

## John Crombach



John Crombach is Chief of the Oxnard, California, Police Department, which has 238 sworn and 151 civilian personnel and an operating budget of over \$60 million. Oxnard's population of nearly 200,000 is approximately 66% Hispanic or Latino, 20% White, 8% Asian or Pacific Islander, and 4% African American. The economy of Oxnard is driven by international trade, agriculture (it is the strawberry capital of the state), manufacturing, defense, and tourism. Oxnard's Port of Hueneme is the busiest and only deep-harbor commercial port between Los Angeles and San Francisco and is vital to trade with the Pacific Rim economies. A blue-collar city, Oxnard's median household income is approximately \$48,000.

Crombach began his law enforcement career in 1978 as a deputy with the Ventura County, California, Sheriff's Department. Later that year he transferred to the Port Hueneme Police Department, where he worked in patrol and investigations until 1985. He began his career with the Oxnard Police Department in July 1985 as a patrol officer and earned his way through the ranks to the position of chief of police in March 2005. Along that path, his Oxnard PD assignments included supervisory and management posts in all major areas of law enforcement, such as uniformed patrol, SWAT, investigations, traffic enforcement, training, community relations, administration, and labor relations.

Like his mentor, former Oxnard Chief Robert Owens, Crombach leads his employees by example in crossing cultural, economic, occupational and other societal boundaries to bring together diverse coalitions of residents and businesses to prevent and address crime and disorder problems, including gang and youth violence and a variety of quality of life issues. His commitment to establishing community partnerships and providing transparency in the problem-solving process are widely credited with helping build police-community trust and cooperation while getting crime-reduction results. Crombach's principled refusal to enforce immigration laws within the boundaries of Oxnard and his support for cultural competency among his workforce have contributed to exemplary working relationships between the Oxnard PD and the city's large Latino community. Cultural competency in Oxnard is enhanced partly through an innovative program that trains police and community members together. The program, which Crombach helped develop and deliver, today uses key members of the community as facilitators, and the appreciation Oxnard officers show for these facilitators and the community residents participating in the program signals impressive progress since the early days of the training, when many officers were wary of sitting side-by-side with community members in a workshop. This cultural competency training has forged long lasting and productive community partnerships, resulting in collaborative, multi-disciplinary strategies.

Crombach has written op-ed pieces on juvenile justice issues and testified before the California State Assembly on gang injunctions. He has given many presentations regarding juvenile detention alternatives and disproportionate minority confinement. For his commitment to building bridges of understanding and effective collaboration between racial, ethnic and cultural groups in his community, Crombach has been given awards by the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) and the NAACP. In 2007 he was invited by the NAACP to swear in the civil rights organization's new board of directors. As chief, Crombach developed a neighborhood policing model for all four districts in the City, which is being employed to provide tailored services to meet the expectations and priorities of Oxnard's very diverse community. The robust, trend-setting police-community engagement in Oxnard during the past several years earned the Chief's agency the distinguished James Q. Wilson Award for excellence in community policing from the U.S. Department of Justice.

Crombach's undergraduate education focused on psychology and sociology, resulting in a bachelor's degree in Criminal Justice from the School of Social Science at the University of La Verne. His master's degree in Public Administration is from California State University, Northridge. He serves on the board of directors of the 104-year old National Council on Crime and Delinquency, the California Police Chief's Association, the Ventura County Justice Policy Taskforce, and the Greater Oxnard Boys and Girls Club. He has also served on the board of the greater Oxnard community's component of California First Five, a statewide effort to educate parents and caregivers about the important role they play in their children's early development.