

Hon. Robert M. Restaino

Mayor of Niagara Falls

Robert Restaino is the Mayor of Niagara Falls, the City in which he was born and raised. From the beginning, Robert always intended to stay in Niagara Falls and practice law in his hometown. He has dedicated his personal and professional life to improving and strengthening his home – the Niagara Falls community.

An attorney by profession, Robert received a Bachelor's of Arts in political science from Niagara University in 1981, and went on to earn a Juris Doctor degree from the State University of New York at Buffalo Law School in 1985.

Together with his wife, Diana, Robert embarked on a successful legal and judicial career in Niagara and Erie counties while raising his growing family.

After admission to the bar, Robert developed his legal practice based on a philosophy of honesty and hard work. He has continued that philosophy throughout his years of public service. He lives it daily as Mayor of Niagara Falls.

After building his own private law practice, Robert spent the greater part of 12 years presiding over four separate Courts within Western New York. While serving more than a decade as a Niagara Falls City Court Judge, he also presided over two specialty courts, the Juvenile Justice Court and the Domestic Violence Court.

In addition to his time as a Municipal Judge, Robert served interim terms as Acting Judge in Buffalo City Court, Acting Niagara County Court Judge and Acting Niagara County Family Court Judge. From 2008 to April 2012, he worked as a Special Assistant, Medicaid Inspector General, investigating Medicaid Provider Fraud within the County of Niagara. During his term of service, he identified more than \$3 million in Provider Fraud, recipients who improperly obtained tax-payer funded benefits.

When Robert decided to run for Mayor, he also decided to give up his successful law practice, and an over 35-year career as an attorney and judge. Robert knew there was a greater calling – one where he could make a difference in the lives of his neighbors.

Robert was elected Mayor of Niagara Falls in 2019, and took office in January 2020, just weeks before the COVID-19 pandemic shut down the world. Before he even had time to get to work in his new position, Robert was faced with the task of leading the City through uncharted territory. No Mayor in Niagara Falls had ever been faced with something like this.

To lead Niagara Falls through such a tumultuous time, Robert followed his philosophy of honesty and hard work, and put health and safety above all else. He provided strength and courage at a time when uncertainty and confusion plagued people everywhere.

Robert knew recovering from the pandemic would be a monumental challenge for the City of Niagara Falls. He worked tirelessly with federal lawmakers to secure \$57 million in American Rescue Plan funding for the City. He is now using that money to help

strengthen and boost local businesses, improve safety and security in the City, and to improve the lives of residents.

As Mayor of Niagara Falls, Robert leads the City with one thing in mind – the best interest of people living in the community. He makes decisions not based on political interest, rather, the affect those decisions will have on people living in the City. He is not afraid to take-on deadbeat property owners. While he welcomes new industries and businesses to the City, Robert actively challenges them to ensure those enterprises are beneficial to the community – not burdensome.

In the spirit of community, Robert has volunteered and participated in many civic activities and community organizations over the years. He continues that civic engagement today, while also enjoying the occasional game of golf, cooking, and spending time with family – especially his four-year-old granddaughter, Kennedy.