is an investment in the safety, security and prosperity of the community we share. Whatever you contribute, every dollar we raise is a small down payment on the brighter future of Volusia County. Join us and help us lead the way forward.

Edith Shelley
Volusia County Sheriff's Foundation Vice Chair

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