



## **INDUCTEE BIOGRAPHY: ACTIVIST, PHILANTHROPIST, TELEVISION PERSONALITY JOHN WALSH**

*Superman Hall of Heroes inductee John Walsh is known internationally as a crime fighter, victims' advocate and host of "America's Most Wanted" television show. Walsh and his wife helped pass the Missing Children's Act of 1982 and the Missing Children's Assistance Act of 1984. The latter bill founded the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. He never sought the role, but fighting for justice has been his mission since July 27, 1981 when his six-year-old son, Adam, was abducted from a Hollywood, Fla., mall. Adam's remains were found two weeks later.*

John Walsh has helped put over a thousand criminals behind bars through his *America's Most Wanted* TV show. The show was one of the longest running series in American television history, but it was born out of tragedy. In 1981, Walsh's son, Adam was abducted and later found murdered. In an effort to find a positive outlet for their grief, Walsh and his wife, Reve turned their focus to helping other missing children. In 1984, they helped pass the Missing Children's Act of 1982 and the Missing Children's Assistance Act of 1984. The latter bill founded the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

In 1983, the Walsh's story was made into an NBC television movie, *Adam*. The sequel, *Adam: His Song Continues*, aired in 1986. Following the broadcasts, a roll of missing children was featured, leading to the recovery of 65 youngsters. They also founded the Adam Walsh Child Resource Center, a non-profit organization dedicated to legislative reform, which eventually merged with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

By the late 1980s, many malls, department stores, supermarkets, and other such retailers adopted what is known as a "Code Adam," a movement first made by Wal-Mart stores in the southeastern United States. A "Code Adam" is announced when a child is missing in a store, or if a store employee or patron finds a child. If the child is lost or missing, all doors are to be locked and a store employee is posted at every exit, while a description of the child is generally broadcast over the intercom system. "Code Adam" as a term has become synonymous with a missing child, and is a predecessor to an "Amber Alert," which serves as a system of broadcast-driven community notification.

In 1988, Walsh created the *America's Most Wanted* television show, which has helped capture over a thousand criminals, including 15 from the FBI's most wanted list. In his

career, he has helped bring home more than 60 missing children. Walsh has not backed down from the fight to help bring criminals to justice. His newest show, *The Hunt With John Walsh*, debuted on CNN on July 20, 2014.

Walsh has been honored numerous times by many local, state and federal agencies. In addition to being named "Man of the Year" by both the U.S. Marshals Service and the FBI, John was made an honorary U.S. Marshal. He is only one of three people to receive this honor in the organization's history.

Walsh has been the driving force behind major pieces of child protection legislation. This work led to him being honored five times by four presidents. John continues to testify before Congress and state legislatures on crime, missing children and victims' rights issues. His latest efforts include lobbying for a Constitutional amendment for victims' rights.