

*RJ Reynolds*

*Recognizes*  
**John Polite**  
*as Public Safety Officer*  
*of the Year*

## Being Polite

Long before John Polite announced his intentions to run for sheriff of Forsyth County, his name and reputation were already respected and well-known. Polite was born and raised in Winston-Salem. After graduating from Paisley High School, he went on to earn a degree from Winston-Salem State University.

Soon after leaving WSSU, Polite embarked on a long and storied career in law enforcement. When Polite retired from the Forsyth County Sheriff's Office late last year, he had spent 27 years serving the county. Polite first worked in the department's communications division before moving on to the patrol division and then the civil division.

Polite gained the respect of both students and faculty members when he took over the resource officer position at Reynolds High School. His

tenure at the Sheriff's Office also included stints at the county jail in the department's court security division. By the time Polite retired, he was a lieutenant watch commander who had worked under four sheriffs.

It was not only Polite's vast knowledge of the Sheriff's Office but also his civic involvement in the city that he has always called home, that helped Polite make history last September in the Democratic primary. In a county where black candidates have not had the best of luck, Polite became the first black candidate for sheriff to win a primary. Although Polite's luck was not as good in the general election, his campaign helped to galvanize the local African-American electorate like never before. The way he ran the campaign and the dignity he showed in defeat have garnered him even more praise and respect.



School Resource Officer John Polite at Reynolds High School.



John Polite walks his daughter down the aisle.



John Polite poses with young ballplayers.