New Jersey Attorney General’s

2017

Community Policing Awards

Program

May 22, 2017
Rutgers University
Livingston Campus, NJ

NJ Office of the Attorney General
“I firmly believe that community policing is more than having uniformed officers walk a beat. Rather, it is an overarching strategy that depends on collaboration between police departments and community groups to identify and solve local neighborhood problems.”

CHRISTOPHER S. PORRINO
Attorney General
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Camden County Police Department
In 2015, under the leadership of Chief J. Scott Thomson, a progressive program, entitled Project Guardian, began as an outreach effort to identify youth who were being targeted as potential gang members and link them to appropriate social services. The program partners with 27 organizations, ranging from the U. S. Attorney’s Office to local grassroots social service organizations. Their detectives and analysts identify youth through social media and police contacts. Once youth are identified, their parents are sent invitations to participate in scheduled programming, projects, social service intakes (by participating agencies) and counseling sessions. Already, there are over 100 success stories so far. Project Guardian is expanding to include career and job placement components.

Camden also created the PACER Bookmates program, where officers go each week to elementary schools in Camden to read, one-on-one, with kindergartners. Each officer spends an hour at an assigned school each week reading with the same two students, each for 30 minutes. The program is designed to foster literacy and allow the children to form positive relationships with individual police officers.

For middle and high school-aged children in Camden, the Department launched the Blue Knight Explorers, which runs all day, three days a week over the entire summer. The Explorers learn about all aspects of police work, take educational field trips, attend cultural events, and help officers at community events.

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Trooper II Reinaldo Cruz
Newark Station, NJSP
Trooper II Reinaldo Cruz goes above and beyond his valiant public service by spending large quantities of his personal time volunteering to serve others, especially children in low-income and/or high crime areas. The following programs and organizations represent a few of the causes Trooper Cruz supports on a regular basis: the Youth Leadership Safety Program (providing education on topics such as anti-bullying, gang awareness, Internet safety, pedestrian and bicycle safety); Trooper Youth Week; Read Across America; “At Heart’s Length” (raising money and donating food to families in need); “David’s Touch” Foundation Elizabeth Girl Scouts (to purchase and distribute gifts, coats and books to terminally ill children); and Thomas Jefferson Arts Academy.

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Evesham Township Police Department

Since 2010, Evesham Township Police Department prioritized their community policing profile to promote transparency. A full-time community policing officer was identified, and because of this new strategy, in 2016, the Department offered 231 events with 620 officers in attendance, which is the equivalent of 2,232 hours invested by their officers. Some of the events that they sponsored include, but are not limited to, presence at community events; the Police Explorer program; crime prevention seminars on Burglary, Identity Theft, Child Safety, and Fraud; Citizen Police Academy; Jr. Police Academy; Cool off with a Cop; Neighborhood Watch events; and recruitment initiatives.

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Patrolman Craig Hoover
East Brunswick Police Department

As an essential part of the Opiate Initiative Program, Patrolman Craig Hoover serves as the coordinator and manager of the program. The Department partners with the Drug Alliance and other participating community service providers to provide an outlet and resource for residents and their families battling opiate addiction. The program puts residents in touch with treatment centers and personnel who assist them with addiction or dependency-related matters. Since January 2016, there have been over 35 outreach contacts, and based on their efforts, the Department has documented that the program has exceeded a 50% success rate. Their Opiate Initiative Program has been recognized as a model program in New Jersey, and it is designated as a point of contact for other departments interested in starting or sustaining opiate programs.

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Featured Recipients

**Hunterdon County Prosecutor’s Office**

The Hunterdon County Prosecutor’s Office has successfully partnered with community organizations and members to effectively offer three programs to its residents. First, L.E.A.P., the Law Enforcement Adolescent Program, is an adolescent diversion program that connects at-risk youth and their parents with early interventions. 98% of adolescent participants have not re-entered the court system upon completion of LEAP. Second, created in 2012 and in collaboration with the faith communities, One Voice promotes communication to address social issues, such as prescription drug abuse, heroin addiction and suicide prevention. They have reached over 65,000 community members through this medium. Third, the START initiative, beginning in 2013, provides life-saving addiction and crisis services referrals. This initiative has reached some 6,000 people to-date.

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**School Resource Officer David Jiles**

*West Deptford Police Department*

SRO David Jiles is described as “a genuine caring male role model” for the students. He has fostered relationships based on trust, collaboration and understanding between himself and the school community. Officer Jiles runs the LEAD program, de-escalates crises, facilitates family meetings, provides referrals, and more. He is the West Deptford liaison for Neighborhood Town Watch, coordinator for town events (National Night Out, Spookapalooza) and the lead coordinator for the Junior Police Academy. Officer Jiles treats the students, faculty and staff with the utmost respect. The faculty and staff seek him out routinely to answer questions and to provide support. Clearly, Officer Jiles has been a tremendous asset to his assigned school community.

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Newark Police Division

The Newark Police Division partners with members of the city’s 100-member Clergy Alliance to enhance its community relations. The program began in 2010 but briefly suffered due to lay-offs. In 2016, Mayor Ras Baraka and Public Safety Director Anthony Ambrose set out to re-establish the program using newly painted police cruisers for clergy patrol members to join police to visit local business owners and residents – at their homes, hospitals or schools – each weekday. The Citizen/Clergy Patrol program is an integral part of Newark’s community policing program and is well on its way to establishing relationships between clergy and law enforcement that are based on honesty, transparency and trust.

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Perth Amboy Police Department

Over the course of the past two years, the Perth Amboy Police Department has formed a partnership with 30 police chaplains. They work with the Department to enhance the overall quality of life of residents by walking the streets and talking with residents, business owners and children. On hot summer evenings, they give water to teens playing basketball or parents sitting on park benches. Officers on and off duty interact with teens by playing basketball and participating in the Department’s swim meet for charity.

Due to their frequency of activity within the community, the officers took notice of the need to address homelessness and hunger. As a result, officers regularly cook and serve meals within the community. The Department also launched an Opiate Outreach Initiative to address the needs of those battling drug addiction, and collaborated with the Perth Amboy Redevelopment Team for Neighborhood Enterprise & Revitalization (P.A.R.T.N.E.R) to develop a Neighborhood Watch, spot measures to sustain crime prevention, and initiate community building programs.

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Featured Recipients

Summit Police Department

Dedicated to leveraging existing community partnerships, Summit Police Department has advanced its community policing outreach by working with social service organizations like Family Promise of Union County and the Junior League of Summit to hold an annual “Community Cares” food drive. Last year, the drive collected 689 pounds of food. Additionally, the Community Policing Unit partnered with ABC’s Good Morning America to highlight the dangers in the rising trend of distraction burglaries taking place throughout the state. Also, the Community Policing Unit partners with Fountain Baptist Church’s Rights of Passage ministry by facilitating group dialogue with boys about police interactions with African American youth aimed at fostering communication and mutual respect.

Further, the Department reaches out to youth through its relationship with the Board of Education. Officers interact with students to teach traffic safety; provide leadership seminars; give cyberbullying presentations; and serve as mentors. They provide a presentation entitled “Summit Safe Seniors” which covers telemarketing scams and identity theft, and developed a comprehensive information packet with additional resources. Much of their efforts are shared using social media, such as their safety video initiative. The Department looks at these key partnerships and collaborations as impactful avenues to address public safety concerns locally and abroad.

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Westampton Township Police Department

In implementing its community policing initiatives, the Westampton Township Police Department established partnerships with local businesses, faith-based groups and civic groups. One result of this collaboration is the Department’s Dunkin Donuts gift card initiative during the Christmas holiday season, wherein officers give out gift cards or small bags of coffee to motorists who are stopped for minor traffic offenses. Every October, officers participate in breast cancer awareness month by placing Susan G. Komen decals on their patrol cars. Other community policing activities include, but are not limited to, Black History month awareness, Military appreciation, prostate cancer awareness, autism awareness and Xbox Madden tournaments with local children.

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Panelists

Officer David Jiles

Officer David Jiles is an eight year veteran of the West Deptford Township Police Department. Formerly working in the Patrol Division, he now serves in the Special Operations Unit as the School Resource Officer. He serves as President of the Township’s Police Athletic League (PAL) and is the coordinator for various community events. Officer Jiles is a graduate of the Gloucester County Police Academy, where he graduated first in his class. Prior to his career in law enforcement, he attended Monmouth University, where he obtained a bachelor’s degree in Business Management.

Trooper II Reinaldo Cruz Jr.

Reinaldo Cruz Jr. has been an active community servant since the age of 13, while a parishioner at St. Clements Church in Matawan, Monmouth County, NJ. Having grown up in Perth Amboy and later in Aberdeen, NJ, Reinaldo worked alongside his church parishioners over the past two decades. Reinaldo began a career in law enforcement while he was still an undergraduate at Kean University. Working long hours and often double shifts as a Corrections Officer at the Middlesex County Juvenile Detention Center, he graduated in 2003 with a degree in Bilingual Elementary Education/History. He then went on to join the Elizabeth Public Schools in Union County, NJ as a Bilingual Teacher. After seven years with the school system, Reinaldo sought a career that would allow him to share his love of teaching and service not only with his students, but the community as a whole.

That decision set him on a new path, and he has never looked back. Reinaldo soon became a member of the 150th New Jersey State Police Class, completing his training on June 26, 2009. Since leaving the Academy, Reinaldo has actively worked in Bordentown, Kingwood, Cranbury, and Hamilton Stations. During his two-year stint as a recruiter for the 152nd-155th New Jersey State Police Classes, he and fellow Troopers within the Recruiting Unit worked collaboratively with the Selection Process Unit and Academy staff. Currently, Tpr. Cruz is assigned to Troop “D” Newark Station on the New Jersey Turnpike. He is an active member of the National Black State Trooper Coalition-Marshall C. Brown Chapter, New Jersey Latin-American Troopers Society (NJLATS), Korean-American Brotherhood of Law Enforcement (KABLE), and an active member of the Elmora Youth League-Tpr. Thomas J. Hanratty Jr. Memorial Complex in Elizabeth, NJ as a board member and coach.

Patrolman Craig Hoover

Patrolman Craig Hoover is a 16 year member of the East Brunswick Police Department assigned to the Community Policing Unit. During his service with East Brunswick, Patrolman Hoover has served in both the Patrol and Administrative Divisions, serving as Lead Firearms Instructor and Community Policing/Crime Prevention Officer. In addition to his current assignment, Patrolman Hoover serves as the liaison officer for numerous department programs including: Internship
Coordinator, Chaplain Liaison, Human Relations Council, Municipal Alliance and Neighborhood Watch Programs. Patrolman Hoover's duties also include staff training, recruitment, internships, and community presentations. In addition to his regular assignments, he instructs in-service programs both at the Union County Police Academy and the Middlesex County Police Training Center.

In 2016, Patrolman Hoover was the recipient of the Knights of Columbus “Golden Shield Award,” Central District Elks Americanism “Citizen of the Year” award, and was recognized by the Governor's Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse as the Middlesex County Volunteer of the Year. Patrolman Hoover is a Veteran of the United States Marine Corps where he achieved the rank of Sergeant. During his military service he was the recipient of several commendations and awards. Patrolman Hoover holds a Bachelors of Science Degree in Administration of Justice from American Public University where he graduated with high honors. Patrolman Hoover is a devoted husband and a father of two teenage daughters. He spends much of his free time with his family. He is an active member of Policeman's Benevolent Association #145 and American Legion Joyce Kilmer Post #0025.

Lieutenant Roger Rogers

Roger Rogers is a Lieutenant with the Westampton Township Police Department located in Burlington County, New Jersey. He presently serves as the Criminal Investigation and Intelligence Division Commander and Public Information Officer. His other duties include supervising the Department's Firearms Training and Community Policing Units.

Lt. Rogers began his law enforcement career as a Class I Officer with the Willingboro Township Police Department in 1992, before serving with Port Authority Transit Corporation Police in 1997. He then found a home with the Westampton Township Police Department in 1998. It was in Westampton where Lt. Rogers was able to express his love of community policing and put his “people first” mantra to work.

Some of his community policing initiatives include a Dunkin Donuts gift card giveaway, a monthly patrol cop awareness patch, the Department's participation in a “Badges vs Ballers” basketball game at the Wells Fargo Center and the upcoming Madden “Chief’s Bowl.” Lt. Rogers credits Chief Joseph Otto, who partners with him, with assisting in putting community policing first in Westampton.
Atlantic City Police Department’s community policing efforts have expanded in recent years from 15 to 38 trust-building programs, which collaborate with colleges, churches and civic groups to reach an estimated 2000 citizens. ACPD, in collaboration with Stockton University, assists local children with homework. Also, trained clergy in ACPD uniform provide anger management/conflict resolution counseling to families. The Department also participates in weekly walks for peace and homeless outreach.

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Sergeant James Babcock, Park Ridge Police Department, has introduced the following community policing programs and initiatives: “Back to Scoop” Night, in partnership with local ice cream parlors who give officers coupons for a free cone for youth; departmental open houses; a child safety seat event; Golden Agers group seminars, where officers educate seniors about scams and other crime prevention tools; and bike helmet incentives for compliant youth.

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Trooper I James Bambara, who is assigned to School Safety and Outreach North, New Jersey State Police, developed a defensive driving presentation for teen drivers entitled “One Hit Away.” Its primary goal is to reduce the number of fatal motor vehicle accidents due to reckless driving. He incorporates people living with traumatic brain injuries (TBI) due to motor vehicle accidents that could have been prevented into the presentations. They speak to the students about the consequences of not wearing a seat belt, impaired driving, speeding, racing and distracted driving.

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Under Chief Minichini, Belleville Police Department enlisted the township council, community leaders, clergy and local business owners in a partnership to prevent crime. Through this partnership, the Department has implemented initiatives, particularly Coffee with a Cop, a Junior Police Academy, a community outreach day and block parties, and a bicycle giveaway program for needy families — all with the overarching goal of preventing crime; fostering positive law enforcement-community relations; and improving the overall quality of life for township residents.

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Recognized Nominees

Volunteers from Carney’s Point Township Police Department, in collaboration with its police chaplains program, convene monthly meetings of an addiction support group to provide the attendees with valuable information and resources available to help them and their loved ones on their road to recovery.

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Joseph Racite
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Trooper I Storm Colleton, who is assigned to Bordentown Station, New Jersey State Police, canvasses the local community to help identify individuals and families who are in need, and he links them to the appropriate local resources available to address those needs. Through those efforts, he organized Thanksgiving Dinner which benefitted 26 local families and a toy drive which benefitted 10 local families. Additionally, Trooper I Colleton gives a great deal of his personal time and energy to local outreach efforts, such as providing free self-defense lessons to community members through his church.

Contact:
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The Cumberland County Law Enforcement Community Engagement Series, developed by Cumberland County Prosecutor Jennifer Webb-McRae, Vineland Police Chief Tim Codispoti (Ret.), Bridgeton Police Chief Mike Gaimari, Millville Police Chief Jody Farabella and Cumberland County Sheriff Robert Austino, brings together law enforcement, faith-based leaders, government representatives, Neighborhood Watch leaders, educational representatives, non-profit representatives and business leaders to enhance community-law enforcement relations and to create opportunities for dialogue and problem-solving. In 2016, the series included public sessions on topics such as: use of force investigations; internal affairs; police/citizen encounters; law enforcement hiring practices and incarceration and reentry.

For more information, please visit: www.njccpo.org/community.

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Police Officer Michael Czarzasty, Cinnaminson Township Police Department, serves as a School Resource Office (SRO) and lead officer for all community-policing initiatives, which includes National Night Out, Cinnaminson Day, Pirate Day and Cookout with a Cop. Due to Officer Czarzasty’s efforts, the 2016 National Night Out was the largest ever with over 4,000 residents attending.

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Recognized Nominees

**Patrolman John Eckert**, Morris County Park Police Department, has participated in numerous community policing endeavors during his 8 years of service. He has served as an instructor for and coordinator of the Junior Police Academy. Eckert created the Department’s Facebook page, where he currently serves as the Assistant Editor. Additionally, he is as a member of the Department’s ATV unit and Child ID Program, providing ID cards to parents in the event a child goes missing, and assists with the Department’s Holiday toy drive.

Contact:
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**Edison Police Department** reaches over 100,000 residents through its community policing initiatives, which include but are not limited to, a Community Resource Unit; the Safe & Sound program for vulnerable adults and children with disabilities; Operation Chill (where Officers reward youth with free 7-Eleven slurpees for kindness and good behavior); Halloween Treats Handout; Breast Cancer Awareness; Neighborhood Watch Groups; and Police Bicycle Patrols in parks and during special events.

Contact:
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**Emerson Police Department** has expanded its community policing efforts by presenting an open house, where the Officers interact and socialize face-to-face with residents. The Department also hosts a Cop Camp Out, where residents are invited to play games, eat and interact with officers on a campsite. These new initiatives are supported through donations raised by the Department’s Community Policing Unit.

Contact:
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Due to the richness of diversity within their small, densely populated community, the **Highland Park Police Department** began mandatory cultural diversity trainings for all of their officers. Qualified volunteers train on various topics, including but not limited to, Orthodox Jewish religion; African American culture; Asian Indian culture; Muslim religion; Chinese culture; women’s culture; autism, aphasia and mental health awareness. These trainings help to equip officers with the necessary tools to better understand, respect and serve the many different types of people encountered daily.

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Lieutenant Paul Castimore, Detective Joseph Kratzel, Traffic Officer Rodger Davis, School Resource Officer Christopher Fabian and School Resource Officer Joseph Hale of Jefferson Township Police Department, run the annual Junior Police Academy, which introduces about 75 students, also known as cadets, ranging in age from 11 to 14 to a career in law enforcement. Cadets are introduced to physical training; the New Jersey State Police Aviation Unit; the Passaic County Sheriff’s Office K-9 Unit; the Bomb Squad; SERT; DWI googles; the New Jersey Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; and crime scene investigations. Also, cadets tour the Morris County Correctional Facility and Fire Training Academy.

Contact:
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Lieutenant Jeremy Merck, Camden County Police Department, spends a great deal of his personal time volunteering with two local programs, specifically the J. Torres Tae Kwon Do Academy, where he works with children on martial arts, judges competitions, and speaks to them about bullying, safety, and other issues. He also helps lead the “Bridging the Racial Divide” initiative, holding roundtable talks with teenagers in the city to discuss ways to improve relations between police officers and residents.

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The Community Awareness Unit of the Middlesex County Sheriff’s Office has created several programs geared toward building and strengthening community-law enforcement relations. Citizens First is an 8 week program, which introduces community members to the roles and responsibilities of law enforcement officers. Other programs include the Civilian Academy, which has a rigorous pre-screening process similar to the pre-screening process of law enforcement officers to give community members a glimpse of the application process for officers. MCSO also runs an Explorer Program, which promotes leadership, character and integrity to community youth.

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The Midland Park Police Department has implemented a new strategy to enhance their community policing efforts. Officers are assigned by voting districts, and residents of those districts are given their assigned officer’s phone number and email address. Officers are also assigned to community-wide events to ensure that the Department is represented. On a daily basis, officers conduct safety checks at religious institutions and schools. While they are at the schools, the officers are encouraged to have lunch with the children. As an effort to increase community communication, the Department also launched a Facebook page.

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Recognized Nominees

Led by the **Monmouth County Prosecutor’s Office, the Asbury Park Community Development Initiative (APCDI)**, with members from various sectors of the community, including but not limited to, faith-based, non-profit, business and government, focuses on creating innovative ways to improve law enforcement and community relationships, expand employment opportunities and provide mentors to at-risk youth. MCPO also has a Community Law Enforcement Unit operating under the prosecutor's direct supervision.

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**Lieutenant Tyrone Williams**, Officer Paul Rusiniak, Officer Travis Davis, Officer AnJennette Sanders and Officer Garth Guthrie of the Montclair Police Department, Community Services Unit, have contributed numerous hours to establishing and participating in programs that partner with the community. Some of these initiatives include: Citizens Police Academy; Junior Police Academy; Coffee/Pizza with a Cop; National Night Out; the Police Athletic League (PAL); and community/youth forums. Since being revived after its elimination in 2008, the unit has received positive feedback from the community.

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As president of the **New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police, Chief William Parenti** has taken ardent strides to connect our local police chiefs with our communities across the state. He has represented the membership with regards to community policing at community forums throughout the state and at the White House forum on 21st Century Policing. His philosophy is that every police department despite its size or demographic should adopt a true community policing resolve.

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**Parsippany Police Department** has used a mix of activities, events and services to boost their community policing profile, including but not limited to, active shooter presentations; crime prevention seminars; citizens police academy; drug take-backs; school visits; tours of their department building; civilian awards; a VLOG, a social media presence, and bicycling through neighborhoods to engage residents.

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Recognized Nominees

Paulsboro Police Department has launched several successful community policing initiatives, such as an after-school public safety club, where students meet two times per month and are exposed to different aspects of public safety, such as Police, Fire, OEM, EMS, etc.; a chaplains program; a safe camera program; a safe transaction zone inside and outside the Department and online public comment forms. In response to 8 shootings and 2 murders in 2016, the Department, in collaboration with local churches, conducted community meetings and community walks. These endeavors have resulted in strengthening community and law enforcement relations.

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Riverside Township Police Department’s Kidz Funzone Game Center was launched by Captain Hans D. Jaensch, Patrolman Timothy Marano and SLEO Michael Hynes. A seized pick-up truck was transformed into a mobile gaming and entertainment center mounted with three 50” TVs and three Xbox 360 game consoles. The game trucks are used at community events, “Movie Nights with the Police,” and outdoor activities. In their personal time, these officers went above and beyond to obtain in-kind donations to make this project a reality.

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Roxbury Township Police Department launched a community food program in response to a food shortage identified by Roxbury Social Services. The Department conducts an annual food drive with incentives for children who donate food items. Any child donating food at headquarters gets to meet an officer, and take a picture with them for the Department’s Facebook page where they are displayed as a “Hunger Hero”. Each child also had the opportunity to sit in a patrol vehicle and a private tour of headquarters.

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Rutgers University Good Neighbor Program, led by the Rutgers University Police Department, is a collaborative effort of local law enforcement, the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs and community members to improve the public safety of off-campus students. They partner with local municipal police, the Department of Community Affairs, and community members to promote “good neighbor” practices among off-campus students via a door-to-door campaign and printed materials. This program has resulted in a 19% reduction in off-campus crime, and it has strengthened collaboration and communication between university police and local police in Camden, New Brunswick and Newark.

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Patrolmen Carl Villone, Alex Phillips, Nick Cacciola, Joe Wills, Will Sheehan and Joseph Duffy, of Woodbury City Police Department, created a Junior Police Academy, which served about 70 Woodbury students. The students participated in numerous community policing education and awareness activities, including but not limited to, K-9 demonstrations; firearms safety programs; and physical fitness training over a two-week period in the summer. The program was developed to give students a positive activity to do during summer vacation.

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Woodcliff Lake Police Department re-organized its community policing efforts by strategically assigning officers to be liaisons to a designated neighborhood. Each sergeant is assigned to approximately 30 businesses and each lieutenant is assigned to monitor and report monthly progress to Chief Anthony Jannicelli, and acts as an arbitrator in neighborhood disputes. The new system has already resulted in a more manageable, accountable and efficient way of utilizing our force as well as a marked improvement in community-law enforcement relations.

For more information, please visit:

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