

Illinois State Police Hosts Division Of Patrol Change Of Command Ceremony

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CHICAGO – Illinois State Police (ISP) Director Brendan F. Kelly today announced the Division of Patrol (DOP) change of command. Colonel Margaret McGreal is retiring from ISP after more than 26 years of service. On September 21, 2023, Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Owen will be promoted to Colonel and will be the newly appointed DOP Deputy Director.

“Congratulations to Colonel McGreal on her many years of distinguished service and dedication to the people of Illinois,” said ISP Director Brendan F. Kelly. “Colonel McGreal has been a true leader at ISP and her impact will live on through the officers

she led under her command. We welcome Colonel Owen into his new role as the Division of Patrol Deputy Director and look forward to his leadership.”

Colonel McGreal began her career with the Illinois State Police in May 1997 as a member of Cadet Class 95. Upon graduating from the Academy, she was assigned to District Chicago, now Troop 3. In 2006, McGreal earned a promotion to the rank of Sergeant, followed by a promotion to the rank Master Sergeant in 2009. She was then assigned as the supervisor of District Chicago’s Violent Crimes Initiative Unit. During this time, she was also responsible for the District’s Field Training Program. In 2014, McGreal was promoted to Operations Lieutenant in District 5. After returning to District Chicago as a Lieutenant, McGreal was responsible for the District’s South Sector Patrol and Specialty Units, specifically the Gang Violence Task Force Team. In 2018, McGreal was promoted to Captain of District Chicago and in 2019 she was appointed to Lieutenant Colonel for the Division of Patrol. In May of 2020, Colonel McGreal was appointed and served as the first female Colonel of the Division of Patrol. Colonel McGreal has been a vital part of all aspects of ISP and has eagerly invested her time and shared her experience and knowledge with others, preparing them to become future ISP leaders.

“I am so fortunate and proud to have been a part of the Illinois State Police and have had the opportunity to work alongside some of the bravest and most courageous men and women throughout my career,” said Colonel McGreal

Colonel Owen began his career with the ISP in 2002, as a member of Cadet Class 106. As a Trooper, he worked patrol in former District 10, now Troop 7 and was later assigned as a K9 officer and a member of a Special Enforcement Team, eventually being promoted to the rank of Sergeant.

In 2012, he transitioned to the former ISP Division of Operations Operational Services Command where he served as the Statewide Criminal Interdiction Coordinator along with being assigned to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) as a task force officer. There he attended and graduated the ISP Investigator School, as well as the DEA Narcotics and Dangerous Drug Investigations School. He went on to serve as a detail leader Master Sergeant for the Executive Protection Unit within the Office of the Director before taking positions as the Deputy Chief of Staff and Chief of Staff within the former Division of Operations. Colonel Owen went on to serve as the former District 9, now Troop 6, Commander before being advanced to the rank of Major and serving as the Region III (central Illinois) Commander, followed by the Northern Investigative Commander with responsibilities to serve investigative Zones in northern Illinois. He later transitioned to the Southern Patrol Commander before being appointed to his most recent assignment as Assistant Deputy Director for the Division of Patrol Operations at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

“I am extremely proud to be an Illinois State Trooper, standing shoulder to shoulder with my peers within all ranks of the ISP to reduce crime and serve our communities,” said Colonel Owen.

On June 24, 1921, the 52nd General Assembly of the State of Illinois authorized the Department of Public Works and Buildings to hire a “sufficient number of State Highway Patrol Officers to enforce the provisions of the Motor Vehicle Laws. ISP was officially created in 1922, at which time the first state police force in Illinois emerged with officers patrolling the highways on motorcycles, enforcing motor vehicle laws to provide public safety.

Today, ISP is a multifaceted police agency focused on enforcing the laws, protecting the public, and providing an array of specialty services to other law enforcement agencies through innovation and collaboration. ISP, now comprised of sworn personnel and civilians totaling more than 3,000, is one of the most modern and efficient police organizations in the country.

ISP thanks Colonel McGreal for her years of service to the people of Illinois and her great leadership within ISP, while welcoming the incoming Colonel Owen. We look forward to his leadership.