

## CLASS OF 2020

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### Jim Murdaugh

Dr. Jim Murdaugh, president of Tallahassee Community College, has dedicated his life to public service. Aside from his significant accomplishments as a leader in higher education, he also has had an enormous impact on public safety in Florida.

Murdaugh began his career at the Florida Bureau of Criminal Justice Planning and Assistance in 1976. In 1977, he transitioned into law enforcement and served at the Leon County Sheriff's Office, leaving the agency in 1983 with the rank of Lieutenant, and at the Fort Walton Beach Police Department from 1983 to 1984 as Commander of Patrol and Detective Operations and Interim Police Chief.

In 1984, Murdaugh became Bureau Chief of the Florida Attorney General's crime prevention program where he initiated several new programs, including the first School Resource Officer training course, and received national recognition. From 1988 to 1999, he served in a number of increasingly responsible leadership roles at the Florida Department of Law Enforcement before he was hired by then-TCC president T.K. Wetherell to lead the Pat Thomas Law Enforcement Academy.

Under Murdaugh's direction, the Academy grew to become the Florida Public Safety Institute, one of the largest and most highly regarded public safety institutes in the nation. Upon his selection as president of

TCC in 2010, Murdaugh continued to champion postsecondary workforce programs in careers like law enforcement, firefighting, and corrections. Today, 10% of TCC's graduates are in the public safety field.

Murdaugh is a 30-year veteran of the United States Air Force Reserve where he was called to active duty in both Gulf Wars and in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. He served as Commander of the 96th Security Forces Squadron and Chief of Security Forces at Eglin Air Force Base. He retired in 2004 with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Murdaugh holds bachelor's and master's degrees in criminology and a doctorate in public administration from Florida State University. He is also a graduate of Leadership Florida Executive Class VII and the prestigious Senior Executives in State and Local Government program at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government. Murdaugh was inducted into the Florida State University College of Criminology and Criminal Justice Hall of Fame in 2011.

Watch the video presented at the 2020 Heroes in Public Safety Lifetime Achievement Award Ceremony of Frank Messersmith speaking on behalf of Jim Murdaugh [HERE](#).