

***Finalist information:**

Alex Gearhart is the current Assistant Chief of Police for Killeen. He has 29 years of experience as a licensed peace officer and is experienced in all divisions of the department. He currently has executive leadership of the Operations Bureau, consisting of the Patrol and Criminal Investigations Divisions of the Killeen Police Department. Gearhart has a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from the University of Central Texas (now Texas A&M Central Texas in Killeen).

Keith Humphrey retired from the City of Little Rock, Ark. in 2022 as police chief after 34 years in law enforcement. He had previously been chief of police for the City of Norman, Okla. and Lancaster, Texas and held command and supervisor positions with the City of Arlington, Texas. Humphrey received his Master of Business Administration in Strategic Leadership from Amberton University and his Bachelor of Business Administration in Management from Texas A&M University.

Pedro Lopez, Jr. is currently the chief of police for the Houston Independent School District Police Department. He has a 35-year law enforcement career and an extensive history working with the Houston Police Department, including as Assistant Chief of Police. He holds a Master of Arts in Criminology from the University of Houston and a Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership from Mountain State University. Lopez had a 27-year military career in the U.S. Army.

Chris Vallejo is currently a Senior Law Enforcement Official and Community Engagement Leader/Commander of Investigations with the Austin Police Department and has worked with them for nearly 30 years. He has 29 years of experience delivering organizational leadership, mission critical operations and community safety initiatives. Vallejo has a Master of Science degree in Criminal Justice, Executive Leadership Track from Texas State University and a B.A. in Applied Arts and Science from Midwestern State University. He is a former Marine.

Ellwood Thomas Whitten, Jr. has been the Chief Deputy for the El Paso County Sheriff's Office since 2013. He retired from the El Paso Police Department in 2009 and has 30 years of law enforcement experience, including Chief of Police in DeWitt, Iowa, Carlsbad, N.M. and Harlingen, Texas. Whitten holds an Master of Public Administration from Purdue Global University, Master of Science in Criminal Justice Administration from Sul Ross State University and a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice Administration from Park University.

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