



THE ONS

Published on City of Richmond California (<http://www.ci.richmond.ca.us/index.aspx?nid=271>)

OFFICE OF NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY (ONS)

2014 ANNUAL SUMMARY

When Young Men Decide – Richmond California 2014 is possible!

In 2014 the City of Richmond recorded its lowest number of firearm related homicides in four (4) decades. This represents a precipitous and dramatic reduction in firearm activity from when the Office of Neighborhood Safety was launched in late 2007.

The City of Richmond Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS) is a non-law enforcement agency within city government. The primary goal of the ONS is to reduce firearm assaults and associated deaths. The ONS provides and coordinates targeted intervention services, attention intensive engagement and support structures that are designed to improve the social emotional health and wellness of those it serves. The ONS partners with young men through its Operation Peacemaker Fellowship or “the Fellowship” who are at highest risk for being involved in gun violence. The ONS values the lives of these young men and provides an environment where they are delivered huge doses of HOPE, and in partnership with the ONS labors together to create personal and interpersonal transformational opportunity in communities most impacted by firearm activity. When these young men have an individual and collective sense of purpose and hope, they are successful in making healthier decisions, and the entire city benefits! Kind of like Richmond California in 2014!

Below, please find in summary the product of this Important Partnership for 2014:

The ONS reached more than 160 stakeholders in its 2014 outreach campaign that had an association with firearm related offenses in Richmond. In our efforts to engage our stakeholders the ONS produced the following outcomes:

6,000+ outreach hours;

2,891 outreach contacts;

1,800 hours of mentoring and life coaching;

310 hours of anger management and life skills development training;

200+ service referrals;

Young men who participate in the Fellowship are making healthier decisions about how they negotiate conflicts that have in the past led to gun violence. We concluded our 3rd 18-month Fellowship cohort at the end of 2014. We ended the cohort having had over the 18-month period 40 Fellows. The following speaks to the progress outcomes of this cohorts experience:

Of the 40 active Fellows within the 3rd Operation Peacemaker Fellowship, since becoming a Fellow:

40 individualized Life Management Action Plans are on file;

39 Fellows are Alive (97%);

34 have no new firearm injuries (85%)

34 are not suspected for a new firearm related offense (85%);

34 have no new firearm related arrests(85%);

21 Fellows graduated the Fellowship (53%), and 19 will return as 4th Cohort Fellows in March 2015.

The Fellowship provides statewide travel/excursion opportunities (Horizon Broadening Exposures) for those Fellows that demonstrate extraordinary commitment and dedication towards remaining alive and free from incarceration and promoting peace within their communities. At the conclusion of the 3rd Fellowship cohort, 75% of the Fellows had participated in 13 civic, cultural and educational horizon broadening exploration and Peace building activities. These activities were facilitated in the following cities: Houston Texas, Dallas Texas, San Antonio Texas, Tallahassee Florida, Philadelphia Pennsylvania, Washington DC, Chicago Illinois, Pismo Beach California, Los Angeles California, San Diego California, Pasadena California, San Francisco California and Mexico City Mexico. Each of the Fellowship explorations included college visits, restorative justice exercises, meetings with city officials and/or community dignitaries, cultural, civic, educational activities, space for fun and opportunities to peace talk and build with rival group members.

As of this writing, we have had 68 Fellows through the three cohorts. 65, remain alive! The ONS will launch its 4th Fellowship cohort in March 2015. We will invite 49 young men and 1 young woman to participate.

The following cities have expressed interest in our work in Richmond by visiting and/or through information request:

Berkeley, CA

Oakland, CA

Salinas, CA

Sacramento, CA

Brooklyn Park, MN
Grand Rapids, MI
Detroit, MI
Cleveland, OH
Wichita, KS
Miami Gardens, FL
Tallahassee, FL
Boston, MA
Philadelphia, PA
Austin, TX
Santa Clara County California
Chicago, IL

Below find recent media attention received by the ONS and the Operation Peacemaker Fellowship:

Al Jazeera News

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dSygbE-21aE>

Mother Jones

<http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2014/06/richmond-california-murder-rate-gun-death>

The Nation

<http://www.thenation.com/article/190225/how-one-california-city-began-bringing-its-murder-rate-down-without-cops>

MSNBC

Melissa Harris Perry Show

<http://www.msnbc.com/melissa-harris-perry/watch/the-bold-way-one-city-is-trying-to-stop-crime-308689475941#>

CBS News – KPIX Local

<http://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2014/09/26/cash-program-for-at-risk-youth-helping-slow-richmonds-gun-violence/>

CBS News – KPIX Local

<http://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2014/09/26/richmond-anti-crime-program-takes-enemies-on-free-trips-operation-peacemaker-fellowship/>

In 2014, the ONS resource development efforts produced more than \$800,000.00 for its programs and opportunities. We thank our many private contributors, our philanthropic family including the Richmond Community Foundation, the East Bay Community Foundation, the Kaiser Permanente Northern California Community Benefits Program, The California Endowment, and The California Wellness Foundation. Special appreciation to our state and federal partners – The California Gang Reduction, Intervention and Prevention Program (CalGRIP), and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). Thank you for helping us to create healthy exchanges and space that promote healing and restoration, redemption and emancipation from death and destruction!

Still much to be done, with a great deal of optimism in that the City of Richmond ended the 2014 year with 75 firearm assaults and 11 homicides, **its lowest in 4 decades**. This represents a 21% and 31% reduction respectively from 2013, where the city experienced a 33-year low. This also represents a 76% reduction in firearm related homicides between 2007 when the Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS) was created and the end of 2014, and a 54% reduction in firearm related homicides comparing the five years before the launch of the Fellowship with the 5 years after its launch (June 2010).

The experience with our Fellows has demonstrated that when we deliver healthy relationships, heavy dosages of hope, nourishing accountability, and high expectations to those chosen as Fellows, most Fellows rise to the occasion. When confronted with conflicts that at one time birthed a firearm response, Fellows learn to respond with healthier decision making. The resulting reduction of gun violence in Richmond changes our community narrative significantly, opens doors for sound community development and economic growth, and makes a clearer path for living, learning, working and playing for everyone in our city. With their courage and work, our primary stakeholder partners – “the Fellows” deliver to this city each day a greater sense of hope that urban gun violence in Richmond can be overcome and eclipsed by brilliance and LIFE! We leave 2014 holding strong to our mantra – “when one truly desires to live, better decisions are made, lives are changed, and conditions are created that transform a city!”

When our young men DECIDE Life over death, anything is possible!

We are forever grateful to the many friends who labor in this struggle hand-in-hand with us to save and rebuild our young men into stronger, healthier family and community leaders. Thank You!

DeVone L. Boggan
Director