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David J. Hickton

Founding Director, Institute for Cyber Law, Policy, and Security,
Professor of Law

David J. Hickton is the founding director of the [University of Pittsburgh Institute for Cyber Law, Policy, and Security](#).

President Obama nominated Hickton for United States Attorney for the Western District of Pennsylvania on May 20, 2010, and was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on Aug. 5, 2010. He was sworn in as the District's 57th U.S. Attorney on Aug. 12, 2010.

During his tenure as U.S. Attorney, Mr. Hickton's signature achievements include:

Combating the National Heroin and Opioid Crisis

- Co-chaired the National Heroin Task Force.
- Formed U.S. Attorney's Working Group on Drug Overdoses and Addiction, which includes key federal, state, and local law enforcement along with public health and public safety staff.
- Brought community impact prosecutions against large-scale heroin traffickers and worked to reduce stigma, minimize the criminalization of addiction, and improve access to treatment.

Addressing the Cyber Threat

- Brought first-of-its-kind indictment against five members of the Chinese military for economic espionage against Pittsburgh-based companies and organizations.
- Created a dedicated section in the U.S. Attorney's Office to focus on cybercrime and national security.

- Prosecuted ground-breaking cases include Darkode, the largest English-speaking cybercrime forum, and Evgeniy Bogachev, creator of GameOver Zeus and Cryptolocker malware.

Enhancing Community Police Trust

- Assembled a Community Police Working Group in 2011 to build trust for and from law enforcement and the citizens they serve.
- Established a civil rights section in the U.S. Attorney's Office.
- Pittsburgh was selected as one of six pilot cities for the National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice by Attorney General Loretta Lynch.

Significant Civil Recoveries and Achievements

- EDMC - Achieved a historic settlement of \$95.5 million, the largest ever False Claims Act (FCA) recovery of Department of Education funds.
- Pennsylvania Department of Corrections – Secured fundamental changes throughout the prison system to humanely address the issues of unconstitutional confinement conditions for those suffering from severe mental illness and for victims of institutional sexual assault.
- GameOver Zeus Botnet - Utilized civil injunctions in conjunction with criminal prosecution to dismantle a global network of infected victim computers used by cyber.

Prior to becoming U.S. Attorney, Mr. Hickton engaged in the private practice of law, specifically in the areas of transportation, litigation, commercial and white-collar crime. Mr. Hickton began his legal career as a Law Clerk for the Honorable United States District Judge Gustave Diamond from 1981 to 1983. For over a decade, Mr. Hickton was an Adjunct Professor of Law at Duquesne University School of Law, where he taught antitrust.

Mr. Hickton is a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers and a Fellow of the Academy of Trial Lawyers of Allegheny County. Mr. Hickton has been admitted before the United States Supreme Court, the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, the United States District Court for the Western District of Pennsylvania, and several of the U.S. Circuit Courts.

Previously, Mr. Hickton was involved in a wide range of community activities and has long been an active supporter of and participant in organizations that benefit children and the arts. He is a past Executive Board Member of the Pittsburgh Public Theater and served as its President. Mr. Hickton also was a longtime member of the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, a non-profit organization that uses arts and culture to reinvigorate the Downtown.

His nomination as United States Attorney marks Mr. Hickton's second Presidential appointment. From 1999 to 2001, Mr. Hickton served on the President's Advisory Committee on the Arts for the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts at the request of then-President Bill Clinton.

Mr. Hickton graduated from Pennsylvania State University in 1978 and the University of Pittsburgh School of Law in 1981.

[**Learn more about the University of Pittsburgh Institute for Cyber Law, Policy, and Security.**](#)

Education & Training

- JD, University of Pittsburgh School of Law
- BA, Pennsylvania State University



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