

Lynda R. Williams
Professor of the Practice
Criminal Justice Administration
Middle Tennessee State University

Lynda R. Williams is currently the Professor of the Practice at Middle Tennessee State University in the Department of Criminal Justice Administration; with this appointment in 2017, she became the first individual bestowed this title in recognition of the breadth and depth of her knowledge and expertise in the field of criminal justice and executive security.

In her role within the Department of Criminal Justice Administration, Ms. Williams' curriculum subject matter includes foreign/domestic terrorism studies, criminal justice processes, community and public service engagement and executive law enforcement leadership speaker symposiums.

Prior to joining the faculty of Middle Tennessee State University, Ms. Williams led an accomplished career as a veteran of the United States Secret Service, from 1988 until she retired, as the Deputy Assistant Director in 2017.

Ms. Williams began her career in the United States Secret Service in 1988 as a Uniformed Division Officer assigned to the White House Branch. After serving three years as an Officer, she was selected to be a Special Agent and assigned to the Washington Field Office where she carried out the agency's primary investigative mission in counterfeit currency, treasury check, credit card and bank fraud, and other financial crimes investigations. In 1997, Ms. Williams was assigned to the Vice Presidential Protective Division during the Clinton Administration, and for the next four years, executed executive protection and venue security for Vice President Al Gore, domestically and internationally; she then returned to the field as a senior agent in the Richmond (Va.) field office to continue investigative case management and protection assignments.

Ms. Williams entered the supervisory ranks in 2003, when she was promoted as the Assistant to the Special Agent in Charge of the Washington Field Office. Her promotion served as a milestone distinguishing her as the first African American female to serve as a supervisor in this major field office. In 2004, Ms. Williams was transferred to the Secret Service Headquarters, where she served as the National Recruiter in the Security Clearance Division. In 2008, she was once again promoted to the Secret Service's Country Attaché, Pretoria Resident Office in Pretoria, South Africa. In this capacity she was responsible for all Secret Service operations in Sub-Saharan Africa and five countries in West Africa. Ms. Williams had jurisdiction for 21 countries, as well as oversight for the security of the visit of the American executive delegations (Vice President Biden, former Presidents Bill Clinton and Jimmy Carter) during 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa.

Ms. Williams returned to Washington, DC in 2011, upon being promoted to be the Special Agent in Charge, Office of Congressional Affairs, serving as a liaison to members of Congress. In 2013, Ms. Williams returned to the field of recruitment as the Special Agent in Charge of the Recruitment Division, where she championed the most robust recruiting, marketing and hiring efforts in the history of the agency, leveraging national media campaigns and social media engagement for unprecedented success.

In May 2015, Ms. Williams was appointed to the ranks of the Senior Executive Service, as the Deputy Assistant Director/Chief Security Officer, in the Office of Human Resources, and was responsible for the development, implementation and management of the agency's personnel and facility security vision, strategy and programs until the time of her retirement in June 2017; at the time of her retirement, Ms. Williams had become one of the highest-ranking females in the history of the Secret Service.

Ms. Williams, a native of Memphis, Tennessee, holds a Bachelor of Science from Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) and a Master of Science in Management from Johns Hopkins University. She is currently a PhD Practitioner (Leadership & Decision Making) at the University of Tennessee Chattanooga.

Ms. Williams maintains a strong presence in community service and in organizations for professional development and engagement; Ms. Williams served as the 43rd National President of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE), and remains a long-standing member of the Women in Federal Law Enforcement (WIFLE), International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP), National Council of Negro Women (NCNW), National Association for the Advancement of Color People (NAACP), and American Association of University Women (AAUW) and Law Enforcement Against Drugs (L.E.A.D.) She is also member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated, and recently appointed to the Homeland Security Advisory Council (HSAC).

Ms. Williams has frequently been highlighted as a law enforcement subject matter expert on CNN's New Day, British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), ABC, CBS, NBC, the National Press Club, MSNBC and in special segments with journalists Ed Gordon, Roland Martin and Arkansas Governor/talk show host Mike Huckabee, as well as being a highly regarded keynote speaker in leadership, motivation and crisis management forums. She was inducted into the College of Behavioral and Health Sciences - Hall of Fame as an MTSU distinguished alumni; 2019 MTSU Trailblazer Award; MTSU Faculty Spotlight; to name a few.

Ms. Williams believes in paying forward the many opportunities presented to her; she relishes pouring into the minds of tomorrow's leaders in the field of Criminal Justice and, more importantly, giving back to her alma mater.