

**Peter J. Orput** is the Washington County Attorney and has been one of the original volunteers with *Safe Summer Nights* initiative since 2014 and serves on the Board of Directors. His professional career includes positions as the assistant Hennepin County attorney assigned to the violent crimes unit. He was formerly the director of Policy and Legal Services for the Minnesota Department of Corrections. There, he supervised parole hearing officers in the Hearings and Release unit as well as oversaw the department's records, policies and contracts and legal services sections. Pete also served as general counsel to the commissioner of corrections.

Prior to his position with the Department of Corrections Peter was the former deputy attorney general in charge of the Public Protection Section of the Minnesota Attorney General's office. In that capacity, he oversaw the criminal prosecution, criminal appeals, predatory offender and public safety divisions. As deputy attorney general, Peter directed 48 prosecutors and staff in providing assistance to county attorneys throughout the state.

In addition to his supervisory duties, Peter was the lead prosecutor with the Minnesota Gang Strike Force, where he directed gang investigators in racketeering investigations of organized criminal gangs throughout the state. Peter also prosecuted gang homicides, racketeering, and drug distribution conspiracies. He also provided legal advice to the commanders in the five regional offices of the Minnesota Gang Strike Force. Peter represented the attorney general on the Minnesota Criminal Gang Oversight Council, which establishes policies and procedures for combating criminal gangs in the state.

Soon after joining the attorney general's office in 1999, Peter tried a number of significant gang cases on behalf of the Gang Strike Force. He successfully tried *State v. Matelski* and *State v. Carrillo*, two gang assault cases that led our appellate courts to approve of the use of gang expert testimony and evidence of gang membership in criminal trials. Peter also tried the first three-defendant joint criminal trial in state history, resulting in the murder convictions of three violent gang members.

Prior to serving as deputy, Peter managed the criminal prosecution division of the attorney general's office. In that role, he directed a team of prosecutors in trying serious violent crimes, fraud and environmental cases throughout the state. After one year as division manager, Peter had, despite a cutback in staffing, doubled the number of prosecution referrals brought to the office by county attorneys, including many who previously had not called upon the attorney general for assistance with complex or violent criminal prosecutions.

Peter's career highlights as a trial attorney include:

- Prosecuted the first state clandestine methamphetamine laboratory case
- Prosecuted the first gang racketeering case in the state
- Prosecuted Minnesota's first three-defendant joined criminal case
- Tried over two hundred cases to twelve person juries, including two cases tried simultaneously in two courtrooms
- Co-prosecuted a thirty-two defendant prison gang case involving charges of gang crimes, attempted murder and racketeering
- Briefed and successfully argued over a dozen criminal appeals before the Minnesota Court of Appeals
- Minnesota State Prosecutor of the Year - Minnesota Arson Investigators' Association
- First prosecutor chosen by the journal *Minnesota Law & Politics* as a "Super Lawyer" in 1997 and chosen annually since then.

Peter has been called upon by his peers and by law enforcement to lecture and train throughout the country. He serves as a long-time faculty member of the National District Attorneys Association, for whom he frequently teaches Trial Advocacy III, Cross-Examination and Pretrial Advocacy at the National Advocacy Center in Columbia, South Carolina. He also has lectured to attorneys at numerous bench and bar functions including the annual Criminal Justice Institute, Washington County Bar Association and the Tenth District Public Defenders Conference. Peter has lectured annually at the International Gang Investigators conference in Chicago and has taught prosecutors in California, Illinois and Alabama as well. He also has taught law enforcement officers throughout the country and in Canada on behalf of numerous agencies, including the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association, Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, Minnesota Juvenile Police Officers Association, Quad States Gang Investigators Association, Minnesota County Attorneys Association, International Arson Investigators Association and the International Association of Police Chaplains, as well as many local police and sheriff's departments.

Peter has, throughout his 21 years as a prosecutor, authored numerous articles for the National District Attorneys Association, International Gang Investigators Conference, Minnesota County Attorneys Association, and for many other journals, magazines and newspapers related to law enforcement. He is the co-author of two practice manuals, *Arson Investigation and Prosecution* and *Gang Prosecution*, published and distributed throughout the nation by the Minnesota County Attorneys Association.

Peter served as chair of the Criminal Law section and as a board member of the Minnesota State Bar Association. Additionally, he has been chair of the Minnesota County Attorneys Association Education Foundation, a member of and former chair of the Minnesota County Attorneys Association Education Committee, and a member

of that organization's Police Officer Training Committee. Peter authored two teaching sections for the committee's *Police Officer Training Manual: Evidence Concepts & Courtroom Testimony For Law Enforcement* and *Methods of Teaching*. Peter also is the former president of the Washington County Bar Association and was the founder of the Mille Lacs County Bar Association.

Peter also serves as legal counsel to the Minnesota Chiefs of Police Association, which he has done since 1994. There he lectures at their annual Executive Training Institute and writes a column in their quarterly magazine on legal topics of interest to the members. He also provides legal advice and representation to the board of directors.

Peter also is adjunct assistant professor in the police science department at St. Mary's University where he regularly teaches "Essential Legal Skills for Police Leaders".

Peter is a father of three, a former high school social studies teacher and Marine and enjoys traveling, reading and teaching.