

Ronald J. Johnson
Community Coordinator
North side of Milwaukee -District # 5

Mid-Year Report

Coalition Building

The following report summarizes the Community Coordinator's activities in Milwaukee Police District Five with respect to the Safe Streets Initiative.

The past six months have been a time of growth and development for the Safe Streets program. The Community coordinator for District 5 on the North side of town has been busy with the task of collaboratively building relationships with community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, residents, community stakeholders, business people, law enforcement, educators, job developers and youth. This all-inclusive, community-driven model is how Restorative Justice practices are woven into the Safe Streets crime reduction effort. Crime is looked at as victim based, offender focused and community driven.

A list of some of the contacts made in this effort include: Northcott Neighborhood House, St. Martin de Porres Catholic Church, The Alma Center, Harambee Ombudsman Project, Wisconsin Correctional Services, Milwaukee Fatherhood Initiative, The Kaiser Group, Running Rebels Community Organization, Career Youth Development, Milwaukee Area Workforce Development Board, Warning! We Must Respect Each Other Summer Basketball League, Ministries of Hope, Hepatha Lutheran Church, Boot Camp program, Milwaukee Public Schools, Stand Together Milwaukee.

Examples of how collaborative relationship can benefit the community and serve the program are:

- 1). The Coordinator working with the Northcott Neighborhood House staff to help organize the security strategy for the recent June 19th community celebration. Juneteenth Day is a festival of hundreds of thousands of people and is celebrated on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, in the heart of the 5th district. There were no serious incidents and no violence.
- 2). The Boot Camp program, under the direction of Rodney Bourouge and a 30 man squad , helped with the 5th district spring neighborhood clean-up which was held on Saturday, May, 3, 2008. Fifth district Captain, Tony Smith, announced early in the spring that a physically clean neighborhood was an important part of his summer safety strategy. The clean-up was organized by Community Liaison Officer Ray Robakowski and driven by the area's block club organizations, specifically Hands Around First Street and Cluster 5.

3). The formation of Stand Together Milwaukee, a gun and violence prevention coalition that was initiated by Sernoma Mitchell from the Greater Milwaukee Foundation and Janet Fitch, a well known art activist in Milwaukee. After less than a year of meeting, Stand Together Milwaukee quickly grew into a coalition of more than 30 organizations. Its mission is to advocate for gun and violence prevention and to support existing efforts to that end. The Safe Streets Coordinator is actively involved with the work of the coalition.

Program Highlights

A major event in the Safe Streets program in the 5th district was the Community Call-In, which took place at St. Martin de Porres Church on Tuesday, February 26, 2008. The Call-In, a central component in the crime prevention strategy of Dr. David Kennedy, represented a collaboration between Marquette's Restorative Justice model/Safe Streets, law enforcement, and the community residents and block clubs of the Harambee Great Neighborhood. Law enforcement identified a number of low-level drug dealers in a gang-entrenched neighborhood. Undercover buys were made, secret pictures taken and offender's identities collected. All of the people involved in this low-level, open-air drug market were invited to a community meeting instead of being arrested and thrown in jail.

At this Call-In event, close to 40 police officers were present as well as community residents and stakeholders. The Call-In is an effort to hold offenders accountable to the community for crimes and injustices. Milwaukee Mayor Tom Barrett and Milwaukee Police Chief, Edward Flynn, were on hand to speak.

The offenders were referred to a needs assessment with the community organization, Justice 2000. They were also referred to resources such as: Northcott Neighborhood House's Fresh Start Program, the City of Milwaukee's Summer Youth Employment program, St. Vincent Adult Education Center, the Milwaukee Job Development agency and to the Milwaukee Area Technical College.

We continue to work on developing a more collaborative effort with Milwaukee Reentry Coordinator Kristine Kehoss' office at the Department of Corrections. This collaboration also includes US Attorney Bill Lipscomb, Community Prosecutor Jake Corr, and officers from the 5th district. Monthly notification Hearings are held to "welcome" formerly incarcerated individuals back into the community and to present to them straight talk from law enforcement. At the same time, we conduct a Community Listening Circle which includes the offenders, law enforcement, victims and resource providers. Since January we have worked with the DOC in doing 8 Notification Hearings/Circles that included 64 offenders and 193 members of the

Community. Most of the Circles/Notification Hearings have been held at the Coffee Makes You Black Community Center, with one being held at the Church of the Living God. In the next program quarter, hearings and circles will be held at various sites throughout the 5th district.

Additional Restorative Justice Circles have been conducted in collaboration with the Safe Streets program at the Alma Center, St. Vincent Adult Learning Center, the Holton Street YMCA, NOVA H.S. and North Division H.S.

Future Activities

The next quarter will see the development of Community Teach-ins as a way of strengthening block clubs, a support group for ex-offenders and more Circles with clergy, community residents and stakeholders. Also, Ray's consulting group has agreed to donate an 8 week Father's Nurturing Class to the men we work with from DOC in the Circles.

Respectfully Submitted by:

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