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02-16

OUR REFERENCE SSW-JK

May 1, 2002

Police Executive Research
Forum (PERF)
1120 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 930
Washington, D.C. 20036

Attention: Herman Goldstein Award

Dear Police Executive Research Forum:

I would like to nominate the Honolulu Police Department's Operation Growth Chart project for the 2002 Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing.

Operation Growth Chart was initiated by our Weed and Seed officers to provide mentors for youths needing guidance and activities to divert them from drugs, crime, and gangs. The project involves police officers and community figures serving as mentors and partnerships with organizations and agencies for various programs in public housing areas and schools.

I attest to the accuracy of the information provided in the submission and that the results are attributable to the Operation Growth Chart project.

We appreciate the opportunity to apply for the 2002 Herman Goldstein Award.

Sincerely,

4 D. DONOHUE
Chief of Police

2002 HERMAN GOLDSTEIN AWARD FOR
EXCELLENCE IN PROBLEM-ORIENTED POLICING

HONOLULU POLICE DEPARTMENT

**OPERATION GROWTH CHART-
COPS AND KIDS GROWING TOGETHER**

By Sergeant John Kauwenaole
April 22, 2002

2002 HERMAN GOLDSTEIN AWARD
HONOLULU POLICE DEPARTMENT

OPERATION GROWTH CHART-
COPS AND KIDS GROWING TOGETHER

Summary

Project Weed and Seed is designated to **weed** out the criminal elements from a selected neighborhood and to **seed** it with prevention, intervention, and treatment programs.

The Means: Partnership and collaboration between the community, law enforcement, business, social agencies, and other service providers.

The Goal: To improve the quality of life, provide self sustenance in the community to help restore communities.

Honolulu's Project Weed and Seed, implemented in January 1998, is the first of its kind in the state of Hawaii. The selected site, the Kalihi-Palama/Chinatown area in the City and County of Honolulu, straddles two Honolulu Police Department districts, District 1 (Central Honolulu) and District 5 (Kalihi).

SCANNING:

After effective weeding efforts were done within the Weed and Seed site in District 5, the designated Weed and Seed officers saw that there were no structured activities available for young children ranging from adolescents to teens. There were no programs that would keep the youngsters occupied and to keep drugs, criminal activities, or joining gangs from becoming second nature to them.

The officers felt that if they were to have a positive relationship with the young children in the community, they would have to provide a good basis as a beginning into developing a better and safer community, reflecting the prevention, intervention, and treatment of the seeding portion.

ANALYSIS:

With the implementation of the Weed and Seed program, the community was surveyed via mail and the Weed and Seed officers conducted door-to-door surveys. Crime statistics and beat officer input were also used as focal points.

Prior to 1998 and as far back as police officers, residents, business owners could recall, the Kalihi-Palama/Chinatown area had a stigma of being a socially and economically challenged community. The area has a high rate of homeless individuals, influx of immigrants, and renters which has allowed crime to thrive in this particular area.

RESPONSE:

As District 1 began forming a dedicated Weed and Seed team, the Weed and Seed officers from both Districts 1 and 5 looked into mentoring programs that the children could be involved in. The programs would have to be long-term, fit the needs of the children, and eventually be self-sustaining.

The officers worked with various government and private agencies to institute youth programs such as Movies on the Wall, Keiki Police ("Kids Police"), Na Keiki O Paniolo ("Kids as Cowboys"), Lunch with the Students, Law Enforcement Explorers, Community Safe House, and DEFY (Drug Education For Youths).

ASSESSMENT:

After their initial apprehension, the children participating in the programs have come to trust and befriend the police officers. A positive by-product has been that the mentorships have also brought the parents and children and the parents and police closer together. The variety of mentoring programs has also attracted a large number of children by meeting different personalities and age groups.

Operation Growth Chart: Cops and Kids Growing Together

DESCRIPTION

Originally brought to Hawaii in 1998, the first in the state, Project Weed and Seed is designed to **weed** out the criminal elements from a selected neighborhood and to seed it with prevention, intervention, and treatment programs.

The Means: Partnership and collaboration between the community, law enforcement, business, social agencies and other service providers.

The Goal: To improve the quality of life, provide self-sustenance in the community to help revitalize and restore communities.

The site selected for Honolulu's Project Weed and Seed is the Kalihi-Palamal Chinatown area. The site straddles two Honolulu Police Department districts, District 1 (Central Honolulu) and District 5 (Kalihi).

In implementing the program, Weed and Seed officers from District 5 conducted door-to-door surveys of residents, businesses, and educational facilities in the community. The University of Hawaii also mailed questionnaires to the populace and businesses in the area. Officers attended meetings held by neighborhood groups and boards to get a better understanding of the issues and concerns of the area from the residents' standpoint. Finally, the beat officers were interviewed to identify the underlying problems that would be used as a starting point.

The target area suffers from numerous problems (i.e., high rate of street crimes and drug dealing) while the residents fight the social stigma attached to the socioeconomically depressed neighborhood. There is also resident apathy because of the high rate of renters, homeless people, and immigrants.

Studies as well as crime statistics showed that the area had high juvenile crime, significant school dropout rates, poor scholastic scores, tendencies to join youth gangs, as well as limited motivation for the youths to do better and reach higher for themselves. Time and time again, the lack of role models and the lack of positive parental-type relationships surfaced as major problems. The only type of relationship that was predominant was the negative gang-type relationship that provided an easy escape route for the youths. The officers realized the limited existing mentoring opportunities for these kids and so they stepped up to the plate as mentors themselves to set up "Operation Growth Chart."

With the opportunity for these officers to have a positive influence on the neighborhood youths came the opportunity for the officers to reach many of the parents through their children. Hopefully, parents as well their children would emerge as leaders as an outcome of this program.

At the same time there were setbacks. The fact that the officers did not have formal mentoring training was seen as a minimal speed bump that was easily overcome by the eagerness and police training of the Weed and Seed officers.

Another problem faced was the apprehension of the residents who did not see the officers as anything else but law enforcement agents and viewed the program as being another that would be "here today and gone tomorrow." The officers noted that with only four designated Weed and Seed officers, there would only be a limited number of children who could be reached. In 2000, District 1 (Central Honolulu) added an additional four officers to the Weed and Seed team, thereby doubling the mentors. In that same period, officers would come and go as they were promoted or transferred to other assignments within the department. However, Weed and Seed

officers were a select lot chosen for their strength in working outside of the box with community members in addition to their police abilities.

Our mentoring project is not just a single program but several different efforts which allows us to target the various ages, cultures, and personalities of children. The following are some of the projects and programs under Operation Growth Chart:

- **Safety Awareness.** A presentation was done at the surrounding elementary schools that encompassed the Mayor Wright Homes, a public housing complex in the middle of the Weed and Seed site. A blend of Stranger Danger, traffic safety, and officer awareness (variety of officers in different uniforms and vehicles) presentations were put together in a single program. With the success of the Safety Awareness program, the officers found that additional types of mentoring were needed to increase the effectiveness of Operation Growth Chart.

- **School Lunch Program.** The officers went to the elementary schools to have school lunch with the children, causing chaos as the children screamed in the hopes that the officer would sit at their lunch table. The program provided the opportunity for the children and officers to closely interact and strengthen the positive attitude toward law enforcement officers.

- **Na Keiki O Paniolo ("Kids as Cowboys").** This program was for children from ages 10 to 18. The officers brought the kids to one of two designated riding stables on the other side of the Island of Oahu to teach them not only about how to ride a horse but how to care, feed, house, and handle horses. At one stable it was also possible to learn about aquaculture while learning to throw a fishing net and to fish with a rod and reel. Lunch was also served to the children.

The young participants were exposed to many new experiences that they might never have had. In one instance, a child said that he had never gone to that side of the island prior to the excursion.

- **Law Enforcement Explorers.** This program is a joint effort with the Boy Scouts of America and is an established Boy Scout outpost for youths 14 to 20 years of age who are interested in law enforcement as a career. They meet regularly and receive instructions and information on crime investigations, domestic intervention, cardiopulmonary resuscitation training, and bicycle training. These Explorers in turn lend their assistance at various police and community activities.

- **Keiki Police.** It is an after school homework assistance program that is run by police officers. After the homework is done, there are games and movies to help keep the children out of trouble.

- **Safe Haven.** The Weed and Seed community house is considered a Safe Haven. After school there is a worker that helps the children with their homework. There are three computers hooked up to the same programs as the elementary schools that the children can use to further their computer skills or finish their school assignments. Once a week there is an arts and crafts day when they work on projects or are involved in other activities, such as cooking.

The Safe Haven is also used by the youths as a place to relax and just hang out and have a place of their own where they have a sense of belonging in a safe, positive atmosphere. The backrooms are used by the District 5 Weed and Seed officers as a work office so that there is constant contact between the children and officers.

- **DEFY (Drug Education for Youth).** DEFY is an established Department of Justice program that was branched out to include the Weed and Seed site. DEFY's mentoring program entails a two-step approach that includes a structured class work program and a week-long camp. As part of the class work portion, the students are taken on numerous field trips that include the Circuit Court, television stations, local community colleges, restaurants, and emergency service providers (police and fire stations).

DEFY sites in the continental United States do the camp portion first and then the class work, but it was found to be more beneficial for Operation Growth Chart to use the camp as a reward after the class work. The orientation is a requirement that includes children and their parent(s) or sponsors. After the first DEFY session, it was discovered that more mentors were needed. For this session there were mentors from the Department of the Attorney General, Department of the Prosecuting Attorney, and the Hawaii National Guard in addition to the police officers. In our second session, junior leaders from the prior session also volunteered their time to help with the incoming class.

Prior to our mentoring programs, the area had numerous social service agencies that were basically grant-driven. They helped only as long as they had grant money. The children consequently were hesitant in forming lasting relationships with the officers fearing that, like the other agency workers, they would be there for only a short period of time. The mentoring programs provided the stability and longevity that the youths needed in their lives.

It was also found that to get more youths into Operation Growth Chart's growing circle, the programs had to diversify to include the use of social agencies that cater to immigrant services due the difficulty of the law enforcement officers in reaching the immigrants.

Growth has been seen not only in the children and their families but also in the participating officers who have watched the children they have mentored turn into their friends and move in a positive direction.

Another measure of success is that recruiting youths into the program is becoming easier. The children and their families are coming to us hoping to get into the mentoring programs.

Our main method of evaluation is the positive reaction from the community that we serve. Residents began to trust the Weed and Seed officers in a way that allowed us to work as a team instead of having a "us versus them" attitude.

Mentoring programs have always been hard to quantify in numbers because of the long-term effects and the impossibility of foreseeing the number of juveniles who may commit crimes in the future. Biannual reports are submitted to the local Weed and Seed coordinator who then submits these reports to the national Executive Weed and Seed office. Reports include all community events, meetings, training sessions, and DEFY sessions.

There were some problems in starting up the mentoring programs. We knew the programs would have a tremendous impact on the community, but the direction to take the program was uncertain. Questions arose as to how we were to get started, with what age group, what type of activities to incorporate, and, of course, if we could make a difference. There were also problems with a limited budget and the lack of mentors. While the mentors worked in the mentoring programs, they still had to tend to the law enforcement needs of the community. The officers had to learn how to balance weeding efforts as well as seeding efforts.

The results of the program are apparent to anyone who knows the neighborhood. What is difficult to put into numbers are the youths' sense of pride and the growth in their relationships with their peers, family members, and the police.

The displacement of Operation Growth Chart youths into other communities is not considered a bad thing as with juvenile offenders. They move on and take the knowledge they gained from the mentoring programs into their new neighborhoods where hopefully they will become leaders in their community and schools.

From the start of the program, the officers have set their goals so that as they continue their careers, the youths they mentor will eventually become positive role models for the next generation of youths.

REFERENCES

Aside from the DEFY training manual, most of the officers' training is from on-the-job training and specialized training received for DARE, Law Enforcement Explorers, and community policing programs. One of the biggest assets these officers have is dedication and the drive to get the job done and better the community even if they do not live there. What these officers possess cannot be taught in books, learned in classes, or found in training films.

AGENCY AND OFFICER INFORMATION

This problem-solving initiative began from the top level of the Honolulu Police Department. The command allowed the Weed and Seed supervisors and officers to be able to "think out of the box" and to take the initiative with full support when needed.

All the officers have received some sort of problem-oriented policing training. Training continues for veteran Weed and Seed officers, and our department is now beginning to train new

officers in the concept of problem-oriented policing or community policing. No monetary incentives are given to the officers participating in the program. As crime drops in the community and their caseloads drop, the officers began to feel their job satisfaction increase.

Initial Weed and Seed funding did not allow for any large scale mentoring programs. The mentioned mentoring programs were not entirely funded so the officers would have to alter their normal work schedules, often at a moment's notice.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Copies of the Weed and Seed biannual yearly report submitted to the Executive Office of the Weed and Seed
2. Photos of several mentoring events

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