

**OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY**  
BLUE RIDGE JUDICIAL CIRCUIT



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Chief Investigator Dwight Kelley Retires After 36 Years**  
**Brandon Owens and William Hegwood Appointed Chief and Assistant Chief**

**September 27, 2023** – District Attorney Susan K. Treadaway announces that Chief Investigator Dwight Kelley is retiring September 29, 2023, after 36 years of service to the citizens of Cherokee County and the State of Georgia. Earlier this month, the District Attorney’s office hosted a retirement reception for colleagues and family.

“It has been an honor to work with Dwight Kelley, who is one of the most dedicated professionals I’ve known in my career,” said District Attorney Susan K. Treadaway. “For decades, he has served the citizens of Cherokee County with distinction. Through the years, he has helped to build an incredible team of investigators, who will carry on his work well into the future. It has been a joy to work with Dwight and I wish him a long and happy retirement.”

A lifelong resident of Ball Ground, Kelley served in uniform patrol and special operations for the Cherokee Sheriff’s Office before accepting a position in 1990 as an investigator in the District Attorney’s Office. At that time, the Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit included both Cherokee and Forsyth counties, and the District Attorney’s Office had a staff of 15 employees. The Cherokee County Justice Center hadn’t yet been constructed, and trials were held in multiple locations outside of the courthouse.

In 1997, Kelley was appointed chief investigator, a position he has held for 26 years. During that time, Kelley assisted with the prosecution of countless criminal cases, in addition to supervising a growing staff that now includes 20 professionals with extensive law enforcement experience.

“I am leaving this Office with a great team of investigators in place. They are the most talented staff I’ve seen in my 33 years here. They’re smart, exceptionally well trained, professional, tech-savvy, and hard-working, and I think the best of the best, statewide,” said Kelley. “I know that the new chief and assistant chief are ready to take on their roles and continue to grow this office with professional criminal investigators. I thank Cherokee County for giving me the opportunity to serve in this capacity for the past 36 years.”

Effective Monday, October 2, 2023, Brandon Owens will take on the role of chief investigator and William Hegwood will take on the role of assistant chief investigator.

Chief Investigator Owens is a Cherokee County native and U.S. Marine Corps veteran with 26 years of law enforcement experience and extensive training, including completion of the Columbus State

Professional Management Program and the Georgia Chiefs of Police Executive Development Program. He began his career in 1997 at the Cherokee Sheriff's Office, where he served on the Cherokee Multi Agency Narcotics Squad. He joined the District Attorney's Office in 2006 and was soon promoted to lead senior investigator. In 2008, he accepted a position as Commander of the Zell Miller Mountain Parkway Drug Task Force, which serves the Appalachian Judicial Circuit. In 2018, he returned to Cherokee County to serve as senior investigator in the District Attorney's Office.

Assistant Chief Investigator Hegwood possesses 33 years of law enforcement experience and 3,800 hours of specialized training, including completion of the FBI National Academy Class 261 and the Georgia Chiefs of Police Executive Development Program. He began his law enforcement career with the Smyrna Police Department, where he headed the SWAT team before retiring with 20 years of service. The newly incorporated City of Dunwoody then recruited him to assist with building its police department. After retiring from Dunwoody Police, he began his career in 2015 with the Cherokee County District Attorney's Office as an investigator and was later promoted to senior investigator.

*The Office of the District Attorney for the Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit is committed to seeking justice, acting with integrity, and collaborating with partner agencies in the criminal justice system in order to protect the citizens of Cherokee County and the State of Georgia.*

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