

Vote of Confidence Biographies

Governor

Democrat

Chris Swanson

Sheriff Christopher R. Swanson is a lifelong public servant inspired by working-class values and real-world experience.

Raised in Grand Blanc, he grew up in a working-class family where hard work, accountability, and looking out for one another weren't slogans but a way of life. He attended Mott Community College before earning both his bachelor's and master's degrees in public administration from the University of Michigan.

For more than thirty years, Swanson has served his community in multiple roles, including sheriff's deputy, paramedic, business owner, and educator. He is a card-carrying, dues-paying member of organized labor in good standing. He's spent several decades as a member of the American Federation of Teachers and, prior to that, AFSCME. Today, he's served 28 years as a professor at the University of Michigan–Flint, teaching public health and health administration.

During the Flint Water Crisis, as Undersheriff, Swanson was intimately involved in stabilizing operations during one of the most difficult periods in the city's history. He also launched GHOST in 2018 to disrupt human trafficking networks, protect victims and stop exploitation before it happens.

Swanson was elected Sheriff of Genesee County in 2020. Following the murder of George Floyd, Swanson removed his helmet and responded to protesters, "Let's walk," helping de-escalate a volatile situation and turn confrontation into conversation.

In September of 2020, he created IGNITE, a nationally recognized jail education model shown by a Harvard-affiliated study to reduce repeat incarceration, lower violence inside the jail and return people to their communities with the tools to succeed.

Swanson was re-elected Sheriff in 2024 with 30% crossover. He leads one of the largest sheriff's offices in Michigan. He has earned national recognition for

building smarter, more effective public-safety systems that protect taxpayers while improving outcomes.

As a candidate, Christopher R. Swanson is running to protect working people, serve communities with integrity, and unify Michigan around solutions that put people first.