

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



SEMINOLE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
SHERIFF DENNIS M. LEMMA



SEMINOLE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

SHERIFF DENNIS M. LEMMA

MISSION:

TO ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE BY REDUCING
CRIME AND THE FEAR OF CRIME
IN SEMINOLE COUNTY, FLORIDA



We believe that crime is a symptom of another problem, and to reduce crime, we have to address the underlying conditions that lead individuals to commit crime in the first place.

The Seminole County Sheriff's Office prioritizes safer communities through our community policing efforts.

In addition, we further enhance individual empowerment and foster vibrant neighborhoods by investing in mental health and substance misuse initiatives.

Together, we create a secure environment for everyone to thrive, ensuring a brighter future for residents and businesses alike.

Dear Seminole County Residents & Supporters,

Welcome to the **2023 Annual Report.**

We are honored to present the 2023 Seminole County Sheriff's Office annual report, showcasing our unwavering dedication to the community we have the privilege to serve. Our agency is deeply committed to meeting the evolving needs of our residents and embracing modern policing techniques. Our primary objective is to enhance the quality of life for our members and safeguard the well-being of the individuals who choose Seminole County as a place to live, work, and raise a family.

Central to our mission is the cultivation trust and satisfaction among our citizens. By actively listening to the concerns of our communities, we can develop tailored solutions that align with their expectations, fostering positive relationships and a strong sense of unity. Addressing critical issues such as the opioid and fentanyl crisis, substance use disorders, and mental health services remains a top priority. While we have made notable strides locally and beyond, we acknowledge the challenges that persist and reiterate our commitment to combating these challenges alongside our community partners.

Our relentless dedication to public safety underscores our ongoing efforts to allocate resources effectively and explore innovative approaches to service delivery. By remaining proactive and adaptable, we can enhance the efficiency and impact of our public safety initiatives while staying attuned to the dynamic needs of our diverse communities. Together, we can forge a safer and more resilient future for Seminole County.

Sincerely,



Sheriff Dennis M. Lemma



2023 CRIME STATS

Florida, and Seminole County in particular, have maintained historically-low crime rates, reflecting a commitment to safety and security in our community.



Uniform Crime Reporting Program

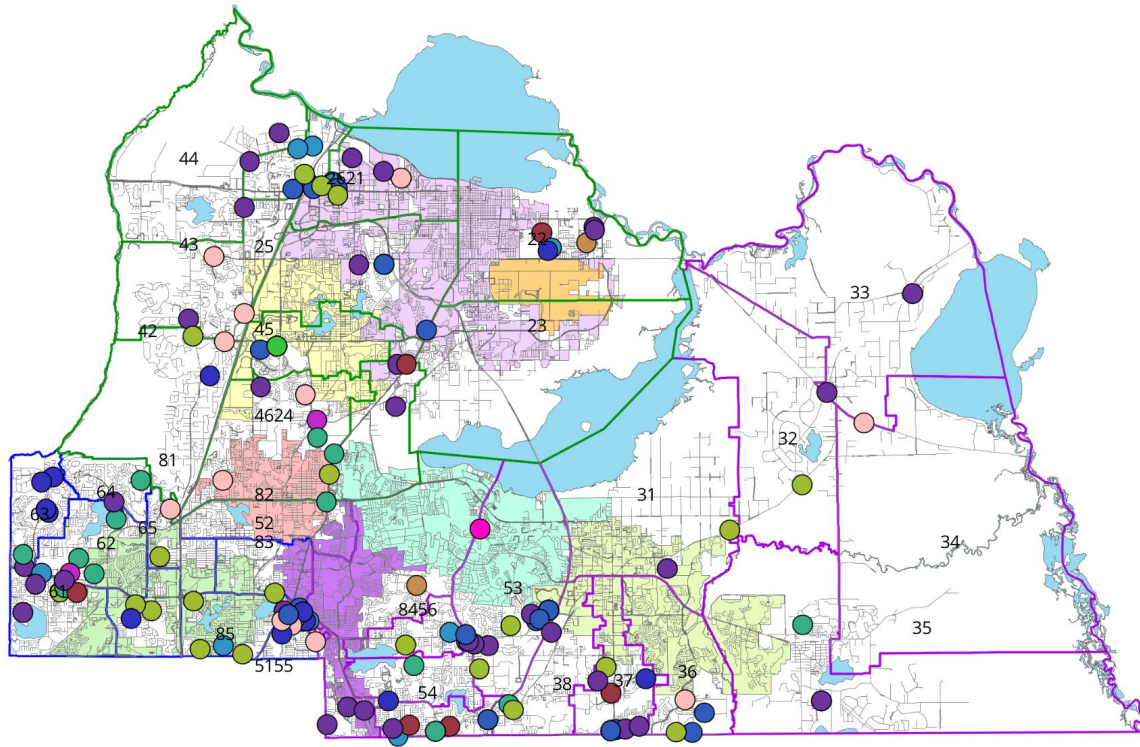
The Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program generates reliable statistics for use in law enforcement. It also provides information for students of criminal justice, researchers, the media, and the public.

UCR collects data that can be used as a tool to create a report card for a community. The data submitted can create a comparison between other jurisdictions, and even across the state and nation. Over 18,000 law enforcement agencies in the United States collect and submit the data to create an overall snapshot on crime statistics and trends.

Here are our stats from 2023:

	2022	2023	% Change
Violent Offenses			
Murder	7	9	28.6
Rape	57	62	8.8
Robbery	42	34	-19.0
Aggravated Assault	229	315	37.6
Violent Offense Total	335	420	25.4
Violent Crime Rate	145.0	181.3	25.0
Property Offenses			
Burglary	225	227	0.9
Larceny	1436	1457	1.5
Motor Vehicle Theft	132	168	27.3
Property Offense Total	1793	1852	3.3
Property Crime Rate	775.8	799.2	3.0
Total Index Offenses	2128	2272	6.8
Clearance Rate for Index Offenses	27.4	30.6	11.5

All of our **2023 Crime Maps** are available to view online.



Want to see what happened in your neighborhood and near your business last year? Our monthly crime maps indicate Part 1 Crimes which have been reported to the Sheriff's Office for the respective month and include only those reported in unincorporated Seminole County. If the incident resulted in more than one offense, only the most serious is recorded and displayed on these maps. (For example, if a crime occurred which included Aggravated Assault and Burglary, only the Aggravated Assault would be displayed since it is the more serious crime.)

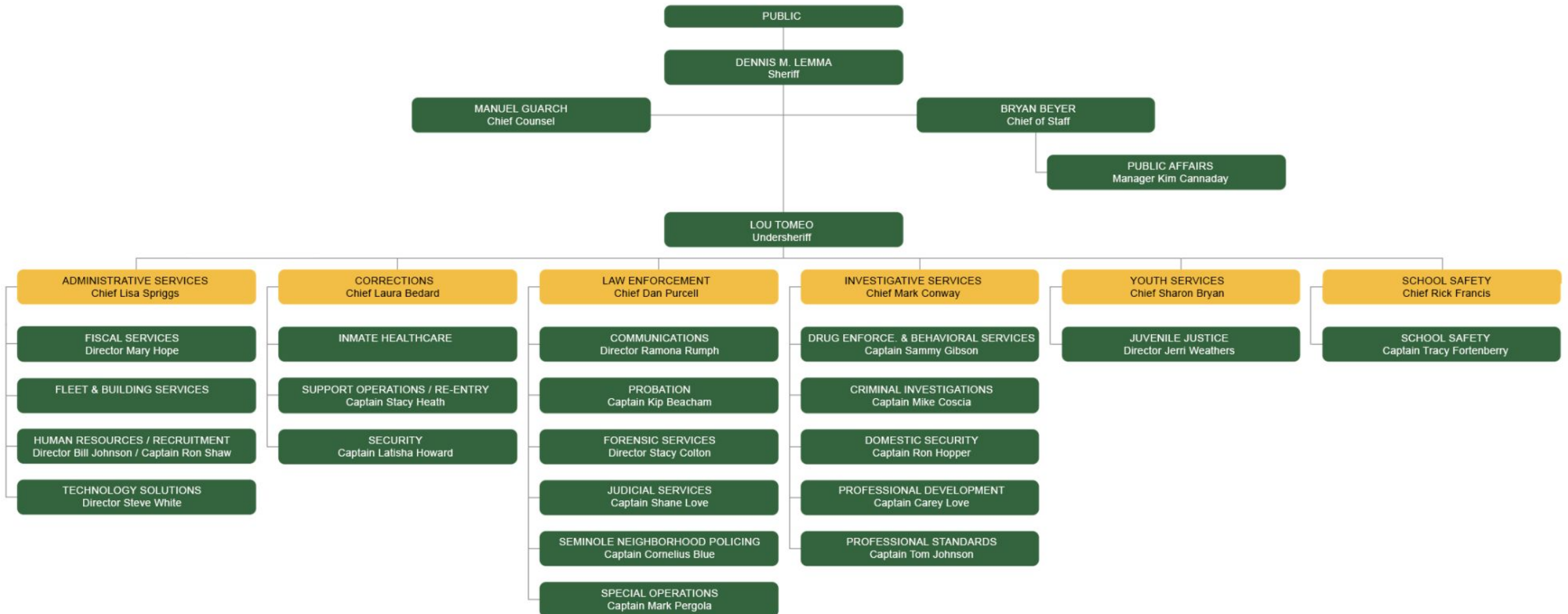
Click [here](#) to see the crime maps.

SCSO Executive Command Staff



2023 Organizational Chart

Chain of Command & **How We Work Together**



Maintaining a safe and strong Seminole County through **strategic initiatives**



Commitment

Committed to serving and supporting our valued community members with unwavering dedication



Integrity

Upholding the highest standards of integrity is at the core of our agency's values



Solutions

Discovering vital solutions for the protection and well-being of the community

Building upon our commitment to serving Seminole County effectively, we have outlined specific strategies and initiatives that reflect our dedication to ensuring a safe and secure community. Our approach encompasses a range of objectives and actions designed to strengthen our organization and foster positive relationships with the community we serve.

By aligning our internal and external priorities, we are confident in our ability to create a safer, more secure future for all residents. Together, we will continue to work towards a community where trust, collaboration, and prosperity thrive, making Seminole County a better place for everyone.



Major County Sheriffs of America

In 2023, Sheriff Lemma served his second and final year as President of the Major County Sheriffs of America (MCSA).

The MCSA is leading the way for a safer America with professional law enforcement executives of the largest Sheriff's Offices representing counties or parishes with a population of 500,000 or more. These Sheriffs are dedicated to preserving the highest integrity in law enforcement and the elected Office of the Sheriff.

During his tenure as President, Sheriff Lemma focused on organizational restructuring, legislation that supports a modern policing profession, strengthening relationships with our federal partners, and collaborating with fellow Sheriffs to share ideas and programs that assist their respective communities and sheriff's offices.

Photo Credit: Department of Homeland Security

Sheriff Lemma appointed Chair of Statewide Council on Opioid Abatement

In July, the Statewide Council on Opioid Abatement was created by the Florida Legislature through House Bill 783. The Council is managed by the Department of Children and Families with the assistance of the Department of Legal Affairs in the office of the Attorney General Ashley Moody.

The purpose of the Council is to enhance the development and coordination of state and local efforts to abate the opioid epidemic and to support the victims of the opioid crisis. The Council shall advise the state and local governments on resolving or abating the opioid epidemic and review how settlement monies recovered from the opioid litigation brought by the state and its subdivisions have been spent and the results that have been achieved from these expenditures.

In December, Sheriff Lemma was designated the Chair of the Council by Attorney General Moody.



SCSO **General** Counsel

Mary Ann Klein's legislative accomplishments & bidding farewell

SCSO General Counsel Mary Ann Klein served as the General Counsel for the SCSO for 13 years. She earned her Juris Doctorate from Nova Southeastern University and was admitted to the Florida Bar in 1986. Throughout her tenure, General Counsel Klein collaborated with various agencies and the judicial system to bolster public safety. Notably, she played a pivotal role in reforming civil and criminal procedural rules amidst COVID-19 and spearheaded efforts regarding videotaped depositions for law enforcement, witnesses, and victims in criminal cases. General Counsel Klein retired in June, leaving behind a legacy of dedication and service.

Following Mary Ann's retirement, Assistant General Counsel Manny Guarch was promoted to Chief Counsel, a title transition that reflects the responsibility of the executive office. Chief Guarch is responsible for overseeing all litigation and legal matters involving the agency and providing guidance on various legal issues encountered by agency members.



Drug Enforcement & Behavioral Services Division

Formed in 2021, the Drug Enforcement & Behavioral Services Division is positioned to combat and address the co-occurring conditions of mental health, addiction, and substance abuse.

The Drug Enforcement & Behavioral Services Division consists of the City-County Investigative Bureau (CCIB), the Human Trafficking Unit, the Behavioral Services Unit, and the Seminole Collaborative Opioid Response Efforts (SCORE) non-fatal and fatal response teams.



Behavioral Services Unit **helping those in crisis**

The Behavioral Services Unit enhances law enforcement intervention models for mental health and co-occurring crisis-related calls for service. They are dedicated to addressing the core issues behind crisis calls and providing assistance to those in need. By identifying the root causes of distress, the Unit aims to offer meaningful support and guidance to individuals facing challenges. Through their proactive approach, they strive to not only resolve an immediate crisis, but also create lasting solutions that promote well-being and recovery. By focusing on the underlying factors contributing to a mental health crisis, the Behavioral Services Unit plays a crucial role in helping people access the resources needed to improve their well-being.

In 2023, BSU saw a 6% decrease in adult baker acts from 2022, and a 24% decrease in adult marchman acts.



The Juvenile Mobile Crisis Response Program provides an alternative option for youth in crisis specifically related to mental health. A Deputy can request a Licensed Mental Health Counselor to respond to the location of the crisis. Therapists offer on-scene crisis intervention, stabilization, and safety planning to alleviate the need for a Baker Act.

When Mobile Crisis responds to a juvenile crisis, the likelihood of a Baker Act is reduced by 93%.

The Unit responded to 106 calls for assistance in 2023, of which 83% were stabilized and placed on a safety plan, while only 17% required a Baker Act.

CCIB Investigation Results in First-Degree Murder in **Fatal Fentanyl Poisoning**

In November, Sheriff Dennis Lemma announced three suspects had been charged with First Degree Murder by Unlawful Distribution of a Controlled Substance for their involvement in the fatal poisoning of 27-year-old Tristan Buttrum, of Apopka.

The investigation revealed a web of drug-related crimes that spanned multiple states, involving several individuals. In October, the three drug dealers were indicted by an 18th Judicial Circuit grand jury. On November 7th, the three suspects were arrested and charged with First Degree Murder by Unlawful Distribution of a Controlled Substance.

It was determined Hunter and Diaz routinely traveled to California to purchase illegal drugs from Raya and would ship them back to the Central Florida area. Agents learned of one purchase of 40,000 pressed fentanyl pills purchased from Raya in mid-December 2022 alone.



SEMINOLE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE PRESS CONFERENCE

SUSPECTS ARRESTED & CHARGED



BRADLEY HUNTER

DOB 07/25/1997 OF KISSIMMEE
INCARCERATED IN OSCEOLA COUNTY JAIL



VINCETE DIAZ

DOB 12/16/2000 OF ST. CLOUD
INCARCERATED IN OSCEOLA COUNTY JAIL



ANDRES SPANCKY RAYA

DOB 11/05/1995 OF L.A. CALIFORNIA
INCARCERATED IN LA COUNTY JAIL

ALL THREE CHARGED WITH **FIRST DEGREE MURDER BY UNLAWFUL DISTRIBUTION OF A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE**



SEMINOLE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE PRESS CONFERENCE

THE DECEASED VICTIM

TRISTAN BUTTRUM
27 YEARS OLD FROM APOPKA
DIED JANUARY 2, 2023

CAUSE OF DEATH:
FENTANYL POISONING



A **Significant** Legislative **Victory**

In June 2023, Governor DeSantis signed House Bill (HB) 365. HB 365 accomplished one of the most challenging issues of defining proximate cause versus substantial factor in the state's murder statute. Including substantial factor now in statute, and when fentanyl is present in the body, we can show that there was enough of that substance to be a lethal dose. We know that even a microgram of fentanyl is enough to be a deadly dose, and now, language supports that – if the substance is found in any amount, it can be considered a substantial factor in the death of an individual. This will not only allow us to better classify a death, but it will also help in the prosecution of those dealing deadly doses of narcotics across the state. This will have a significant impact on the number of individuals we can charge with first-degree murder.



With this legislative change, House Bill (HB) 365:

- Creates a new statute to charge a person over 18 years of age or older who unlawfully distributes, delivers, sells, or dispenses certain controlled substances like heroin, fentanyl, and fentanyl analogs that cause an injury or overdose to a person that survives by the use of an opioid antagonist with a second-degree felony.
- Elevates the offense to a first-degree if the person has already been previously convicted of providing drugs to someone who overdoses and lives.

There was a certain level of immunity and protection being provided to a dealer because of the use of the lifesaving medicine, naloxone, on the person overdosing. This additional statute will allow us to hold these dealers accountable for their actions, even if the overdose or poisoning does not result in death.

Criminal Investigations Division

The Criminal Investigations Division is responsible for investigating complex, specialized crimes and augmenting law enforcement services with advanced technologies. With a focus on thoroughness and unique expertise, they tackle a wide range of criminal cases, including those requiring intricate analysis and specialized techniques.

Crimes Against Children Unit conducts post-incident investigations on a host of major crimes against children. In 2023, the Unit conducted four traveler operations resulting in 32 arrests, executed ten search warrants, seven of which resulted in arrests, and reviewed 340 cybertips.

Domestic Violence Unit reviewed 1,278 domestic cases, conducted 323 investigations, made 91 arrests, and conducted 38 trainings and presentations.

Youth Investigative Services Unit participated in the 2023 US Marshals Joint Operation “We Will Find You” for missing juveniles in the Central Florida Area. During the month-long operation, 301 arrests were made, and 243 missing juveniles (voluntary, disabled, and endangered runaways) were recovered.

Victim Services - Our agency is the only law enforcement agency in the county providing on-scene advocacy to crime victims 24 hours a day, every day of the year. We provide this service for unincorporated Seminole County as well as to all the seven city police departments within Seminole County and for the Florida Highway Patrol. We also have bilingual and volunteer advocates in English and Spanish.

The Elder Services Unit was assigned 183 cases and made contact or provided services and resources to 244 citizens. They also attended or presented 66 times at HOAs and various elder functions and distributed 33 scent evidence kits to citizens.

Digital **Forensics** Unit

The Digital Forensics Unit (DFU) serves the Seminole County Sheriff's Office, the county's seven city police departments, neighboring jurisdictions, and federal partners. In 2023, DFU assisted 28 agencies, handled 433 cases, and processed 1,047 evidence items, marking a 29% increase from 2022. The total data size amounted to 256,457 GB. These statistics emphasize DFU's significant role in supporting law enforcement and investigating digital evidence.

K9 Siri, a rescued chocolate lab, is trained to detect an odor unique to electron devices. In 2023, she assisted in various search warrants for Crimes Against Children, Major Crimes, and assisted an external agency in searching for a phone for a double homicide and attempted homicide.



Major Crimes Unit

The Major Crimes Unit (MCU) spearheads criminal investigations of violent crimes including homicides, sexual batteries, armed robberies (including banks and businesses), firearm related crimes, and other significant offenses.

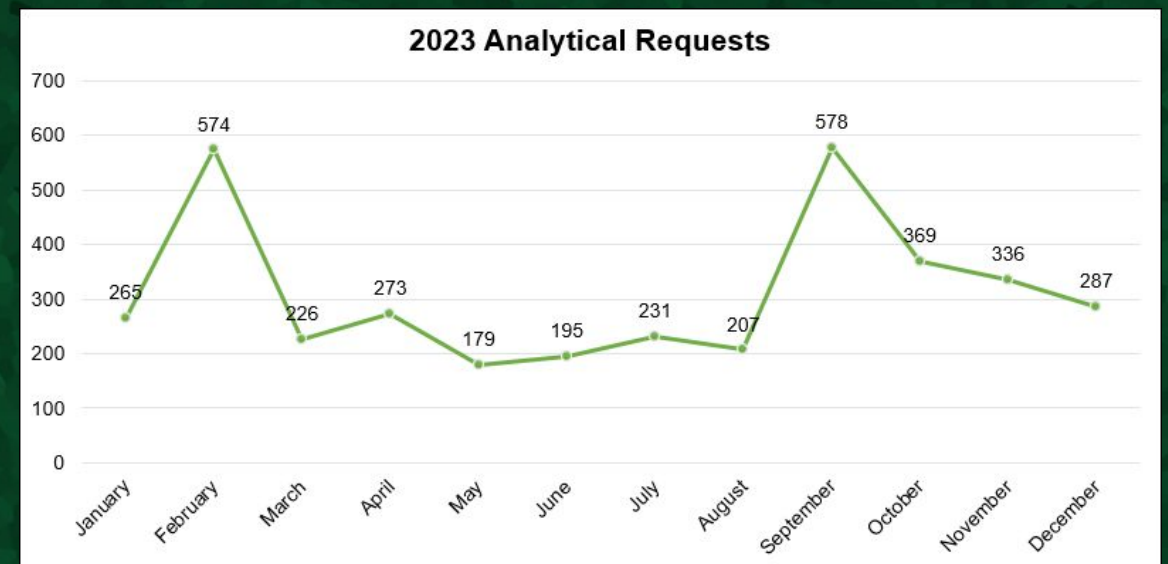
In the year 2023, the MCU has been entrusted with 229 assigned cases, a testament to the trust and reliance placed on this unit by the community. Each case represents not just a set of legal challenges but a profound human story that demands justice. Achieving an overall clearance rate of 41.46% underscores the unit's commitment to resolving cases, providing closure to victims and their families, and removing dangerous individuals from the streets.

Domestic Security

Our Domestic Security Division (DSD) is responsible for investigating, collecting, analyzing and disseminating intelligence information concerning criminal activity, international and domestic terrorism, pawn, street gangs, outlaw motorcycle gangs, warrants, inmate telephone monitoring, registered felons and sexual offenders/predators.

The Division gathers criminal intelligence information for the purpose of tracking and identifying emerging crime patterns and developing enforcement and prevention strategies.

The Crime Analysis Unit completed 3,720 analytical requests. These requests were completed to provide information and support to over 15 Law Enforcement Agencies (local, state, and federal), the State Attorney Office, and the general public. Additionally, the Unit assisted with 6,526 calls for service for the Seminole County Sheriff's Office and surrounding municipal Police Departments.





Professional **Development**

Enhancing Leadership, Career Growth, and Development

In our ongoing commitment to fostering the professional growth and development of our staff, we prioritize providing comprehensive career development, leadership learning, advanced training, and upskilling opportunities to ensure expertise and excellence within our agency.



Training remains a critical component of our yearly agenda, focusing on high-liability areas such as driving, defensive tactics, and firearms. In 2023, our trainers successfully covered a range of essential courses including Firearms, EVOC, ACT, Taser, and CPR. Notably, we collaborated with the Seminole County Fire Department to conduct 47 sessions of Rescue Task Force training, responding to the evolving challenges of active shooter incidents.

AXON Taser 10

A new era in **Less-Lethal Technology**

With a maximum range of 45 feet, TASER 10 creates more time and space to de-escalate and resolve conflicts. When de-escalation fails, TASER 10 can deploy up to 10 individually targeted probes without the need to reload. TASER 10 advancements in accuracy, effectiveness and reliability mean less likelihood of escalation to lethal force. Intelligent, any-probe connect with spread optimizer energizes up to 4 probes at once to maximize the effectiveness of the probe deployment. A more visible green LASER improves user aim in daylight scenarios. A bright pulsing light and loud alert sound emits whenever the weapon's Warning Alert is initiated, allowing the user the opportunity to de-escalate without deploying cartridges. Additionally, full integration with Axon Evidence allows us to manage newly designed pulse graphs, weapons activity, event logs and firing logs as evidence. This new advanced technology serves as only one step in the ongoing efforts to serve our community with the utmost of integrity and professionalism.



An **Accredited** Law Enforcement Agency

The Seminole County Sheriff's Office is an accredited law enforcement agency that meets the high standards of the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies as well as several other distinguished accrediting bodies. The Seminole County Sheriff's Office is currently accredited by nine independent, accrediting bodies

The Sheriff's Office was formally reaccredited in October by the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation as an Excelsior agency. This is the Fifth Excelsior award presented to our agency by the Commission. To achieve this level of excellence, the agency has maintained best practices and professional standards that demonstrate our diligence, professionalism, and commitment to maintaining the highest level of service to the community we serve.





#WeAreSCSO



Seminole Neighborhood **Policing (SNP)**

The SNP Division oversees uniformed patrol activities, general investigations, code enforcement, community partnerships, and crime prevention efforts. In 2023, Law Enforcement issued 13,365 Uniform Traffic Citations to enhance road safety. Additionally, 24,039 Written Traffic Warnings were issued to promote compliance with traffic laws. Code Enforcement logged 257 violations. The SARA (Scanning, analysis, response, and assessment) Problem Solving Initiative addressed 55 community concerns. These statistics reflect the division's multifaceted approach to maintaining public safety, fostering community partnerships, and ensuring the well-being of Seminole County residents.





Special Operations

Aviation Section

The Aviation Section completed 1,480 missions, with 945 in unincorporated Seminole County and 535 assisting external agencies. They located 156 adults, 55 missing adults, 19 juveniles, 10 missing juveniles, and 36 stolen vehicles. Utilizing their Wescam daytime and infrared camera system, they achieved 202 successful person finds and responded to 6 fires, making 89 bucket drops. ALERT helicopter crews also conducted 2 Search & Rescue missions, 51 surveillance missions totaling 41.4 surveillance hours, 12 photo/evidence missions, and 41 public displays. Additionally, they facilitated 180 arrest assists. Alert 2 was replaced and underwent a new paint scheme in December.

Range and Water Unit

The Range and Water Unit conducted 114 marine area patrols on waterways in Seminole County. Additionally, they performed 76 area patrols on Seminole County designated Natural Lands, State Wildlife Management, and Water Management properties. These efforts demonstrate their commitment to monitoring and safeguarding both aquatic and terrestrial environments, ensuring the protection of natural resources and public safety within Seminole County.

Canine Unit

The Canine Unit actively participated in various community events and demonstrations, including the Community Law Enforcement Academy, Leadership Seminole, new employee orientation, and Seminole County School demonstrations. The tracking Canines collaborated with community members to develop "Scent Jars," improving their capacity to locate at-risk individuals. Additionally, full-service Canines were requested and deployed to aid in multiple felony incidents, emphasizing their invaluable role in supporting law enforcement operations and enhancing community safety.



SPECIALIZED **RESPONSE** SECTION

The Seminole County Specialized Response Section consists of ten teams, including SWAT, Crisis Negotiation, Hazardous Device, Emergency Response, Critical Incident Response, Food, Honor Guard, Unmanned Aircraft Systems, Underwater Search and Recovery, and Civilian Search & Rescue. These teams, composed of sworn, certified, and civilian members from various agencies within Seminole County, fulfill collateral duty assignments. While deployed, they operate under the direction of the High Risk Incident Commander.

In 2023, significant activities included the SWAT Team's eight deployments, Crisis Negotiation Team's response to four calls, the Hazardous Device Team's 27 missions, and the Critical Incident Response Team's participation in SWAT training sessions and team-specific training days. The Emergency Response Team assisted on seven missions. Additionally, the Food Unit served 6,480 meals, the UAS Team received three requests, the USART deployed 14 times, and the Civilian Search and Rescue Team dedicated personal time to assist in searches and evidence location.



Storm Response 2023

Hurricane **Idalia**

In late August, the tenth named storm of the 2023 Atlantic hurricane season, Idalia, formed from a low-pressure area that crossed Central America from the eastern Pacific Ocean. Idalia, originally forecasted to be a Tropical Storm, strengthened into an extremely dangerous Category 4 over the Gulf of Mexico as it neared Florida's western coastline. On Wednesday, August 30, Idalia, as a powerful Category 3 Hurricane, made landfall at Keaton Beach in the Big Bend region of Florida.

35 members of the Sheriff's Office Disaster Response Team, deployed to Suwannee County. This self-sustained team was able to provide immediate assistance to Suwannee County residents, providing 24-hour law enforcement services to the hardest hit communities. The team helped provide assistance at points of distribution and conducted patrols of evacuated areas. Additionally, the team helped with road clearing, specifically school bus routes and school grounds, to help expedite school opening. On the second day of deployment, the team was tasked with helping to facilitate a visit from United States President Joe Biden to Live Oak, FL.



9-1-1 Communications/Dispatch

SCSO Communications Division is an essential link between the public and emergency services. It provides dispatch services for the seven municipalities within Seminole County, including the Altamonte Springs Police Department, Casselberry Police Department, Lake Mary Police Department, Longwood Police Department, Oviedo Police Department, Sanford Police Department, and Winter Springs Police Department.

The total number of 911 calls received in 2023 was 216,637, of which 96.4% were answered above the National Emergency Number Association's standard. Additionally, the center received 1,067 text-to-911 messages, enhancing accessibility for individuals in need of emergency assistance and reflecting its commitment to ensuring public safety and efficient emergency response.



Specialized Services

Community Outreach and Support Team (COAST): The mission of the COAST is to continue to engage in the community and bridge the gap between our homeless population and our supportive network of partners. Conducted planned quarterly wellness checks of ten homeless encampments.

Outreach & Neighborhood Engagement (ONE) Community Initiative is a five-day program will include presentations from various SCSO units and aims to foster relationships between citizens and law enforcement. There was a total of five initiatives with this highest class being 55 students.



Forensics Services Division

The Forensic Laboratory Services Division is dedicated to advancing the mission of our agency by delivering precise, scientifically rigorous, and professional forensic services. At the heart of their mission lies a commitment to accuracy, integrity, and excellence in every facet of our work. They strive to uphold the highest standards of forensic analysis, utilizing state-of-the-art technologies and methodologies to ensure the reliability of our findings.

This Division serves as a trusted partner to law enforcement agencies, providing critical support in the investigation and prosecution of criminal cases. By offering comprehensive forensic services, including analysis of evidence, crime scene processing, and expert testimony, they contribute to the pursuit of justice and the safety of our community.

See behind the scenes Forensics video [here](#).





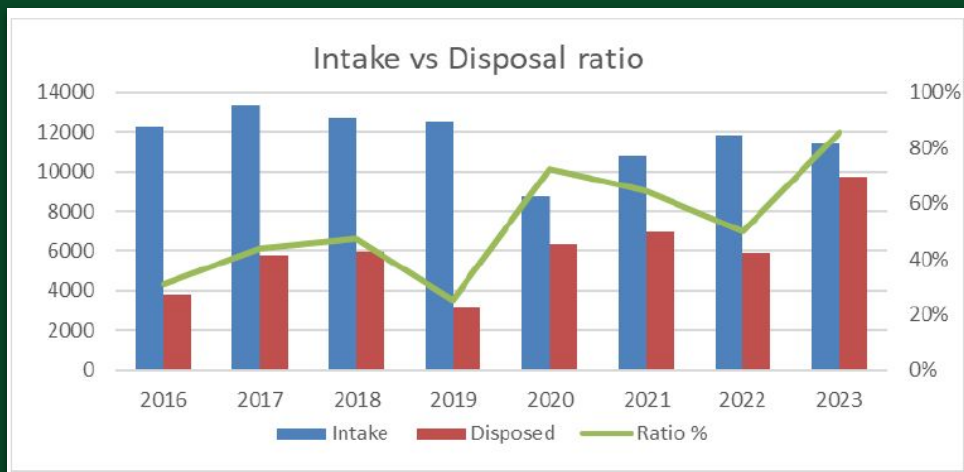
Latent Print Unit

In 2023, the Latent Print Unit showcased its pivotal role within our Forensics laboratory, handling the analysis and comparison of latent prints and ink-to-ink prints with precision. Their responsibilities extend to the operation of vital systems including the Biometric Identification System (BIS) and the Integrated Automated Fingerprint Identification System (IAFIS).

With a dedication to investigative excellence, the Unit processed 2,108 BIS entries, yielding valuable leads crucial for case resolution. Additionally, the unit completed 370 comparison requests, resulting in identifications, with an impressive 73% facilitated by BIS hits. Notably, they experienced a 9% increase in evaluation service requests, receiving a total of 1,030 for the year. Furthermore, the Latent Print Analysts provided expert courtroom testimony on sixteen occasions, further emphasizing our commitment to justice and integrity.

Evidence Unit

The Evidence Unit plays a critical role in the management of property and evidence held by the laboratory, overseeing reception, documentation, storage, release, and disposition processes. In 2023, the unit received 11,387 items and achieved its highest disposal rate since 2016, with 9,739 items disposed, accounting for an impressive 86%. Thanks to their dedication, our total inventory increased by only 2.4% this year, totaling 112,996 items of property and evidence as of December 31, 2023. This outstanding performance reflects the Unit's commitment to efficiency and accountability, ensuring the proper handling and management of evidence vital to the integrity of investigations and the justice system.



Crime Scene Unit

The Crime Scene Unit responds to crime scenes with precision and expertise. Responsible for processing evidence, collecting latent prints, and conducting DNA collection, the unit plays a crucial role in forensic investigations. In 2023, their efforts yielded significant results, with (17) FDLE CODIS match reports linking physical evidence to (26) investigative leads, driving forward multiple cases. Additionally, (11) SCSO NIBIN requests produced (20) potential investigative leads, further enhancing the effectiveness of SCSO investigations. Furthermore, Unit members provided expert testimony a total of 29 times, comprising of (20) depositions and (9) trials. Their unwavering dedication and expertise underscore their pivotal role in supporting law enforcement and ensuring justice for our community.



Judicial Services

Safety & **Security at the** Courthouses

The Judicial Security Division operates with two distinct units: Judicial and Civil. Covering five buildings, soon to be six with the addition of the Annex, and a five-story parking garage, they ensure security across Criminal, Civil, Juvenile, Domestic Relations, and Specialty courts. Their responsibilities extend to day-to-day security operations, and safeguarding judicial, employee, and public safety at key locations including the Criminal Justice Center, Civil Courthouse, Juvenile Justice Center, County Services Building, Public Safety Building, and the Parking Garage. Meanwhile, the Civil Section manages court-ordered paperwork and subpoenas across Criminal, Civil, and Mental Health court processes.

In 2023, their dedication resulted in significant statistics:

- Visitors to all five buildings: **280,541**
- Personal items screened at entrances: **282,806**
- Contraband items found at screening: **668**
- Inmates transported to courtrooms: **5,123**
- Warrant arrests made: **154**
- Defendants attending Specialty Courts: **8,942**

These numbers reflect the Division's commitment to maintaining a safe and secure environment for all involved in the judicial process.



Judicial Services



Civil



John E. Polk Correctional Facility (JEPCF)

JEPCF prioritizes reentry programming to support inmates upon release. In response to the opioid epidemic and without additional resources, the Correctional Staff formed an passionate team and dedicated physical assets to establish two treatment units to address substance-use disorders effectively. This proactive approach demonstrates the JEPCF's commitment to inmate recovery and supports successful reintegration into society, ultimately contributing to safer communities and reducing recidivism rates.

Some notable inmate programs include:

Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT) aims to provide continuous care for incarcerated individuals on opioid medications, ensuring post-release access to community services like Naltrexone and Suboxone.

iBuild offers a 1,420-hour construction trades program, preparing students for entry-level positions and future apprenticeships

Project Courage focuses on teaching employable skills and connecting inmates to community resources.

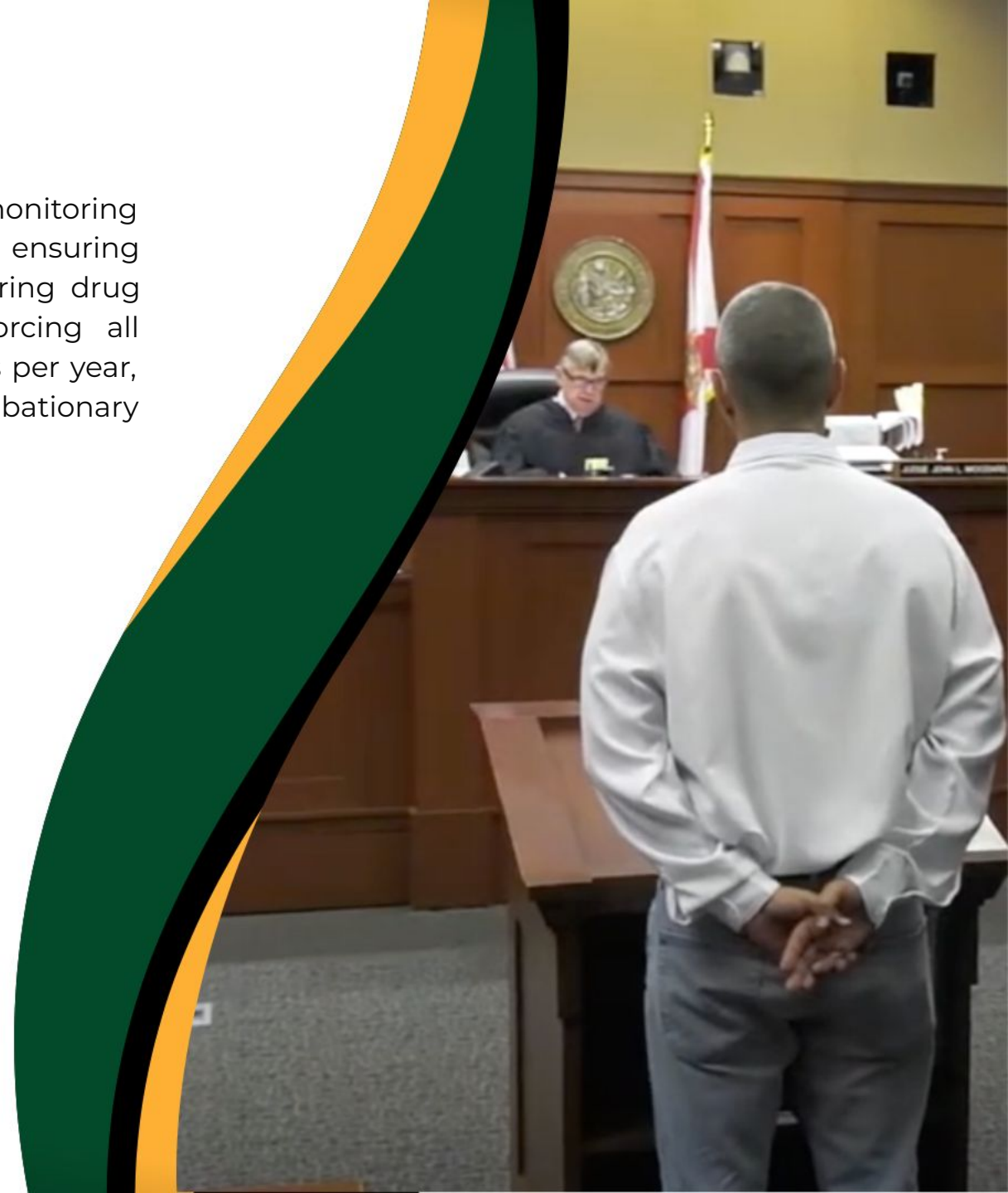
ReNEW/ACTT Dorms offer substance-involved individuals a reentry program focused on substance abuse curriculum and prosocial skill development.

In 2023, 72 inmates received **identification cards** or driver's licenses through JEPCF programs.

Probation

Probation plays a crucial role in the criminal justice system, monitoring offenders placed on probation by Seminole County Courts and ensuring compliance with court-ordered sanctions. This includes administering drug and alcohol testing, conducting residential searches, and enforcing all mandated conditions. With an average caseload of nearly 700 cases per year, Probation Officers work diligently to uphold the integrity of probationary arrangements.

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- Pre-Trial Diversion offers an alternative route for first-time offenders, providing counseling, education, and supervision to divert them from the criminal justice system.
 - Mental Health Court and Veterans Treatment Court initiatives further illustrate our commitment to rehabilitation. Through collaboration with mental health professionals and veterans' services, Probation Officers provide tailored support and resources, enabling individuals with mental health disorders or veterans facing substance abuse issues to access necessary assistance and avoid incarceration.
 - By facilitating rehabilitation and offering a path to redemption, Probation plays a pivotal role in promoting community safety and supporting individuals in rebuilding their lives.



Child **Protective** Services Division

Transitioning Care: A New Chapter in Child Protective Services for Seminole County

For 23 years, the SCSO Child Protective Services team provided services to the most vulnerable in our community and our families, requiring immediate or ongoing services. Last year, the SCSO transitioned these responsibilities back to the Florida Department of Children and Families. It is essential to emphasize the work so many accomplished on the CPS team over the years. These individuals and units positively impacted so many lives in our community, in some cases, as actual lifesavers. The CPS reputation will forever be remembered as providing services with compassion, and a level of professionalism that is both needed and respected.



THANK YOU CPS!

Wraparound Services

In August of 2023, the Seminole County Sheriff's Office partnered with the Department of Children and Families to create an innovative program to serve children, families, and vulnerable adults in Seminole County. Members of Wraparound Services work to identify systemic barriers and necessities, while providing resources and services to mitigate the need for DCF intervention. The team also takes in referrals from local community members, community partners, and all local law enforcement entities.

SNAP (Stop Now and Plan)

SNAP, an evidence-based cognitive behavioral model, offers structured curriculum-based groups to teach children and parents effective emotional regulation, self-control, and problem-solving skills. In 2023, SNAP received 193 referrals for various SNAP programs. Of the qualified referrals, nearly 100 youth completed a SNAP program, while the rest are still actively participating or unfortunately unsuccessful. This widespread recognition underscores the effectiveness and relevance of SNAP in addressing behavior issues and promoting positive outcomes for youth and families in our community.

Juvenile Justice Division



Explorers

In 2023, the Explorers completed nearly 2,260 hours of community services, assisted with 40 community events, and accumulated nearly 6,130 hours of law enforcement training. Explorers competed in multiple Florida Association of Police Explorers competitions and walked away with many top-place finishes. The Central Florida Law Enforcement Explorer Academy Class 20 was held in June and included an academic portion with various courses plus a drill instruction and physical training portion. All 12 Explorers who attended graduated, and many walked away with awards.



SEMINOLE COUNTY
SHERIFF'S
OFFICE

SCHOOL SAFETY
DIVISION

campus

speak out
800.423.TIPS
www.speakouthotline.org



School Safety Department

A holistic approach that **leads the way**

The functions and duties placed on school safety deputies and officers have rapidly evolved due to the rising need for frequent threat assessments and criminal investigations. These increased demands and needs led to the formation of the new School Safety Department, which will place emphasis on the importance and requirements to keep our students, faculty, staff, and campuses safe in an ever-changing environment.

In August, Captain Rick Francis was promoted to the rank of Chief, assigned to oversee this newly formed department, and will provide direct oversight to the increasing demands and evolving needs of all aspects of the SCSO school safety model, including the changes that have required increased enforcement action on school campuses and involving students. Chief Francis has proven to be a national leader in school safety, having developed our unique initial school safety model and providing guidance and leadership to other districts around the state and nation.





New School Safety member, **K-9 Dragus**

Dragus is a two-and-a-half-year-old Labrador Retriever and an SCSO detection K-9. With funds donated by the Central Florida Kennel Club, we purchased Dragus from Southern Coast K-9 in New Smyrna Beach, where they also did his initial detection training.

Dragus is the newest and most unique member specifically assigned to our School Safety Department to detect firearms and ammunition. Deputy Sheriff Matthew Simonetti and Dragus will work countywide and are not assigned to any one school. K-9 Dragus is a valuable asset to the School Safety Department and emphasizes the SCSO's dedication to keeping students safe.

Recruiting Detention Deputies



The SCSO announced a fundamental change to its hiring policy, now opening doors for qualified candidates as young as 18 years old to join the agency as Detention Deputies at the John E. Polk Correctional Facility, including the opportunity to become certified through the agency's sponsorship program, once reserved exclusively for candidates with college degrees.

The SCSO is committed to a diverse workforce, is a drug free workplace, and an equal opportunity employer. The SCSO recognizes the importance of engaging the younger generation in public service and this strategic decision aims to foster a diverse and dynamic team that brings fresh perspectives and a passion to serve others within the criminal justice profession.

Technology Solutions

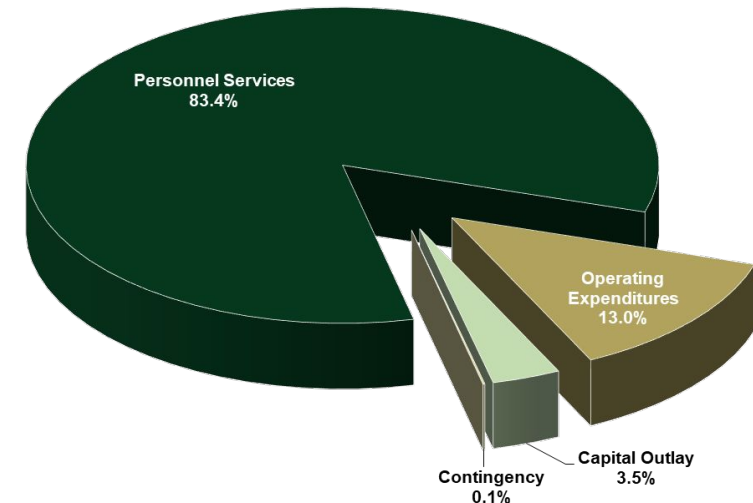
The Technology Solutions Division oversees all of the information technology infrastructure at the SCSO, with 32 team members supporting approximately 1,200 agency members. In 2023, the division handled 16,384 support calls with a 98% user satisfaction rate. They managed 866 laptops, 511 workstations, 199 servers, and 982 mobile devices. Additionally, they processed 5,258,107 emails, ensuring spam and virus-free communication.

Building Services

SCSO Building Services aims to ensure comfortable, reliable, and safe facilities for employees and visitors, encompassing buildings from Public Partners and Private Entities. Partnering with various trades, including electricians, plumbers, HVAC technicians, and landscapers, they uphold high standards of maintenance and service. With approximately 660,000 square feet under management, they completed 3,223 work orders and oversaw 17 major construction/renovation projects and 184 minor projects. Managing 93 vendors/subcontractors, they processed 2,473 invoices and assisted in logistics for 5 major agency events. Dedicated to collaboration with stakeholders, SCSO Building Services is committed to efficient operations and optimal facility conditions.

Fiscal Services

The Fiscal Year 2022/2023 Sheriff's Office Budget totaled \$169,244,129. This amount includes grants, contracts, and other revenue sources as well as the expenditures necessary to support the general fund operational responsibilities of the Sheriff's Office for the respective year; including law enforcement services, adult and juvenile detention services, judicial services, and various other operational responsibilities entrusted with the Office of the Sheriff. Personnel services which includes salaries and benefits make up nearly 85% of the budget. Our agency members are an invaluable asset to the success of our goals and priorities.



Backing the Blue

Seminole County Sheriff Foundation **Supports our Members**



The Seminole County Sheriff Foundation hosted the 2023 "Blueline Gala," an event made possible by our partners at Axon. This incredible gathering drew over 1,000 supporters, sponsors, and policing professionals. The event objective was to raise funds for the Foundations that support the Seminole County Sheriff's Office, the Orange County Sheriff's Office, the Osceola County Sheriff's Office, and Orlando Police Department. The proceeds from the event will be used to benefit Sheriff's Office deputies, employees, and their families in their greatest time of need, as well as innovations in crime fighting.

The Foundation aims to provide support to law enforcement officers, policing professionals, and their families,, who work tirelessly to keep our communities safe.

Click [here](#) to visit the Sheriff Foundation website.



Remember Those Who Made the Ultimate Sacrifice

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

35th Annual Candlelight Vigil

As Major County Sheriffs of America President, Sheriff Lemma had the solemn privilege of joining in the reading of over 600 names of fallen officers at the 2023 Police Week Candlelight Vigil, held by the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, D.C. This ceremony serves as a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made by law enforcement officers nationwide. Each engraved name represents a life lost in the line of duty, honoring their dedication and courage. Sheriff Lemma's participation underscores his commitment to honoring the memory of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in service to their communities, ensuring that their legacy lives on in our collective remembrance.



SCSO Honor Guard Team - Rendering Honors & Presenting the Colors

The Honor Guard Team represents the Sheriff's Office at ceremonial events, funerals, parades, and formal proceedings. In 2023, they participated in 61 details, including four Line of Duty Death funerals and numerous other events. Additionally, they held regular training sessions and contributed to the Public Safety Honor Guard Academy. Their dedication and professionalism were evident, providing vital support to the agency and community. Their unwavering commitment to honoring fallen officers earned widespread recognition and appreciation, emphasizing their crucial role in upholding the values of service and respect within the community.



Honoring Seminole County's **Fallen Heroes**

In May, the SCSO held the annual Memorial Ceremony to honor six fallen SCSO heroes, as well as those from the Longwood Police Department, Florida Highway Patrol, and Officer German of the Windermere Police Department, who was a product of Seminole County. Sheriff Lemma delivered remarks, and Congressman Corey Mills, Representative of the 7th District of Florida, served as a memorable keynote speaker. The event was a beautiful candlelight vigil that brought together the community to show their support and appreciation for the brave individuals who made the ultimate sacrifice. The ceremony is an important reminder of the sacrifices made by law enforcement officers and their families, and serves as a time for reflection and gratitude.

Click [here](#) to watch the ceremony video.





Forever in our Hearts - Saying Goodbye to a legacy

On May 1st, the entire SCSO mourned the loss of Linda Gregory, wife and widow of fallen Deputy Sheriff Eugene Gregory, who lost his life in the line of duty in 1998. Linda also worked at the Sheriff's Office for several years. In many ways, Linda paved the path for the agency's work in the mental health treatment and reform space.

She was truly a special lady; such a giving and kind soul. She will always have a place in the heart of the Seminole County Sheriff's Office - she will be deeply missed at this year's memorial service.

SCSO Honors & Celebrates Agency Members

In our 2023 Member Recognition Ceremonies, Sheriff Dennis Lemma honored over 300 individuals for their exceptional contributions to the Sheriff's Office and the Seminole County community. These included achievements in drug enforcement, solving robbery cases, life-saving actions, efficiency enhancements, and bravery in perilous situations. The Sheriff's acknowledgment of their diverse accomplishments emphasize their incredible dedication to enhancing community safety. It serves as a testament to their outstanding contributions and exemplifies the commitment of our personnel to upholding the highest standards of service and security.





ASIS Awards Ceremony

Sheriff's Office members were celebrated at the ASIS International L.E.O. Awards Ceremony, the premier law enforcement recognition event in the Southeast United States. Deputy Megan Blazina was presented with the Valor Award, while Deputy Michael Aprile earned the Community Policing Award. Deputy Randall Payette and K-9 Woden was recognized with a Criminal Investigations Award, and Brendan Stallworth was honored with the Youth Services Award. These accolades highlight their exceptional dedication and contributions to law enforcement, underscoring the Seminole County Sheriff's Office's commitment to excellence in service and community engagement.

FOX 35 Care Force Awards

Standing Out & Giving Back

Several agency members and teams were humbled and grateful to receive the “FOX 35 Care Force Award,” honoring them as first responders dedicated to helping others, giving back to the community, making strides in their profession, and consistently going above and beyond the call of duty. The recognition is a testament to their hard work and selflessness, and the SCSO is honored to be acknowledged by our media partners for their efforts in serving and protecting the public.



FSA **Civilian of the Year**



Crime Analyst Sean Ryan received the prestigious honor of being named the 2023 Florida Sheriffs Association's Civilian of the Year. Sean's outstanding efforts in combating organized crime have significantly enhanced the safety and security of Seminole County residents and visitors alike. His unwavering dedication and expertise has been instrumental in identifying and convicting individuals involved in violent crimes and homicides. Sean's commitment to excellence sets a benchmark for service within law enforcement, exemplifying the Sheriff's Office's ongoing dedication to safeguarding the community.

Making a **Difference** in the Community

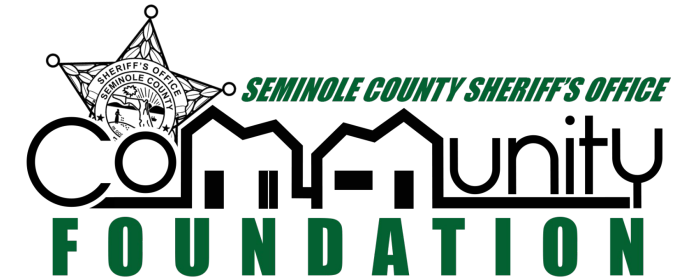
The Sheriff's Office actively contributes to the community by organizing civic events, supporting local causes, providing educational programs, and engaging in community outreach initiatives. Through these efforts, they aim to build trust, foster positive relationships, and make a meaningful difference in the lives of residents.



SCSO Community Foundation

The Seminole County Sheriff's Office Community Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization with a mission to aid underserved and at-risk populations in the county. The foundation seeks to achieve this goal through education, prevention, and provision of resources.

The Board of Directors, which is appointed by Sheriff Lemma, is made up of members of the community and the Sheriff's Office. This ensures that the foundation is a representation of the people it serves and can effectively address their needs.



The foundation plays a vital role in creating a safer and more equitable society for all. Its programs go a long way in empowering individuals and communities to overcome challenges and lead fulfilling lives. Programs supported by the Foundation include but are not limited to:

- Shop with the Sheriff
- Halloween Safety Spooktacular
- Christmas Village
- Police Athletic League
- Employee Engagement Team

These events are possible because of charitable donations to our Community Foundation.



A Spooktacular Success: Halloween Safety Festivities

2023 Halloween Safety Spooktacular Display Winners

Halloween Spooktacular: Family Friendly, Spooky Event

In October, the SCSO hosted the annual Halloween Safety Spooktacular, presented by The Hartford and held at Seminole State College. The event was once again a huge success, with families gathering to enjoy free Trunk-or-Treating and snow cones served by our Snow Patrol. Star 94.5 provided music and entertainment, and several community partners and sponsors joined this family-friendly event. There was a large family turnout and everyone had a great time.



22nd Annual Christmas Village

Spreading **Holiday Cheer**

Each December, the SCSO partners with care providers to host a special holiday event for children who are victims of abuse or neglect, are in foster care, or are underserved. Volunteers gather donations and raise funds to purchase thousands of toys and set up a Christmas Village with games, crafts, and a visit with Santa. While the kids enjoy the activities, their parents or caregivers secretly shop for toys to be taken home for Christmas morning. Community members and businesses also participate by holding toy drives, donating toys, or making monetary donations.

The 2023 event was once again held at the SCSO headquarters, allowing more room for activities, better parking, and the ability for families not able to attend the day of the event to still receive toys. This community-based event helped fulfill Christmas wishes for nearly 500 children.





Shop with the Sheriff

Education, Resources, **Positive Relationships** with Law Enforcement

In 2023, 220 students were given an unforgettable back-to-school shopping experience for new clothes and essentials during our annual Shop with the Sheriff event. Thanks in large part to the significant involvement of community partners, sponsors, and members of the Sheriff's Office.

This experience provides a valuable mentoring opportunity by deputies and members of our agency. It prepares students for success in the new school year offering confidence and increased self-esteem in the classroom. Shop with the Sheriff is a signature event of our Community Foundation, and is completely funded through charitable contributions.

