



BCPO News



LaChia L. Bradshaw, Acting Prosecutor

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LaChia L. Bradshaw Takes Office as Burlington County Acting Prosecutor

A 20-year veteran of the Burlington County Prosecutor's Office was sworn in yesterday to oversee the agency, marking the first time in its history that the BCPO will be led by a person of color or a woman.

LaChia L. Bradshaw was administered the oath of office at the Olde Historic Courthouse in Mount Holly by the Hon. Terrence R. Cook, P.J.Cr. She met with members of the office immediately afterward, thanking them for the support she has received as she begins her new role and offering praise for their commitment to seeking justice for victims of crime.

Members of law enforcement continue to face difficulties created by the pandemic, and an increased focus on social justice issues has changed the way agencies operate and interact with the public, she said.

"However, I am aware of the dedication of the people in this room," she said. "I am confident that together we can successfully meet these challenges and any others that are presented to our office."

She was nominated last month by Gov. Phil Murphy and will serve in an acting capacity pending confirmation by the New Jersey Senate.

Acting Prosecutor Bradshaw is a graduate of Rutgers University, where she received a B.S. in Administration of Justice, with a minor in Sociology. She earned her J.D. from the University of Maryland School of Law. Prior to taking the helm of the BCPO, she served as a Senior Assistant Prosecutor in the Major Crimes Unit – Special Victims Section.

Upon being nominated, she noted the significance of bringing diversity to the role of the county's top law enforcement officer.

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“Representation matters,” she said. “Even as a career prosecutor, I never imagined it was possible to obtain this position. Primarily because I’d never seen anyone in this county who looked like me in this position. I hope to encourage and inspire all people, and particularly people of color, to consider careers in law enforcement and prosecution and become as passionate about it as I am.”

Acting Prosecutor Bradshaw replaces Scott Coffina, who returned to the private sector following a five-year term.

Her first official action yesterday was to fill the position of BCPO chief of detectives, which became vacant with the retirement of Darren Anderson. She selected Patrick J. Thornton, who has been with the BCPO since 2020 in the role of chief of staff.

His career in law enforcement began in Burlington County, where he served with the Eastampton Police Department and the Burlington Township Police Department before enlisting in the New Jersey State Police.

“Pat has done an outstanding job managing our office,” Acting Prosecutor Bradshaw said. “He will be pivotal in helping to build the investigative side into the operation that we envision going forward.”

Chief Thornton said he appreciated the vote of confidence in being chosen to lead the BCPO detective staff.

“After a thirty-year career in law enforcement, being able to return to Burlington County and serve as the chief of detectives is a great honor,” Chief Thornton said. “I look forward to serving our citizens in this role.”

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