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MEDIA RELEASE

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Deputy Chief Jesse Gonzalez Retires After 35 Years of Service

Gurnee – After an incredible journey spanning 35 years, we are excited to announce the well-deserved retirement of a true law enforcement professional, Deputy Chief Jesse Gonzalez. Jesse's remarkable tenure with the Village of Gurnee Police Department has left an indelible mark on our community and beyond, making him the longest-serving police officer in the Gurnee Police Department's history.

Jesse's story with us began in 1988 when he joined the Gurnee Police Department as a patrol officer. His unwavering commitment and exceptional work ethic quickly propelled him through the ranks, earning him a position with the Northern Illinois Police Alarm System (NIPAS) in 1992 as an Entry Team member for seven years. During this time he responded to hostage/Barricade incidents, high risk warrant services and major crime scene searches. In 1999, he embraced a new challenge as a Detective within the Gurnee Police Investigations Division lasting 19 years. Jesse solved many complicated cases from bank robbery, kidnapping, sex assaults, armed robberies, shootings and other heinous crimes. He simultaneously served with the Lake County Major Crime Task Force from 2001 to 2012, working on over 120 Lake County cases dealing with homicides, officer involved shootings, kidnapping and in custody deaths. He was designated as the Task Force Commander from 2011 to 2012, showcasing his unyielding dedication to solving complex cases, leading teams, and upholding justice.

In November of 2014, Jesse's leadership skills came to the forefront as he took on the role of Investigations Commander. His strategic thinking, dedication, and relentless pursuit of justice defined his tenure, setting the stage for even greater responsibilities. In October 2018, Jesse was appointed Acting Deputy Chief of Operations, showcasing his ability to oversee complex operations with expertise. This commitment led to his promotion to Deputy Chief in May 2019, a position that exemplified his dedication to the betterment of our police department.

Jesse's legacy also includes mentoring new officers as a Field Training Officer, sharing knowledge as a Rapid Deployment Instructor, and overseeing the Rapid Deployment training program. His exceptional achievements were met with numerous Unit Citations, Letters of Recognition, and Letters of Commendation. Among his many accolades, awarded Exchange Club Policeman of the year in 1994, Pioneer Press Best of the Best of Lake County Officer in 1997, Gurnee Officer of the year in 1994 & 2004, National Crime Victim's Rights Week Law Enforcement Award in 2009 from the Lake County Advocacy Center, and received the Crime Response Pillar Award in 2014.

As Jesse begins this exciting new chapter of his life, we want to express our deepest gratitude for his service, leadership, and lasting impact on our community. Please join us in celebrating his accomplishments and wishing him all the best in his well-deserved retirement.

The community is welcome to attend the official walk-out ceremony on Friday, September 8th, at 3:00 PM at the Gurnee Police Department.

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