

Thank you, Attorney General Xavier Becerra, and to all of you who are here today in celebration of the office of the Sheriff.

I have many people to thank for this moment. All of you here today have played roles and given support for my rise through the ranks.

I begin by thanking and recognizing my parents, Phil and Ella. My Dad is in the hospital and could not be here today, but my Mom is here for the both of them.

Growing up, my mother Ella was always a strong advocate – supporting me and my brother when we were young. She was actively involved in our public school education. Even after we graduated, she volunteered for years at Coleman Advocates for Children and Youth and led our local parent teacher association. She was so effective that she became one of the leaders of the California State PTA, working to improve the lives of all children and families.

My father's family immigrated to San Francisco around the time of the Great Earthquake and built a successful dry-cleaning business.

Then World War II happened, and the federal government ordered the internment of Americans of Japanese ancestry, which included the Miyamoto's. Our family lost everything, and we were forcibly relocated to Heart Mountain in Wyoming for the first part of the war.

Did they give up? Of course not.

In fact, my grandfather's three brothers, Shig, Mitch and George, enlisted and proudly fought for the United States as part of the most decorated unit in U.S. military history, the 442nd Regimental Combat Team.

Lucky for me, the Miyamoto's returned to San Francisco and began anew. My father grew up and became an attorney. He practiced law and later became an appellate judge for the state of California.

I share this with you because this is my family.

- They are the role models who influenced me.
- They faced adversity and racial discrimination.
- They responded with strength, grace, and grit and became civil servants.

The Miyamoto's became the change they wanted to be. They embodied resilience.

Inspired by my family's tradition of service, I joined the San Francisco Sheriff's Department over 23 years ago to make a difference in people's lives.

Every workday, I don my Sheriff's uniform and serve our City with some of the finest people I know.

People like our outgoing Sheriff, who has been a role model and mentor to me. She is the first to rise through the ranks and become Sheriff, and the first female to serve as Sheriff in the San Francisco Sheriff's Department. I am honored to have worked for and with Vicki Hennessy.

- I serve with people who put other people first.
- Who ensure public and individual safety both inside the criminal justice system in the jails and courts, and outside in the community.
- Who take pride in their work serving San Francisco.

I am honored to call them my colleagues and serve as their Sheriff for the next four years.

They, too, embody resilience.

Our department members have been at the forefront of some of the toughest challenges facing our City, including an increase in the number of people in jail who suffer from behavioral health issues.

Not surprisingly, this has challenged our infrastructure and our staff. We share these challenges across all our city agencies and with our justice and public safety partners. We collaborate to build and nurture relationships and trust, and to provide services to everyone.

In response to the changing jail population, we've created psychiatric sheltered living units, which provide consistent care and structure.

Our behavioral health assistance teams, comprised of trained deputies and Department of Public Health specialists, are supporting people in jail collaborating and coordinating care and individual treatment plans for people housed in these units. And it's making a positive difference in their lives, creating new hope for their successful re-entry into the community.

As the San Francisco Sheriff's Department moves forward, you can expect more of this from my staff and me.

- Care.
- Compassion.
- Collaboration.

I started my career with the San Francisco Sheriff's Department in 1996. It has shaped me in more ways than I can count. On my very first day, my training deputy sent me on an errand, which made me late for the shift I was scheduled to relieve. The deputy on duty was none too happy with me.

She and I not only overcame that initial stumble, we fell in love and were married five years later.

Please recognize my lovely wife, LeeAnn Miyamoto, and our five children, Melanie, Jordan and our triplets: Joseph, Marissa and Maya.

They have been my source of personal strength and love and I thank them with all my heart. LeeAnn and our children have supported and inspired me every step of this journey. They bring me joy and happiness.

Even in difficult moments, I learn something new. When there was a high-profile case of alleged misconduct, we needed to create a safer environment that encouraged accountability. I started a body-worn camera pilot program that had an immediate impact.

With this technology, we saw:

- better interaction between the deputies and people in jail;
- increased accountability and transparency;
- and reduction in use of force

Now we're expanding the program and rolling out body-worn cameras across the department.

At the Sheriff's Department, we have a faith in others to change for the better. As a young deputy working on the 6th Floor of the Hall of Justice, I connected with a man who suffered from addiction. He would get sober in jail, build confidence, get released and relapse -- over and over again. Inevitably, he'd end up back in jail. You may know the story. We see and live it every day.

But you know what, he never gave up. And I didn't give up on him either.

Sheriff Paul Miyamoto Inaugural Speech January 8, 2020

I saw something of myself in him, someone from the same ethnic and cultural background on a different path but for one or two choices. Eventually, his commitment to stay sober stuck. Today he is a mentor serving others through Asian Rehabilitation Services and someone I see in our community.

He embodies my father's favorite quote: "Never give up."

This mantra of resilience follows me along with my family's story of optimism and persistence in the face of internment. Not just to survive, but to give back and commit to serving the very nation that placed hardships on my family.

My family has guided me. Their positive attitude will also make its mark on the San Francisco Sheriff's Department over the next four years.

I lost my first election for Sheriff in 2011.

Eight years later, I am the first Asian American in history to be elected to Sheriff in the state of California.

Never give up.