

National Law Enforcement Museum

An exhibit features a 'powerful backdrop' for corrections

BY FLOYD NELSON



A ribbon-cutting ceremony and speech by Clint Eastwood (pictured middle) kicked off the opening of the National Law Enforcement Museum.

“**L**ong before I was telling people to get off my lawn, I was telling them to go ahead and make my day. I won’t say either of those things today, I just want to say how much I appreciate being involved with the [National Law Enforcement Museum] and police officers in general. I’ve been lucky enough to portray them, lucky enough to make a living portraying them and I’m glad to be here.”

With those words, actor, filmmaker, musician and political figure Clint Eastwood kicked off the official opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony of the National Law Enforcement Museum in Washington, D.C. on Oct. 11, 2018.

The National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund founding CEO Craig Floyd and Museum Executive Director David Brant; former U.S. Attorney General John

Ashcroft; U.S. Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein; Washington, D.C. Mayor Muriel Bowser; U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke; Motorola Solutions Chairman and CEO Greg Brown all made remarks during the event. Retired Philadelphia Police Commissioner Charles Ramsey was the keynote speaker, and former President George W. Bush also addressed the audience in a pre-recorded video message.

Authorized by Congress in 2000, the 57,000-square-foot National Law Enforcement Museum at the Motorola Solutions Foundation Building is a three-story mostly underground institution, located adjacent to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, D.C.’s Judiciary Square. The museum tells the story of American law enforcement by providing visitors a “walk in the shoes” experience along with educational



Photos opposite page and above courtesy of The National Law Enforcement Museum

journeys, immersive exhibitions and insightful programs. Beginning with the earliest forms of colonial law, the museum takes the visitor on a journey all the way to the present as it explores nearly every facet of American law enforcement, including one highly important aspect — corrections.

“The men and women who serve in corrections perform important law enforcement duties and are essential to upholding the rule of law in our country,” said Floyd. “As we designed the museum, it was important to ensure this facet of law enforcement was represented. When we had the opportunity to acquire one of the prison cells from the former Lorton Correctional Complex, we knew it would be a powerful backdrop for highlighting the story of the corrections beat.”

The keynote speaker, Ramsey, said law enforcement has gone through triumphs, tragedies and controversy.

“You name it,” he said, “our profession has gone through it, and that continues today.”

Ramsey concluded his remarks by sharing some advice for visitors and law enforcement:

“When you go into the museum, I ask that you look beyond the artifacts that are in the museum. Look beyond some of the displays and interactive videos [...] and think about the people that serve. Think about the period of time in which they served. I want you to think about why it is so important that, as a profession, we don’t act as if we can do it all by ourselves.”

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Floyd Nelson is director of Communications and Publications at the American Correctional Association.



Photo courtesy of The National Law Enforcement Museum



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“Over the last decade, the National Law Enforcement Museum has worked with dozens of law enforcement experts, historians, academics and community leaders to develop the core of the museum’s exhibitions and programming to ensure an accurate, unbiased portrayal of American law enforcement.”

— David Brant, museum executive director