

Honorable Jonathan F. Mitchell
Mayor of the City of New Bedford

Biography

Taking office in January 2012, Jon Mitchell is New Bedford's thirty-eighth mayor. In November 2013, he was the first sitting New Bedford mayor since 1866 not to be opposed for reelection. He was re-elected again in November 2015 by a decisive margin.

Jon has sought to re-establish New Bedford as one of the leading cities in the Northeast. Since he took office, New Bedford has moved aggressively to reform its school system, to modernize the Port of New Bedford, to solidify the downtown's status as the cultural and economic center of Southeastern Massachusetts, and to raise the quality of life of every neighborhood. Under Jon's leadership, New Bedford has emerged as a national leader in renewable energy, and has witnessed both its unemployment rate and its high school dropout rate plummet.

Jon has made city government more efficient through effective management, and now the city has the highest bond rating in its history. The city also has modernized its trash recycling system, retrofitted nearly 10,000 street lights with LED bulbs, and reigned in health care costs, all saving millions in taxpayer dollars. For these and other accomplishments during his tenure in office, the New Bedford Standard-Times named Jon the "2015 SouthCoast Man of the Year."

Jon's roots are deeply imbedded in New Bedford. He was born in the city, and hails from a local fishing family that included his grandfather, Alexander Mitchell, whose name is inscribed at the Seaman's Bethel among local fisherman lost to the sea. The son of public school teachers, Jon was raised in New Bedford and North Dartmouth, and attended local public schools.

Jon attended Harvard College, where he funded his tuition with financial aid and by working in factories and warehouses back home during the summers. After graduating from Harvard with a degree in economics, Jon went to work in Washington, D.C., and remained there to attend law school at George Washington University. Upon graduation, Jon began work as a federal prosecutor in the United States Department of Justice, having been selected to the prestigious Attorney General's Honor Program, one of only five attorneys out of over fifteen hundred applicants in the Department's Criminal Division. As one of the youngest federal prosecutors in the country, Jon successfully prosecuted both violent crime cases in the District of Columbia, as well as major white collar crime cases in various parts of the country.

After three years, Jon returned to Massachusetts, where he worked briefly at the Massachusetts Attorney General's office prosecuting public corruption cases, before leaving for private practice at a major Boston law firm. After paying off his remaining student loans, he returned to the role of federal prosecutor as an Assistant United States Attorney in Boston, in which he prosecuted cases in the areas of white collar crime, firearms, narcotics, environmental crime, and public corruption. Many of his cases were of national importance, including his service as the prosecutor on the task force searching for Boston mob boss James "Whitey" Bulger, as well as his prosecutions of:

- The perpetrators of the Buzzards Bay Oil Spill;

- Glenn Marshall, the former leader of the Mashpee Wampanoag tribe for a campaign finance scheme connected to disgraced lobbyist Jack Abramoff;
- Robert Mardirosian: the lawyer who sought for over twenty-five years to sell paintings from one of the largest art heists in U.S. history;
- ExxonMobil: prosecution of the oil giant for an oil spill in Boston harbor.
- Albania Deleon: asbestos training school owner whose practices led to “one of the country’s most egregious environmental crimes,” according to the Boston Globe.

Jon served six years in the Army National Guard. He is married to Ann Partridge, a breast cancer doctor and researcher at the Dana Farber Cancer Institute, where she founded and directs the Institute’s Program for Young Women with Breast Cancer. They are the proud parents of three daughters, Grace (14), Natalie (12) and Lauren (10).