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NN Sheriff runs for re-election

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Behind every good city is a good city government. Sheriff Gabriel Morgan is aiming to pen this Newport News as he is running for re-election.

In 2005, Morgan became the first African American elected Sheriff in Newport News.

Throughout his tenure in office, Sheriff Gabe Morgan has focused his efforts on helping prisoners re-enter society and reducing overcrowding at the Newport News City Jail, which the Sheriff's office oversees.

Morgan is responsible for a budget, which exceeds 15 million dollars and a staff that exceeds 220 that provides a myriad of functions; including the custody, and care of more than 500 prisoners daily, the protection of our Courts and Judges, the service of court documents, and the enforcement of the laws of the Commonwealth. Morgan is the Executive Officer of the Courts.

Since taking office, Sheriff Morgan immediately instituted significant policy changes supporting his guiding principles: justice for all, service to others, and an abiding love for his community.

He encourages the public to read his annual reports posted on the web, or in the city libraries.

Morgan serves on a number of boards and commissions throughout the Hampton Roads Area. In 2007, Leroy Hassell, Sr., Chief Justice of the Virginia Supreme Court, appointed Morgan to serve on the Commission for Mental Law Reform.

As the sub-committee chair for Emergency and Temporary Detention Orders, Morgan's leadership led to major changes in the law. Governor Tim Kaine recognized Morgan's

commitment to service, and appointed him to the Inter-agency Civil Admission Advisory Council.

Morgan is a graduate of the University of the State of New York at Albany, the Army's Command and General Staff College, and the Ninetieth Session of the National Sheriff's Institute.

Prior to being elected as Sheriff, he served as Special Agent-in-Charge for the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, Investigative Services. His office was responsible for conducting criminal investigations including identity and vehicle-related frauds, motor vehicle dealer-related crimes, and the evasion of transportation related-taxes.

Sheriff Morgan served his country with over twenty-one years in the U.S. Army. He subsequently earned a commission through Officer Candidate School. Morgan commanded the Area Confinement Facility at Fort Knox, Kentucky.

While in command of the confinement facility, he was credited for instituting vocational programs that employed the inmate population while saving the facility thousands of dollars. He was named the "Best Counter Terrorism Senior Program Manager (1997)" of all five services, by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Low-Intensity Conflict and Terrorism.

He has served in many theaters including the Middle East, Africa, Bosnia, Croatia, Haiti, Korea and Europe. He culminated his career as the Information Systems Security Officer for the Army's Training and Doctrine Command at Ft. Monroe, Virginia.

His awards include the Meritorious Service Medal with four clusters, and the Army Commendation Medal with seven clusters. He was also awarded the following Campaign Medals: Humanitarian Service with oak leaf, Southwest Asia, NATO - Yugoslavia Service, Liberation of Kuwait – issued by Kuwait, and Liberation of Kuwait – issued by Saudi Arabia.

Sheriff Morgan is committed to maintaining a great quality of life for all of the citizens of Newport News, as he works tirelessly on many social and community issues. He is an active member of the World Outreach Worship Center.

Morgan has accumulated a plethora of supporters including Newport News Mayor McKinley Price, U.S. Rep. Robert C. "Bobby" Scott, D-Newport News, and Newport News Commonwealth's Attorney Howard Gwynn.

But even as Morgan seeks re-election, speculation has grown about his future plans and whether he may seek higher office. Morgan did not rule out the prospect of running for another office in future years.

"I'm focused on being the Sheriff right now and doing the best job possible," Morgan said. "I appreciate people's confidence in me but right now I'm focused on doing a good job as sheriff."

Morgan has testified before Congress several times at subcommittee hearings held by Scott about youth violence and prevention, an issue the two have partnered on many times over the years.

“He’s done a good job as sheriff,” Scott said. “When you do a good job with the job you have it opens up the possibility for you to run for other offices.”

Gwynn said he and Morgan have enjoyed a close working relationship over the years, and said community members should re-elect him because of his track record in office.

Morgan was first elected to the sheriff’s post as a Republican, but later changed his affiliation to the Democratic Party.

“When you examine the record, you will find that during my entire career, my goal has always been to serve people, not just by doing my job as the Sheriff, but by going above and beyond to find innovative solutions to the problems facing people, families and the community,” said Morgan. “The Office of the Sheriff belongs to you, the people, and I have had the honor of serving as your Sheriff for over seven years.”

Even in the words on Morgan’s re-election campaign website, his genuine desire to serve and better his community permeates the computer screen.

“Today, I remain committed to fighting for the quality of life and safety of our community, while striving for common sense changes within our City,” says Morgan. “Although November 2013 may seem far away, the hard work of campaigning begins now, and I need your support through volunteer work and spreading the word.”