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Chief Hastings Take Command Of the U.S. Border Patrol's Buffalo Sector

The U.S. Border Patrol's Buffalo Sector has a new Chief Patrol Agent. On August 21, Brian S. Hastings officially took command of the Buffalo Sector, whose headquarters is located on Grand Island. Chief Hastings has over 17 years of experience and will oversee all operations for approximately 350 employees of the busiest Border Patrol sector on the northern border.

1. Chief Hastings, congratulations on your new position and welcome to Grand Island. Tell us a little about your Border Patrol career.

I began my career in the U.S. Border Patrol in 1995 at the Cotulla Station in the Laredo Sector, and then was promoted to Senior Patrol Agent at the Calexico Station in the El Centro Sector. I was an instructor at the U.S. Border Patrol Academy and held supervisory positions at the Nogales Station in the Tucson Sector and the Sault Sainte Marie Station in the Detroit Sector. In 2003, I was promoted to Patrol Agent in Charge of the Sault Sainte Marie Station, and in 2005, was selected as the Patrol Agent in Charge of the Ajo Station in the Tucson Sector. In July 2010, I transferred to U.S. Border Patrol Headquarters where I served as an Associate Chief, Acting Deputy Division Chief, and Acting Division Chief in the Northern and Coastal Border Division until my selection as Chief Patrol Agent of the Buffalo Sector.

2. As the chief of the Buffalo Sector what are your responsibilities?

I oversee operations of approximately 350 employees who contribute to the success of this sector and to the safety of our local communities. Buffalo Sector consists of 29 counties, which includes all of the Western parts of New York State, portions of Central and Northern New York State, and parts of Pennsylvania. The international boundary in the Buffalo Sector is composed entirely of water and consists of Lakes Erie and Ontario, the Niagara River, and the western portion of the Saint Lawrence Seaway. The Buffalo Sector is responsible for monitoring over 400 air miles of border that includes 36 miles of the Niagara River and 33 miles of the Saint Lawrence Seaway.

3. What is the role of the Border Patrol?

The Border Patrol carries out one of the most important Homeland Security missions by enforcing the laws that protect our country from the entry of terrorists and terrorist weapons. We also continue to perform our traditional functions of immigration and drug enforcement through detection, interdiction, and apprehension of those who attempt to enter illegally or smuggle people and contraband across our Nation's 6,000 miles of land border and 2000 miles of coastal water.

4. What does that mean for Grand Island and the surrounding communities?

The two Border Patrol stations that are responsible for patrolling the local area are Buffalo Station and Niagara Falls Station. We focus our resources on the Niagara River, Lake Erie, and Lake Ontario. Buffalo Station is responsible for patrolling Grand Island and I am sure you have seen our agents patrolling in their vehicles, on bikes, and in our boats. We rely heavily on the citizens of Grand Island to assist us in our mission by reporting suspicious activity to our communications center. The number is 1-800-331-0353.

5. As the new Chief Patrol Agent, what is your vision for the Buffalo Sector?

I plan on building upon the strong foundation that has already been laid. I have been impressed with the strong relationships between the agents and local law enforcement as well as with the agents' engagement with the local communities. I foresee these relationships only getting better as we will have more Citizens Academies and continue to work hand in hand with our law enforcement partners.

We will continue to focus our resources on the international border and although Buffalo Sector produces its own unique challenges, I am confident the men and women of the Buffalo Sector will continue to keep our country and the local communities safe.

6. And most importantly, how are you enjoying Western New York, and most specifically Grand Island?

We are very happy to be living in Western New York. We have been extremely pleased with the strong sense of community pride and the friendly people that make up the local communities.

We look forward to experiencing four seasons again. We are already enjoying many of the local outdoor activities. My son and I are avid outdoorsmen and we are enjoying some of the best hunting and fishing in the United States.

Additionally, the food here is outstanding. We love the Beef on Weck and we haven't had a bad chicken wing yet.