

2015

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department Antelope Valley Crime Prevention & Community Engagement Strategies



Prepared by
Lancaster and Palmdale Sheriff's
Community Relations

CRIME PREVENTION & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

ANTELOPE VALLEY SHERIFF STATIONS 2015

LANCASTER & PALMDALE SHERIFF STATIONS

The purpose of this report is to outline existing crime prevention and community engagement strategies and programs currently being utilized at the Lancaster and Palmdale Sheriff Stations. In addition, new components, philosophies and strategies have been identified and are outlined in this report. The primary goals are to improve all aspects of our public trust policing and reduce crime by working to enhance our partnerships with the communities we serve.

At the Lancaster and Palmdale Sheriff Stations we expect all personnel to adopt community policing strategies and work cohesively to adhere to the following basic principles and philosophies:

- *Change Lancaster and Palmdale Station's current culture from warrior mentality to guardian mindset*
- *Train all sworn personnel on community policing and problem oriented policing methods*
- *Work with community members to identify problems and implement solutions which positively impact quality of life issues and areas of concern within the community.*
- *Maintain and enhance transparency and open communication with the public to further community partnerships.*
- *Work tirelessly every day to maintain public trust throughout our community and with our public safety partners.*

This report will identify current community policing partnerships and programs which have been implemented at the both the Lancaster and Palmdale Sheriff's Stations. It will also introduce proposed new strategies which are being adopted and implemented.

Background

In early 2011, Palmdale Captain Bobby Denham and Lancaster Station Captain Robert Jonsen recognized the sheriff's stations had become somewhat isolated from the minority communities. As newspaper headlines read the stations were waging a war on crime/criminals, many in the minority communities felt the war had been waged on them. Department policies, procedures and enforcement tactics left many in the community with a lack of trust of their local law enforcement.

Acknowledging the need to re-establish credibility and trust within the two communities, the stations began looking at opportunities to collaborate with community partners such as non-profit organizations, faith-based groups, community organizations, youth groups, community members, and other government agencies specifically within our minority communities.

For some in the Antelope Valley communities it was too little, too late. In August 2011, the United States Department of Justice (DOJ), Civil Rights Division, initiated an investigation into the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department's (LASD) Palmdale and Lancaster Stations in response to community complaints about potential Fair Housing Act violations and other general policing issues in the Antelope Valley.

As the DOJ began conducting its investigation, the stations continued to develop their community plans. In 2012, the Captains revived the station Community Advisory Committees. Press releases were sent to all local news media outlets and several dozen people inquired or applied. The reinstatement and reorganization of the Antelope Valley Station's CAC's began with the thoughtful selection of its panel of members. Each member chosen was selected to represent different segments of the communities to achieve an overall representation. Different geographic areas, ethnicities, faiths, and members of the LGBTQ were all considered when selections were made. The committees' composition is truly reflective of the diverse communities served.

Ultimately 8 people were chosen to represent Palmdale and 11 people were chosen to represent Lancaster. All CAC members were required to live or work in the community, were active in the community, and had completed or agreed to complete the Community Academy.

In June 2013, the DOJ publicized their findings letter, which alleged a pattern or practice of discriminatory policing and otherwise unlawful searches and seizures, including the use of unreasonable force, and violations of the Fair Housing Act. LASD subsequently entered into negotiations with the USDOJ and the Settlement Agreement was signed on April 28, 2015.

The following include excerpts from the terms of the agreement as it relates to Section VII Community Engagement and the actions the Lancaster and Palmdale Stations have taken in addressing them to date. Many of the mandates stipulated were put into practice prior to the release of the findings letter and/or settlement agreement.

Community and Problem-Orientated Policing

Under the terms of the agreement, LASD agreed to actively promote and strengthen partnerships within the community, to engage constructively with the community to ensure collaborative problem-solving and bias-free policing, and to increase community confidence in the Department.

Settlement agreement #87: LASD agrees to actively participate in community engagement efforts in the Antelope Valley, including participating in local community meetings, making itself available for community feedback, developing the Community Advisory Committees (CAC), and working with the community on the development of diversion programs.

Both stations have already taken steps to implement some of the recommendations and action items addressed in the settlement agreement.

Since 2012, Lancaster and Palmdale Stations have been actively engaged in the following local community organizations and community based groups. Some of these groups meet monthly and others we support through civic engagement and/or special events. These groups were chosen as they represent segments of our community which have been identified as most vulnerable, have historically been under represented, or represent those who previously had no, little, or strained relationships with the Sheriff's Department.

Through consistent collaboration with these community groups, the stations have established the Sheriff's Department as a valuable resource and a community partner. In return, these organizations have assisted the stations in creating opportunities in developing relationships with the community members they represent, i.e.; the homeless, mentally ill, faith based groups (often the target of hate crimes), the LGBTQ community (often the target of hate crimes), victims of domestic violence, victims of sexual assault, youth (at risk, minority), probation/parolees (seeking rehabilitation/re-entry into community), Hispanic community (Spanish only), and minority communities.

Communication with community groups is primarily done through email in regard to establishing meeting dates and times, and distribution of special event information. Station personnel support these groups by mentoring, providing auxiliary support at community events, attending meetings, providing safety presentations, teaching self-defense classes, and providing other support services.

The assignment of personnel who attend specific meeting and/or events is based upon the requested service and/or event. In addition to the primary person, additional support personnel may be asked to accompany in an effort to increase overall station community participation efforts.

Through increased participation in civic and community engagement, deputies from Lancaster and Palmdale Stations have gained a greater understanding of community needs and are working alongside community members, non-profit organizations, community organizations, and other government agencies to positively impact the quality of life for all Antelope Valley residents.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS AND OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Deputies and/or the Sergeant from the Community Relations/Crime Prevention office from both Lancaster and Palmdale Stations attend monthly meetings with our community partners. These coalitions require consistency of personnel due to ongoing dialogue and problem solving efforts which would be extremely difficult to manage with a constant change in personnel. Station personnel are required to attend one event per year. However, many personnel opt to attend one or more event throughout the year. Events, operations, community projects are shared with station personnel who have the opportunity to participate via email notification or through patrol briefings.

Antelope Valley Homeless Coalition (Mentally ill, Homeless, Veterans) - The AV Homeless Coalition is comprised of representatives from government agencies, law enforcement and non-profit organizations to address the needs and concerns of the Antelope Valley homeless population. Through constructive collaboration of efforts, many needs of the homeless are met. The yearly project for this group is an annual count of the homeless population. Station personnel are vital to this operation's success as patrol deputies are able to provide information regarding the location of homeless encampments and/or areas where the homeless congregate. This is important to the community because without an accurate homeless count, the Antelope Valley does not receive the adequate financial resources needed to take care of this special population within our community. The coalition is also responsible for facilitating training and fundraising events for organizations such as Grace Resource, Catalyst Foundation, Mental Health America, and Valley Oasis which graciously provide education, emergency food, housing assistance and other emergency resources.

Goal – The purpose for attending this monthly meeting is developing relationships and establishing trust with homeless community, creating networking opportunities with non-profit organizations, and laying the foundation for future training opportunities.

Antelope Valley National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (AV NAACP) - The monthly meetings, which are held the third Monday of each month, are

regularly attended by the Lancaster Station Captain, the Liaison Lieutenant and/or Community Relations Sergeant. The president of the AV NAACP is also a member of the Lancaster Sheriff's Station Community Advisory Committee (CAC).

Goal - Purpose of attending meeting is to repair fractured relations with minority communities, specifically the African-American community. During this meeting we learn about other events which are occurring in the community as well as issues and concerns facing minority community members. LASD members in attendance often use this platform to explain Department Policies to increase the community's knowledge and understanding of why certain protocols are necessary.

Antelope Valley Re-entry Coalition - Spearheaded by the Paving the Way Foundation, this group works to assist community members who are on probation or parole to successfully fulfill the requirements of their court sentence, while finding gainful employment and/or education. Without a strong support system these community members will not successfully integrate back into society. The coalition holds two Community Resource Fairs per year.

Lancaster Station personnel additionally work with Paving the Way Foundation to raise funds needed to provide educational programs and materials for life classes, parenting classes, job interview and resume assistance. Without the necessary skills to achieve employment, and general life skills, the chances for re-entry success for most probationers and parolees is limited.

Goals for both programs - Reduce recidivism. Provide support for community members struggling to stay out of the legal system. Restore community trust. Repair relations with minority communities. These fairs are attended by Department members who address the probationers and parolees to advise them on ways to succeed.

Antelope Valley Veterans Alliance and the Antelope Valley Veterans Community Action Coalition (Veterans, Homeless Veterans, Veterans with Disabilities) - CAC members, along with station personnel, support both of these organizations which are comprised of representatives from government agencies, law enforcement, and non-profit organizations to address the needs and concerns of the Antelope Valley's Veteran population. Information learned from this meeting which is relevant to crime prevention and community outreach, is disseminated to station personnel and/or community members. Information regarding job fairs, community events and services offered for veterans, are shared with station personnel as well as other community partners and provided to veterans in need.

Goal - Purpose for attending this meeting - developing relationships and establishing trust with Veterans, creating networking opportunities with non-profit organizations, and

laying the foundation for future training opportunities. Deputies with prior military service attend this meeting.

Antelope Valley Interfaith Council (Faith Based/Secular) – Lancaster and Palmdale Station personnel, together with the Antelope Valley Human Relations Commission, attend meetings which include a diverse spectrum of people from all faiths and ethnicities. These meetings and events are public forums designed to engage the community in an open setting to voice grievances, ask questions and join in fostering a greater understanding of community concerns. Specific concerns addressed are those which are in relation to the many diverse and sometimes controversial faiths within the Antelope Valley Community. The purpose of the group is to promote understanding and tolerance. Personnel who attend these meetings take notes when appropriate and share information learned with station personnel.

Goal - Reduce number of hate crimes and hate incidents in the Antelope Valley and to increase law enforcements awareness of certain religious protocols and needs.

Mental Health America (Mental Health, Homeless, Veterans) - Over the past three years Mental Health America has provided Mental Health Training to over 600 Antelope Valley Law Enforcement Officers including LASD Deputies, California Highway Patrol Officers, Lancaster and Palmdale City Code Enforcement Officers, and Kern County Deputies. The goal of the training is to reduce the number of negative incidents involving law enforcement and persons with mental health conditions, by training law enforcement officers to recognize the signs of a person with a mental illness and a person in crisis. Teaching law enforcement skills such as de-escalation techniques and providing referral resources, provides officers with additional tools and alternative solutions for addressing person affected by mental illness or in crisis, who all too often end up incarcerated. Additionally, deputies who have attended the training have had the opportunity to meet with many of the patients/clients while they are not in crisis and while they were in a “safe” positive environment. Several deputies have stated they have come across those same people while working patrol and had a positive experience with them, which they attributed to the training.

Goal - Reduce number of force incidents in response to calls involving persons with mental illness or in crisis, provide deputies and community members with additional resources.

Children’s Charities of the Antelope Valley - Thunder on the Lot – Both AV stations assist in this event which is operated by the City of Lancaster and benefits over 25 children’s organizations. This event has expanded to become the largest car and bike show event in northern Los Angeles County. The AV station personnel, with Search and Rescue, CERT, and Teen CERT, present exhibits and conduct demonstrations.

This event provides an excellent opportunity for station personnel and volunteers to interact and engage community members in a fun and friendly environment.

Grace Resource Center - Grace Resource Center is a faith-based community emergency housing shelter and food bank. Both the Lancaster and Palmdale Stations conduct several food drives each year to support the growing number of homeless and low income families coming into the Antelope Valley. With limited community resources to provide for the growing needs of this population, the stations have also participated in clothing, jacket, shoe, blanket, and backpack drives.

Goal - To assist low income families and homeless persons with the things they need to survive until they can obtain employment and permanent housing. Because it is the right thing to do.

Valley Oasis - Valley Oasis is a community based organization dedicated to eliminating social and domestic violence and homelessness through community awareness intervention, prevention, safe shelter, and supportive services. Through our partnership, station detectives work with domestic violence and sexual assault advocates to obtain services for victims such as emergency housing, counseling and court accompaniment. It is through community partnerships such as this that we are able to help victims escape violence, seek justice, and begin recovery.

Goal - Create a safer community, build community trust. Break the cycle of violence.

CIVIC MEETINGS

City and Town Council Meetings - Deputies were present at all city council and county town hall meetings to address any law enforcement questions or concerns residents may have, as well as to provide crime statistics and crime prevention information. CAC members were encouraged to attend the meetings in their area to be an additional resource for community members who may feel some trepidation about speaking directly to a deputy.

Chambers of Commerce - The AV stations are actively engaged in their local Chambers of Commerce. In addition to the traditional events law enforcement would participate in with these business chambers such as parades, station personnel now attend Business before Breakfast, and the monthly luncheon meetings with both the city and Hispanic Chambers of Commerce. These meetings are great opportunities for deputies to speak to business owners regarding crime prevention concepts, security, safety, and loss prevention issues shared by most businesses. Recently Lancaster and Palmdale Station personnel co-facilitated an active shooter presentation. Following that presentation, several local businesses asked for additional presentations at their establishments for their employees.

Goal of attending these meetings are to increase business participation in crime prevention programs, develop relationships with the business community, and work together with local businesses to develop strategies to reduce crime within the business community.

School Board Meetings – Personnel from both stations attend monthly school board meetings. These meetings are a forum for citizens to voice concerns regarding their communities, school programs, school safety, as well as their experiences and perceptions of deputy interactions amongst students.

Information gained from these meetings regarding criminal activity in or around the schools is brought back to the station and assigned to patrol deputies in briefing, assigned to directed patrol units or other specialized units. Feedback regarding experiences with deputies has been positive and negative depending on the issue the parent wants addressed and whether the deputy is able to address it at the time. Overall, parents are happy the deputies are at the meetings to establish order and maintain civility, especially during meetings when controversial decisions are being made.

Goal of attendance at meeting: to develop rapport with district parents. Gain information regarding criminal activity going on within or around school grounds. Address parent concerns.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Coffee with a Cop – “Removing the barriers, eliminating the agenda, and meeting on mutual turf is why the Coffee with a Cop concept works.” Coffee with a Cop was created by Hawthorne Police Department. The concept is simple, law enforcement talking with community members about everything from sports to politics over a cup of coffee.

Palmdale station adopted this program in 2015, as a community engagement event. On the first Friday of each month, the public and deputies meet at a local McDonald’s restaurant to enjoy a free cup of coffee and cookies. This non-threatening exchange has proven to be a success. The Palmdale Station Captain attends and joins in on the fun and conversation. This event has fostered new relationships and helped towards building trust with the public.

The program has been instrumental in expressing to the community the Department’s desire to meet with them and hear their ideas, concerns, or any issues they may be experiencing in their neighborhoods.

Coffee with a Deputy- Lancaster Station adopted this program in 1998 and continued it

until 2001 when it was cancelled due to budget constraints. It was reinstated in 2012. The concepts are the same as the “Coffee with a Cop” program. The coffee is held at the Lemon Leaf Café which is located on Lancaster Blvd, just down the street from the Lancaster Sheriff’s Station, and in the heart of the city. It is easily accessible by public transportation and in walking distance of several senior living apartment complexes and the Senior Center. Each month various deputies, sergeants, lieutenants, professional staff and the Captain attend.

Public Safety Expo - Palmdale Station had meager beginnings, as the original station was a storefront in a small shopping center. The location was too small to accommodate a large number of people. In order to provide a station open house for the public, Palmdale held their event at several venues over the years. Since it wasn’t really a station open house, they renamed it the Palmdale Public Safety Expo. Past events were held at a local car dealership and a local park.

Over the past several years, Palmdale Station has partnered with the Antelope Valley Mall to present the Public Safety Expo. This event which is held on the Saturday before Father’s Day each year, takes over the parking lot in front of the main entrance to the only major shopping mall in the Antelope Valley.

Past events at the mall have included a car show, chili cook-off, a free rock climbing wall presented by the Sheriff’s Search and Rescue Team as well as a “Dunk-a-Cop” dunk tank. This event features numerous Department units and all public safety entities from throughout the Antelope Valley, including the fire department, animal control, railroad police, American Medical Response, local hospitals, CERT, Red Cross, and city services to name a few. Each year this event has drawn crowds in excess of 800 people.

Everyone loves the opportunity to dunk the station captain and a traffic officer in the dunk tank. The public and deputies interact at the various booths and exhibits. This event is family friendly and a great time is always had by all in attendance.

Any donations received from this event go to “999 for Kids.” This children’s charity was created by the Sheriff’s Department and provides funds for children in the care of the Department of Children and Family Services. The County only provides for standard care items for these children. 999 for Kids provides funds for such items as racing wheel chairs, specialized computer equipment and keyboards, and even summer camp programs for special needs children. In 2015, Palmdale Station raised over \$1000 for this charity.

2016 will mark the ten-year anniversary of the opening of Palmdale Station. In honor of this event, Palmdale Station will host an open house on Saturday, June 4, 2016, in lieu of the Safety Expo.

Fire Service Day – Both Lancaster and Palmdale stations partner with the Los Angeles County Fire Department for this one day event. The Fire Service Day is the fire department's open house. The Sheriff's Department works hand in hand with the fire department. We assist with this event by participating in their chili cook-off and by providing emergency equipment for display. Each of our station Explorer Posts provide Explorer recruitment information and interact with the public and young adults. The Antelope Valley Search and Rescue Team has vehicles on display and presents an exhibit which highlights mountain rescue operations and wilderness education.

Our participation in this event allows the public to interact with deputy personnel in an open, non-threatening atmosphere. Personnel at this event do not provide any security or policing function. Their sole mission is to engage and interact with the public.

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEES AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Community Advisory Committees

The Community Advisory Committees (CAC), including the Committees now active in Lancaster and Palmdale, became the liaison between the Sheriff's Department and the Community. It is the responsibility of the CAC to not only keep the Sheriff's Department informed about issues, criminal or quality of life, that affect their neighborhoods, but it is also the responsibility of the CAC to relay complaints to the Sheriff's Department when the community members have interactions with Sheriff's personnel who didn't meet their needs or expectations.

CAC members have unfiltered access to the station commanders and provide valuable input to them and the Sheriff regarding strategies in training to improve community relations and the complaint process. They also work with the Sheriff and station commanders to establish and carry out community public safety priorities and concerns, as well as receive and convey to the Department, public comments and concerns.

Over the last few years, the CAC's have received training in the Organizational Structure of the Sheriff's Department, a review of Department Policies and Procedures, the Department's complaint system, use of force policies, internal investigations and accountability systems, Peace Officers Bill of Rights (POBR), policies and procedures related to use of force and firearms, station community programs, Problem Solving Policing, Community Policing and Communication, and Bias Free Policing and Implicit Bias.

The Lancaster CAC created and maintains control over its Facebook page, "Lancaster CAC." CAC Member Shunnon Thomas is the administrator of the site. The CAC is able to receive messages from the public and can advise the public how to file complaints, commendations, or just voice comments or concerns.

The Community Advisory Committees and/or individual members have hosted several Community Outreach forums, attended / hosted four National Night Out events, and attended numerous community and station events. Additionally, they are working with our local cable and radio stations to produce several public service announcements (PSA). The purpose of these PSA's is to educate the public on, "What to do if you are pulled over", "What to do if you see an emergency vehicle behind you", "How to reduce theft", and many more.

In 2014, the CAC's were instrumental in coordinating several Driver's License workshops geared toward the Hispanic community. These workshops included several South and Central American Consulates, the California Department of Motor Vehicles, the California Highway Patrol and Palmdale Station Zone Deputies. The workshops were held in Spanish and addressed the documentation and verification procedures in order to obtain a California Driver's License. Several hundred people attended the workshops, which were very well received.

Both CAC's have been working with community leaders to build partnerships and specifically engage youth, the Hispanic community and communities of color. The ultimate goal is to establish open communication and trust.

Days of Dialogue

In 2015, the Palmdale CAC and Captain Don Ford worked to bring the "Days of Dialogue" program to the Antelope Valley. Their website states, "Days of Dialogue is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization whose mission is to be a catalyst in the community problem solving process by creating dialogue on sensitive social issues among diverse community groups. By facilitating respectful, purposeful conversation on a broad range of public issues and public policies and topics, we foster understanding, and encourage people to improve their quality of life through civic engagement." (Futureofpolicing.org)

Working with event organizers from the Institute for Non-Violence, and Lancaster CAC member Shunnon Thomas, President of the Antelope Valley Chapter of the NAACP, and Juan Blanco former NAACP President, the stations co-hosted a dialogue event which was the first of its kind in the Antelope Valley. Since that date the stations have hosted three dialogue events. Pre and post surveys were conducted at each event. Information on each event is published on the website. It was extremely encouraging to see the diverse group of people from throughout the Antelope Valley sit together in round tables to discuss such topics as racial profiling, excessive force, and current media coverage of high profile incidents involving law enforcement. Although such topics are often uncomfortable, it is important that both the community and deputies have the opportunity to discuss topics such as these which left unaddressed can lead to mistrust, resentment, and even hatred.

Feedback from each of these events from the community and the deputies who attended has been extremely positive and it is clear that more dialogue events are needed.

Goal - community trust building, racial reconciliation.

Public Service Announcements (PSA) - The Lancaster Station CAC believes that one of the reasons for negative contacts experienced between some community members and law enforcement is the public not being aware of how best to interact with law enforcement. The CAC is developing several PSAs aimed at addressing concerns such as: *What do I do when I am pulled over? What do I do when there is an emergency vehicle behind me with the lights and sirens on? How to file a complaint against a deputy or commend them for their actions? How can I keep my house safe from burglars?* The CAC will be working with community members and Department personnel to determine the priority of PSA's and future topics.

Goal - reduce number of negative contacts with community members, increase public trust, crime prevention, community policing.

Station Open House - Each year in May, Lancaster Station partners with local non-profit organizations for their Annual Open House. The open house offers residents an opportunity to tour the station, meet personnel, and familiarize themselves with some of the many programs and services the station, Department, and local non-profit organizations provide.

This event provides an opportunity for the public to interact with department personnel in a non-threatening, fun atmosphere.

Justice Sunday National Continuum Event – This event is held during the Martin Luther King Jr weekend and involves faith-based community leaders with a focus on race relations and procedural justice for all. Deputy personnel attend local events and stand in unison with participants.

Multi-Denominational Faith-Based Holiday Events - A recent toy drive and community dinner was sponsored by One Way Up, which is a local non-profit organization specifically benefitting minority and low income families. Additionally, CAC members and station personnel collected toys and distributed them to local families and charity organizations.

Palmdale Station hosts an annual Christmas toy drive and toy give away. In addition to providing toys on a special request basis for specific need families, station personnel dress as Santa Claus and drive up and down streets in patrol cars to pass out toys. Last year's event netted over 950 toys with an estimated value in excess of \$10,000.

CRIME PREVENTION AND PUBLIC SAFETY EDUCATION

Lancaster and Palmdale Sheriff's Station leaders and city and county officials agree that one of the keys to reducing crime and addressing public safety challenges in the contract cities of Lancaster and Palmdale and the surrounding unincorporated areas is to enhance traditional policing techniques through the use of community based policing programs. By partnering with the communities we protect, we fortify public trust and make the community, as a whole, safer for all.

In 1992, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Antelope Valley Station first adopted community policing philosophies. That effort has continued as a foundation for public safety services for more than two decades.

Palmdale Station- PAC Program

Palmdale Station has operated on the philosophy of community policing even prior to its grand opening as its own station. In 1992, working with the City of Palmdale, Palmdale Station started what is now known as Partners Against Crime (PAC). This specialized team was developed based on community partnerships and the community policing model. Its primary focus was to strengthen community ties for crime prevention and problem solving. The team has developed a philosophy of policing the community by combining the assets of patrol, detectives, station leaders and, most importantly, the community.

Strong partnerships have been developed and enhanced between the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department staff, City of Palmdale officials, County of Los Angeles representatives, residents, business owners and community leaders. The PAC program and concepts removed the barriers between deputies, the city and the community. Deputies have been given the autonomy to identify problems, develop solutions and work directly with city and community members to permanently resolve issues impacting our neighborhoods.

Through PAC, deputies have moved out of their patrol cars and into the neighborhoods on foot and bicycle to develop strong relationships with the residents and business owners. This program incorporates both outreach and enforcement efforts and integrates them into the neighborhoods focusing on problem solving.

Institutionalism

From the onset, the PAC program was committed to being a long-term solution instead of a quick fix. The program has provided the flexibility to identify community problems and concerns and immediately react to make a difference. The Sheriff's Department has formed long-term partnerships with the community, city and county agencies. The Palmdale Station works to involve the entire station in the concepts of "Community Based Policing" and principals involved in "Problem Oriented Policing." Both are an integrated part of the normal operating procedures and service expectations.

One of the primary missions of the PAC team is to educate and empower the public to be actively involved in their community and law enforcement efforts. We ask the citizens to be the “eyes and ears” for law enforcement and have direct lines of communication to provide information and express their concerns.

The PAC team has developed community partnerships with government entities, business owners, non-profit organizations, residents and the local media.

Partners Against Crime (PAC) Concept Defined

PAC is comprised of a team of sergeants and deputies who are overseen by a lieutenant. They work together with the public to identify concerns, prevent crime, address crime trends or nuisance problems and respond to crime tips. Two sergeants oversee the team elements and have the authority and flexibility to move personnel around to address frequent varying missions and concerns to permanently resolve long-term problems or issues that are most important to the public. The team is also bicycle trained and conducts patrols throughout the city. These patrols are frequently conducted with specific information about crimes and nuisance problems provided by the residents. These patrols are effective in fighting crime, but additionally assist in public relations and crime prevention as the deputies are removed from the car and have close interaction with the public.

These deputies are contract items for the City of Palmdale, with the exception of three School Resource Deputies who are contracted by the Palmdale School District.

Apartment Watch – PAC Certification

This PAC program combines the City, Palmdale Sheriff's Station, rental property owners and managers and residents into a team that focuses on keeping illegal activity out of rental property and improving the quality of life for all Palmdale residents. The program focuses on neighborhood maintenance and revitalization, advancing creative and comprehensive interventions to deal with gangs, drugs and hate crimes through collaborative problem solving strategies.

Property owners and/or managers must complete the three phase certification program and maintain active participation to remain a member in good standing with the PAC Program. The three phases include:

- *Phase 1 - Landlord Training Program*
The landlord training program is open to individuals who own or manage rental property. Participation and completion of the class is mandatory for owners/managers seeking certification for their property. The program is an eight-hour course, which takes place over two nights. The course takes an in-depth look at managing rental properties, keeping illegal activity off properties and current laws and practices involved with landlords and their tenants.

- *Phase 2 - Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design Inspections*
In order for law enforcement officers to effectively combat crime on properties, it is necessary for property owners to make “Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design” (CPTED) modifications to their properties. These standards address the physical design of a property and can include such issues as installing appropriate locks on doors and windows, installing outdoor lighting and landscaping designed to deter criminal activity. Properties that meet and maintain the recommended modifications will be certified. PAC certification may be revoked if the minimum requirements are not maintained.
- *Phase 3 - Partners Against Crime Apartment Watch*
The third segment of the PAC program is the Apartment Watch or Mobile Home Watch segment where residents receive crime prevention training. The effectiveness of organizing neighborhoods for problem solving has been documented across the country and has similarly proven very successful here in Palmdale.

Palmdale's PAC program has also been very successful in forming and maintaining Apartment Watch groups. These groups are made up of tenants, property managers, property owners and neighbors. Meetings are held as requested by the public. Both deputies and city crime prevention officers attend meetings where community engagement and interaction are key strategies to addressing issues of concern.

Most meetings are informal, with “pot luck” meals before the meeting. This allows the deputies, city crime prevention officers and the public to mingle and establish a rapport prior to the meeting.

Lancaster Station-Directed Patrol Units

Lancaster Station also recognizes the importance of Community Policing. Utilizing a multifaceted team approach, the station has developed innovative crime prevention strategies.

Working with the City of Lancaster and County Agencies, personnel identify crime trends and work with community members to develop crime fighting strategies. Through the use of Directed Patrol Units (no call cars assigned to patrol), areas which experience high rates of crime have the added resources to address specific areas of concern. Additionally, specialized teams such as LAN-CAP, the Burglary Suppression Team, and the Robbery Suppression team were created to immediately address specific crimes, increasing the odds of solving them expeditiously. Members of these teams rely heavily on community support. Tips through crime stoppers has been an extremely effective tool in obtaining information regarding wanted persons, identifying suspects, identifying drug houses, and gaining invaluable information to solve crimes. Working with the community relations/crime prevention unit Public Service

Announcements can be disseminated to alert the public regarding crimes happening in a particular area.

Lancaster Community Appreciation Project- LAN-CAP The City of Lancaster, the Los Angeles County District Attorneys' Office, and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department collaborated to create the LAN-CAP program. A specialized team of eight dedicated deputies and a sergeant work to help patrol and reduce crime in rental properties, as well as work with rental managers and property owners to address unique needs and regarding crime prevention. The City's Public Safety Office, in conjunction with LAN-CAP deputies, conducts specialized training courses for rental operators within the City, focusing on areas such as screening of tenancy applicants, Code Enforcement, evictions, gangs/graffiti, crime prevention, narcotics, Chronic Nuisance Abatement, and more. Under Lancaster City Ordinance Chapter 5.40, all owners of residential rental property within the City, must obtain a Rental Housing Business License from the City. In addition, all rental properties with sixteen or more residential rental units must obtain LAN-CAP certification (those with fewer than sixteen units are highly encouraged, but not required, to obtain LAN-CAP certification). Similar to the PAC program, the LAN-CAP certification process consists of the landlord training class, implementation of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies, and rental community crime prevention training sessions for the residents of the program.

Landlord training classes are held periodically throughout the year. Each class consists of two four hour sessions; both sessions are required to pass the class. Landlord training classes are open to property owners, property managers/assistant managers, and anyone who works in a rental property's leasing office. Whenever possible, it is recommended that multiple employees (besides the manager him/herself) attend the class, so that all employees have the knowledge necessary to make the program work effectively and efficiently.

Goal - Work with residents, landlords and property managers of large rental properties to provide a safe community environment free of gangs, narcotics, and other crimes sometimes associated with affordable housing.

City Liaison Deputies

The cities of Palmdale and Lancaster are each assigned a Liaison Deputy. These deputies are responsible for attending all City Council and Planning Commission meetings and act as the Sergeant-at-Arms. They partner with all city departments and are responsible for conducting licensing checks of local businesses. The liaison deputies write all Environmental Impact Reports for new businesses and new construction.

The Liaison Deputies train new staff working as park rangers and youth that are hired each summer to work at the city's Department of Parks and Recreation. The cities have always been very responsive to the needs of law enforcement and have worked to create or modify municipal codes to assist us.

The municipal codes are written as civil citations (administrative citation involving a fee), criminal infractions or criminal misdemeanors. The Liaison Deputy acts as the bailiff for all administrative hearings, which are heard by a commissioner. This partnership greatly reduces parties and noise ordinance violations.

Zone Deputies

To assist in crime prevention and enforcement, the City of Palmdale was divided into four zones. Initially four deputies were committed to this program; one deputy for each zone. Due to budget shortfalls, now there are two deputies responsible for overseeing the four zones.

The Zone Deputies work under the community relations office and are supervised by a sergeant and the PAC lieutenant. They function in a similar manner as the PAC unit, but are focused on handing quality of life issues and neighbor disputes occurring at single family residences.

The Zone Deputies run daily crime statistics using numerous resources. They identify crime trends within their "zones" and develop strategic plans with PAC, other department resources and neighborhood watch block captains and area residents. This concept allows us to work with area residents to solve neighborhood problems together.

The Zone Deputies work very closely with the City of Palmdale Crime Prevention staff to facilitate more than 450 Neighborhood Watch groups throughout the city. The deputies attend meetings most every evening. Like the PAC Apartment Watch meetings, deputies and crime prevention staff arrive early to meet the public and build rapport, often over a meal. The Zone Deputy acts as a personal liaison between the public and the department.

The Zone Deputies facilitate "Business Watch" meetings to address crime trends specific to area businesses. The deputies walk up and down the street with Crime Prevention Staff stopping in businesses to talk to small business owners. This personal interaction allows us to find out what is really happening in a neighborhood as opposed to just calls for service and reported crimes. Panhandling and homelessness are two big issues which often go unreported in our area. Business owners fell powerless to do anything because prior calls to the station for service rarely provide permanent results.

The Zone Deputies are able to create strategic plans with business owners to address their concerns. In some instances, it's as easy as providing shelter or drug rehabilitation information to the individual.

The Zone Deputies also coordinate and attend special projects and community outreach and engagement events with the city and station. They receive all Los Angeles Regional "Crime Stoppers" tips and address public emails and anonymous tips, regardless of the source. They constantly monitor social media for tips, trends and intelligence.

The Zone Deputies monitor "Next door" which is a free private social network for the residents of the community. People are using Next door to quickly get the word out about break-ins, organizing neighborhood watch groups, and asking for help from other community users.

The Zone Deputies maintain our station website, which is viewed by the public. They ensure our website is updated regularly to address current issues and crime trends. They also assist the station press information officer by writing press releases and crime prevention tips. Each week Palmdale station releases information from our "Palmdale's Most Wanted" television segment via Nixle, Facebook, Twitter and our public website palmdale.lasd.org.

In addition, Palmdale Zone Deputies assist with station tours, school presentations, parole/probation compliance checks, conduct juvenile resource follow-up, and assist Partners Against Crime (PAC) and Antelope Valley Crime Fighting Initiative Task Force as requested.

SUMMER CRIME ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM (SCEP)

During the summer months, the County of Los Angeles fields a team of five deputies and one sergeant that comprise the Summer Crime Enforcement team. This team works regularly to partner with the residents in the unincorporated areas of Palmdale Station and Lancaster Station.

Loud Party Enforcement

Designated Weekend Party Patrols – In 2007 and early 2008, there were five gang-related homicides at or near the locations of large parties. The party patrol cars were developed, along with strong Lancaster and Palmdale Municipal Codes, to handle these parties and issue citations when appropriate. Since its inception, only one murder at or around a large party has occurred.

Two, two person, cars have been funded by the City of Palmdale to primarily patrol and respond to loud party calls. There were an increasing number of parties which escalated from a social gathering to masses showing up and fights breaking out. There were shootings, stabbings and assaults with great bodily injury. These cars, along with laws passed by the Palmdale City Council, curtailed these parties and kept them from growing into large problems resulting in violence and disruption to neighborhoods and the community. The council adopted an ordinance that makes the civil fine for a first

time large party offense 500 dollars. Second offenses can be 1,000 dollars and a third offense 2,000 dollars. The city maintains a database that keeps record of those who are repeat offenders. The deputies attempt to educate most first time violators about the ordinance in lieu of direct enforcement.

CAREER CRIMINAL APPREHENSION TEAM (CCAT)

Two deputies assigned to this team liaison with California State Parole and the Los Angeles County Probation Department to closely monitor those on parole, AB-109 and probation. They work to make sure the offenders are following the terms and conditions of their parole or probation. This team is also responsible for conducting prostitution stings.

Resident Deputies

The Antelope Valley Sheriff Station service areas are uniquely vast and diverse. Based on the widespread service area, it became necessary to develop the Resident Deputy (Town Sheriff) program to meet the public safety needs of our outlying station areas and provide optimal, community based service.

Three Resident Deputies are assigned to Palmdale Sheriff's Station. They patrol the areas of Acton and Aqua Dulce, Littlerock, Pearblossom, Llano, and Wrightwood, and the areas of Elizabeth Lake, Lake Hughes, Green Valley, and Leona Valley.

One Resident Deputy is assigned to Lancaster Sheriff's Station. He patrols the area of Lake Los Angeles.

All four deputies are a true representation of community policing. Working daily in the same community, the Resident Deputies become an integral part of the communities they serve. They not only provide police enforcement services, they attend Town Hall and Council meetings, school and water board meetings, and work directly with the residents to resolve problems or issues of concern. They are the School Resource Deputy for their area (Acton). They work to establish neighborhood watch groups in their areas and attend neighborhood watch meetings as requested by neighborhood watch block captains.

Each Resident Deputy is issued a cell phone and the number is provided to area residents. Emergency and routine calls for service are still requested to be routed through the station, but the Resident Deputy is available on day shift to handle and address quality of life issues and neighbor disputes working with community members to create solutions.

The Resident Deputies also assist with policing services in the Angeles National Forest, Los Padres National Forest and the Desert Preserve. They act as the Assistant Search

and Rescue Coordinators for the many emergencies that occur in these mountainous and desert regions. Each year they respond to over 80 emergencies including lost and/or injured hikers, medical emergencies and vehicle accidents.

Youth Crime Task force (YCTF)

A team of two Palmdale deputies who liaison with the Los Angeles County Probation Department, the Vital Intervention and Directional Alternatives (VIDA) program, Schools and School Resource Deputies and Alcohol and Beverage Control (ABC). This team conducts curfew and truancy sweeps. These sweeps reduce daytime burglaries and crimes committed by juveniles after 10:00 pm. It also assists in keeping juveniles in school to learn and further their education. Team members meet with parents and assist in getting at-risk youth into the VIDA program. They also provide parents with information about parenting classes. This combined community policing effort helps teach juvenile offenders responsibility and the consequences of their actions. It also aids parents with understanding how to work with their teenagers and young adults to be productive members of the community. This team plans and executes ABC stings of local businesses in an effort to educate business owners and reduce alcohol sales to minors. This team has also conducted stings on local smoke shop operations in an effort to reduce sales of tobacco to minors and sales of bath salts.

Graffiti Investigator

The Graffiti Investigators have the responsibility to handle all graffiti cases in the Cities of Palmdale and Lancaster. They work with the courts to get restitution for the cities, conduct training sessions for city workers who cover up the graffiti, and administrate the Graffiti Tracker Program. They work with the crime prevention office to conduct training at schools on the recognition of graffiti and how to report it and teach a portion of the Landlord Training Class on gangs and graffiti. Additionally, they educate local businesses that sell spray paint and conduct sting operations in order to ensure businesses are in compliance.

Mall Deputy

The Mall Deputy is dedicated to the safety of the employees and patrons of the Antelope Valley's only regional mall, which attracts thousands of patrons. The retail establishments and large business areas can also attract a criminal element, which can include large volume retail theft. This deputy has partnered with mall security, management, small business owners and the loss prevention officers from the large anchor stores. This deputy conducts regular business checks, both on his own and with the City of Palmdale Crime Prevention staff. He educates businesses on methods of combating retail theft. He is a member of the Los Angeles Organized Retail Crime Association (LAORCA) and attends their monthly meetings. He brings back information

and intelligence on current retail crime trends and concerns to both the mall staff and the City of Palmdale Crime Prevention personnel. The Mall Deputy has secured the use of the mall and its staff for active shooter training. This deputy also works with the Graffiti Investigator to identify vandals at the mall and with Zone Deputies to address crime trends at the mall and surrounding area.

SCHOOL RESOURCE DEPUTIES

Palmdale Station - The Palmdale School District contracts for three deputies to cover 25 schools from kindergarten to 8th grade. These deputies work daily in partnership with the schools, the students, the parents or guardians of students, the surrounding neighborhoods and businesses. They conduct regular respect-based and anti-bullying assemblies emphasizing safety, responsibility, and respect.

Over the past three years the school deputies have been working with the station community relations sergeant to create and implement a local "Teen CERT" program in our middle schools. CERT is an acronym for Community Emergency Response Team, which is a FEMA course on emergency and disaster preparation. Initial classes were run as an after school program presented by deputies and fire department staff. Graduates of the program are used for fire, emergency and disaster drills at their school. The program has been so successful, that two middle schools and two high schools have adopted the program and have made the training credited classes.

This partnership between the deputies, students and school staff has prepared our youth to help in the event of a major emergency or natural disaster. It is a very successful program which helps groom leaders for the future. Additionally, it has allowed students to interact with a deputy in a fun, hands-on environment, where they all work together as a team.

The School Resource Deputies also conduct bicycle and railroad safety programs for the students. Due to the numerous railroad crossings and bike paths in our area, education of this nature has been vital in saving lives and preventing accidents. These deputies work closely with VIDA and our Law Enforcement Explorer program, making several referrals of their students.

The School Resource Deputies have implemented first day of school procedures to enhance safety. They run several earthquake and lockdown drills annually, including using role players for realism and CERT trained students to assist school staff.

Our School Resource Deputies are extremely proactive and go out of their way to interact and engage students. Although they do provide security and handle criminal issues as they arise at the schools, the deputies work hard to break down barriers in order to interact with the students. As an example, the School Resource Deputies started a new student engagement program in 2015. The program is a friendly competition between two school deputies and twenty students. Teachers choose

students to assist with the competition based upon the prior week's performance. Each week a new competition is held in which each deputy pairs up with ten students. The winning team wins a five dollar gift card to Baskin-Robbins. This program has turned our deputies into celebrities at the schools. Students want to be chosen for the competitions and they support their favorite deputy. We are seeking ways to expand this program for 2016.

Lancaster Station - The Lancaster Station School Safety Unit is the largest school safety unit within the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. It has one sergeant, two team leaders, and two detectives, nine resource deputies for Antelope Valley Union High School District which encompasses eight high schools, eight continuation high schools and two "SOAR" prep academies. Three of the high schools are located in the Palmdale Station area. They also provide two resource deputies for Lancaster Unified School District with twenty-one schools. The Station also covers Eastside Union School District with one deputy for six elementary and middle schools. In addition, the station covers Antelope Valley College with two deputies and thirteen security officers. The deputies assigned to the school unit provide routine training for school security and staff in regards to active shooter and school lockdown incidents. The deputies participate in school events which include active drug and DUI diversion, and intervention training for youth. The school deputies strive to create positive interactions with the students they work with. They encourage students to excel academically and spend considerable time mentoring, providing homework assistance, or just listening to the students who sometimes lack attention at home. The deputies assist in career days on the campuses and assist the local court and district attorney's office in yearly "mock trial" competitions.

Goal - Provide a safe learning environment, create positive and supportive interaction with students, and establish community trust.

Neighborhood Watch - The AV stations are responsible for providing the Neighborhood Watch program to the unincorporated area of Lancaster and Palmdale. Rural Watch encourages residents to get to know their neighbors and report suspicious activity in their communities. The Lancaster Station and CAC sponsor Spanish classes and meetings for the Hispanic residents in the Lake Los Angeles Community.

Since 2011, Palmdale Station has made participation in Neighborhood Watch meetings a high priority by taking steps to ensure their attendance at over 250 meetings, and taking the opportunity to educate the residents regarding local crime trends and crime prevention strategies. Palmdale Station has also expanded their program to incorporate Park Watch, which allows park patrons to meet with deputies to discuss specific issues related to their local parks. This partnership with station personnel is available for residents who would like to assist in keeping their local parks a safe and inviting location of their community to enjoy.

AV deputies facilitate Apartment Watch programs while working closely with city staff, complex owners/mangers, and tenants to improve the quality of life in the complexes.

Goal - Involve community members in creating crime prevention strategies, build community trust

Public Safety Programs - both Lancaster and Palmdale Stations regularly provide Personal Safety, Home Safety, On-line/Computer Safety and Emergency Preparedness presentations to Neighborhood Watch, Business Watch, and community groups. They also educate the community through Domestic Violence, Child Abuse, and Sexual Assault Prevention Campaigns which also provide free self-defense classes for women and children.

Goal - To work with community members and victim service providers to increase public awareness and reporting of domestic violence, child abuse, and sexual assault crimes. Reduce crime through Crime Prevention/Community Policing efforts.

YOUTH ORIENTED PROGRAMS- Community Led

Pen or Pencil Mentoring - A culturally-based academic and mentoring enhancement curriculum created by the National Alliance of Faith and Justice. The principles of Pen or Pencil evolved around the link between educational experiences (*pencil*) and delinquency (*penitentiary*). Students who may be struggling in school are more likely to drop out and possibly become involved in criminal activity. The AV station captains and deputies participate by mentoring in the program which is designed to empower and encourage minority students to graduate high school, go to and complete college, ultimately working towards a successful career.

The target population is primarily minority school aged children; however, children of all races are welcome. We were invited to participate in this program by organizers and eagerly accepted the opportunity to engage with local youth.

Goal - It is our goal to create positive and supportive interaction with the youth involved with the program and thus establishing trust and a foundation for future growth. Additionally, we hope to inspire more minority youth to consider a career in law enforcement.

Feedback from participants and facilitators has been extremely positive.

Making Appropriate Choices (MAC) Program – Lancaster Station deputies participate in a unique youth program that encourages Antelope Valley youth to “make appropriate choices” and to have positive interaction with deputies and California Highway Patrol (CHP) officers. The MAC program was created in response to several tragic events involving the use of illegal drugs and/or alcohol which cost local teens their lives. A committee comprised of business professionals, school administrators, law enforcement and local youth, researched various drug, alcohol and tobacco prevention

programs that were being taught nationwide. The committee selected elements from each program that they felt were the “best practices” and the “MAC” program was created. The value in the program’s overlying theme is the premise that students are taught they have a choice. Information is conveyed in a fun and informative way, and responsible behavior is rewarded through a variety of extracurricular school-sponsored activities in which deputies and CHP officers also participate.

The pilot program is currently being offered at Cole Middle School. Station personnel attend school assemblies, conduct periodic classroom lectures, and participate in activities.

Goal - Our goal in this program is to encourage good decision making, reduce the number of youth who engage in underage drinking, illegal drugs, tobacco use, and to foster positive relationships with law enforcement officers. The success of this program in relation to school performance is being tracked and determined through the Eastside School District.

YouthBuild - Palmdale Station has partnered with local churches and youth groups, including their local chapter of YouthBuild, which works with young adults between the ages of 17-25. This outreach provides guidance to those who are often in conflict with the justice system. Deputies meet bi-monthly with YouthBuild participants to answer questions and discuss current sensitive issues, such as the Trayvon Martin and Michael Brown shootings. They also discuss topics like search and seizure, constitutional rights and use of force by peace officers. This outreach includes events that promote tolerance and teamwork by coming together and participating in softball and kickball games with the deputies.

Goal - Community trust. Deputies are afforded the opportunity to interact with the youth in a fun, interactive, and positive environment. Participation in this program strengthens law enforcement relations within the minority community, particularly with our local youth.

Green Thumb Summer Camp – This program provides a weekday summer camp at the local parks within Palmdale. Each year, Palmdale Station deputies, including Search and Rescue, bike patrol, motor officers, and patrol engage the children with a hands-on opportunity to ask questions, touch and feel, and wear some of the specialized equipment used by various units within law enforcement. Law Enforcement Explorers are on hand to explain their role in assisting the department and the community.

Goal - Community trust, developing foundation for positive relationship with law enforcement.

Read Across America – One day each year deputies visit local schools and engage with children ages 5-12 by reading books, telling stories, and answering questions about law enforcement. The goal of this program is to encourage kids to read. As community members it is our goal to express to our youth the importance of getting an education and staying in school. Multiple studies have shown children who do well in school are more likely to stay out of trouble. In 2015, deputies read at fourteen elementary schools to an estimated 900 children.

Goal - Literacy, community trust, developing foundation for positive relationship with law enforcement.

School Presentations - Deputies conduct presentations which take place at local schools, making themselves available to educate and answer questions while showcasing Department vehicles and equipment. The topics of these presentations are directed by the teachers of the individual classes. Topics include age appropriate group discussion and general law enforcement questions. Interactions with the children has been extremely positive.

Goal - Increase positive law enforcement interactions relations with youth, increase trust.

Career Days – These events allow students to meet with a deputy one-on-one and allow deputies the venue to showcase the many opportunities and rewards offered by a career in law enforcement with the LASD. Career days allow deputies to interact with students in a positive environment. By sharing personal experiences (i.e., how the deputy got started in his or her career) allows for the students to see the deputy as a person, not just someone in a uniform. These continuous positive interactions with deputies and other law enforcement officers can help to establish a positive image for law enforcement especially our youth.

Foster Care Community Programs

Palmdale Station has partnered with the Department of Children and Family Services to promote adoption from the foster care system within their service area. Their involvement allows a forum for perspective parents to partner with deputies in providing counseling, mentoring, resources, and tools for addressing incorrigible youth.

Lancaster Station has partnered with the Penny Lane organization to provide safety training to employees, counselors, and other staff who work with troubled youth. Additionally, station personnel have been working with Penny Lane administrators to create life skills classes for foster children who are aging out of the program. Many of our homeless young people are children who left the foster care system without a support system or the skills to take care of themselves.

Goal - to reduce the number of violent incidents between foster youth and the people who are charged with their treatment and care. Reduce the number of homeless young adults aging out of the foster care system. Promote adoption.

YOUTH ORIENTED PROGRAMS- Department Led

Vital Intervention and Directional Alternatives (VIDA) - A structured sixteen week program for non-violent, at-risk youth between the ages of 11-17 ½ who are struggling with parent relationships, academics, anti-social peers/attitudes and making smart decisions. Typically, participants are referred to the program through a community agency, however, parents can also refer their children. Participants are interviewed by trained VIDA staff members to determine if they meet the program's targeted risk criteria.

Through a collaboration of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, community-based organizations, volunteers, schools and families, the program teaches young adults the value of effective decision-making and taking responsibility for their futures.

Goal - Intervention of at risk youth. Increased positive interaction with deputies. Foster relationships, develop trust.

Youth Activities League (YAL) - The YAL is a national after school program run by law enforcement to engage youth in mentorship. Palmdale Station runs this program out of Jackie Robinson Park in Littlerock. This venue offers local children organized sports activities, tutoring and an opportunity to interact with responsible adults in a safe and secure environment. There is one deputy assigned to this program who is assisted by a civilian staff member and several park volunteers.

The YAL program is designed to provide low and moderate income families with tutoring, sports and other community activities for their children ages 6-18. The purpose is to prevent children from becoming idle, which is a contributing factor to delinquent behavior. The program stresses the importance of self-esteem and forms a personal partnership between the participant, law enforcement and responsible adults who provide mentorship. Several year-round activities are open to youth who choose to become socially involved.

In 2015, there were 63 children participating in the YAL program. Most of the participants enroll in sports programs, with 42 of them taking advantage of tutoring assistance. In the summer months, participants enroll in summer camp programs offered by Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation. The deputy assists park staff during the YAL off season.

The YAL program does not end with the after-school program. Participants go on

regular field trips to sporting events, musicals and plays. They attend special events at theme parks like Disneyland, where the park is closed to the general public and only open to YAL groups from throughout the United States. They also attend Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (S.T.E.M.) presentations offered by the United States Navy and Air Force.

YAL young adults attend “Life After High School.” This weekend event is held at Fresno State University and exposes high school juniors and seniors to college life. Participants attend classes, meet college students and stay in a special dorm. The goal is to motivate participants to get good grades and strive to attend a college. This program has been very successful in furthering participant’s educational goals.

Goal - Establishing relationship with at-risk youth, particularly within the minority communities. Establishing positive interaction, fostering trust.

Every 15 Minutes – Deputies work with local school officials, the California Highway Patrol and Los Angeles County Fire Department to present three “Every 15 Minutes” events yearly. These events challenge teens to consider the dangers and consequences of drinking and driving by witnessing realistic role-playing scenarios acted out with the assistance of their own peers. Target group is high school teens.

Goal of program is to reduce the number of traffic related accidents involving alcohol and/or bad decision making. Feedback from community has been extremely positive.

Explorers– Lancaster Station facilitates the Antelope Valley Sheriff’s Explorer Academy. This “Learning for Life” program (Learning for Life is an affiliate program of the Boy Scouts of America) is an interactive career Exploring program available for young adults ages 14-20. The Explorer program provides education and hands-on experience for youth who may be considering entering the law enforcement profession. The academy which teaches the fundamentals of law enforcement stressing ethics, integrity and team work, is approximately 22 weeks long, meeting every Saturday. Once graduating from the Academy the recruits are assigned to either Lancaster or Palmdale Station Explorer Posts determined by their residence.

The goal of the explorer program is to mentor young men and women who are looking to gain leadership skills and prepare them for college, military, or careers in public service. This program has been extremely successful and many of the deputies who are currently assigned to Lancaster and Palmdale Stations have been prior Explorers.

This year, Lancaster, Palmdale, and Santa Clarita Stations co-hosted the Fifth Annual Law Enforcement Explorer Competition at Pitchess Detention Center. This event drew thirty-three Explorer teams from California, and one team from Arizona.

Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) for middle school students –

Palmdale school resource deputies created the first CERT training program for middle school students in the Antelope Valley. This training has been applauded by the local CERT board and the Palmdale School District as it has encouraged young people to get involved in their neighborhoods and schools. This public safety education program helps to build up leadership skills and self-esteem. The program also allows for positive interaction with deputies who instruct the classes.

POLICE-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Sheriff Station Volunteer Opportunities

The County of Los Angeles Volunteer program offers volunteers an opportunity to be involved with nearly every aspect of a sheriff's station. Volunteers may choose to be a part of such traditional functions as:

Clergy Program - **Antelope Valley Sheriff's Chaplain Council** – Lancaster and Palmdale Station personnel meet monthly with local pastors and clergy to build community outreach and address concerns expressed amongst congregation members. AV station's involvement with this group has provided a direct link to the community which allows an opportunity for quick mitigation of any problem issues identified.

Front Desk - Volunteers work the station front counter in a volunteer uniform to greet the public and provide station services.

Clerical - Volunteers work in the station secretariat and assist with filing of reports and work under the direction of the secretaries.

Volunteers on Patrol - Volunteers work in volunteer vehicles in a volunteer uniform assisting in the field as additional eyes and ears in the community.

Mounted Volunteers - Volunteers on Patrol who work on horseback. They have ongoing training with their horse to provide safe and effective mounted observation patrol. They patrol the rural areas looking for illegal dumping activity. Additionally, they work at the Antelope Valley Mall patrolling the parking lots. They do a great job of interacting with children of all ages who love to pet the horses.

Search and Rescue Volunteers - Volunteers that work alongside Search and Rescue Reserve Deputies, which are highly trained and were formed to function as the Sheriff Department's official emergency response unit, providing services to residents who

become stranded, lost, or injured in remote areas.

Sheriff's Explorer Program – See Department led youth programs

CERT Certified Volunteers - Volunteers who elect to respond to disaster areas and provide aid as directed by the Sheriff's Department.

Goal - the goal of volunteer programs is to engage community members in Community Policing and Crime Prevention strategies. Additionally, volunteers assist station personnel in providing better customer service to the community by assisting Sheriff's Station personnel which are often under staffed.

Community Academy – Lancaster and Palmdale Stations co-facilitate a Community Academy for residents within their service areas twice a year. The classes are held once per week for eight consecutive weeks. Topics include: Patrol Procedures, Use of Force, Internal Affairs Investigations, Traffic and DUI Laws, Arson/Explosives Presentation, Gangs, Forgery/Fraud/Identity Theft, and Causal Factors of Violence. Participants are partnered with a deputy for an 8-hour ride-along and take part in several role-playing scenarios featuring common law enforcement and citizen interactions and incidents.

The program provides an outstanding opportunity to educate and partner with residents to give them a thorough understanding of the Department's public safety goals and procedures. It also affords all involved deputies the opportunity to receive feedback from the community members as to their perceptions of law enforcement and areas of community concern or importance. Participants develop a better understanding of public safety efforts, procedural nuances, and transparency.

Following these classes, participants become an integral component in our community policing strategies. These community members understand the need to take an active role in crime prevention efforts in partnership with law enforcement.

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Classes – Lancaster and Palmdale Station assist in the presentation of several CERT classes throughout the year. These classes are designed to equip citizens to take care of themselves, their families, and their neighbors in the event of a disaster or emergency. AV station personnel were involved in conducting the first classes in our area which were geared toward the hearing impaired and Spanish speaking participants. These classes are invaluable, allowing the public to interact with deputies in their role of educator and helper, not just enforcer. There are always waiting lists for the next available class.

Ride-A-Long – The Sheriff's Department provides this program to community members and department applicants. This program provides participants the unique opportunity

to gain insight into law enforcement by “riding” in the car “along” side a deputy as they work their shift. Many of the program participants come away with a much better understanding of the law enforcement challenges.

SOCIAL MEDIA/TECHNOLOGY OUTREACH

Public Information Officer/Media Liaison - Although the Antelope Valley is within Los Angeles County, we are separated from the greater Los Angeles Metro area and San Fernando Valley by the Angeles National Forest. This 1,024 square mile mountain range creates a thirty-mile gap which keeps major news outlets south of the Antelope Valley. Additionally, portions of the Antelope Valley are devoid of free digital television frequency reception. This requires residents to purchase cable or satellite television services. There has been a recent surge in internet television services such as Hulu and Netflix. These services currently only cover major national and world media events and programs such as World News Tonight, 20/20, and 60 Minutes. In response to a lack of major media news coverage in the Antelope Valley, several local news agencies provide relevant news and current event topics to our residents.

Time Warner Cable News is the areas only source for local television news. This cable news show is only available to Time Warner Cable television customers. They feature a daily television news show which is aired throughout the day. Time Warner also provides cable internet service for most of the greater Antelope Valley including our neighboring counties of San Bernardino and Kern.

The Antelope Valley Press (avpress.com) is the areas print media news source. They offer daily printed newspaper and a paid on-line version of their daily newspaper. Both stations have very good relationships with the newspaper staff. The paper works with the stations to print articles of interest and helps publicize upcoming community events involving the Sheriff’s Department. Newspaper staff and reporters have participated in patrol ride-alongs, major parole sweeps and community events.

The Antelope Valley Times (theavtimes.com) is the areas main free internet news source. This media outlet generally reprints new articles from other media outlets. They re-post both the Palmdale and Lancaster Most Wanted feature on a weekly basis. They have two reporters who have covered community events. Of particular interest is their “comments” section. The AV Times offers a free unfiltered area on their website where public ideas and comments are shared. There is often heated rhetoric on both local and national topics. By reviewing public comment of local incidents, both stations have been able to modify our press releases to better suit the idiosyncrasies of our community.

Many of the remote rural communities throughout the Antelope Valley have their own newspaper. These publications focus only on local neighborhood issues and events.

Each station maintains a working relationship with these publications by providing weekly crime trends and crime report information specific to their area.

Both Lancaster and Palmdale Stations have a long history of working closely in partnership with all of our local media and “stringer” news services. As stated above, local media representatives are frequently taken on ride-alongs and are included in some warrant and search operations. This relationship helps connect with the public and maintain transparency. In addition, several public service announcements are written and distributed monthly pertaining to how residents can protect themselves against current crime trends. As an example, during the month of November, Palmdale Station submits daily child safety tips in response to Child Safety Awareness Month, and in September, weekly emergency preparedness articles are published in response to National Disaster Preparedness Month.

“Palmdale’s Most Wanted” and “Lancaster’s Most Wanted” are three minute segments aired on Time Warner Cable television. These segments highlight career criminals who our detectives are seeking the public’s help in locating. The features include a brief synopsis of the wanted persons’ actions and their photograph being aired on the local cable television news. Several of these criminals have been arrested using this direct partnership with the media and the help of concerned residents.

Each week the AV stations release most wanted information via NIXLE, Facebook, Twitter, as well as their public websites Lancaster.lasd.org and Palmdale.lasd.org. Current crime trends and safety announcements are released every other week or more frequently as necessary.

Recognizing the need to reach out to the Hispanic community, Palmdale Station sought to collaborate with Palmdale CAC member Lillia Galindo and her “Café con Leche” talk radio program. Lillia Galindo is also affiliated with the League of United Latin American Citizens.

This local Spanish radio program has featured numerous personnel from both Lancaster and Palmdale Stations. Sheriff command staff, station captains and deputy personnel have all been guests on this show. They have discussed such on air public call-in topics as: domestic violence, dangers of drinking and driving, dangers of shooting firearms in the air, dangers of illegal fireworks, Halloween safety tips, traffic related issues including new traffic laws, and how to obtain a driver’s license.

Palmdale Station has reported this segment has been directly responsible for providing leads to dead-end cases and for the apprehension of eighteen criminals since the beginning of the year.

Crime Stoppers - Deputies have been diligently working on Crime stopper tips that have been provided by the public. This system has proven to be a valuable source of information for law enforcement by alerting them to specific concern expressed by the community, even those expressed anonymously.

SELF ASSESSMENT

In an effort to identify programs that have been successful, AV station personnel are constantly evaluating community interest in these efforts, participation, feedback, and any obstacles to their community engagement efforts.

One of the obstacles that is being faced is lack of community awareness of the numerous station-hosted community events. To address this issue, station personnel utilize all social media outlets and community organizations such as the NAACP for posting current and updated safety alerts as well as upcoming community events. They have also increased the dissemination of information through pamphlets and flyers at highly frequented government facilities, such as county libraries and the Antelope Valley Courthouse.

Another obstacle faced by the AV stations is the ongoing budget and staffing concerns. There are many opportunities for station personnel to participate in events and meetings throughout the year. However, the stations are limited in the number of their personnel they can allow to leave their primary patrol duties in order to attend these functions. The station captains must balance the impact of these community events with the needs and safety of the community members, as well as the personnel that are assigned to work in the service areas they are responsible for.

Lancaster and Palmdale Sheriff's Stations are continuously developing and adjusting their community outreach to best meet the ever changing needs of their unique communities, and will continue to do so in the future. They are constantly seeking outlets for new outreach opportunities while remaining dedicated to their current efforts. Future plans include utilizing community surveys to gauge the community's experiences with, and perceptions of, the AV stations and public safety.

For more information about community outreach programs available in the service areas of Lancaster Station, please contact Sergeant Theresa Dawson at (661) 940-3882. Palmdale residents can contact Sergeant Andrew Nagel at (661) 272-2400.