



HUDSON VALLEY **PATTERN** *for* **PROGRESS**

Pattern Fellows Class of 2020-2021

Improving Police & Community Relations

The History of Police-Community Relations

How did we get here?

History of Police Community Relations – A Timeline

American Revolution Era

- Tension in landowner/tenant relationships
- “Community Watchman” model derived from slave patrols dating back to 1704
- Predominate method of policing in US through the 1830’s



Civil War Era

- Emancipated slaves migrated out of the south
- Widespread racism and laws still restricted freedom for people of color
- Hudson Valley Police Departments originated in the mid-late 1800’s



Early-Mid 20th Century

- Black population continued to increase
- “White flight” from neighborhoods
- Hoover administration formed the Wickersham Commission in 1929
- O.W. Wilson’s “Progress of Police Administration” published in 1951



Civil Rights Era

- Modern relationship between police and minorities was born
- Unionization of police forces



Rising Tensions

- Racial violence ignited by political, social, and racial tensions
- Riots in protest of conditions of servitude
- Laws limited rights to vote, travel on public transportation, attend school and more
- Growing divisions between the working class and elites



Current Events

Where are we today and what are we trying to solve for?

Current Environment

- Shift from business management to operational management
- Interconnectivity of the world has police incidents' live-streamed daily
- Media reports have perpetuated stereotypes; not only of people of color, but also of police
- Mid-Hudson Valley police made numerous attempts to take down drug-dealing networks and dangerous gang members
 - (Operation Clean Sweep-2013; Operation Mop Up-2014; Orange County Undercover Narcotics Operation-2020)



Statistics

- Many disturbing incidents since 2014
- Nearly 1,000 fatal shootings in the US each year for the past 5 years
- Of the millions of interactions that occur annually, use of deadly force represents a small fraction (.0015%)
- Black Americans and Hispanic Americans shot at a disproportionate rate
 - Black Americans: 13% of population; 24% of those fatally shot
 - White Americans: 62% of population; 49% of those fatally shot



Police Reform

- For decades, police agencies have been developing innovative best policies, practices and training on use-of-force, de-escalation and crisis intervention strategies
- Transparency is needed to increase trust and legitimacy
- Communities are a vital part of the policing system
- Cooperation and collaboration to achieve success

“To separate the community from the policing system is akin to separating patients from the health care system or students from the education system.”

Ronald L. Davis



Police Reform Legislation



Right to Know Act (RTKA)

(NYC Council 2017)



Repeal of Section 50-A of state Civil Rights Law

(NY Legislature 2020)



Police Statistics and Transparency (STAT) Act

(NY Senate 2020)



George Floyd Justice in Policing Act

(US Congress 2021)



Re-envisioning Public Safety

Recommendations to get there

Accountability and Representation

- There is no “one size fits all” for every community and every law enforcement agency
- Transparency implies openness, communication and accountability
- Change is needed from both law enforcement and community members
- A diverse police force provides value; requires focus and dedication
- Job requirements may need to be re-evaluated



Defund the Police

- A call to action – reallocate funds and/or redirect services more appropriately handled by others (i.e. mental illness, drug overdose, other social service issues)
- Rushing to implement defunding and reinvestment strategies without careful planning may leave vulnerable members of the community in worse circumstances
- Fewer police to help keep communities safe
- Reduces funding for vitally important training and ongoing professional development needs



Reimagining Responses

- Mental health and substance abuse issues have approached epidemic levels in recent years
- In 2015-2016, a quarter of those killed by police displayed signs of mental illness
- Eugene, Oregon's CAHOOTS (Crisis Assistance Helping Out on the Streets) Program started over 30 years ago has experienced remarkable results
 - Responded to 24,000 calls during 2019; only 150 required police back-up



Reimagining Training and Moving Forward

- Police do not shoot out of anger or frustration or hatred, they shoot out of fear
- Many officers are trained that every encounter, every individual, is a potential threat
- Embrace a guardian mindset rather than a warrior
- The path forward is a slow and steady process
- Thoughtful and deliberate; empathy and compassion
- April 1st is just the beginning...dialogue must continue



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