

Episode Title: The Police is the Community

Featuring:

- Host: Chris Harrison
- Guest: Shane Brandel

Overview:

In this episode of *The Main Points Podcast*, host Chris Harrison engages in a compelling conversation with Shane Brandel, Chief of Police for the Decatur Police Department. Chief Brandel shares his journey into law enforcement, starting from his early influences in a small Illinois town to his 28-year career serving the Decatur community.

Listeners will hear about his experiences navigating the challenges of being a young officer, his reflections on leadership and growth, and his favorite roles throughout his career. The discussion also explores the importance of humility, teamwork, and mentorship in law enforcement, as well as the evolving role of the police department in fostering community connection.

Whether you're interested in public service, leadership, or learning more about the heart of Decatur's law enforcement community, this episode offers valuable insights and inspiration.

Key Discussion Points

Key Takeaways from the Conversation with Chief Shane Brandel

1. Chief Brandel's Path to Law Enforcement:

- Grew up in El Paso, Illinois, influenced by a family history of law enforcement and firefighting.
- Decided to pursue a career in law enforcement at the age of 15, inspired by his stepfather, a police chief, and other relatives in the field.
- Tested with multiple police departments and joined the Decatur Police Department in 1997 as a 21-year-old.
-

2. Early Challenges and Growth:

- Acknowledged the challenges of being a young officer and the maturity required to excel in the field.

- Emphasized the importance of learning through trial and error, observing peers, and owning mistakes to improve and grow.

-

3. **Career Milestones:**

- Started on second-shift patrol, then advanced to roles in the Street Crimes Unit and the Adult Investigations Division.
- Rose through the ranks to sergeant and eventually chief, highlighting his love for working with a mix of experienced and new officers on the midnight shift.
- Shared that his time as a midnight shift sergeant was one of the most enjoyable and fulfilling periods of his career.

-

4. **Reflections on Leadership:**

- Believes in the value of humility and self-awareness for long-term success in law enforcement.
- Stressed the importance of mentorship, teamwork, and embracing opportunities to learn and grow.

-

5. **Serving the Decatur Community:**

- Expressed pride in his 28 years of service to Decatur and his deep commitment to its diverse and evolving community.
- Highlighted the role of the police department in fostering understanding and connection within the community.

-

6. **Training and Preparedness in Policing:**

- Discussed the rigorous training process for new officers, emphasizing the months of preparation needed before they are fully deployable.
- Shared personal experiences that shaped his approach to policing, including memorable moments like his first foot chase on his first shift.

These key takeaways highlight Chief Brandel's passion for law enforcement, his dedication to personal and professional growth, and his commitment to building a stronger, safer community in Decatur.