

*Congratulations!*

## Colonel Joseph Richard (Rick) Fuentes

New Jersey State Police (Retired)

2019 Robert P. Shumate National Public Safety and Justice  
Contributor to Excellence Award Recipient

Joseph Richard (Rick) Fuentes joined the New Jersey State Police in 1978 and rose through the ranks from a general road-duty trooper to overseeing the intelligence section before being named superintendent. His career at the New Jersey State Police spanned 39 years. During his time with the New Jersey State Police, Col. Fuentes provided local, state, and national leadership to encourage and sponsor secure critical information sharing to improve public safety, law enforcement, and homeland security.

Col. Fuentes has had almost four decades of experience in law enforcement, public safety, homeland security, and emergency management. As superintendent of the New Jersey State Police, a gubernatorial appointee confirmed by the state legislature, he has served four governors, both Democrat and Republican, beginning with Governor James McGreevey and culminating with two terms of the administration of Governor Christopher Christie. As superintendent, Fuentes commanded an enlisted and civilian work force of more than 4,000 men and women tasked with a broad range of patrol, investigative, homeland security, administrative, forensic laboratory, and emergency management responsibilities. He managed an annual budget of more than \$300 million.

Col. Fuentes shepherded the New Jersey State Police through a federal consent decree imposed by the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) in 1999. Working closely with DOJ and the state attorney general's office, Fuentes established new patrol and search procedures, overhauled operational, disciplinary, training, and performance protocols and created stringent accountability for all layers of supervision



and management. Anticipating the termination of the federal consent decree in 2009, Mr. Fuentes successfully petitioned Governor Jon Corzine and the Governor's Advisory Committee on Police Standards to continue the reforms of the federal decree as a matter of state law. The Law Enforcement Professional Standards Act of 2009, signed into law by Governor Corzine, continues to provide a statutory protection for these reforms.

During his tenure as superintendent, the New Jersey State Police was nationally recognized for its management accountability and patrol practices and has received four consecutive accreditations by the Commission for the Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies.

In his capacity as superintendent, Mr. Fuentes also served as the state director of the Office of Emergency Management. He managed more than 25 presidentially-declared states of emergency in New Jersey, most notable being Superstorm Sandy in 2012 and the blizzard of 2010. He also created and managed New Jersey's state and local response to New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and to Puerto Rico in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria in 2017.

Fuentes has served on a variety of law enforcement boards. He has served as a member of the Executive Committee of the International Association of Chiefs of Police, the general chair of the IACP State and Provincial Division, chair of the IACP Homeland Security Committee and served six years as a member of the Second Executive Session on Policing at the Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government. During 2015-2016, he was selected to

participate on the DHS's Homeland Security Advisory Council Customs and Border Patrol Integrity Advisory Council. He has also served as a charter member of two main law enforcement advisory bodies to the United States Attorney General: the Global Advisory Working Group and the Criminal Intelligence Coordinating Council. For five years, he was a seated charter member of the Director of National Intelligence's (ODNI) Law Enforcement Advisory Board, serving first under Director James Clapper and most recently under Director Dan Coats. In his position on the ODNI Law Enforcement Partner's Board, Fuentes has been tireless in his advocacy to raise the collective priority of the intelligence community against the scourge of international drug trafficking organizations, urban violence, and criminal street gangs.

Fuentes worked closely with the executive command of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to promote the use of the national fusion center network in a manner that will build bridges and create collaborations between the DEA and the U.S. Department of Health that would allow for timely assessments on the national impacts and consequences of the of the opioid crisis, particularly as it pertains to the increasing spread of heroin and fentanyl. At a meeting at ODNI in July 2017, he introduced a plan to use the state-run forensic laboratories and fusion centers to provide the DEA with very specific trace properties on all seized fentanyl and its many analogs. This would allow DEA to approach countries, such as China, with specific information identifying fentanyl production laboratories that account for the majority of illicit U.S. sales.

During his tenure as superintendent and throughout his participation on federal advisory committees, Fuentes has maintained that the continued strength and effectiveness of public safety in this country rests on the ability to work closely with and harness the enormous power and knowledge of state and local law enforcement in a manner that will significantly disrupt the efforts of international and domestic criminal and terrorist organizations. He is also an ardent supporter of collaborations between educational institutions and law enforcement –

collaborations that have driven crime reductions, police reforms, and accountability measures that created greater legitimacy between law enforcement and the communities that it serves.

Fuentes was an early adopter of the concepts of information sharing and creating an information sharing environment. Early in the Colonel's history of model data sharing, IJIS recognized that value that he brought to the mission community. Any opportunity to collaborate would result in models that would have long-term impacts on the operational and solution-provider communities, yielding benefits that would contribute to the national evolution of data sharing to secure our citizenry. During his tenure with the Criminal Intelligence Coordination Committee and GLOBAL, he supported numerous pilot and demonstration projects to demonstrate the value of information sharing to support critical public safety priorities – the list of efforts is long. Fuentes was intimately involved in creating the network of Fusion centers and standing up the New Jersey Regional Operations and Intelligence Center (ROIC), which has served as a model for the 78 other fusion centers in the US. He supported the I95 information sharing effort which facilitated the exchange of information from Boston to Richmond to focus of weapon, drug, and human trafficking. During his involvement with the ODNI, he championed numerous sharing efforts and the development of standards.

In New Jersey, he was the principal partner in creating the CorrStat Rt. 21 effort which addresses violence in the north east portion of the state. He was one of several partners who supported and testified on behalf of creating the information sharing environment (ISE) legislation in New Jersey. This state-level ISE was the first of its kind nationally, using the lessons-learned from the Nationwide SAR Initiative that brought the contributions of both the NJ ROIC and the IJIS Institute. In these efforts and several others, IJIS enjoyed a partnership with the Colonel that inspired great results and directly impacted the safety of our hometown communities.

In the public health arena, his leadership assisted the development of a model for the drug monitoring initiative which has become a national model. Within the Division of State Police, he fostered the sharing of

information between the state and local law enforcement as well as creating the concept of intelligence-led policing efforts. Finally, he has been a champion for the use of data to drive operations. He partnered with Rutgers University to analyze data in the area of shootings and firearms trafficking to create investigation and policy priorities. Even beyond his retirement from NJ DSP, he remains active and vigilant in support of national public safety and security communities.

Fuentes holds a Doctor of Philosophy degree from the City University of New York with a published dissertation on the domestic business operations of Colombian cocaine cartels. He has possessed a Top Secret/Sensitive Compartmented Information security clearance issued by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Over the span of his investigative career with the NJSP, he has received numerous awards, to include:

- the National Meritorious Intelligence Award, issued while a member of the Newark Joint Terrorism Task Force for his contribution to the investigation and prosecution of Yu Kikumura, a member of the Japanese Red Army;
- 1993 Trooper of the Year award for several drug trafficking investigations resulting in the seizure of two tons of cocaine; and
- the Arthur Niederhoffer Memorial Fellowship for achievement and service within the John

Jay College Doctoral Program in Criminal Justice.

Col Fuentes was nominated for the Robert P. Shumate Justice and Public Safety Contributor to Excellence Award by Thomas J. O'Reilly, the executive policy advisor of the Rutgers University Center on Policing (COP) and a former official with the Department of Justice. Fuentes and O'Reilly have worked together on a variety of information sharing efforts for more than 15 years, and Fuentes is currently working on a regional sharing effort with Rutgers COP, The Real Time Crime Center, and the New York Police Department.

At his retirement ceremony in 2017, Governor Christie praised Fuentes for a distinguished career and especially for his work during Superstorm Sandy, saying there was "no one who worked better or more effectively" in handling the 2012 storm and its aftermath. At the ceremony, Fuentes said he could sum up his career in two sentences: "There were days and there were times when I wanted to go home from work early. There was never a single day I can remember when I didn't want to come to work."

We honor the work and contributions to justice and public safety excellence by Col. Fuentes and are pleased to present him with the 2019 Robert P. Shumate National Public Safety and Justice Contributor to Excellence Award.

