

City of Seattle



Chief of Police

Seattle Police Department

**Confirmation Packet
May 20, 2025**

Shon Fitzgerald Barnes



City of Seattle

Mayor Bruce Harrell

May 20, 2025

The Honorable Sara Nelson
President, Seattle City Council
Seattle City Hall, 2nd Floor
Seattle, WA 98104

Dear Council President Nelson:

After an extensive national search for a leader who possesses the strength, knowledge, and dedication to effective and equitable police work needed to ensure that the Seattle Police Department continues to excel, it is my pleasure to transmit to the City Council the following confirmation packet for my appointment of Shon F. Barnes as Chief of Police.

The materials in this packet are divided into three sections:

1. **Shon F. Barnes**

This section contains Chief Barnes' appointment, oath of office form, resume and the press release announcing his appointment.

2. **Background Check**

This section contains the report on Chief Barnes' background check.

3. **Competitive Exam**

This section contains the results of the competitive exam as required by Article Vi, Section 3 of the City Charter.

The search for Seattle's next police chief was led by two nationally respected law enforcement leaders, former Interim Chief Sue Rahr and former Chief Kathleen O'Toole. The search began in mid-2024 to recruit the highest-qualified candidates nationwide. Fifty-seven applications were received from throughout the United States and narrowed to a list of 44 qualified candidates. The top four candidates were invited to take a competitive exam in November, as required by the [City Charter](#), and three candidates passed the exam. Those names were forwarded to me for my consideration and final selection. During the search process, and as part of the Charter-required competitive exam, we sought insight and feedback from diverse community members. Last year, my office hosted six neighborhood "Safer Seattle" community forums focused on public safety, and public comment and feedback from these meetings helped shape the [job description](#) for the Chief of Police position.

The City of Seattle, its residents, and the sworn and civilian staff who make up the Seattle Police Department are ready for a police chief who is a forward thinking, effective, and thoughtful leader – one who is nationally recognized for community-oriented and collaborative policing. Seattle has set clear expectations that our next leader must guide the Seattle Police Department to invest in community engagement and partnerships, focus on innovation, and utilize research and data in crime prevention strategies to improve public safety. Our city deserves a police chief who will be the driving inspiration to transform and enhance the department's culture, continue to build community relationships, and address public safety challenges through evidence-based practices to make all those who live, work, and visit Seattle safe. Shon Barnes is such a leader, and the one Seattle needs.

Chief Shon Barnes has been dedicated to policing for 25 years. His entry into policing began while he was a high school teacher and realized he could have a greater impact as a police officer. His law enforcement career began with the Greensboro Police Department in North Carolina where he eventually was promoted to Captain. Chief Barnes left Greensboro to accept appointment as a Deputy Chief of Police in Salisbury, North Carolina, and then diversified his experience as the Director of Training and Professional Development with the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago.

Immediately preceding his appointment as Interim Chief in Seattle, Mr. Barnes served as the Chief of Police for Madison, Wisconsin where he was a nationally recognized leader for implementing crime reduction strategies that dramatically decrease violent and property crime. He is committed to the concepts of inclusivity and diversification of the police department's sworn and civilian staff. He is a mission-driven leader who leads through data-driven strategies and by employing technology to reduce crime. His message is clear – the police department cannot combat crime alone and must commit to partnerships and building relationships to keep communities safer.

Chief Barnes holds a Ph.D. in Leadership Studies, a Master of Science in Criminal Justice, and a BA in History and Pre-Law. He has participated in ongoing professional education with the Senior Management Institute for Police, the Southern Police Institute, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He is a subject matter expert for the U.S. Department of Justice on police leadership, critical incident review, use of force practices, and constitutional police standards. In addition, he was inducted into the George Mason University Center for Evidence-based Crime Policy Hall of Fame, which recognized his use of data analytics and evidence-based policing. He has been identified as a National Institute of Justice Law Enforcement Advancing Data and Science Scholar and a member of the National Policing Institute's Council on Policing Reforms and Race. Barnes is a cofounder of the 54th Mile Project and has helped develop a national training curriculum on police and race.

In the time since I appointed Shon Barnes to serve as Interim Chief, he has dedicated considerable effort toward fostering relationships with both internal and external stakeholders. He has worked build rapport with a variety of community groups in every Council District, including the African American Advisory Council, the Downtown Seattle Association, the American Jewish Committee of Seattle, View Ridge Community Council, Eritrean community leaders, Chinatown International District community leaders, Leschi Community Council, Business Improvement Associations, along with the Precinct Advisory Councils. He has joined in local community events, like Morning Service at First AME Church, and participated in community safety walks, including in Belltown and the University District.

Chief Barnes has also made it a point to engage with public safety partners, including the leadership at the Office of Police Accountability, the Community Police Commission, and the Inspector General for Public Safety, as well as his fellow City department directors. Further, Chief Barnes has developed connections with fellow regional criminal justice partners at the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, the Office of Adult and Juvenile Detention, the Seattle City Attorney's Office, the King County Sheriff's Office, the Washington State Patrol, the University of Washington Police Department, University of Washington Medicine, and the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission. It is clear that the Chief's over 300 engagements within the first 100 days have laid a strong foundation for transforming police-community relations and improving overall public safety strategies.

After reviewing Chief Barnes's application materials and reflecting on your interactions with him during the first 100 days of his appointment, I'm confident you will agree that he will provide the leadership we need as our permanent Chief of Police.

If you have any questions about the attached materials or need additional information, Chief Public Safety Officer Natalie Walton-Anderson would welcome hearing from you. I appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce A. Harrell". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "B" and "H".

Bruce A. Harrell
Mayor of Seattle

SECTION

A



City of Seattle

Mayor Bruce Harrell

May 13, 2025

Shon F. Barnes
Seattle, WA
Transmitted via e-mail

Dear Shon,

It gives me great pleasure to appoint you to the position of Chief of Police of the Seattle Police Department at an annual salary of \$361,862.

Your appointment as Chief is subject to City Council confirmation; therefore, you will need to attend the Council's confirmation hearings. Once confirmed by the City Council, you will serve at the pleasure of the Mayor.

Your contingent offer letter provided employment information related to the terms of your employment, benefits, vacation, holiday and sick leave.

I look forward to working with you in your role as Chief and wish you success. We have much work ahead of us, and I am confident that the Department will thrive under your leadership.

Sincerely,


A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce A. Harrell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Bruce A. Harrell
Mayor of Seattle

cc: Seattle Department of Human Resources file



City of Seattle Department Head Notice of Appointment

Appointee Name: <i>Shon Fitzgerald Barnes</i>	
City Department Name: <i>Seattle Police Department</i>	Position Title: <i>Chief of Police</i>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Appointment OR <input type="checkbox"/> Reappointment	City Council Confirmation required? <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Appointing Authority: <input type="checkbox"/> City Council <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mayor <input type="checkbox"/> Other: <i>Fill in appointing authority</i>	Term of Position: * Council Confirmation to Mayor's Discretion <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Serving remaining term of a vacant position</i>
<p>Background: Chief Shon Barnes has been dedicated to policing for 25 years. His entry into policing began while he was a high school teacher and realized he could have a greater impact as a police officer. His law enforcement career began with the Greensboro Police Department in North Carolina where he eventually was promoted to Captain. Chief Barnes left Greensboro to accept appointment as a Deputy Chief of Police in Salisbury, North Carolina, and then diversified his experience as the Director of Training and Professional Development with the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago.</p> <p>Immediately preceding his appointment as Interim Chief in Seattle, Mr. Barnes served as the Chief of Police for Madison, Wisconsin where he was a nationally recognized leader for implementing crime reduction strategies that dramatically decrease violent and property crime. He is committed to the concepts of inclusivity and diversification of the police department's sworn and civilian staff. He is a mission-driven leader who leads through data-driven strategies and by employing technology to reduce crime.</p> <p>Chief Barnes holds a Ph.D. in Leadership Studies, a Master of Science in Criminal Justice, and a BA in History and Pre-Law. He has participated in ongoing professional education with the Senior Management Institute for Police, the Southern Police Institute, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He is a subject matter expert for the U.S. Department of Justice on police leadership, critical incident review, use of force practices, and constitutional police standards. In addition, he was inducted into the George Mason University Center for Evidence-based Crime Policy Hall of Fame, which recognized his use of data analytics and evidence-based policing. He has been identified as a National Institute of Justice Law Enforcement Advancing Data and Science Scholar and a member of the National Policing Institute's Council on Policing Reforms and Race. Barnes is a cofounder of the 54th Mile Project and has helped develop a national training curriculum on police and race.</p>	
Authorizing Signature:  Date Signed: May 20, 2025	Appointing Signatory: <i>Bruce A. Harrell</i> <i>Mayor of Seattle</i>

*Term begin and end date is fixed and tied to the position and not the appointment date.



CITY OF SEATTLE ▪ STATE OF WASHINGTON

OATH OF OFFICE

State of Washington

County of King

I, Shon Fitzgerald Barnes, swear or affirm that I possess all of the qualifications prescribed in the Seattle City Charter and the Seattle Municipal Code for the position of Chief of Police; that I will support the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of Washington, and the Charter and Ordinances of The City of Seattle; and that I will faithfully conduct myself as Chief of Police.

Shon Fitzgerald Barnes

Subscribed and sworn to before me

this ____ day of _____, 2025.

[Seal]

Scheereen Dedman, City Clerk

Shon F. Barnes Ph.D.

Chief of Police (Madison, WI)

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

October 6, 2024

City of Seattle
700 5th Avenue,
Suite 5500
Seattle, Washington, 98104

Dear Executive Search Committee,

I am honored to submit my cover letter and resume in consideration for the position of Police Chief for the City of Seattle. My cover letter and resume, reflect my readiness, fortified by a wealth of life experiences and a comprehensive background in police leadership, to steer a forward-thinking, community oriented, and pioneering police force through an exciting and rapidly changing landscape. My extensive background in community and problem-oriented policing aligns seamlessly with Seattle's commitment to fostering a secure and inviting environment for every resident. Over my 24-year tenure as a law enforcement officer and executive, I have cultivated a policing ethos underpinned by robust mentorship, continuous education, notable professional achievements, and rich experiential learning. This ethos is encapsulated in my belief that effective policing should be collaborative, neighborhood oriented; community focused (business, educational, and residential); problem-oriented; and based on the most current empirical research available to quickly reduce crime, and harm to the community, while elevating public confidence in police services.

Currently, I hold the position of Chief of Police at the Madison Police Department in Wisconsin. My tenure began in December 2020, during a pivotal time when the department sought to mend its relationship with the community after a tragic incident involving an officer and an unarmed African American teenager. This event, coupled with a rise in both property and violent crimes, underscored the urgent need for change. In my role, I have initiated a transformation within the department, prioritizing community trust and community engagement. My efforts in restructuring and implementing strategic initiatives have not only been recognized on a national level but have also significantly contributed to the enhancement of public safety in Madison. My policing philosophy is deeply anchored in the principles of the constitution, which I regard as the foundational minimum rather than the limit of our duty. This guiding principle ensures that our department's actions consistently respect and protect the rights and dignity of those we serve.

Over a three-year period, the implementation of the Stratified Model of Crime Reduction significantly decreased crime rates across several major categories within our community. Notably, there was a 40% decrease in auto thefts, a 19% decrease in reports of shot fired, a 36%

decrease in burglaries, and a remarkable 67% decrease in homicides. A key aspect of this success was the department's commitment to community partnership, focusing on diversion programs aimed at reducing arrests by addressing crime's underlying causes. Initiatives included programs for addiction diversion, strategies to prevent crimes related to homelessness, a juvenile restorative justice program, and a mental health co-responder model. Additionally, the department established an employee mental wellness program, which includes two mental health days annually and a mandatory session with a therapist. These measures have fortified the department, enabling it to effectively navigate the challenges of the 21st century and enhance the safety and well-being of our city.

One initiative exemplifying our commitment to safety is Vision Zero, a strategy rooted in data analysis with the ambitious goal of eradicating traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries across all modes of transportation, including roads, bike paths, and sidewalks. Vision Zero endeavors to enhance the safety of all city inhabitants, irrespective of their mode of transit—be it walking, cycling, driving, or using public transportation. It particularly targets areas with a high incidence of injuries, aiming to reduce life-threatening accidents and serious harm. Our department diligently disseminates crucial, up-to-date data pinpointing where investments in time and resources can significantly elevate the safety of the most dangerous intersections and roadways. Furthermore, we are acutely aware of the socioeconomic and racial disparities within different communities and are dedicated to prioritizing improvements in economically disadvantaged areas that are part of the high injury network. Ensuring equity remains a principal concern for my administration and consistently guides our conversations, decisions, and enhancements.

In my role as a leader and change agent, I have fostered a departmental philosophy that prioritizes unwavering commitment to engaging with the community, implementing sound policing practices, and devising strategies that effectively address the most pressing issues in policing to include gun violence, the opioid crisis, and retention, recruitment, and morale. I consider myself privileged to have been a part of two exemplary police departments, led by individuals who are deeply invested in the welfare of the community we are sworn to protect.

Throughout my professional journey, I have consistently embraced every chance to enhance my expertise in police management and leadership. As an alumnus of the Southern Police Institute's Administrative Officer's Program at the University of Louisville, where I graduated in 2012, I had the honor of being chosen as the president of the alumni association for the term 2017-2018. In this capacity, I represented a network of over 300 law enforcement executives. Together with my board, we successfully organized a national police leadership conference addressing critical issues such as Opioid Abuse and Drug Enforcement, fostering Community-Police Relations, and strategies for Crime Reduction.

My educational pursuits also include graduating from the esteemed Senior Management Institute for Police, an initiative of the Police Executive Research Forum. My commitment to advancing law enforcement through scholarly research was recognized in 2015 when I was appointed as a National Institute of Justice LEADS Scholar. This accolade was in recognition of my work in leading research focused on the application of technology to mitigate crime and the societal impact of substandard police practices. To deepen my understanding of the intricacies of police work and its effects on communities, I pursued further education at the historically black college

and university (HBCU) of North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. There, I achieved a doctoral degree and contributed to academic literature with a dissertation that explored the nuances of racial disparities and profiling in the context of police traffic stops.

Understanding the critical balance between meeting community needs both service-oriented and safety-focused and upholding our legal responsibilities in a fair and just manner is paramount. In my tenure as Police Chief, I have spearheaded several policy reforms that have markedly decreased risks to both our residents and the department. These reforms encompass the establishment of threat assessments for the execution of search and arrest warrants, the imposition of stringent restrictions on no-knock search warrants, the curtailment of searches during pretextual traffic stops, the introduction of a duty-to-intervene mandate, the formation of a peer-support and crisis negotiation team, and the enforcement of compulsory emotional intelligence training for all personnel. The well-being of our police force is of utmost concern to me, recognizing that the quality of our service is intrinsically linked to the safety and wellness of our officers. My commitment to this cause was exemplified in 2016 when I participated in the Officer Safety and Wellness Group, part of President Obama's 21st Century Policing Report, and subsequently presented my insights on enhancing officer safety and welfare at the Department of Justice in Washington, D.C.

Embracing Mayor Harrell's One Seattle vision, I am committed to steering the Seattle Police Department (SPD) with steadfast dedication to safety, accountability, and innovation. My approach to leadership is deeply rooted in collaboration, engaging with community leaders, advocacy groups, and government entities to forge and execute strategies that address intricate issues effectively. My professional history is a testament to my enduring dedication and achievements in modern police leadership, showcasing a track record of success at local, national, and international stages. My portfolio presents a suite of pioneering leadership methodologies and experiences, meticulously curated to prepare for the esteemed role of your Police Chief. I hold immense pride in my dual role as a scholar and practitioner within the law enforcement field, equipping me with a comprehensive perspective on the expectations of a Mayor, City Council, Police Department, and our community.

With an ardent desire to contribute my skills and fervor for civic duty to the position of Seattle Police Chief, I am motivated by the city's staunch commitment to safety, reform, and forward-thinking practices. I am ready to shoulder the responsibility of guiding the SPD towards a groundbreaking chapter in law enforcement. The prospect of discussing how my skill set dovetails with the Seattle Police Department's requisites and the community it pledges to serve is one I anticipate with great enthusiasm. I stand at the precipice of a new professional epoch, poised and thrilled to embark on this journey.

I appreciate your attention to my application and eagerly anticipate your response. I am excited about the opportunity to engage in the forthcoming selection process.

Sincerely,

Shon F. Barnes

Chief Shon F. Barnes Ph.D.

Revised 10/2024

Shon Fitzgerald Barnes Ph.D.

Education

- 2014- 2018 **Ph.D. Leadership Studies:** (Concentrations: Community and Civic Engagement, Strategic Planning, Police Disparities, and Organizational Change) Awarded Magna Cum Laude, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, Greensboro, North Carolina.
- 2004- 2007 **Masters of Science, Criminal Justice,** Awarded Magna Cum Laude University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio.
- 1993-1997 **Bachelor of Arts History/Pre-Law,** Elizabeth City State University, Elizabeth City, North Carolina.

Professional Education

- Summer 2014 **Senior Management Institute for Police,** 54th Session
The Police Executive Research Forum (PERF).
- Fall 2012 **Southern Police Institute,** 128th Administrative Officers' Course.
University of Louisville, Louisville, Kentucky
- Spring 2023 **Federal Bureau of Investigations',** Session 81, Law
Enforcement Executive Session, Quantico, Virginia.

Managerial and Supervisory Police Command Experience

February 2021-Present

Chief of Police, Madison, Wisconsin

Chief of Police for the Madison Police Department, an organization that prides itself on its educated and varied team committed to community engagement. Our uniformed professionals, both men and women, are dedicated to providing exemplary police services, safeguarding the legal rights of all individuals. Embracing diversity as a fundamental principle, MPD is lauded nationwide for its inclusive workforce, with approximately 21% of commissioned staff being people of color and 28% identifying as female. This reflects our unwavering commitment to equality and representation in law enforcement. The annual budget is approximately \$84 million. Cross- Functional Command Experience, Initiatives, and Accomplishments include:

- Implemented the Stratified Policing Model, a method grounded in evidence that weaves problem-solving, crime analysis, and accountability into the fabric of its operations. This model is designed to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of crime reduction efforts while promoting community engagement. It integrates seamlessly with the agency's structure, aiming to fortify the influence of law enforcement on public safety and community ties.

- Additionally, the department has undergone a reorganization to better support its non-commissioned personnel and has developed its inaugural comprehensive strategic plan. This plan is focused on diminishing crime rates and elevating public satisfaction with police services.
- The annexation of the Town of Madison's Police Department has expanded police coverage and resources.
- The department has been restructured to embody the principles of the 21st Century Police Report, with a commitment to data-driven policing to foster transparency and community trust.
- Collaborative partnerships with local businesses and nonprofits have been established to enhance community-police relations and boost officer morale.
- The M.O.R.E Program was initiated to promote diversity within the department, reflecting the community it serves. A strategic alignment between the department and the community on crime prevention has led to notable reductions across all major crime categories.

September 2020- January 2021

Director of Training and Professional Development, Chicago, Illinois

As the Director of Training and Professional Development under the Deputy Chief Administrator at the Civilian Office of Police Accountability (COPA), my role encompasses overseeing the training and professional development within the agency. My core responsibilities involve assessing the training needs of the agency's staff to devise programs aligned with our goals and initiatives. I am tasked with creating course outlines, developing training materials, and selecting the most effective instructional methods. I deliver comprehensive training programs across various platforms, covering key areas such as interviewing techniques, evidence assessment, legal case analysis, and report writing. To ensure the training's impact, I conduct thorough evaluations and collaborate with executive staff to refine developmental strategies, thereby enhancing training opportunities. I innovate educational methods to boost and assess staff performance empirically, curate supervisory principle curricula, and stay abreast of policing and accountability trends to update our training accordingly. Additionally, I manage the engagement of vendors, consultants, and speakers to enrich our training programs and presentations. Cross- Functional Command Experience, Initiatives, and Accomplishments include:

- The Training Plan section of the City of Chicago's Consent Decree has been successfully submitted, meeting the provisional compliance requirements.
- Additionally, the COPA Academy has undergone a reorganization to adopt a Problem Based Learning Model for instruction, enhancing the educational approach and methodology.

April 2017-September 2020

Deputy Chief of Police, Salisbury, NC

As the Deputy Chief of Police, I developed a strategic plan aimed at transforming and administering a community-focused police agency, achieving full CALEA accreditation in the process. My responsibilities included overseeing daily operations to enact the principles of the 21st Century Report on Policing, while also providing counsel to the Police Chief. I was instrumental in integrating and directing the department's crime control strategy, as well as spearheading our community engagement initiatives. My role extended to acting as the intermediary for the department's Public Safety Partnership with the U.S. Department of Justice and the Project Safe Neighborhoods Initiative in collaboration with the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Middle District of North Carolina. As a central figure in Salisbury, the administrative hub of Rowan County, I engaged with a

vibrant and varied community. Cross- Functional Command Experience, Initiatives, and Accomplishments include:

- Introduced Stratified Policing, encompassing Problem-Oriented Policing, Strategic Accountability, and Crime Analysis, alongside a structural reorganization to tackle issues such as gun violence, eroding community relations, and the advancement of officers.
- These measures resulted in a significant decrease in violent crime, with homicides dropping by 45% and shootings by 60% in CY2018, followed by a further 65% reduction in homicides in 2019.
- Additionally, the Cure Violence Model was adopted during the "2019 Summer Cease Fire" in partnership with the Salisbury NAACP Chapter, leading to a remarkable outcome of zero homicides during the 90-day trial.
- As President of the Southern Police Institute Alumni Association, I spearheaded a national police conference that addressed critical law enforcement challenges identified by a survey among 300 law enforcement executives, focusing on Police Reform, Community-Police Relations, Recruiting and Retention, and Evidence-Based Crime Reduction Strategies.
- The department also revitalized the "Neighborhood Oriented Policing" model, aligning it with the patrol beat reorganization plan, which empowered officers to manage smaller neighborhoods and be accountable for resolving local issues, reinforcing the principle that "Every officer has a neighborhood, and every neighborhood has an officer."
- My expertise in Community Policing was recognized with an invitation to participate in a focus group at the International Association of Chiefs of Police's Institute for Community Police Relations, established in response to the 21st Century Report on Police Reform, with the aim of fostering trust between police departments and communities through evidence-based practices.

November 2000- April 2017

Greensboro Police Department (NC)

Police Captain: From 2013 to 2017, I held the position of commanding officer for three divisions within Greensboro, North Carolina—the state's third-largest city and ranked 69th nationwide. My responsibilities included overseeing the department's performance evaluation system, orchestrating and supervising the training programs, and providing counsel to the Chief of Police regarding community relations and strategic objectives. Greensboro, with a population of 277,000 and a density of 2,098 individuals per square mile, is served by a police department comprising over 800 staff members, 700 of whom are sworn officers, operating on a budget of \$67 million. In my capacity as commanding officer, I was responsible for managing annual budgets between \$10 and \$13 million. The Greensboro Police Department prides itself on being the inaugural CALEA Accredited agency in North Carolina—a testament to our commitment to excellence, with commanding officers being instrumental in maintaining this status through successive reaccreditation efforts. Cross- Functional Command Experience, Initiatives, and Accomplishments include:

Captain of the Training Division: This position serves as the Commanding Officer of the division responsible for the selection and review of candidate backgrounds, training, education, and maintaining the certification of 700 sworn police officers.

- Spearheaded a comprehensive overhaul of the police recruit selection process and the Police Academy's training program, enhancing the curriculum with additional hours dedicated to conflict resolution and communication skills. This initiative represented a complete transformation of the traditional 24-week police academy structure.
- Furthermore, I introduced the principles of procedural justice throughout the police department, ensuring that our in-service training was in harmony with the foundational principles of the 21st Century Report on Policing.
- Committee Chair tasked with revising the performance evaluation system for all police department personnel, culminating in the creation of a new evaluation tool that is consistent with the City of Greensboro's Human Resources guidelines and the strategic reform objectives of the Greensboro Police Department.
- In my role as a Specialized Subject Control and Arrest Techniques Instructor, I am responsible for educating police recruits on constitutional Fourth Amendment rights, laws pertaining to arrest, search, and seizure, as well as defensive strategies and officer safety protocols.

Captain of the Southern Patrol Division: This position is a Division Commander and is responsible for directing and administering the management functions of a patrol division. Functions include providing leadership in directing subordinates, administering programs, and developing goals for assigned operations as well as supervision of all law enforcement activities.

- Spearheaded a targeted problem-oriented policing initiative aimed at curbing crime and social unrest at Heritage House Apartments, a complex notorious for the highest incidence of emergency calls and social disorder within Greensboro.
- This multifaceted community policing effort unfolded in three strategic phases: firstly, pinpointing and dismantling the local drug and prostitution rings; secondly, fostering a leadership framework within the community; and thirdly, forging collaborative partnerships with neighborhood churches under the banner of P.A.C.T (Police and Church Together).
- The successful execution of this project culminated in a marked decrease in criminal activity and emergency service calls to the area.
- In recognition of the positive impact generated by the Heritage House Problem-Oriented Policing Project, I was honored with the "Police Officer of the Year" award for 2014 by the Randleman Road Business Association.

United States Department of Justice: Civil Rights Division

Subject Matter Expert: Police Leadership, Critical Incident Review, Use of Force

- Perform in-depth analyses of significant events that include police use of force, authority misuse, and breaches of constitutional policing standards.
- Review and appraise the efficacy of police leadership, supervisory roles, internal procedures, and force deployment strategies.
- Act as a knowledgeable authority on empirical policing methods and superior law enforcement protocols.
- Offer guidance on adhering to stipulated consent decree mandates and regulatory compliance.
- Preserve the integrity of sensitive information and uphold the security clearance protocols for U.S. Department of Civil Rights inquiries.

International Police Organizational Reform Experience

Bamako, Mali (West Africa)

The Southern Police Institute, in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy in Bamako, Mali, crafted a specialized training program to bolster the Security Governance Initiative's National Police Reform. The focus of this program was on conducting thorough Background Investigations for both the National Police Force and the Gendarmerie, Mali's elite police unit.

Delivered in Bamako in October 2018, the training equipped Malian law enforcement personnel with essential skills to effectively assess potential recruits. Additionally, Gendarmerie members were included to foster better integration and cooperation with the National Police, especially in rural investigations where their jurisdiction lies.

This initiative is a key component of the sustained partnership between the U.S. and Malian governments, aiming to enhance the recruitment process's integrity and oversight as part of the broader human resources reforms initiated by the Security Governance Initiative since 2015.

Professional Contributions

- **Publications.**

- Miller, K, Danielson, S, and Barnes, S., (2013). Making Leadership Count: Implementing Effective Partnerships and Alternative Organizational Structures to Address Complex Problems. Case Analyses of Two Child Development-Community Policing Partnerships in North Carolina. Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice, Executive Session on Police Leadership.
- Barnes, S "Implementation of Procedural Justice in Police Agencies" cited in; Novak, K. J., Cordner, G. W., Smith, B. W., & Roberg, R. R. (2017). Police & society (7th ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Barnes, S. F. (2018, March 2). Police Community Relations: A study of racial disparity and the effects of hot spot policing leadership strategies (Doctoral dissertation, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, 2018)
- Barnes, S. F. (2018) "Profile of the 21st Century Leader." A paper of the BJA Executive Session on Police Leadership. Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Assistance, U.S. Department of Justice; and St. Petersburg, FL: Center for Public Safety Innovation, St. Petersburg College.
- Barnes, Shon F. "Mastering New Essentials: Leader Skills 5." BJA Executive Session on Police Leadership, The BJA Executive Session on Police Leadership, 1 Mar. 2018, bjaexecutivesessiononpoliceleadership.org/BarnesBestGainerAudios.html

- **Presentations.**

- 1st Annual American Society of Evidence Based Policing Conference: Evaluating Predictive Policing Analytics Software Presentation and Panel Discussion (Phoenix, Arizona).
- 2018 International Association of Chiefs of Police Conference-Research Advisory Committee: Title: An Overview of Police Led Research (Orlando, Florida).
- George Mason University 10th Anniversary Criminal Justice and Public Policy Symposium. Presentation Title: Community Police Relations and the Effects of Hot Spot Policing on Racial Disparity in Traffic Stops (Arlington, Virginia).
- Global Perspectives on Police, Law, & Society: Common Ties against Communities of Color, presentation and panel discussion, at Howard University (Washington, DC).
- Barnes, S. F. (2018, May 09). LEADS Scholar Spotlight: Predictive Policing Algorithms. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1J-JzQusjfU&t=4s>.

- **Professional Organizations & Activities.**

- CNN Special Guest Correspondent
- University of Chicago Police Leadership Academy Committee Member
- New York University Policing Project Health Check Advisory Board.
- 21st Century Report on Policing: Pillar 6 National Officer Safety and Wellness Working Group (Washington DC)
- President of the Southern Police Institute Alumni Association (2017-2018)
- Police Executive Research Forum Immigrant Advisory Committee Member
- International Association of Chiefs of Police: Research Advisory Committee
- Prince Hall Free and Accepted Masons
- 32nd Degree Scottish Right Consistory
- Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.
- Alpha Phi Sigma Criminal Justice Honor Society
- National Institute of Justice Federal Grant Reviewer

- **Honors and Awards**

- 2015 National Institute of Justice, Law Enforcement Advancing Data and Science (LEADS) Scholar. In 2014, NIJ collaborated with the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) to select and honor law enforcement officers committed to using evidence and data to inform law enforcement policy and practice.
- United States Selective Marine Corps Reserve Medal First Award
- Outstanding Dissertation Award for the College of Arts and Sciences 2018, North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University.
- 2023 HBCU Living Legend Award
- Finalist for the Superintendent of Police (Chicago, Illinois)
- 2024 George Mason University's Center for Evidence Based Crime Policy, Policing Hall of Fame Inductee
- 2024 Radford University's Center for Police Practice, Policy and Research, Excellence in Policing Award



Press Release

For Immediate Release

Contact Information

Jamie Housen

jamie.housen@seattle.gov

Mayor Harrell to Appoint Shon Barnes Seattle's Next Chief of Police

Currently the Madison, Wisconsin Chief of Police, Barnes brings to Seattle a record of accomplishment, including implementing solutions that have driven a 67% decrease in homicides, a 40% decrease in auto thefts, and a 19% decrease in reports of shots fired so far in 2024, as well as advancing strategies to build an inclusive police service where 28% of officers are women.

Seattle – Today, Mayor Bruce Harrell announced the appointment of Shon Barnes as the next Chief of the Seattle Police Department (SPD), following a national search. Barnes has served as the Chief of Police for Madison, Wisconsin since 2021, and is a nationally recognized leader in reducing crime, improving community-police relations, and driving culture change. Mayor Harrell will welcome Chief Barnes to Seattle with a public event in January, and Chief Barnes will begin a series of meetings with community members in city neighborhoods.

“Earlier this week, under tragic circumstances, the nation received its introduction to Chief Shon Barnes. We all saw firsthand what our team has known since we began this recruitment process – that Chief Barnes possesses the impressive leadership capabilities, compassionate approach, and dedication to effective police work needed to continue moving our Police Department forward,” **said Mayor Harrell.** “I’ve spoken with Madison Mayor Satya Rhodes-Conway to express my condolences and support as they process this week’s tragedy and to share my continued commitment to fighting for solutions to the gun violence epidemic that impacts every corner of our country through our shared work with the U.S. Conference of Mayors.”

Mayor Harrell continued, “Chief Barnes will bring proven experience and a forward-looking vision to help us realize our **One Seattle** commitment to safety for every person in every neighborhood. I would like to thank Chief Sue Rahr for her strong leadership this year, both in the department and throughout this search. We took a different approach to this search process than those of the past, as we sought to seek out and recruit the best possible chief for SPD’s future. I am confident Chief Barnes is that leader, and that he can further advance positive strides in public safety in Seattle, rooted in innovation, accountability, and community partnership.”

In Madison, Chief Barnes implemented evidence-based approaches to partner with the community, achieved significant decreases in crime, and led strategic initiatives to improve the effectiveness and diversity of the department. He has over 12 years of police command-level experience, including patrol, training, and recruitment, and served as a civilian police accountability executive in Chicago, where he helped meet the training plan requirements of a federal consent decree.

“I am truly honored to accept this position and thank Mayor Harrell for his trust and confidence. The mayor and I share a vision that crime prevention and community safety is a shared responsibility and that every community member plays a role in keeping Seattle safe,” **said incoming Chief Shon Barnes.** “My family and I are excited about the opportunity to integrate into Seattle’s vibrant community, known for its diversity, innovation, and resilience. I look forward to working alongside the dedicated men and women of the Seattle Police Department to uphold these core values.”

Under Chief Barnes, so far in 2024, Madison has seen a 67% decrease in homicides, a 40% decrease in auto thefts, a 36% decrease in burglaries, and a 19% decrease in reports of shots fired. As Seattle seeks to build an inclusive police service for people of all backgrounds, Chief Barnes brings proven experience advancing the Madison Police Department’s inclusive workforce initiative that has resulted in 28% of officers being women.

Barnes participated with the officer safety and wellness committee that was part of President Obama’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing. He has served as a subject matter expert for the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division and been recognized for his accomplishments and scholarship by the National Institute of Justice and Radford University’s Center for Police Practice, Policy and Research. Earlier this year, he was inducted into the Policing Hall of Fame at George Mason University’s Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy.

“Chief Shon Barnes is a nationally recognized leader and innovator, but I mostly admire his authenticity and values. He is highly principled, fair, and sincere. He has consistently demonstrated great care for his personnel and the communities they serve,” **said former SPD Chief Kathleen O’Toole.** “I have no doubt that he will receive a warm welcome in Seattle and provide the stable, effective leadership that SPD deserves.”

The search for Seattle’s next chief began in mid-2024, led by current Interim Chief Sue Rahr and former Chief Kathleen O’Toole, two widely respected law enforcement leaders who recruited candidates from around the country to ensure Seattle received the highest quality applicants.

There were 57 total applications received from across the United States which were reviewed and narrowed to a list of 44 qualified candidates. The top four candidates were invited to take a competitive exam in November, as required by the [City Charter](#). Three candidates – Chief Barnes; Nicholas Augustine, Assistant Chief of the Montgomery County, Maryland, Department of Police; and Emada Tingirides, Deputy Chief, Los Angeles Police Department – passed the exam and were forwarded to Mayor Harrell for his consideration and final selection.

The search process was designed to recruit qualified individuals and encourage talented law enforcement leaders to apply. During the search process, and as part of the Charter-required competitive exam, the mayor sought insight and feedback from a diverse collection of community members. Earlier this year, the mayor’s office hosted six “Safer Seattle” [community forums](#) focused on

public safety. These meetings were held downtown and in the Bitter Lake, South Park, Rainer Beach, Central District, and Queen Anne neighborhoods. Public comment at these meetings and responses to an online survey helped shape the [job description](#) for the Chief of Police position.

“I am very excited to see Chief Shon Barnes join the Seattle Police Department! He has achieved a national reputation for his focus on research and innovation while remaining centered on the core values of community policing. His skills and knowledge are just what SPD needs to take it to the next level,” **said Interim Chief Sue Rahr**. “I look forward to collaborating with him over the next several weeks to ensure a smooth transition in late January. The people of Seattle and the men and women of SPD are very lucky to gain such a knowledgeable and talented new leader!”

Sue Rahr was appointed interim chief of the Seattle Police Department in May 2024 and was not a candidate for the permanent position. Under Rahr’s leadership, SPD has made significant progress in recruiting more officers, deploying crime prevention technology, supporting the expansion of diversified response options, and launching place-based crime reduction strategies.

Rahr will continue to advise and support the department during the transition to Chief Barnes.

About Chief Barnes



Chief Barnes has a 24-year history as a police officer. He began his career with the Greensboro, North Carolina Police Department, where he rose to the rank of Captain. Following that role, he served as Deputy Chief of Police in Salisbury, NC, and then as Director of Training and Professional Development with the Civilian Office of Police Accountability in Chicago, IL. He has served as Madison, Wisconsin’s Chief of Police since 2021.

Barnes holds a Ph.D. in Leadership Studies from North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, a Master of Science in Criminal Justice from the University of Cincinnati, and a BA in History/Pre-Law from Elizabeth City State University. He has also participated in ongoing professional education with the Senior Management Institute for Police, Southern Police Institute, and Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Chief Barnes has served as a subject matter expert for the U.S. Department of Justice on police leadership, critical incident reviews, use of force practices, constitutional policing standards, and compliance with federal consent decrees.

He has been recognized as a National Institute of Justice Law Enforcement Advancing Data and Science Scholar and is a member of the National Policing Institute’s Council on Policing Reforms and Race. Barnes was named an HBCU Living Legend in 2023. He was inducted into the George Mason University’s Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy Hall of Fame in 2024, an honor recognizing his use of data analytics and the evidence of what works best in policing.

In 2020, Barnes walked the 54-mile route from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama with Chief Tarrick McGuire of the Arlington, Virginia police department and Dr. Obed Magny to commemorate the historic 1965 civil rights march led by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Barnes is co-founder of the 54th Mile Project and has helped develop a national training curriculum on police and race.

Chief Barnes is married to Dr. Stephanie Dance-Barnes, a leader in higher education and expert in cancer biology, and together, they have three children.

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SECTION

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Memo

Date: 4/29/2025
To: Jeremy Racca, Chief of Staff and General Counsel
From: Pam Inch, Senior Executive Recruiter
Subject: Qualification of **Shon Fitzgerald Barnes**

The Seattle Department of Human Resources has received a copy of Shon Fitzgerald Barnes' certification as a Peace Officer from the State of Washington. The certification includes:

- A check of criminal history, any national decertification index, commission records, and all disciplinary records by any previous law enforcement
- Inquiry to the local prosecuting authority in any jurisdiction in which the applicant has served as to whether the applicant is on any potential impeachment disclosure list
- Inquiry into whether the applicant has any past or present affiliations with extremist organizations, as defined by the commission
- A review of the applicant's social media accounts
- Verification of immigrant or citizenship status as either a citizen of the United States of America, lawful permanent resident, or deferred action for childhood arrivals recipient
- A psychological examination administered by a psychiatrist licensed in the state of Washington
- A polygraph or similar assessment administered by an experienced professional with appropriate training

Chief Barnes has met both the Washington State and the city's standards to serve as the Seattle Police Chief.

Cc: Personnel File