



Odette Johnson

First LGBTQ Liaison for the Richmond Police Department

Odette Johnson is a native of Richmond, Virginia and currently serves as a newly elected member of Diversity Richmond Board of Directors. Now retired, she continues to be an ally and supporter of the LGBTQ community. In 2013, she was appointed as the first LGBTQ Liaison for the Richmond Police Department.

Johnson has over 26 years of law enforcement service. In her Richmond Police capacity, she was promoted thru the ranks and held the rank of major and retired as the Chief of Staff in 2015. In 2011, Johnson made history as the first black female to be promoted to the rank of major in the police department. During her tenure at the Richmond Police Department, she served in various capacities to include the first black female commander of the Department's First Police Precinct. She oversaw a staff of more than 120 employees serving the public safety concerns for approximately 30,000 citizens. She was also appointed as the Interim Chief of Police at Virginia Union University where she was presented with a Citation of Excellence Award for her service at the university. In 2015, Johnson was appointed as the first female Chief of Police and Public Safety Director at her alma mater, North Carolina Central University.

As a United States Army Reservist, Johnson served our country for 24 years. She was assigned as a non-commissioned officer to the 80th Training Command (TASS) as an Equal Opportunity Advisor. She served with the 80th Division in support of the Operation Iraqi Freedom Mission. She was awarded the Bronze Star Medal for completion of an exceptional meritorious tour in a combat zone in Iraq. She was also featured in the book, "When Janey Comes Marching Home: Portraits of Women Combat Veterans," by Laura Browder.

Johnson has attended and graduated from numerous academies, including the Police Executive Research Forum's (PERF) Senior Management Institute, the Professional Executive Leadership School (PELS) at the University of Richmond, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Women's Leadership Institute, the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI) and the Virginia Forensic Science Academy. She has served as an assessment panelist in addition to serving on numerous committees and boards.

Johnson has a Bachelor's degree in Public Administration and a Master's Degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Human Resources.

Johnson attends Mount Olivet Baptist Church in Petersburg, Virginia, under the spiritual direction of Dr. Wesley McLaughlin. She has been a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Inc. for over three decades. She is the proud mother of two college students.