



Proactive Alliance

Combining Policing and Counseling Psychology to Build Relationships and
Community Engagement



Molly Mastoras, MA, LPC
Master Police Officer (Ret.) Dimitrios Mastoras

<https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/31f33e89-b409-4235-91a4-7c1826a57d24/Proactive%20Alliance%20White%20Paper.pdf>



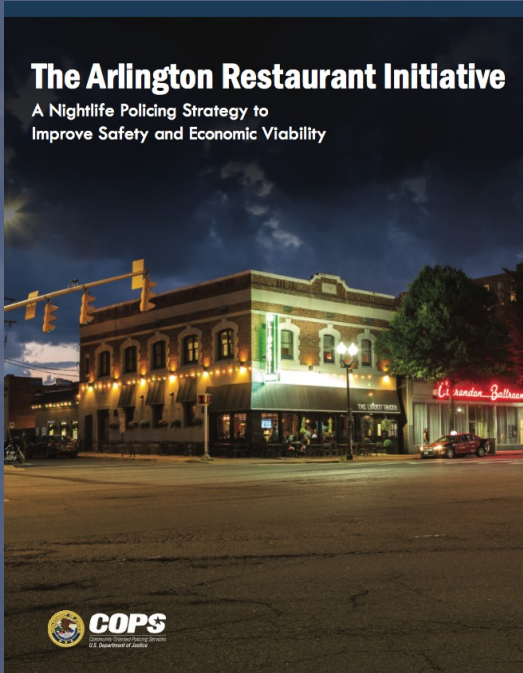
Molly C. Mastoras, MA, LPC

Co-Founder, President Safe Night LLC

Molly Mastoras is a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) in Virginia. She has worked as an assistant program director and probation counselor for the Fairfax County Juvenile & Domestic Relations District Court and as a social worker for the Fairfax County Office for Women and Arlington County Child Protective Services (CPS). Molly has worked extensively with survivors of sexual assault throughout her career, leading to the creation of Safe Night Active Bystander, a sexual assault prevention and intervention-training program. She developed the Proactive Alliance approach, which teaches police and enforcement agencies to develop a relationship-based strategy with the community using adapted counseling therapy concepts. She co-authored *Proactive Alliance: The Ethos of Broken Windows* published in IACP Police Chief Magazine and presented Proactive Alliance at the 2020 American Society of Evidenced-Based Policing (ASEBP) Conference. In 2021, Molly presented at the Law Enforcement and Public Health (LEPH) Conference and co-authored *Proactive Alliance: Combining Policing and Counselling Psychology* in the Journal of Community Safety and Well-Being with Dr. Charlotte Gill. Molly serves on the Board of Directors for the Washington Regional Alcohol Program (WRAP) and continues to work as a psychometrist and psychotherapist at a private practice in Northern Virginia.



Origin of Proactive Alliance



- Collaboration of two practitioners from psychology and law enforcement fields
- Arlington Restaurant Initiative (ARI)

George Mason University



Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy
Department of Criminology, Law & Society

Reducing Alcohol-Related Crime and Disorder in Clarendon

Charlotte Gill, PhD
Dennis Almaraz
Muneeba Azam
Matthew Carter
Carrie Johns
Jessica Kim
Kaitlyn Ries

George Mason University


Report prepared for the Arlington County Police Department
July 28, 2017

Key Findings:

- Proactive problem-solving is necessary
- A high level of engagement from officers is effective
- Bar and restaurant staff need training and policies


University of Virginia

- ARI decreased alcohol related crimes between 9pm – 3am
- Recommendation that ARI continue, citing a sharp decrease in alcohol related crimes



Evaluating the Impact of the Arlington Restaurant Initiative on Alcohol-Related Crimes in Clarendon

Alexa Nasal (VT), Kelsey McMahan (VT), Megan Grandine (VT), Hannah Brinkley (VT), and José Bayoán Santiago Calderón (CGU)
SDAL: Gizem Korkmaz and Aaron Schroeder
 Sponsors: Jim Mastoras, Arlington County Police Department; and the Virginia Tech Center for Peace Studies and Violence Prevention (CPSVP)



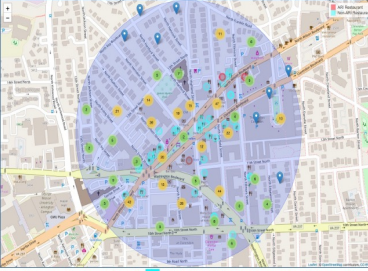
Project Overview

- **Background:** Arlington County features some of the most unique restaurants and nightlife destinations in the Washington D.C. metro region. Areas such as Clarendon, however, with a large number of restaurants have become a difficult issue for police to manage due to alcohol-related crimes such as malicious wounding, sexual assault, public intoxication, assault on police, DUI, disorderly conduct, and rape.
- Arlington County Police Department (ACPD) launched the Arlington Restaurant Initiative (ARI) that focuses on best practices for restaurants and nightlife to reduce the risk of alcohol-related disorder. The initiative grew out of the Clarendon Detail, the creation of a team of patrol officers using overtime to control pedestrian and road traffic, and to ensure that intoxicated patrons are protected from harm.

	2016	2017
Assault/Disputes	451	570
Drunk in Public (DIP) / Seated on Way (SOW)	1,308	1,400
DIP Pedestrians		5,375
Uber/Taxi Obstructions	4,190	8,465
Dawmings	25	31
Reports	190	123
Field Observation Report (FOR)	8	47
Contacts	8,922	15,888
Arrests		98
Vehicle Under Surveillance (VUS)		38

- Officers working the Clarendon Detail collect activity logs (summarized on the left) to capture information about all contacts between police and citizens on the busiest nights regardless of whether or not a formal incident report was written.
- The logs revealed that, despite the impact of excessive alcohol consumption on the crimes listed above, only about 10% of police contacts with the public result in an arrest.

	2016	2017
Weekend Days	117	118
Officers	1,153	1,254
Avg. Officers per Day	9.9	11.5



Clarendon has over 40 restaurants (pinned in blue circles) with ABC (Alcohol and Beverage Control) licenses and an average of 5,500 patrons per weekend night. Each year, approximately 580,000 patrons visit Clarendon between 21:00 and 03:00, especially during holidays and special "drinking" events. Alcohol-related crime counts in Clarendon between 21:00 and 03:00 for 2016-2017 are given in yellow and green circles.

- **Objective:** Evaluate effectiveness of ARI (social and economic impact) in Clarendon to help ACPD sustain and support the program.

The Challenge...

- Many evidence-based policing strategies rely on meaningful collaboration with the community
- How do police engage the community?





The Challenge...

- Prioritizing community engagement requires a shift in police duties, roles, and leadership
- Lack of organizational change and support can affect officer well-being



Proactive
Alliance

Problem-
Oriented
Policing

Proactive Alliance

- Prioritizes individual relationships
- Public events to elicit community concerns
- Focuses on citizens that distrust or are reticent of police
- Commitment to collaboration with essential stakeholders

“There is a feeling in the scholarly literature that to some extent it has been a buzzword rather than something that has been implemented. Because it is a philosophy or a set of principles rather than a defined model, we see a different level of engagement among police departments”

- Dr. Charlotte Gill, Deputy Director, George Mason University Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy

<https://nextcity.org/daily/entry/community-policing-efforts-success-failure>

Community Policing

- Focuses on broad partnerships
- Public events to show “human side” of officers
- Engages community members who already like the police
- Problem-solving may not include vital stakeholders



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Proactive Alliance

- Uses collaborative preparation and prevention
- Teaches key concepts from clinical psychology and specific techniques adapted from counseling psychology.

Evidenced-Based Approaches

Proactive Alliance is a transtheoretical model that draws upon theory and research from clinical psychology and evidence-based approaches from counseling psychology to provide an additional set of tools for officers' "duty belts."

Goals

- Use fewer police resources with more effective outcomes
- Create safer neighborhoods by developing and maintaining individual relationships
- Promote collaboration with other municipal agencies to improve efficiency





Goals

- Inspire critical thinking and agency for problem solving
- Prioritize officer well-being and job satisfaction
- Modify officer perceptions of the community
- Specify types of accountability and initiate change in police culture

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



(Maslow, 1943)



Proactive Alliance: Combining policing and counselling psychology

Charlotte Gill* and Molly C. Mastoras¹

This article is related directly to the 6th International Law Enforcement & Public Health (LEPH) Virtual Conference in March 2021.

ABSTRACT

The philosophy of community-oriented policing (COP) has been widely adopted by police departments around the world and has important benefits, such as improving community members' satisfaction with police and their perceptions of police legitimacy. However, implementing COP is challenging. Police departments report difficulties obtaining the support of officers on the ground and knowing how best to engage communities—which often contain multiple, overlapping, and sometimes competing groups within the same geographic area—in effective problem-solving and crime prevention.

This article describes *Proactive Alliance*, an innovative training program that draws from criminological theory and evidence-based principles in counselling psychology to teach police officers specific, immediately applicable techniques to establish rapport and long-term working relationships with community stakeholders. The training addresses two key challenges of COP: building meaningful collaboration across diverse communities and empowering frontline officers to become change agents in pursuit of the “co-production” of public safety. It builds on the original theory of broken windows policing, which emphasized the importance of harnessing police officers' personalities to facilitate successful community engagement and crime prevention, and provides practical tools based on those used by mental health professionals to enable officers to engage in active listening, to connect, and to problem-solve with the community while protecting their own well-being. We conclude by describing the potential of *Proactive Alliance* to strengthen COP and evidence-based policing more broadly.

Key Words Community-oriented policing; problem-solving; community engagement; mental health; police training; police officer wellness.

THE CHALLENGE OF COMMUNITY COLLABORATION IN POLICING

Community-oriented policing (COP) emphasizes community involvement in crime prevention efforts and positive, productive relationships between the police and community members, in contrast to traditional enforcement and order maintenance tactics. Community-oriented policing improves satisfaction with the police and has a modest favourable effect on perceptions of police legitimacy (Gill et al., 2014). Proactive policing strategies such as problem-oriented policing (POP) and broken windows policing also appear to be most effective at reducing crime when they are implemented in collaboration with the community (Braga et al., 2015; Weisburd et al., forthcoming; see also Goldstein, 1990; Office of Community Oriented Police Services, 2014).

Despite the importance of community collaboration, and while a majority of the largest police departments in the United States have a community policing plan and/or dedicated personnel (Brooks, 2020; Hyland & Davis, 2019; see also Trojanowicz et al., 1998), police leaders report difficulties in implementing COP; obtaining the support of officers on the ground, and—crucially—knowing how best to involve communities in problem-solving (Eck & Rosenbaum, 1994; Mastrofski et al., 2007; Moore, 1992; Morabito, 2010; Skogan & Frydl, 2004). A vast range of strategies have been deployed under the auspices of COP, some of which do not require community collaboration (Gill et al., 2014; Mastrofski et al., 1995; Skogan, 2006; Teley & Weisburd, 2016). Similarly, POP—which has been described as the “tactical element” of COP (Cordner, 1999)—was originally conceptualized as a collaborative effort in which the police draw upon community

Correspondence to: Charlotte Gill, Department of Criminology, Law and Society, George Mason University, 4400 University Dr., MS 6D12, Fairfax, VA 22030, USA. E-mail: cgill@gmu.edu

To cite: Gill, C., & Mastoras, M. C. (2021). Proactive alliance: Combining policing and counselling psychology. *Journal of Community Safety and Well-Being*, 6(3), 112–117. <https://doi.org/10.35502/jcswb.193>

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Published by SG Publishing Inc. CSA Official publication of the Community Safety Knowledge Alliance

Journal of Community Safety and Well-Being

Charlotte Gill, Ph.D. and Molly C. Mastoras, MA, LPC

Highlights

- Building meaningful collaboration across diverse communities
- Harnesses police officers' personalities to facilitate successful community engagement and crime prevention
- Provides practical tools based on those used by mental health professionals



A Field Experiment on Community Policing and Police Legitimacy



Community-Oriented Policing in New Haven, CT

Peyton, Kyle, Michael Sierra-Arévalo, and David G. Rand. 2019a. "A Field Experiment on Community Policing and Police Legitimacy." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 116(40):19894–98.

Key Evaluation Findings:

- More positive attitudes about police and police performance
- Greater willingness to cooperate and comply with police
- Greater perceived legitimacy, confidence and warmth toward police

UCLA Evaluation of LAPD Community Safety Partnership (CSP)

Jorja Leap, Ph.D. Principal Investigator
Department of Social Welfare, UCLA

EVALUATION OF THE LAPD COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP



UCLA Luskin

MARCH 2020

Key Evaluation Findings of CSP:

- **Relationship-based** partnership improves resident perceptions of safety
- Reduced dangerous conditions that fuel violent crime
- Not limited to gang violence, can also be used for other chronic issues such as homelessness

Key Recommendations:

- Strongly recommended: prioritize **relationship-based**, partnership policing
- Officers need comprehensive training to:
 - Build effective **relationships** with individuals and community-based organizations
 - Develop the specific skills necessary to build trust, including how to engage community members with long histories of mistrust of police

EVALUATION OF THE LAPD COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP



UCLA Luskin

MARCH 2020

Relationship-Based Policing

Molly C. Mastoras, MA, LPC, 2022

Police establish and maintain individual relationships with community members and collateral professionals with the purposeful goal of collaborative problem-solving and management of complex community issues.



Engaging Stakeholders

Proactive Alliance helps officers to successfully initiate rapport and build lasting relationships with those who are challenging to engage.



Building Relationships

When maintaining lasting relationships, officers are immersed in the community rather than presiding over it.

In this context, when a problem arises the options for addressing it widen and police can “crowd source” and have access to new collaborative solutions.

Agents of Change

Proactive Alliance is based on the notion that an individual officer's "self," authenticity, personality, and personal judgment, are assets.

Further, the officer's self is considered a "tool of the trade" that needs care and protection, just as a duty weapon does.



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The Value of Self

An officer's "self" is the most important tool in Proactive Alliance. Thus, teaching officers to understand and protect the "self" is crucial.



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Protecting Self

Officers are taught the same methods as trained mental health professionals to manage and cope with emotional reactions and increase resilience, allowing for increased productivity, decreased stress, and improved emotional wellbeing.

Boundaries

The concept of interpersonal boundaries originates from Family Systems Theory which teaches the importance of self-differentiation: the ability to have convictions, principles, and reactions independent of a group.¹

¹ Bowen, M. (1976). Theory in the practice of psychotherapy. In P. J. Guerin. (Ed.). Family Therapy. New York: Gardner.

Bowen, M. (1978). Family therapy in clinical practice. New York: Aronson.

The Collaborative Perspective

In policing, as in counseling psychology, it is important to meet stakeholders where they are and not where they “should” or “could” be. Beginning from this point allows for a practical, goal-oriented problem solving approach.

Responsive Collaboration

Responsive Collaboration is grounded in the person-centered counseling approach developed by Carl Rogers.

Proactive Alliance adapts the Rogerian concept of Unconditional Positive Regard ² to the idea of relationship-based policing.

² Rogers, C. (1961). *On Becoming A Person*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Company.





The Proactive Guardian

- Physical and emotional safety as co-equal priorities
- Prioritizing the needs of the community
- Deliberate Restraint



Officer Well-Being & Self Care

- Mental illness
- Being an informed mental health consumer
- Self-care

Proactive Alliance and Co-Workers

- Peer Supervision
- Bystander Intervention and understanding the Bystander Effect ³

³ Latane, B., & Darley, J. (1969). Bystander "Apathy."
American Scientist, 57, 244-268.



Potential Benefits for Evidence-Based Policing

- Community support for policing initiatives
- Crime prevention
- Diversify problem-solving options
- Improve officer well-being



Proactive Alliance Relationship-Based Policing Has Been Recognized By:





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Molly Mastoras, MA, LPC

Email:

Molly@Safe-Night.com



www.Safe-Night.com