

CHIEF BAKER BIO



Chief Danny Baker is a 26-year veteran of law enforcement, having served with various municipalities and sheriff's departments in Oklahoma before beginning his career with the Fort Smith Police Department in July 2001. Chief Baker also served 8 years in the United States Army Reserve and Oklahoma Army National Guard as a Military Police Officer while attending college. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice

from Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, OK. During his tenure with the Fort Smith PD, Chief Baker has served in a multitude of roles, which have included: Patrol, Field Training Officer, SWAT, Detective, Vice/Narcotics Supervisor, Special Operations Captain, Deputy Chief of Patrol and Interim Chief.

Accomplishments during his tenure as Chief have included the implementation of the first true co-response Crisis Intervention unit (CIU) in the state, a pre-arrest diversion program for non-violent, misdemeanor offenders, and the creation of a Vulnerable Persons Database to aid in the quick recovery of lost/missing people. Under his leadership, the Fort Smith Police Department has significantly reduced the incarceration rate in Fort Smith while continuing to effectively control crime. At a time when police agencies across the nation are struggling to hire and retain quality police officers, Chief Baker has been able to achieve and maintain a fully staffed police department. In 2022 he secured an almost 24%, across-the-board pay raise for all sworn officers except himself, achieving the highest one-time pay increase in Fort Smith history.

He currently serves on the following state and local boards: Arkansas State 911 Board (2nd term), Hamilton Center for Child Advocacy, Fort Smith Health Advisory Council, the Fort Smith Museum of History (Vice President), and the Christmas Honors program. He was selected as the 2022 Outstanding Chief of Police by the Arkansas Fraternal Order of Police and received the 2023 Community Service Award from the Fort Smith Roundtable. He is a Life Member of the Sebastian County NAACP and active in the church. He and his wife Becky have been married 28 years, raising four children of their own and adopting a fifth from foster care in November 2019. Chief Baker views his position with the department and the community as a ministry of service to others.