

D. Richie Cunningham



Manatee County Sheriff's Office

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LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIAL

A dedicated law enforcement officer with more than 22 years of experience serving Manatee County, and over five years of honorable service in the United States Air Force. I have a reputation for a strong work ethic and an uncompromising devotion to serving the public that has resulted in exceptional results during each of my assignments. I have over 15 years of management experience in patrol operations, community oriented policing, intelligence led policing, and criminal investigations. I have over 18 years of experience in police canine behavior and training; developing a unique approach to law enforcement canine conditioning that emphasizes handler/canine bond. The focus on a strong bond between handler and canine, along with a strong educational background on canine behavior, has allowed me to develop a program that utilizes significantly less physical correction than the industry average.

SPECIFIC SKILL AREAS

- Patrol Operations
- Community Oriented Policing
- Criminal Task Force Operations
- Child Crime Investigations
- Fraud Crime Investigations
- Property Crime Investigations
- Predictive Policing
- Crime Scene Preservation
- Person Crime Investigations
- SWAT
- K9 Training and Operations
- Internal Affairs Investigations
- Property and Evidence Operations
- Intelligence Led Policing
- Policy & Procedure Development
- Team Building & Leadership
- Middle Management
- Media & Public Relations
- Law Enforcement Certified
- Corrections Certified
- Crime Analysis

COMMUNITY

Bradenton YMCA Youth Program Volunteer (2002-2009)

- Coached basketball and football
- Youth, 4-12 years of age
- Focused on athletic, teamwork, and character development

Manatee County Veteran's Council (2017-present)

EDUCATION

Masters of Science in Criminology

- Florida State University, *Top 2% of my class.*

Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice

- Saint Leo University, *summa cum laude "with highest honors"*

Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society

- *Florida State University Chapter*
- *Required to be in the top 10% of your class, invite only.*

Golden Key National Honor Society

- *Required to be in the top 10% of your class, invite only*

Command Officer Management School

- *Class 10, Saint Leo University*
- *September 2009 to April 2010*

The Command Officer Management School was developed by the Saint Leo University Criminal Justice Department to address leadership development specifically for middle and upper management of law enforcement agencies. This is a six-week long, quasi FBI Academy, rigorous leadership curriculum that included law and legal brief research, resource/budget planning and management, media relations, executive leadership development, and agency policy development. There was an extensive academic requirement outside of the classroom; which included developing a mock \$32 million police agency model, with a detailed budget analysis (copy available on request). This project required over 80 hours of research and development that culminated in a mock county commission presentation.

1995 Graduate of Manatee County Sheriff's Office Dual Certification Academy (800 hours)**Selected Professional Development Coursework:**

Field Training Officer Training • Chemical Breath Test Training • Radar Operator • Police Cyclist Course • Community Oriented Policing • Human Diversity Awareness • Domestic Violence Training • Juvenile Sex Offender Investigations • Bias Based Profiling • Human Interaction • Command Spanish • Sex Crimes Investigations • Child Physical & Sexual Abuse Investigations • Interviews and Interrogations • Sudden Infant Death Syndrome • Abusive Head Trauma • DNA Collection Techniques • Death Investigations • SWAT Team Operations • Police Sniper Operator • Active Shooter • Shoot House • Rappel Master • Multi-Jurisdictional SWAT Operations Training • SWAT Waterborne Operations • K9 Handler Course • Line Supervision • Middle Management Supervision • In Depth Leadership • Performance Management • Early Identification & Intervention Strategies • Critical issues for Supervisors • Incident Command System for Law Enforcement (FEMA) • ICS for Single Resources and Initial Action Incidents (FEMA) • National Incident Management System (FEMA) • Human Trafficking Investigations • Gang Awareness • Media Relations • Special Event Management

**1268 hours in professional development. A comprehensive course list will gladly be provided upon request.*

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Manatee County Sheriff's Office

1995-Present

Operations Lieutenant (2013-present)
Patrol Lieutenant (2010-2013)
Criminal Investigations Detective Lieutenant (2006-2010)
Patrol Lieutenant (2005-2006)
Crimes Against Children Detective Sergeant (2003-2005)
Selective Enforcement Sergeant (2001-2003)
Field Training Sergeant (2001)
Patrol K9 Handler (1998-2001)
Patrol Deputy (1996-1998)

Operation Lieutenant (2013-present)

District 1 Operations Lieutenant in charge of COPS and K9. I work directly with the district commander to manage crime and community issues. We utilize an intelligence led policing approach to identify and resolve crime trends promptly and efficiently. My COPS Unit is a specialized tactical unit designed around the problem-solving model, while maintaining their traditional community focused approach. The K9 Unit has nine dual purpose patrol canine teams, two single purpose narcotic canine teams, a computer hardware detection canine team, and a ballistic detection canine team. I have developed a "green dog" Patrol K9 program that is an all-inclusive training program. All aspects of our canine training are conducted within our training program. K9 Gia is our computer detection dog. She was only 8 months old when I rescued her from Bishop's Animal Shelter. She was only 10 months old when she went into service with her handler, Detective Zimmermann, in the Crime Against Children Unit. They have received national recognition in several publications, to include People magazine and Law Enforcement Technology. When I completed their training, they were the first canine team of their kind in the world.

Patrol Lieutenant/Shift Commander (2010-2013)

I was the shift commander in charge of two patrol squads with 18 deputies and two sergeants. Our primary mission is to provide service to our citizens and respond to crime in the best tradition of law enforcement. I use a community oriented policing approach emphasizing courtesy and professionalism to the public and co-workers. To better accomplish our mission, we worked closely with the K9 unit, Violent Crimes Task Force (VCTF), the Gang Unit, and other local law enforcement agencies.

Criminal Investigations Detective Lieutenant (2005-2009)

As a lieutenant in the Criminal Investigations Division, I was in charge of the following units; Property Crimes, Fraud Crimes, Auto Theft Unit, Pawn Unit, Fingerprint Unit, and Property & Evidence. Our primary mission was to investigate criminal cases with the goal of a successful prosecution. I ensured my team worked all cases to their logical conclusion.

Crimes Against Children (CAC) Detective Sergeant (2003-2005)

I was in charge of the child crimes detectives. We were assigned to investigate all criminal cases involving juvenile victims. We worked hand in hand with the Child Protection Specialists (CPS) Unit. The CPS Unit is employed by our agency. Additionally, I supervised FDLEs Sexual Offender Apprehension Program initiative (SOAP); for which we received recognition of excellence for the Governor. Upon completing SOAP, I spearheaded the development of the Sexual Offender Unit in our Division to improve the registration and monitoring of all sexual offenders and predators in Manatee County.

Selective Enforcement Sergeant (2001-2003)

I was in charge of a Community Oriented Policing Unit assigned to a high crime area as part of a federal block grant. We utilized bicycle and foot patrols to establish a partnership with the community. During this time we combated neighborhood drug problems and violent crime, including homicides. We working diligently to reduce the fear of crime by citizens of the community. My unit received many positive reviews on our relentless efforts to accomplish our goals, while maintaining our core values of being “community focused” and “worthy of trust.” During my time, I was also placed in charge of a county wide robbery task force to address several significant robbery trends. Again, my unit stepped up to the task and effectively addressed each trend. During the first month, we made arrests in three trend robbery groups, which included a string of bank robberies and another trend of late night business robberies. We reduced the robberies 81%, based on UCR, during this span.

Patrol Field Training Sergeant (2001)

I was in charge of a patrol squad of uniformed deputies. I was also in charge of the Field Training Program.

Patrol K9 Handler (1997-2001)

I was assigned to the K9 Unit as a patrol canine handler. My partner was K9 Mako, Belgian Malinois. We were a dual purpose team; patrol apprehension, and narcotic detection. We were proficient in apprehending criminal offenders that posed a risk to our citizens, by tracking, building searches, and area searches. I trained K9 Mako on human odor distinction; where he could use the offender’s odor collected from an article (e.g. car seat, shirt, and weapon) and focus his search on only that person. We had over 100 felony apprehensions of suspects that fled. In 2001, K9 Mako was shot and killed in the line of duty during the apprehension of a carjacking suspect. He had an unconditional love for his job and me; for which, I will always keep him in my heart.

Patrol Deputy (1996-1997)

In 1995, I graduated Manatee County Sheriff’s Office dual certification academy. I am cross certified in Corrections and law enforcement. I then graduated the Field Training Program and was assigned as a Patrol Deputy.

Collateral Duties

SWAT Team (1998-2006)

- Team Leader
- Sniper (2003-2006)

SRT (1996-1998)

PERSONAL

I have lived in Manatee County since I was 5 years old. I graduated Manatee High School in 1989. I served in the United States Air Force from 1989 to 1995. I am married with two boys. They were honor students and wrestlers at Manatee High School. Both were 4 year varsity letterman, 3 year captains, and FHSAA State Wrestling Finalists. My youngest received Congressional nominations to West Point, the Naval Academy, and the Air Force Academy. He was also accepted at the Citadel and Norwich University senior military universities to wrestle. We are currently in the process of selecting where he will go.

FAMILY HISTORY

My family history is very important to me, and shaped the way I raised my kids. I was raised in a family with a strong law enforcement and military tradition. I was raised under the strict principle of “duty, honor, and country.” My grandfather, Roy Cunningham, served in the Marine Corp. and retired as a Captain from Washington D.C. Police; where, he served on President Franklin Roosevelt’s security detail. My Father, Robert Cunningham, served for 37 years in the United States Air Force. He served during WWII, Vietnam, and Korea. He graduated the pilot academy in 1941, and initially retired as a Major after his brother, Richard Cunningham, was shot down and killed during the Korean War. The desire to serve was too strong, so he returned to the Air Force after a year as a master sergeant, and finally retired as a Chief Master Sergeant. I learned the principles of leadership, chain of command, respect, and duty at a very young age.

