

Javier F. Pena
Special Agent in Charge (retired)
Drug Enforcement Administration



Javier Peña retired from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) as a Special Agent in Charge (SAC) in January 2014 after 30 years of service. His career was highlighted by his volunteering for assignment to the DEA office in Bogota, Colombia in 1988, where then Special Agent Peña and his partner, then-Special Agent Steve Murphy, set out to bring down the notorious Medellin drug cartel led by Pablo Emilio Escobar Gaviria, or Pablo Escobar. U.S. and international law enforcement agencies continue to utilize many of the strategies and innovative ideas that were created and implemented by Javier and Steve.

Special Agents Peña and Murphy worked and lived with a handpicked group of Colombian National Police (CNP) personnel while pursuing Escobar. During Escobar's reign of narco-terrorism, the cartel kingpin ordered the deaths of thousands of innocent people, including police officers, politicians, judges and a presidential candidate. Mr. Peña spent six years in the search for Pablo Escobar before his team successfully captured and killed Escobar. For his efforts, Peña received Colombia's highest award given to someone not a Colombian citizen, as well as commendation awards from the DEA and the international community.

Mr. Peña is regarded as a subject matter expert on the Medellin Cartel and has delivered more than 100 presentations on the Cartel, including numerous rare photos of original events during the rise and fall of the Cartel. His presentations feature the details of his years spent trying to bring Escobar to justice and stop the carnage of the Medellin cartel. Peña has also appeared in television documentaries and on national news programs as well as in the Latin media.

Mr. Peña continued to serve in various and successful DEA assignments after completing his Colombia assignment, including nine years serving as a Special Agent in Charge of three different major field divisions. Mr. Peña was first promoted to the ranks of Senior Executive Service (SES) as the Special Agent in Charge of the San Francisco office in 2004 before leading the Caribbean DEA office as the Special Agent in Charge from 2008 until 2011. As SAC for the Caribbean field office, Mr. Peña oversaw DEA operations in Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, the Dominican Republic, Barbados, Haiti, Suriname, and Trinidad and Tobago. After the Caribbean, SAC Peña led the Houston Field division, covering the San Antonio, Laredo and McAllen, Texas areas. SAC Peña delivered leadership and guidance, ensuring the exemplary performance of Special Agents, Intelligence Analysts, Diversion Prescription Personnel, Asset Forfeiture Specialists and others in the investigations of highly sophisticated criminal organizations operating domestically and internationally. Retired SAC Peña graduated from Texas A&M International University (TAMIU) in 1979 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in sociology, *cum laude*, and is fluent in Spanish and English. The U.S Government honored Mr. Peña in 2010 with the Presidential Rank Award in 2010, awarded to exceptional career Senior Executive Service (SES) members and Senior Career Employees.

Following retirement, Javier and Steve provide specialized training and solutions associated with drug related issues, law enforcement, intelligence, and investigations. Focusing on their overseas experiences, Javier and Steve provide keynote addresses worldwide that discuss their experiences, leadership principles, conflict management, and how to survive and succeed when faced with seemingly overwhelming odds. Audiences include corporate events, conferences, universities/colleges, performing arts centers, law enforcement, and non-profit/charitable organizations. Steve and Javier served as Technical Consultants for the hit Netflix series, *Narcos*, which is based on their activities in Colombia. They have appeared in numerous documentaries and programs. In late 2019, their book, *Manhunters – How We Took Down Pablo Escobar*, was released by St. Martin's Press and is currently available in 13 countries.

In addition to keynote speaking, Javier and Steve continue their efforts to bring awareness to current drug related issues including the opioid/heroin/fentanyl epidemic, and deadly counterfeit medications illegally entering the U.S. They have spoken twice about these topics on Capitol Hill to members of the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives, and to the American Legislative Exchange Conference and other state level organizations