



# Community Engagement Program Report May 2018

### Introduction

The ability of a police department to fulfill its mission to secure a safe and peaceful society is dependent on also securing the community's trust, approval, and respect. Committed to building community trust through a tripartite model of community engagement, transparency, and accountability, the Seattle Police Department has institutionalized new processes for internal critical review; established schedules for regular reporting on core metrics around use of force, reporting and review of force, crisis intervention, and stops and detentions; provided increasing public access to SPD data; entered into research agreements with scores of researchers around the world in the hope that Seattle's leadership in police reform can contribute to ongoing study in the social science of community policing; equipped its patrol officers with body-worn cameras as another tool to provide transparency into police-community interactions; and partnered with the City to establish a new Office of the Inspector General to provide systemic oversight and technical assistance in our work going forward.

In addition, the Seattle Police Department has continued to strengthen and expand its initiatives to actively engage the community as a partner in keeping Seattle safe and welcoming for all. In this report, we provide updated information regarding our many ongoing initiatives, partnerships, and strategies around outreach, engagement, and recruitment that are all undertaken towards that end. Additional information, and contact information for program coordinators, can be found online at the links provided herein.

### Outreach and Engagement Programming

#### Micro-Community Policing Plans

No two neighborhoods in Seattle are the same. The Micro Community Policing Plans (MCPPs) are designed to address the distinctive needs of each community. The plans take a three-pronged approach that brings together community engagement, crime data, and police services to get direct feedback on perceptions of crime and public safety. MCPPs are tailored to meet the individual needs of each of the current 58 identified communities. Detailed information regarding the MCPP program can be found at <https://www.seattle.gov/police/community-policing/about-mcpp>.

- **Outcome Measurements:** A specific example of how SPD has partnered with local communities to address community priorities can be viewed at <http://www.seattlechannel.org/videos?videoid=x91375>, detailing the work SPD has done with the International District community. In addition, Seattle University recently completed a two-year mixed-method process evaluation of SPD's MCPPs. The evaluation involved the collection of quantitative and qualitative data, including the development of the Seattle Public Safety Survey, which collected and analyzed data at the micro-community level about perceptions of crime and public safety, police-community interactions, and knowledge and understanding of the MCPPs. Data from this survey, which is now in its third year, is used in conjunction with crime data to inform and revise MCPP priorities and strategies and to enable SPD to direct police resources and services to reach unique needs of each community. Among the findings of this research over the two-year study period were statistically significant increases in community perception of police legitimacy and social cohesion, and statistically significant decreases in community perception of social disorganization and fear of crime. A link to the report can be found at



<https://www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/Police/Reports/SPD-MCPP-Implementation-Evaluation-Final-Report.pdf>.

### Demographic Advisory Councils

SPD formed Precinct Advisory Councils (PACs, see below) in the late 1980s. In the 1990s, SPD observed that the PACs were not always reflective of the diverse communities living in the city. The Demographic Advisory Councils (DACs) were formed to create more diverse advisory groups to educate the Department about the challenging issues and concerns within these specific communities. Currently, there are nine (9) community-specific DACs (African American, East African, Filipino, Korean, Latino, LGBTQ, Muslim, Sikh and Arab, Native American, and South East Asian) and one City-wide Advisory Council. The DACs include over 1,000 community members and the participation of over 190 officers.

The overall goal of these councils is to create and strengthen programs and communication efforts that build trust between police and demographic communities. The councils do so in several ways:

- Improving officer training and education regarding cultural norms that may impact police and citizen interactions, and enhancing the understanding of the role of the police through educational materials tailored to specific communities and translated into appropriate languages;
- Working to increase participation of individuals from demographic communities to work in partnership with SPD on public safety issues;
- Facilitating ongoing dialogue between Seattle Police and demographic communities about perceptions of law enforcement in the community;
- Breaking down negative perceptions of law enforcement in demographic communities by building relationships between individual officers and members of demographic communities, and creating and strengthening programs and communication efforts that build trust between police and demographic communities.

More information regarding the demographic advisory councils can be found at <https://www.seattle.gov/police/community-policing/demographic-advisory-councils>

### Precinct Advisory Councils

SPD formed the Precinct Advisory Councils (PACs) in the late 1980s as one of the Department's first community policing efforts. The goal of the councils is to have groups of community members, who are geographically aligned, become more knowledgeable about law enforcement in their communities and more invested in partnering with the Department on public safety issues. The PACs meet monthly in each precinct. Additionally, precinct command personnel and officers participate in over 400 other neighborhood meetings each year.

### **Immigrant Family Institute**

The Immigrant Family Institute (IFI) is an eight-week program that brings together immigrant youth, their parents/guardians, and Seattle Police officers to learn from each other. IFI aims to provide leadership skills to immigrant youth who may be impacted by the juvenile justice system. The program empowers their parents/guardians to self-advocate and navigate city, legal, and education systems. IFI also helps Seattle Police officers be more culturally responsive in serving immigrant youth and their families.

### **Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP)**

The Seattle Police Department has been an active participant in the Human Services Department's SYEP program, which provides internship opportunities for youth and young adults in our community, with a focus on young people from lower-income households and communities that experience racial, social, and economic disparity. While the program is aimed at providing youth with real-world skills to be competitive in the job market, SPD has found it has garnered long-lasting connections between youth and officers. SPD has hired over 50 youth, with a large majority being youth from immigrant communities. In Summer 2018, SPD will be joined by an additional 32 youth.

### **Crime Prevention Coordinators**

SPD currently staffs a Crime Prevention Coordinator position in each of its five precincts. These individuals promote, organize, and coordinate the participation of citizens and businesses in crime prevention program activities. They plan and conduct meetings with individuals and community and business groups to provide information, training, education, and problem solving on crime-related issues and perform as liaisons for SPD with various community groups.

### **Community Policing Teams**

SPD fields a cadre of Community Policing Team (CPT) officers in every precinct. These teams use innovative, non-traditional methods of affecting crime and the resulting fear it causes within a community. The CPTs closely interact with the community to resolve neighborhood problems and concerns using traditional and non-traditional<sup>1</sup> police tactics and the coordinated application of resources beyond those available within the criminal justice system.

### **The IF Project**

The IF Project is an innovative partnership among law enforcement, currently and previously incarcerated adults, and community leaders, to build commonality, reduce misperceptions, and reduce recidivism. This work includes an agreement between SPD and Seattle Public Schools providing youth workshops in 7 of the 13 alternative schools. Additionally, there are monthly IF workshops in the King County Youth Services Center. IF

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<sup>1</sup> Traditional police tactics include measures such as data-driven patrols and reactive police responses that rely on established criminal justice processes and systems for resolution. Non-traditional police tactics focus on regular contact between officers and citizens to solve problems, mobilize community resources, and encourage trust through the flow of information.

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has been positively evaluated by Seattle University as a program that creates an environment for positive change in the lives of youth and adults facing issues of incarceration.

The IF Project was recently the subject of an award-winning full-length documentary that appeared in, among many other locations, the Seattle International, Brooklyn, Justice on Trial, and Global Peace Film Festivals.

More information about the program, and a trailer of the film can be found at <https://www.seattle.gov/police/community-policing/the-if-project>. Information about the documentary can be found at: <http://www.theifprojectmovie.com/>.

### Police Explorers

The Seattle Police Law Enforcement Explorers program aims to bridge the gap between youth and police by educating and involving them in police operations and to interest them in future careers in law enforcement. The Explorers Program is aimed at young people ages 14 to 21 and encourages educational goals, community service, and active civic participation. More information about the Explorers program can be found at <https://www.seattle.gov/police/community-policing/police-explorers>.

### Community Police Academy

The Community Police Academy (CPA) is an eleven-week program held twice a year designed to educate the public in the operations of the Seattle Police Department, while also giving the department an opportunity to obtain valuable feedback from the community. The CPA aims to increase understanding between the SPD and community members through education and interaction.



### SeaPAL

The Seattle Police Activities League (SeaPAL) is a proactive, prevention-oriented strategy that relies on the cooperation, coordination, and building of relationships between youth, police, and community through recreation and cultural enrichment. SeaPAL focuses on providing youth 5-18 years of age the opportunity to participate in programming activities with police officers serving as coaches, mentors, and role models.

The objectives of SeaPAL are to create a safe and healthy environment indicated by reduction in crime and increased participation around the community; to give youth alternatives to conflict resolution through participation programs; to build character and develop leadership excellence among youth; and to train, promote, and build strong minds through athletics and community stewardship.

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SeaPAL is integrated into the Seattle Police Department Youth Outreach and Violence Prevention Unit. SPD has leveraged existing partnership with local community-based organizations and other city departments to provide the programming within micro-communities. Activities for SeaPAL include flag football, basketball, soccer, youth police academies, and a mountain bicycle program. On average, SPD serves over 400 youth annually through these activities.

More information about SeaPAL can be found at <https://www.seattle.gov/police/community-policing/seapal>.

### SeaPAL Mentorship Program

This past winter, the Seattle Police Department launched a mentorship program that pairs middle school students with officers. The program takes place at Denny International, Washington, South Shore and Aki Kurose Middle Schools with 40 students and seven officers. The 12-month mentorship will provide interactive workshops on life skills, leadership, team building, education, and career development. The curriculum is supported through positive interaction and problem-based learning.

Research has shown that mentorship programs can dramatically reduce first-time drug and alcohol use and slash school absenteeism while improving family/peer relationships and increasing student confidence in school. Recent media coverage regarding this program can be accessed at <http://www.king5.com/article/news/local/seattle-police-launch-middle-school-mentorship-program/530468760>.

### Safe Place

Safe Place provides the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning (LGBTQ) community with signage and resources that provide easily accessible safety locations and information. Safe Place is designed to further enhance the relationship between the Seattle Police Department, the LGBTQ community and local businesses by providing a symbol of safety for victims of LGBTQ crime and a warning to those who commit those crimes. SPD has a LGBTQ liaison officer who coordinates this program and works on broader partnerships with the LGBTQ community. More information about the SPD Safe Place program can be found at <http://www.seattle.gov/spd-safe-place/>.



### Coffee with a Cop



Coffee with a Cop day is a national initiative designed to encourage conversations and connections between police officers and community members. These conversations take place casually in coffee shops around the city, allowing officers, commanders, and community members to talk about concerns, issues, and perceptions. Some communities have specifically engaged their precinct commanders in more routine Coffee with a Cop events, allowing them to stay up to date on neighborhood developments.

### National Night Out

SPD is an active participant in the National Night Out initiative, which is designed to heighten crime prevention awareness, increase neighborhood involvement, and bring communities together with their officers. Communities across Seattle sign up each year to register their event so that the Department is aware and can ensure officers and commanders attend as many events as possible. Many neighborhoods find a street to close and host block parties and gatherings to meet their neighbors, speak with officers, and engage in some civic capacity building.

### Block Watch

Block Watch is a program based on the principle that neighbors working together are the best approach to crime prevention. The Block Watch brings neighbors together with their precinct Crime Prevention Coordinator to discuss area crime trends, evidence-based prevention measures, and proactive activities that neighbors can do to positively affect public safety.

More information about the Block Watch Program can be found at <https://www.seattle.gov/police/community-policing/block-watch>.

### Navigation Team

In February of 2017, SPD formed its Navigation Team with a Sergeant and eight (8) officers. The team is partnered with outreach workers and other city staff to provide direct outreach to individuals living outside and in vehicles. The Navigation Team is focused on making the strong connections with these individuals that often are required before they trust someone enough to consider their offer of services and supportive housing.

More information about the Navigation Team can be found at <http://homelessness.seattle.gov/meet-the-nav-team/>.

Media coverage of the work of this team can be reviewed at <http://q13fox.com/2018/03/14/homeless-to-housed-cities-pair-police-and-social-workers-to-help-turn-lives-around/>;



<https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/homeless/before-the-tent-camps-are-cleared-this-seattle-team-coaxes-the-homeless-toward-shelter/>; and <http://www.king5.com/article/news/local/holiday-gifts-delivered-to-kids-in-homeless-camp/281-501852210>.

### Living Room Conversations



These conversations are designed to bring together local community members and police officers in a way that is more comfortable and informal than traditional meetings. Small group settings promote open dialogue and allow participants to address neighborhood issues directly with officers who work in the area. Living Room conversations generally are held at a community member's residence or a community facility.

### School Emphasis Officers

SPD provides four (4) School Emphasis Officers (SEOs) who focus on crime prevention and intervention in collaboration with Seattle Public elementary, middle, and high schools. SEOs focus on gang resistance and violence prevention education and training. The officers also work on reducing truancy and suspensions. The SEOs specifically do not engage in enforcement in the schools, as their main mission is to foster dialogue and trust.

### Victim Support Team

SPD's Victim Support Program is designed to bridge the gap in services for domestic violence victims that exists between the time patrol officers respond to a 911 call and the point at which cases are adjudicated and beyond. The Victim Support Team is a mobile crisis response team committed to providing comprehensive, culturally relevant, and supportive services to domestic violence victims and their children. The VST receives referrals from officers, detectives, prosecutors, emergency room social workers, and system-based advocates, and operates city-wide to offer on-scene and/or over-the-phone support. Teams provide transportation; help locate shelter, food, and clothing; offer resource referral; answer questions about the criminal justice system; and offer safety planning. Partners to the VST include the Seattle Fire Department, which provides volunteers with necessary training on biohazard and injury prevention; the Seattle/King County Emergency Feeding Program, which provides family-sized food bags and snack packs for families in crisis; Westside Baby, which collects and distributes free diapers, clothing, and safety gear for children the VST serves; and New Beginnings, which provides domestic violence training to VST volunteers and coordinates services for domestic violence victims.



More information about the VST can be found at <https://www.seattle.gov/police/community-policing/victim-support-team-volunteer>.



### **Detective Cookie's Urban Youth Chess Club**

The Chess Club was started as a place for kids and teens, ages 7 and up, and their family members, to learn to play chess. Its other mission is as an anti-violence, positive activity that develops critical thinking and problem solving. The Club, staffed by Department volunteers, also offers a unique opportunity for young people and other community members to positively interact with police officers in a casual environment around a shared activity.

### **Precinct Picnics**

The Seattle Police Department, with the support of the Seattle Police Foundation, organizes a community picnic in each precinct every summer. These events offer community members an opportunity to visit with officers and commanders, learn about what the Department is doing, check out some of the Department's specialized equipment, and get to know the officers who serve their community, including, often, the police horses of the Mounted Unit. The picnics usually offer free food, games for kids, and a fun dessert or treat.

### **Chief's Outreach**

In addition to regularly scheduled community outreach events, Chief Carmen Best and members of Command Staff maintain an active calendar of community engagement events, all of which are designed to show police support for the community, to learn from community as to their needs and concerns, and foster greater opportunities for dialogue and understanding.

# Digital Outreach

## Overview

To complement traditional community outreach, SPD seeks to enhance public trust by continuing to be a leader in digital/social media engagement and interacting with the public where they are already actively having conversations. In 2017, SPD digital channels made over 43MM+ impressions with content published via Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Nextdoor, the SPD Blotter, and SPD website. This is important to note because content proactively distributed via digital channels reaches a wide audience allowing SPD to engage with members of the public who might not normally have any interactions with law enforcement. The objectives of the SPD Digital Outreach program are to:

- Expand community outreach efforts with digital engagement.
- Infuse community policing principles into digital outreach.
- Build digital relationships and bolster in-person interactions with the community we serve through transparency, access and engagement.

## Programming

SPD's digital outreach consists of an active presence on the following platforms, providing a mix of both public safety news and community engagement:

- SPD Blotter (SPD in the Community): <http://spdblotter.seattle.gov/spd-in-the-community/>
- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/seattlepd>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/spdinthecommunity/>
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/spdblotter/videos>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SeattlePolice/>
- Nextdoor: <https://nextdoor.com/agency-detail/wa/seattle/seattle-police-department/>
- Reddit Ask Me Anything's (AMA's): [https://www.reddit.com/user/Seattle\\_PD](https://www.reddit.com/user/Seattle_PD)

## Metrics – Audience and Reach

Platform	Followers
Twitter	510K
Instagram	379K
YouTube	2.5K
Facebook	33K
Nextdoor	160K
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>1M</b>

With just over a half million followers across all digital channels, and 12.6 million people viewing content published by SPD last quarter, social/digital media is one of the most efficient ways to engage with the community on an ongoing basis.

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### Recent Examples

Inserted here are recent examples of social media engagement designed to highlight SPD community outreach while also showcasing that police work is about much more than enforcing the law.



Seattle Police Department added 7 new photos.

Published by Tracy K. Clayton [?] · February 16 ·

A Visit from Cupid, Bungled Burglar, Salute to Service, New Officers, Coffee with a Cop and More: [http://spdblotter.seattle.gov/.../a-visit-from-cupid-bungled...](http://spdblotter.seattle.gov/.../a-visit-from-cupid-bungled.../)



6,531 people reached

Boost Post



Lataria Washington, Ανδρέας Αλεξανδρου and 154 others

Top Comments



spdinthecommunity · Following

spdinthecommunity Safety first, SPD bike officers conducting bicycle safety classes for youth ☑☑  
killer.4u i hate bicycles  
alh46 This is great☺



27 likes

JULY 19, 2017

Add a comment...



spdinthecommunity · Following  
Target Store West-Seattle

spdinthecommunity Loved shopping with the kids from South Park this weekend.  
#shopwithacop



tracley, seattleuvv, kiminoa\_seattle, kunluy and salimahkarmali like this

DECEMBER 12, 2016

Add a comment...



Seattle Police Dept. ·

@SeattlePD

Community members walk the new Chinatown/International District beat with @MayorJenny and @CarmenBest. Boundaries change to incorporate Little Saigon on 1/24/18.



8:33 PM · 17 Jan 2018

10 Retweets 70 Likes



spdinthecommunity · Following

spdinthecommunity Chief Carmen Best and Captain O'Donnell at the North Precinct Advisory Council where they addressed topics from demonstration management, homelessness and pedestrian safety.

\_shadowninjaa First  
joshkerns Talk about a flashback...  
yohawkbaby @carmenbest ☺



39 likes

MARCH 7

Add a comment...



### Hiring and Recruitment

Community trust is fostered by recruiting and retaining a highly qualified sworn workforce that reflects the diversity of the community it serves. SPD is committed to expanding diversity in its workforce as it seeks individuals who have the backgrounds and skillsets to meet the challenges of 21<sup>st</sup> century policing. SPD takes seriously its core hiring value:

*At SPD, we acknowledge and honor the fundamental value and dignity of all individuals and pledge ourselves to creating and maintaining an environment that respects diverse traditions, heritages, and experiences.*

In recent years, the Department has applied a continuous-improvement model to its recruitment/hiring process in an effort to deepen outreach to historically underrepresented groups. Although much work remains to be done, significant changes in recruitment/hiring implemented by the Department beginning in late 2014 have produced significant results; the Department's 2017 hiring, for example, was more diverse than Seattle in whole. The hiring of persons of color in recent years is as follows:

<b>2014:</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>2015:</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>2016:</b>	<b>30%</b>
<b>2017:</b>	<b>35%</b>

Changes to hiring and recruitment processes implemented in 2014 included increasing number of pre-test workshops to increase applicant engagement and improve exam success rates; streamlining social media platforms and improving consistency of messaging and branding across all outlets while adding more advanced content; and focusing on grass-roots community engagement. Throughout 2016 and 2017, the Department focused on sustainment of earlier improvements and implemented additional outreach strategies, including developing a "recruiting cadre" of Department officers who are trained and serve as recruiting liaisons in their precincts and in the community, allowing for wider reach and more direct connections, and increasing the quality and quantity of outreach engagement at local events (with a focus on cultural and ethnic group events.)

The Department's recruitment strategy is focused on direct connections with communities historically underrepresented in policing and is explicitly aimed at recruiting officers who reflect the diversity of Seattle. This strategy has resulted in a coordinated effort consisting of direct community connections, advertising, social media, and officer outreach all focused on reaching diverse communities. The Department's outreach is grounded in, and focused on, building community relationships through direct outreach. For example, in 2017, the Department conducted numerous diversity/multicultural career fairs (e.g. City Diversity Career Fair, Urban League of Seattle Career Fair) and community outreach events (e.g. Muslim Community Meeting, API Heritage Festival, Juneteenth Community Event).

Youth engagement is also a critical part of both the Department's recruitment and community outreach strategies. In several instances these efforts have served as a pipeline for successful applicants. Examples of youth outreach efforts with direct recruiting benefits include (as described earlier in this report), the Summer Youth Employment Program, the Police Explorers Program, SeaPAL, and the Late Night Program – a program run in conjunction with the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation that allows officers to interact with youth at community centers during extended hours – time that allows the officer to reduce the fear of police/youth interaction through direct connections with youth in a non-threatening environment.

### Research Partnerships

In addition to the Seattle University study around the Department's micro-community policing plans, discussed earlier in this report, SPD is engaged in several other research partnerships that relate to building or measuring community trust and community perception of police. These include:

***Caller Satisfaction Survey:*** SPD contracts with a local researcher to conduct quarterly assessments of how well SPD is delivering services to those who call 911 for help. The researcher works with a polling firm to contact 200 individuals who called 911 and had an officer respond and speak with them. The survey solicits feedback on how professionally the officer resolved the issue as well as the caller's overall opinion of the Department. Currently, SPD is scoping out other potential avenues to more routinely solicit community member feedback from a broader swath of the city.

***Youth Engagement Outcomes:*** SPD has partnered with Seattle University to evaluate the process and outcomes of the Department's youth and family engagement work, particularly as it relates to the Immigrant Family Institute.

***Body-Worn Video Attitudes/Satisfaction Survey:*** SPD is continuing to conduct a city-wide survey of community members who have interacted with officers equipped with a body-worn camera to assess any impacts on community trust and willingness to engage.

***Enhancing Procedural Justice in Hot Spots Policing:*** SPD has partnered with the Police Foundation in Washington, DC and Arizona State University to examine whether procedural justice training influences community members' perceptions of legitimacy and crime in crime hot spots.

***Body-Worn Video Effects:*** SPD has partnered with the University of Virginia to examine the effect of body-worn video on officer and community behaviors including use of force, filing complaints, calling 911, and injuries to officers.