

Community Relations Report 2020



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Prepared by the Community Relations Bureau



Introduction

The strength, character and dedication of the Suffolk County Police Department has never been more tested and fortified as it was in 2020. We, along with the worldwide community, had to adapt to a new way of life in order to meet extraordinary challenges. The year brought unprecedented circumstances which required us all to work together and take care of each other with compassion and resolve. Regardless of the obstacles, tribulations or departures from normalcy we face, the mission of the Suffolk County Police Department is steadfast and unwavering in our commitment to excellence and innovation. The global pandemic and nationwide calls for police

The Community Relations Bureau fosters and preserves active and open avenues of communication between the Department and the many diverse communities which it serves.

reform were catalysts for action and advancement. Throughout our efforts to address new and recurring needs that faced our community, our overall mission has evolved and expanded.

As part of its overall mission, CRB supervises the Community Liaison Officer Program, the School Resource Officer Program, the Recruitment Section and the Police Athletic League. The Bureau also coordinates and oversees a variety of outreach initiatives which have greatly increased throughout the County in our response to the COVID 19 pandemic.

Despite the challenges of 2020; we have continued to provide traditional services, such as Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), Operation Medicine Cabinet, "Unity in the Community", "Vamos a Hablar", "Let's Talk", "Coffee With a Cop", "Craft With a Cop", "Teen Gaming", "HERE Truancy", Heroes and



Helpers” and “Impact Truancy”. We have evolved our delivery mode, and much like the rest of the world have entered the age where virtual meetings, zoom calls and “social distancing” are now common. Along with our fellow community members, our dedicated officers have shown strength and resilience in the face of adversity. It is our collective goal to emerge from this crisis stronger, wiser and with the knowledge that together we can accomplish wonderful things.

The Suffolk County Police Department is enormously proud of the success its community relations programs have had in recent years and is fully dedicated to expanding these programs in the future to forge lasting and productive relationships within all the communities in Suffolk County.



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The Community Relations Bureau

Deputy Police Commissioner Risco Mention-Lewis is a nationally recognized community leader and advocate. A former Assistant District Attorney, Deputy Commissioner Mention-Lewis is the first female, and the first person of color, to



hold her title in the Suffolk County Police Department. She has presented in an array of venues, ranging from local schools, churches and communities to national conventions and universities. In 2015 Deputy Commissioner Mention-Lewis was invited to the White House by President Barak Obama to discuss strategies for decreasing crime and incarceration.

Her work entails creating comprehensive programs to combat gang violence and recidivism through a synergy of intelligence led policing and community-oriented policing. She coordinates the development of Council of Thought and Action (COTA) groups across Suffolk County, and has spearheaded the Violent Group Insertion initiative which partners with school districts to identify and redirect young people who are showing signs of gang recruitment; evincing, “When we stop the entry...we have less reentry to do.” Deputy Commissioner Mention-Lewis oversees the Suffolk County Police Community Relations Bureau and is intimately involved with all aspects of community engagement, all while maintaining multiple chair positions on local steering committees and youth development and intervention efforts.

Lieutenant Paul Bowden was appointed as the Commanding Officer of the Community Relations Bureau in March of 2019. Since joining the SCPD in 1993, Lieutenant Bowden has spent his career working and supervising patrol officers in the most diverse and economically challenged areas of Suffolk County. He is intimately familiar with the everyday challenges of police and community relations. He is responsible for the day to day operations of the CRB staff including Community Liaison Officers (CLOs), School Resource Officers (SROs) and PAL Officers. He is also the Police Department’s Language Access Coordinator (LAC), and is tasked with ensuring that the department is providing equal access to persons with limited English Proficiency (LEP). As a nationally certified Speech Language Pathologist, he employs his personal knowledge and experience in meeting the needs of those with limited and varied communication skills.



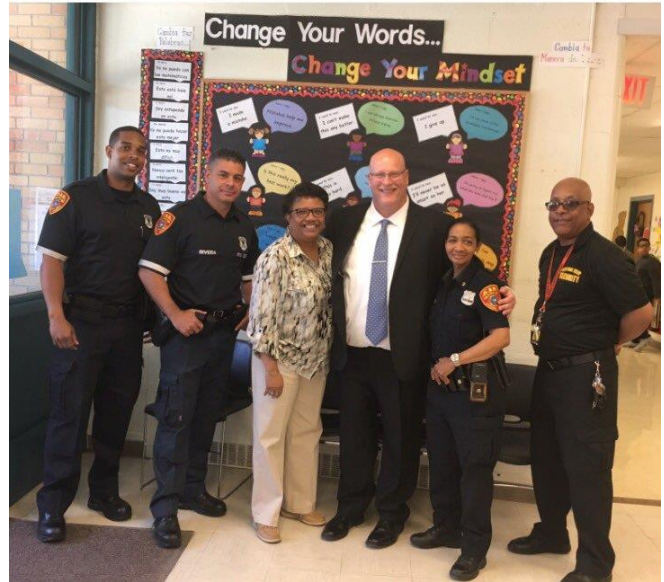
Sergeant Bonnie Raber is the Executive Officer of the CRB and has been supervising the unit since August of 2018. Sergeant Raber is one of the most experienced community relations officers the SCPD has ever had. She was one of the Department's original School Resource Officers, operating primarily out of the Central Islip and Brentwood School Districts. She has been a C.O.P.E. officer and supervisor, a Patrol officer and supervisor, and a Crime Section supervisor, an assignment where she was responsible for cases ranging from violent school incidents to the investigation of child endangerment and domestic violence. Her knowledge and experience in youth and gang violence prevention, investigation, and compassionate intervention is commensurate with the proactive community based intervention strategies vital to the success of CRB.

The **Police Officers of CRB** are a truly special group of individuals working as a cohesive team to build and maintain the important bonds with our neighborhoods, schools, houses of worship and other voices in the communities we serve. Our Officers possess a wide variety of talents and they reflect the diverse landscape of the communities they serve. CRB officers are more than just visitors to the community or employees of the County. They are members of the community, neighbors, coaches, friends and relatives. They drive the same roads, shop in the same stores, and play with their children in the same parks as those they serve. The officers of CRB go forth every day not only to educate, protect and serve, but to learn from those they interact with. When they do so with sincerity, enthusiasm and a willingness to listen, learn and communicate, that is when we are at our best. The following describes in some detail, an outline of the various jobs and functions of the CRB staff and officers.



Community Liaison and COPE Officers Program

Community Liaison Officers [CLOs] and Community Oriented Police Engagement [COPE] Officers are assigned to CRB and detailed to each of the seven precincts, serving as a bridge between the Department and the communities it serves. They work with an array of individual community members, advocacy groups, business owners, school officials, and other governmental agencies to enhance relations and to help identify important issues. The Department has seven CLO's throughout the county, four of the seven are native Spanish speakers.



Our newest CLO, Officer Russ Aue, was assigned to the First precinct in 2020, replacing Officer Matias Ferreira who has moved to our Police Academy as an instructor and military ambassador. Officer Aue brings much needed patrol and



life experience to the CRB. Officer Aue has worked in the First Precinct for over twenty-five years and is intimately familiar with the variety of needs and challenges facing the community. Officer Aue was chosen for this position because of his progressive thinking and his outgoing yet empathic demeanor. In just a few months he created and assisted with multiple new outreach initiatives including golf camps and outdoor activities. Officer Aue is an example of our ongoing efforts to enlist patrol officers in our outreach efforts. His close relationships with patrol officers have helped spread the ideals of community outreach among line officers.

When not participating in organized events, CLOs and COPE Officers visit with community members and local organizations in order to increase crime awareness, crime prevention, and personal safety. They also coordinate with our Recruitment, Police Athletic League and School Resource Officers to assist them



in providing training, outreach activities and presentations that are tailored to their communities.

CLOs and COPE Officers utilize social media such as Instagram, Nixle, Facebook, and Twitter to advertise events and programs in an effort to provide the most up to date information possible. SCPD has eight different Twitter feeds, one dedicated to Headquarters and one for each of the precincts. The number of followers on SCPD Facebook has expanded to over 123,000 as of December 2020, and the SCPD Twitter feeds have a following of over 24,000. In 2020 the SCPD Spanish language Facebook page has exceeded 4,500 followers.

School Resource Officer Program

School Resource Officers (SROs) provide hundreds of informational presentations to high schools and middle schools across the County, including: *Prescription Drugs to Heroin, Gangs & Associated Violence, Diversity & Tolerance, Cyber Law and Cyber Bullying, Alcohol & the High School Student, Social Host & Pre-Prom, What to do When Stopped by the Police, Active Shooter, The Dangers of Vaping, Vehicle Survival-Behind the Wheel, and Distracted Driving*. SROs make it their top priority to present these topics in a manner that engages young people and speaks to them in relevant terms. In turn, it is CRB's mission to make qualified SROs available to any school district that requests, or will accept, assistance. Presentations and assistance are also



offered to elementary schools as appropriate and when the SROs' schedules permit. SROs also conduct informational forums on topics such as, the Heroin epidemic, safe usage of the internet, and proper conduct in social settings. Throughout 2019 and in early 2020 vaping

presentations were increasingly requested to address the growing concern over the use of vape devices by youth in middle and high schools.

SROs assigned both to CRB and the individual Precincts meet together with CRB on a monthly basis in order to share information and receive group training.



This ensures that all SROs possess the most current information concerning the schools in which they work. These monthly meetings and training sessions also enhance the consistency, accuracy and quality of the information that is provided to students county-wide.

One of the most important roles of the SRO's is to work closely with school officials in identifying at-risk youth. Officers engage these students through mentoring, and then guide them to resources in their area to help form more positive behavior and choices. In 2020 SROs continued mentoring programs in multiple school districts throughout the county.

SCPD assigned an additional Spanish speaking SRO, Justin Fernandez to Brentwood Central School District to provide critical support to the students and administration in the aftermath of the 2018 Parkland High School shooting. Officer Fernandez is specifically assigned to engage students at the middle schools and the Freshmen Center, and offers mentoring, classroom instruction, and after school engagement. He also works through the summer at organized sports and life skills programs. The Department continued this partnership through 2020, providing an additional mentoring and youth engagement program in Brentwood West Middle School. Officer Fernandez's empathetic approach to mentoring his students, particularly "students with interrupted formal education" (SIFE) provides a stable role model and source of guidance to those youth who have grown to trust and rely on him for direction and advice.



After the Parkland High shooting, the Public School Superintendent's Association made requests to increase the number of SROs assigned within school buildings throughout the police district. Commisisoner Geraldine Hart, Chief of Department Stuart Cameron, and members of the Homeland Security Section and CRB participated in numerous forums relating to school safety concerns surrounding active shooters. In 2020, SCPD continued training additional patrol officers as SROs to provide dual service in addition to their duties on routine patrol.

In 2020, the SROs truly proved there versitility, dedication and commitment. It was in March of 2020, when our local schools, businesses and many government agencies started to shut down and feel the devistating social, financial and emotional impacts of the COVID 19 pandemic. The Department was ready with



multiple plans of action aimed at ensuring the safety of our community. Our three most senior officers, George Lynagh, Wendy Verlotte and Nancy Ward with over 85 years of combined experience served as incredible examples of changing what you do on the fly for the public good. Officers Ward and Verlotte lead CRB teams in the expansion of a telephonic complaint system (Teleserve) in order to reduce face to face interactions. Many of the callers included elderly and unsuspecting victims of Covid-related fraud and scams. Recognizing the emotional impact of these crimes, the SROs started an initiative to call some of the complainants back just to check up on them and see how they were doing. This was beyond the typical followup of investigatory commands and is a small example of the humanity and caring of our staff. It is not a new concept to police work but it is not common place either.

During the pandemic, CRB deployed its strongest asset to a new and unprecedented assignment. Officer George Lynagh, an SRO for over 18 years and an accomplished public speaker and vocalist, was given the assignment of good will ambassador to community members whose lives were derailed by COVID-19. Officer Lynagh made over 100 appearances spreading love, compassion, and patriotism to thousands of residents. He was “that singing officer” who showed up to peoples homes, hospitals, workplaces, senior living facilities and many other venues. The public response was overwhelming. He showed people from every community that they matter to us, and his presence at their event, whether it was a funeral, a birthday or a hospital discharge was not overlooked. He made people feel special and let them know that the police care about them. He was easily the Department’s most visible and public symbol of concern and empathy. The SRO program is dedicated to this ideal. In order to continue building positive relations with our communities, it is essential to forge these relationships early and honestly with the youth of our community. Once again showing that they are important and their safety is a primary concern.



Recruitment Section

The SCPD Recruitment Section is responsible for recruiting quality candidates for law enforcement and civilian positions with the Police Department.

Recruitment practices are continually analyzed and enhanced to identify and employ the most effective measures. The Recruitment Section works closely with colleges and community groups to identify qualified candidates, with a special emphasis directed toward recruiting Latino, African-American, female, and Spanish speaking candidates in order to reflect the demographics of the communities served by the Department.



CRB currently has two full time officers assigned to Recruitment.

They attended local NAACP meetings, Latino community events, multi-denominational religious services, and job fairs at military bases, high schools and colleges prior to the COVID-19 shuttering of many events. They actively partner with influential members of minority communities to encourage Black, Latino, LGTBQ and female residents to consider SCPD as a viable opportunity for a career in law enforcement. They also utilized social media outlets such as Twitter and Facebook, as well as job search engines such as Linked-In and PoliceOne.com.

Similarly, efforts to recruit civilian positions within the Department including crossing guards continued in earnest in 2020. Recruitment Officers, CLOs, and other community officers distributed informational flyers which include numerous non-sworn positions such as Crime Analysts, Computer Technicians, and Forensic Analysts.

Police Athletic League

The Police Athletic League (PAL) is a recreation-oriented organization that utilizes sports and activities in order to tighten the bond between police officers and young members of the community. The goal of PAL is to engage our youth in hopes of decreasing the lure of gangs, drugs, and other destructive influences.

The program enables more than 20,000 children to engage in a variety of sporting events and activities, and PAL is proud to host the largest youth football



program in the State of New York. In addition to team sports programs, PAL programs also include cooking classes, karate classes, Swim for Survival, fishing trips, and the presentation “Crash Course in Crash Avoidance”.

The PAL had a very strong start to 2020 with an annual awards ceremony for a very successful youth football season. Plans to continue the PAL Soccer Program in Patchogue and Wyandanch, which also expanded into Huntington, were unfortunately canceled due to COVID-19. However, PAL officers and local precinct officers maintained close ties to the community volunteers and organizers in order to ensure the future of these programs.

Much like the rest of our Department, the PAL made dramatic changes during our pandemic response. PAL Officers assisted in the expansion of contactless 911 services to our elderly and homebound citizens. Putting their typical duties aside, they assisted with preliminary reporting and investigation of non-emergency 911 calls for things such as fraud, theft and hit and run accidents. As the Police Department developed improved pandemic management, PAL officers returned to what they do best, the development of youth engagement initiatives.

A shift in thinking was necessary given social distancing restrictions, and traditional sports and recreational programs that were in place had to be



rethought. Officers quickly pivoted from team sports to individual based activities. PAL introduced adventure and other novel initiatives. Hiking, fishing, biking, golf and cross country running became the new focus. It was both surprising and disappointing to discover how many of our youth lived only minutes from our beautiful beaches, parks, golf courses and hiking trails, yet had never utilized

these natural resources. It was extremely rewarding to witness the emergence of a new passion in the heart of child who has been deprived the opportunities to enjoy something that many of us take for granted. Simply casting a line into the water to catch a fish; or following a trail through wooded areas may not seem like a big deal to some. However, there were immeasurable benefits that were discovered during these quiet, reflective trips. Teenagers took the lead in ensuring that younger participants were safe on trails and followed instructions. Some were even naturals at casting and fishing or finding their way.



The PAL is perhaps one of the Department's most valuable community outreach tools. The inclusion of patrol and COPE officers in its activities takes them to a new level of involvement with community. Activities are light-hearted and fun and involve a shared joy and sense of accomplishment, too often absent from routine police interactions. Additionally, the officers bring their unique talents to these programs. For example, Officer Aue of the First precinct, a nationally certified PGA golf professional and instructor, helped to develop golf camps and clinics with PAL. Plans have been made to expand this program, enabling kids to play on private courses at no expense, as many course owners were enthusiastic to help economically challenged children have that experience. This is only one of many examples of the benefits to this type of outreach. The breaking down of social, racial, and economic barriers that results from these programs creates multifaceted rewards. Community spirit is enhanced and those who donate their time, money and resources to these programs are rewarded with the knowledge that they are a part of something important, and that they are promoting equality and benevolence.

PAL continues its support to the Wyandanch Summer Youth Camp Program in 2020. The program provides mentoring by First Precinct SROs during a 5 week camp. Campers are taught lessons in safety, anti-bullying, internet safety, self-esteem building, and drug awareness. They take numerous trips to museums, farms and parks, exposing them to a host of new experiences.

During 2020, cooking classes were also hosted in several communities throughout the police district, including several at Brentwood South and East Middle Schools where officers and school security combined efforts to engage with students. Community Relations Bureau personnel assisted by COPE and SROs brought in volunteer professional chefs to teach valuable cooking skills in a fun and friendly environment. The officers assisted the children as they prepared recipes designed by their guest chef. PAL sponsored these events by providing funding for food items, other supplies, and the portable cooking equipment necessary to bring the program on the road. Classes have continued to spread to communities such as: Bellport, Brentwood,



Central Islip, Gordon Heights, Centereach, Medford, Huntington Station, Wyandanch, Rocky Point, and hopefully can resume as soon as possible.

Officer Edward Groce has presided over the Brentwood youth PAL boxing program for the past eight years and the program continues to grow in popularity and success. Although 2020 brought challenges to the nearly 40 year old program, it still enjoys vibrant interest from the community. It is a



wildly successful

program that has seen its young athletes compete at the highest levels of the sport, with one of our boxers reaching a pre-Olympic trial event and winning a gold medal in Europe at an international competition. As evident by the returning coaches, this program means a great deal to the youth and families in our

community. This positive relationship involves a diverse group of kids coming together and staying focused under the watchful eyes of parents, coaches and a very concerned and vested PAL officer.



In 2020, PAL Officers also developed a virtual Read and Rec Program for a temporary housing Center. The program which runs monthly provides engagement activities between SCPD officers and youth attending after school care, ages K-5th grade. PAL and other precinct Officers read stories to the children then engage in crafts and fun activities such as scooter races and giant parachute games.

Outreach to those with unique needs requires innovative thinking and thoughtful initiative. The program, PAL Officer Brett Engmann initiated in 2019 in a facility which houses hundreds of children and family members in emergency or transitional housing continued in 2020. Providing in-house programs at a such facilities gives children and families a sense of normalcy and connection to a community during uncertain and stressful times.



Police Explorers

The Community Relations Bureau oversees the Suffolk County Police Explorers Program, which is coordinated through the Boy Scouts of America. The Police Explorers Program is a goal-orientated program for individuals between the ages of 14 to 21, who are interested in pursuing law enforcement as a possible career path. Although the Police Explorers is described as a "learning for life" program, it also serves as a volunteer public service program.

Each of the seven Precincts maintains an Explorer Post where participants are taught criminal law, and police procedures and tactics. Participants also engage in community outreach events and many other law enforcement activities. Police Officer Advisors help guide Explorers by teaching them valuable life skills and giving them insight into the daily life of a Police Officer. The Department has thirteen Police Officers and six civilian volunteers who oversee more than 200 participants.

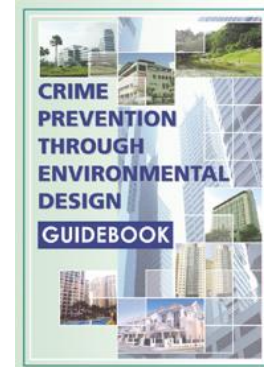
In 2020, our Explorers had to suspend the Explorer Youth Academy, where they are instructed in physical fitness, defensive tactics, military drills and other areas of law enforcement practices. They are typically joined by several Sea Cadets, who are Coast Guard Explorers and together learn about law enforcement as well as working as a team. We look forward to resuming this great tradition in the near future.



Presentations and Services

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED)

The goal of CPTED is to reduce the opportunity for crime inherent in the design of certain buildings and neighborhoods. Upon request, the CRB will conduct CPTED site surveys for schools and businesses, in order to assist with crime reduction and quality of life issues. CPTED trained officers assess the physical design of buildings including, landscape plans, interior and exterior lighting, access control systems, security features, and traffic control devices.



Car Seat Inspections:

The Suffolk County Police Department has 17 Community Liaison, COPE and School Resource Officers who are professionally trained to inspect and install car seats. Lead by Master Instructor, Officer Nancy Ward, SCPD partners with Education Assistance Corporation (EAC) to host car seat safety events where



trained officers physically inspected child seats for defects, recalls and proper installation. EAC provides replacement seats at no charge to the participants to ensure the safety of their children. This partnership with EAC has continued through 2020 with CLO, COPE and SROs participation. SCPD also

partners with members of Adelante, a Latino advocacy group in Brentwood and Central Islip, to provide car seat inspection and installation to dozens of participants, explaining the importance of safety for their children while conducting a much needed community engagement activity to strengthen trust between police and the immigrant community. Once again social distancing and personal protection protocols have severely hampered these initiatives, but they are a staple of our activities and we continue with fervor when safe. .



S.A.V.E (School Active Violence Emergency):

The Community Relations Bureau continued implementing the S.A.V.E. Program in 2020 and installed over 400 S.A.V.E. hotline phones in 310 school buildings in 37 public school districts. CRB will continue to be responsible for coordinating the implementation of this program and will act as a liaison between these schools and the police department.

Youth Academy

SCPD has been hosting four Youth Academies each summer at the Police Academy. The Youth Academy provides teens age 14-18 an opportunity to experience the tasks and physical training that SCPD Recruits undergo. Two of the weeks are dedicated to minority youth through the Suffolk County Executive's Youth Bureau Program. The Department and the Youth Bureau work directly with social workers from the Central Islip and Brentwood School Districts recruiting participants for the program. CRB sends Officer Justin Fernandez, a Spanish speaking SRO, to the program for the week to assist LEP attendees.

Crash Course In Crash Avoidance:

This program is a half-day safe driving instructional course for teenagers between 16-19 years old. The goal of this program is to educate teens in avoidance measures under dangerous driving conditions. Typically, SCPD Emergency Vehicle Operations instructors provide one week of instruction to 40 teenagers to complete the program.

Swim For Survival

SCPD and the Police Athletic League sponsor a swimming program for youth at St. Joseph's College in Patchogue. The program offers very low cost swimming lessons for children. This program has two sessions accommodating 20 swimmers per session. It has been a very successful program over the past several years.



National Night Out

National Night Out is a yearly event sponsored by Target Corporation and local community partners. Every year in August the Community Relations Bureau hosts 7 National Night Out events throughout Suffolk County. Each of the 7 Precincts hold events, either at their local Target Store or at area parks. National Night out is always one of the most fun and positive events of the summer for the Police Department and the communities. Its success is due to the strength of the partnership between neighborhood and police organizers. Attendees are able to view equipment used by specialized units such as Canine, Marine Bureau, Aviation and Emergency Services. Additionally, SCPD partnered with the FBI at 3 of the locations to help foster community feelings of safety with all law enforcement agencies. 2019 was our biggest year ever, more than 3960 community members attended the events countywide. Although this had to be canceled for 2020, we look forward to the 2021 celebration.



Impact Truancy

The Community Relations Bureau, in cooperation with William Floyd Middle School and the Education Assistance Corp. (EAC), has for the past several years, conducted a truancy reduction program called "*Impact Truancy*". Lead by senior CRB Officer George Lynagh and Master Instructor Officer Nancy Ward, our CLOs and SROs meet after school with 9th grade students who were identified by administrators as intra-day truants; i.e., students who go to school in the morning, but then skip their assigned classes. Officers conveyed the importance of finishing high school and facilitated various exercises with students and counselors from EAC. The program assisted students in identifying their specific needs in order to better prepare them for school. The Department anticipates that this program will continue in 2021..



The Ugly Truth Series

The Community Relations Bureau continues to evolve this education and awareness program to proactively combat the prescription drug and heroin epidemic in Suffolk County. Community Liaison Officers have teamed with Suffolk County Chief Medical Examiner, Dr. Michael Caplan to conduct these events, which were hosted primarily at local high schools. Initially, School Resource Officers provided “*Prescription Drugs to Heroin*” presentations to students in assemblies or classroom settings during school hours. This was followed by evening presentation of “The Ugly Truth”, which involved parents, students, faculty and other members of the community. SCPD EMT trainer Jason Byron provided information on the Good Samaritan law, discussed signs and symptoms of an overdose, and demonstrated how to administer Narcan. Participants were provided with an opportunity to practice assembly and administration of the Narcan nasal applicator, and were given two doses of Narcan for emergency use.

In 2020, these presentations were adjusted to adapt to the ever-changing information and threat to our communities. Ugly Truth presentations have been streamlined to avoid duplication of efforts and information, and have been offered at monthly precinct community meetings. Personnel from the Department of Mental Health and Hygiene attend to give family assistance and information to provide a hopeful view for recovery.

SCPD has also worked closely with many school districts to educate and train their staff members in the signs and symptoms of overdose and the use of Narcan as well. More than 6300 community members have been trained in the use of Narcan since the program’s inception.

Unfortunately, in 2020 we were only able to provide one presentation in the beginning of March, but look forward to resuming this program in 2021.



Operation Medicine Cabinet:

In an effort to address the increase of prescription drug use among young people and ensure the proper disposal of unwanted or expired medications, the SCPD was the first police department in New York State to initiate a permanent, continuous drug reclamation program. Operation Medicine Cabinet offers the public the option of disposing unwanted pharmaceuticals 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Receptacles for unwanted pharmaceutical are in the lobby of each of the seven Precincts.

Community Liaison and COPE Officers respond to senior citizen meetings as well to assist in properly disposing of unwanted pharmaceuticals to keep them out of the hands of drug seeking individuals and to protect the environment. In 2020, over 5155 pounds of unwanted pharmaceutical drugs were deposited at the seven police precincts. Since the program's inception in July 2010, over 61,000 pounds of medications have been collected. This program will continue in 2021.



Police Week



Every May, the Suffolk County Police Department hosts Police Week at Police Headquarters in Yaphank. Community Liaison, COPE and School Resource Officers engage nearly 4130 students from elementary level through high school level over the 4-day event. All participants viewed demonstrations by specialized police functions such as emergency driving skills, Emergency Service response to serious traffic accidents, Canine operations, Aviation support, and motorcycle operations.



Static stations display information on the different services, investigative skills and equipment provided by the Department. Tours of the 911 Call Center are given to participants as well, giving them a better understanding of how emergency calls are received and dispatched to officers on the street. High School students are educated in topics such as Distracted Driving and What To Do When Stopped by the Police. A civilian Crime Analyst provides an overview of her role with the Department, providing students an opportunity to see other job opportunities in policing.

SCPD, in partnership with Stony Brook University provides high school students with education regarding Distracted Driving. University professors and Police Officers provide several stations where students are put through various activities designed to replicate distracted driving and



distracted walking situations. By timing students through obstacle courses, driving simulator and sobriety tests without distraction, then putting them through the courses while texting or wearing impairment goggles, students are able see first-hand the negative effects of distraction whether by texting or use of alcoholic substances upon driving and walking. Like many other events, Police week was canceled for 2020 due to COVID 19 safety concerns. It is yet to be determined if this event will be able to take place in 2021, but it is a long standing tradition of the Department which is enjoyed by all who attend and participate.

Faith and Blue weekend

2020 marked our inaugural celebration of the Faith and Blue weekend, which advances the premise that communities are stronger and safer when residents



and law enforcement professionals can relate as ordinary people with shared values, hopes, and dreams. The partners who sponsor National Faith & Blue Weekend believe we can find ways to work together around our many commonalities instead of being divided by our differences. National Faith & Blue Weekend is an extension of the One Congregation One Precinct initiative (OneCOP), a program of MovementForward, Inc., which is a bridge-building, solutions-focused human





and civil rights organization based in Atlanta, Georgia. The OneCOP initiative pairs together officers at the beat or precinct level with local houses of worship.” (<https://faithandblue.org/>). This national movement was celebrated with multiple events at each of the seven precincts here in Suffolk County. Orchestrated by Deputy Commissioner Risco Mention-Lewis, events

included: “Crucial Conversation” forums with local faith leaders and precinct Command staff, community park cleanups, food and clothing drives, group prayer sessions for unity and empathy, shared meals and BBQ parties, police equipment displays, singing, laughing and just simply talking with each other. This weekend event highlighted the need for Police Departments to collaborate with local faith leaders, and more deeply recognize the value and importance of these institutions which are the pillars upon which many of our communities were founded. Faith leaders are often involved with victim advocacy and are invaluable in reconciling disputes. Furthermore, they represent the values and traditions of a community that should be given strong consideration in policing.

Commissioner’s Community Forums

In 2020, Commissioner Geraldine Hart has continued to host quarterly open forums. to provide community members with a wide variety of information regarding the contemporary practices and challenges of policing in Suffolk County, as well as providing information on current crime statistics, Department recruitment efforts and DOJ compliance efforts. These forums



also provided an opportunity for the community to present questions and concerns to the Commissioner and allow for an open dialogue with local advocates and community stakeholders. Also in attendance at these meetings are Precinct Command Staff and specialized department units who address topics that pertain to their particular areas of expertise. At these meetings, the Commissioner also presents awards to police personnel and civilian community members for their outstanding efforts in community engagement and enhancement.



Long Island Language Access Coalition (LILAC) Meetings

In 2020, Commissioner Hart and her staff held quarterly meetings with the Long Island Language Access Coalition (LILAC) and other advocates of the Latino community. These meetings were held in effort to provide the exchange of information and ideas in order to improve the Department's delivery of services to the Latino community, especially those with limited English proficiency (LEP). These meetings allowed for in-depth discussions regarding issues and challenges that are of particular concern to the growing Latino community in Suffolk County. LILAC and other representatives provided the Department with valuable feedback and direction that has been utilized to improve department training and translation practices. Meetings also provide further overview of the Department's progress in relation to the agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice.

Language Access

In 2020, the SCPD continued its efforts to enhance the delivery of police services to those with LEP as well as those with unique communication needs. In April of 2019, the Department partnered with the Stony Brook University Department of Professional Development to introduce Spanish Language Education Courses in order to improve the skills of the Department Authorized Interpreters. These classes were offered in preparation for their certification tests which are conducted through Language Line Solutions. Bilingual officers are required to pass the DAI certification test with a minimum standard of seventy-five percent in order to be recognized as a DAI when providing translation services in the course of their duties. This program was schedule to continue in 2020, but was canceled due to COVID. In January of 2019, the Department had eleven (11) Spanish speaking DAIs and 109 officers certified as bilingual. Following preparation classes and improved recruitment of Spanish speaking officers, by the end of 2019 the Department had certified forty (40) Spanish speaking DAIs and 142 bilingual officers. This was the largest increase and improvement of our language access enhancement in department history. In 2020, the department was able to add three additional DAIs. The department currently has 43 DAIs, all Spanish speakers, and 150 Bilingual officers, of which 139 are Spanish speakers. The numbers have fluctuated due to retirements and trying to get officers tested and trained with COVID restrictions. The availability of in person translation continues to be a priority throughout the Department.



Latino Community Engagement

SCPD has continued to conduct *Vamos a Hablar* events to educate the Latino/Hispanic community on the role of the police department. Topics include the availability of language assistance services, the importance of reporting crimes, the reporting procedures for crimes, police misconduct, and hate crimes. Other advocacy groups such as Adelante have continued their partnership with SCPD by providing venues to host this program, which the Department tailors to meet the needs of their specific audience.

Liga Atlética de Policía del Condado de Suffolk,
Segundo Distrito Policial del Condado de Suffolk,
Concejal Eugene Cook y el Consejo del Municipio de Huntington
Están patrocinando

**Programa De Fútbol de Cancha Cerrada GRATIS
para la Ninos de Huntington**

Para niños en grados 2 a 8
Los Martes o Jueves de 3:30-5:30PM
(El Día dependerá de la Escuela y el Grado/ 6 semanas de futbol)
**Comenzando el 7 de Enero hasta el 13 de Febrero o el
18 de Febrero hasta el 26 de Marzo, 2020**

Los niños **DEBEN** ser recogidos a las 5:30pm
No habrá transporte a casa cuando se termine el juego de futbol

Para Registrarse Venga A
La Iglesia de St Hugh (Cafeteria)
21 E 9th St, Huntington Station
Domingo 8 de Diciembre 2019
9 AM - 11 AM
SCPD Officer Delgado at
631-854-8253

healthfirst
Health Insurance for New York

Mark Colbertson Councilman
Eugene Cook Councilman
Chad A. Lupinacci Supervisor
Juan Cergul Councilman
Edmund J.M. Smyth Councilman

The Department's Civilian Community Liaison Advocate Lizbeth Carillo continued to strengthen the bond between the Department and the Latino community with her involvement in community events and her ability to relay pertinent information to and from the Department. She works directly out of the Commissioner's office and has been an integral part in changes directed toward education and engagement for the immigrant community. She provides interpretation services as an Authorized Interpreter and maintains the flow of information on the Department's Spanish language-Facebook page which in 2020 has more than tripled its previous year's followers to 4266.



Monthly Community Meetings

Each Precinct organizes a monthly meeting to engage members of the community, address their concerns, and inform them about public safety issues. Meetings are scheduled at the beginning of the year and publicized through the web, social media and postings in local libraries, government buildings and high traffic areas. The meetings are held both at the Precinct buildings and also in large facilities such as libraries or community centers.

Precinct command staff (Inspectors, Deputy Inspectors and Captains) also attend meetings and events at a multitude of venues across the police district. Of course in 2020 many of those meetings were held via ZOOM and other virtual modalities.



Precinct and Local community engagement

The mission of community relations and engagement is not the exclusive responsibility of the CRB. The SCPD actually has over 2400 community relations officers, because every single member of our department represents us with every interaction they have in the community. Every aided case, vehicle stop, call for service, response to a victim of a crime, and every casual encounter, affects the manner in which we are perceived and ultimately judged.



The expectation of excellence starts at the very top and extends all the way down to the officer on patrol. For example, Chief of Department Stuart Cameron still rolls up his sleeves to work side by side with frontline officers building homes for Habitat for Humanity. His leadership style is inspiring and sets a clear tone throughout the department.

