

Columbia Heights Police Department

Annual Report 2017



COMMITTED HELPFUL PROFESSIONAL DEDICATED

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A Letter from Chief Lenny Austin

Dear Mayor Schmitt, Members of the City Council and Staff,
Columbia Heights Residents and Community Partners,

As I reviewed the information in this annual report in preparation to write this letter – my first as Chief of the Columbia Heights Police Department – I can say that I am very proud of what we accomplished during 2017. We continued to use our community policing model to address crime issues and solve problems. We also expanded and strengthened our relationships within the community and empowered our partners to join us in promoting our community's safety.

One major initiative that moved forward this year was the Circle Terrace Multi-Purpose Building, which was completed by the end of the year. As you may recall, this project was initiated after this neighborhood had experienced a homicide, and the arrest of a young man who was recruited by a terrorist organization. Over several years, this neighborhood has faced other significant crime and disorder challenges. By working with city leaders, other city departments, county officials, the school district and others, we were able to secure funding for this building and see our goal realized. Our work with these community partners will continue into 2018 and beyond as we forge ahead in providing programming for the neighborhood. Our work to build relationships in this neighborhood while instilling a sense of trust and partnership has received national attention as it was a key part of our All America City story.

2017 was the first full year of working with our Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee (MAC). This diverse group of volunteers reflects our community and helps the Police Department to understand and respond to the ever-changing issues facing our city. During this year, the MAC helped us with community dialogues to talk about community concerns and helped us shape our 2018 strategic plan. The MAC has proved to be an important resource that will help us understand and tackle serious and sometimes difficult issues into the future. They will serve a valuable role in advancing our mission in enhancing the safety and quality of life for our community.

While crime rates remained low throughout 2017, our rate of calls for service has risen to the highest level we've seen for the 30 years that information has been recorded. Even though the crime rate continues to be low, responding to non-crime calls for service gives us the opportunity to provide quality service to the citizens of Columbia Heights.

The Columbia Heights Police Department's commitment to training each and every officer in the de-escalation model of Crisis Intervention Technique training was realized this year. The CIT training is a 40-hour course that is the gold standard for officers responding to people in mental health crisis and other urgent situations. We believe that, through training and a commitment to de-escalation, we can continue to reduce our department's already-low use of force statistics.

While 2017 was a year of transition in the Chief position, our department members carried out the department's day-to-day business at a high level as they always do, with a sense of commitment to our residents and stakeholders. Into the future, we will continue to plan strategically, and use the community policing and problem-oriented policing philosophies that have been so successful for us to address crime and public safety needs. Because the CHPD understands the importance of changing as the needs of the community change, we will continue to be innovative by seeking new and effective ways to serve our community.

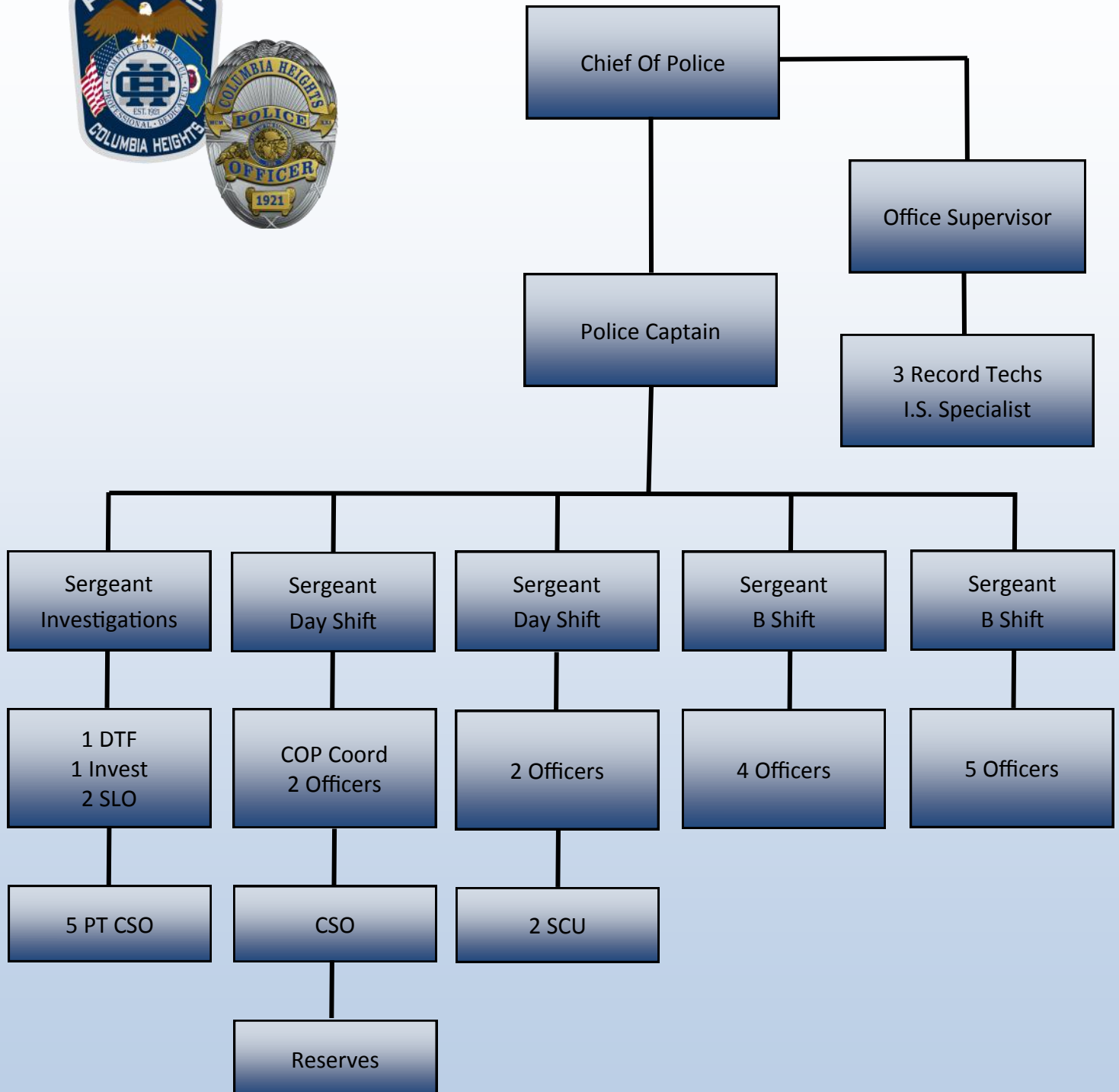
I'm very grateful to our city leaders for the trust they've placed in me, and I'm proud to have been appointed Chief of Police for the agency I've served for so many years. I'm honored to be serving in this new role and working with a department that is truly "Committed, Helpful, Professional and Dedicated."



Lenny Austin

Chief of Police

Organizational Structure



Police Employees in 2017

Name	Title	Serving From:
Scott Nadeau	Chief of Police	04-21-08 last day 07-27-17
Lenny Austin	Captain/Chief of Police	02-15-95 promoted 11-13-17
Ted Fischer	Sergeant	10-30-92
Matthew Markham	Sergeant	08-31-98
Erik Johnston	Sergeant	12-02-02
Justin Pletcher	Sergeant	05-24-10
Andrew Museus	Police Officer/Sergeant	05-13-13 promoted 04-03-17
Terence Nightingale	Police Officer	04-01-85
Paul Bonesteel	Middle School Liaison	09-08-94
Dale Sorensen	Police Officer/DTF	09-11-97
Matthew Aish	Police Officer	08-30-99
Gregory Sinn	Police Officer	06-05-00
Jason Piehn	High School Liaison	04-04-05
Danielle Pregler	Police Officer	03-19-06 last day 12-29-17
Erik Hanson	Police Officer	02-05-07
Joseph Pikala	Police Officer	08-12-08
William Monberg	Police Officer	10-13-08
Timothy Noll	Investigator	11-19-12
Jacob Hilden	Police Officer	05-14-13
Jacqueline Thurmes	Police Officer	02-24-14 last day 01-26-17
Joshua Huebner	Police Officer	11-17-14
Hashim Abdullahi	Police Officer	01-12-15
Mohammed Farah	Police Officer	01-13-15
Tabitha Wood	Police Officer	09-14-15
Ryan Scheevel	Police Officer	03-21-16
Ibrahim Farah	Police Officer	04-27-16
Jacquelyn Urbaniak	Police Officer	11-28-16
Darry Jones	PT CSO/Officer	02-02-17 promoted 10-16-17
Troy Vaughn	PT CSO/Officer	02-02-17 promoted 12-04-17
Karen Olson	Office Supervisor	02-19-86
Elizabeth O'Brien	Records Technician	08-20-90
Ramon Gomez	Records Technician	11-04-13
Emily Peterson	Records Technician	09-21-15 last day 12-29-17
Jason Nihart	Information Systems Specialist	06-11-15
Jerry Wellman	Community Service Officer	01-25-06
Zahra Almosawi	PT Community Svc Officer	09-21-15
Tony Miller	PT Community Svc Officer	10-26-16
Shelby Tombers	PT Community Svc Officer	09-13-17

Employee Highlights

Departure: Scott Nadeau

Chief of Police Scott Nadeau left the Columbia Heights Police Department for a position as Director of Public Safety for the City of Maplewood on July 27, 2017. During his nine years as Chief here, his leadership helped the CHPD to achieve many milestones. Some of these include increased partnerships within our community; an innovative use of Community-Oriented Policing and Problem-Oriented Policing that led to crime rates at a 40-year low; several local, national and international awards; and increased professionalism and diversity in our workforce.



Promotion: Lenny Austin

Lenny Austin was appointed Chief of Police on November 13, 2017. He started his career with the CHPD in 1995 as a police officer. He was promoted through the ranks of Corporal, Sergeant, and he served as Captain since 2008. Chief Austin said that, "Being appointed Chief is an honor that I don't take lightly. I've been very fortunate to be surrounded by a great department, an engaged community, and very supportive city leaders."



City Manager Walt Fehst has the honor of introducing Chief Austin for the first time



Promotion: Andy Museum

Andrew Museum started with the CHPD in May of 2013, and was promoted to Sergeant on April 3, 2017. Before coming to the Police Department, Museum worked as a middle and high school social studies teacher and wrestling and cross country coach in the St Paul School District. Why would someone who worked for ten years as a teacher want to get into law enforcement? Museum says that in his experience as a coach, he realized he liked the team atmosphere better than working alone. In fact, he cites his favorite thing about working here as the camaraderie between officers.

New Employees: Darry Jones and Troy Vaughn

On February 2, 2017, both Darry Jones and Troy Vaughn were hired on as part-time Community Service Officers. They both possessed bachelor degrees in Criminal Justice, but had not yet completed the required coursework in order to be eligible to be licensed as police officers. Starting in June, they began attending the "Pathways to Policing" program through Hennepin Technical College. The Pathways program is a 12-week program designed to take individuals with bachelor's degrees and put them through the required coursework to be licensed as police officers in Minnesota. Darry and Troy attended school full-time while still working for the CHPD in the evenings and on weekends. They graduated in September and took and passed the Minnesota POST (Peace Officer Standards and Training) test.



City Manager Walt Fehst
congratulates Officer Troy
Vaughn on 12-04-17



Mayor Donna Schmitt shares kind words about
Officer Darry Jones on 10-16-17



CSO Tombers in the lobby
before a traffic detail

New employee: Shelby Tombers

Shelby Tombers joined our ranks as a part-time Community Service Officer on September 13, 2017. Shelby's goal is to work in law enforcement, and she's currently working on her law enforcement degree. She helps out with typical community service tasks, to include working at Open Gym.

Recruitment

The CHPD directed resources at recruitment of a high quality and diverse workforce. CHPD representatives attended Career Fairs at several colleges to include; North Hennepin Technical College, Metro State University, and Century College. The CHPD created new recruitments materials aimed at getting applicants that would fulfill its mission.



Department Awards

“Healthy Mind, Healthy Body” award: Chief Scott Nadeau

On Monday, January 9 Chief Nadeau received a “Healthy Mind, Healthy Body” award from the Anoka County Mental Wellness Campaign. The Mental Wellness Campaign is a non-profit created to erase the stigma of mental illness and increase public awareness and acceptance of mental health care. Chief Nadeau was chosen to receive the award in appreciation for his work on behalf of mental wellness in the community and within the CHPD.



Award of Merit: Records Technician Beth O'Brien

Beth O'Brien received an award of merit for her work with the Property and Evidence function between 2009 and 2017. She oversaw the move from the old station to the new Public Safety Building and set up the room in the new facility. She assisted in devising the audit procedure that is currently being used. During 2017, she trained in another technician to take over the Property and Evidence function. During her time as Property and Evidence Tech, Beth was Committed, Helpful, Professional and Dedicated to this very important function.



Award of Merit: Sergeant Matt Markham and Information Systems Specialist Jason Nihart



In the fall of 2017, Columbia Heights was experiencing a rash of business burglaries. Investigative Sergeant Matt Markham and Information Systems Specialist Jason Nihart worked together to develop and analyze a business burglary trend using the recently available predictive analytics feature of the Anoka County Public Safety Data System. Their work resulted in the creation of a predictive location of the next event, and officers working in that area were able to arrest a suspect shortly after a business burglary in the exact area that had been predicted. For their efforts, they received the Award of Merit.

Award of Merit: Officer Mohammed Farah

In July 2017, Officer Mohammed Farah took the initiative to conduct proactive policing which led to a traffic stop in the 4600 block of Central Avenue. Officer Farah identified the passenger for not wearing a seatbelt. He quickly learned that the passenger provided a false name, and he continued to investigate further. Officer Farah learned that the passenger was a level 3 sex offender and had failed to register as required by law. The male was arrested. After the arrest, an agent from the Bureau of Criminal Apprehension took the time to send an email in regards to Officer Farah's stellar police work which took a dangerous sex offender off of the street. For his work in this situation, Mohammed Farah received the Award of Merit.



Award of Merit: Investigator Tim Noll and Officer Erik Hanson



After a robbery in the 4600 block of Central Avenue on December 30, 2016, Investigator Tim Noll conducted a follow up investigation and located pictures of the suspects and distributed those to patrol. Within a day of the incident, Officer Hanson located the suspects using that follow up information and the pictures which had been provided. The suspects were arrested and confessed to the robbery. The victim's property was recovered. This very successful outcome was due to the teamwork between Investigations and Patrol, and both Noll and Hanson working together to solve this case. Because of their efforts, Tim Noll and Erik Hanson received the Award of Merit.

Employee Achievements

Team Heights Pride: (from left to right)

Darry Jones, Mohammed Farah, Justin Pletcher, Ryan Scheevel, and Ibrahim Farah

For the second year in a row, CHPD took second in the Public Safety Challenge at the Officer Shawn Silvera Memorial 5k! This event is held in honor of Lino Lakes Officer Shawn Silvera, who was killed in the line of duty on September 6, 2005. Darry Jones finished first in his age bracket.



COPS Office "Community Policing in Action" Photo Contest semi-finalist

The CHPD submitted this photograph of Officer Hashim Abdullahi with MAC (Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee) member Degha Shabbeleh and others at a community picnic event, and were named a semi-finalist in the contest in the U.S. Department of Justice COPS Office (Community Oriented Policing Services) 4th Annual "Community Policing in Action" photo contest. They solicited photographs of police officers interacting with their communities from police departments around the country.

Major Department Initiatives

Chief Nadeau Farewell Reception

The CHPD hosted a large crowd on July 27, 2017 who gathered to bid farewell to Chief Scott Nadeau and thank him for his nine years of service to the community. Speakers at the event included Mayor Donna Schmitt, City Manager Walt Fehst, and Sheriff James Stuart. Over his tenure, Chief Nadeau's leadership and passion led us to the lowest crime rates in over 40 years, and an effective and positive relationship between the police and citizens of Columbia Heights. We'll always appreciate Chief Nadeau's commitment and enthusiasm, and we wish him the best in his new position working for the City of Maplewood.



Clockwise from top: Mayor Donna Schmitt congratulates Chief Nadeau on his service. City Manager Fehst presents Chief Nadeau with a plaque of his former badges and patches. There was standing room only in the training room. Sheriff James Stuart presents Chief Nadeau with a plaque. Degha Shabbeleh fits Chief Nadeau with a traditional Somali shawl.

Major Department Initiatives

Chief Austin Swearing In

Lenny Austin was officially sworn in as the CHPD's new Chief of Police on November 13, 2017. Surrounded by family and friends, community members and co-workers, Chief Austin took his oath of office. Chief Austin has been a member of the CHPD since 1995. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Organizational Management and Communication from Concordia and a Master's Degree in Police Leadership from the University of St. Thomas. During his time with the CHPD, Chief Austin has served as a patrol officer, field training officer, use of force and firearms instructor, corporal and sergeant. He was promoted to the rank of Captain in 2008. He served as interim-Chief for several months after the departure of then-Chief Nadeau.



Clockwise from top left: Office Supervisor Karen Olson reads Chief Austin the oath of office. Human Resources Director Kelli Bourgeois and City Manager Walt Fehst pose with the newly sworn in Chief Austin. Commander Bryon Fuerst of the Anoka County Sheriff's Office presents a historical CHPD patch to Chief Austin. Retired CHPD Captain Roddy and retired CHPD Captain Olson congratulate Chief (former Captain) Austin.

Major Department Initiatives

Circle Terrace Building Initiative

In 2015, the Circle Terrace Building Project Initiative began after a survey of the neighborhood led the department to focus on non-enforcement action to better serve our residents. It was discovered that there was a shortage of resources and opportunity, so the idea to build a community center in the Circle Terrace neighborhood was born. This would provide a place where residents could gather for recreation programs, police outreach, community support and education, and a multitude of other programs.

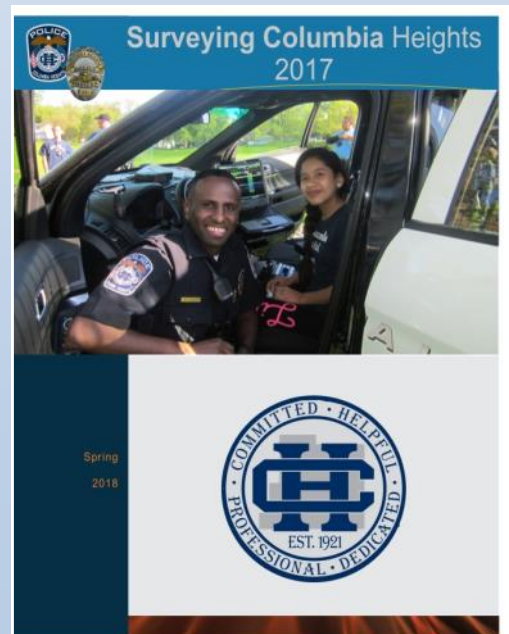


Officer Mohammed Farah talks to Circle Terrace Community members

After years of hard work by several city departments, the building was finally completed in December of 2017. Prior to completion, the police department kept in close communication with the neighborhood providing them updates along the way. A picnic was held on the building site after breaking ground on the new building, and over 300 people came to show their support for the building. As we move forward, we will also utilize the results from a survey that was taken in 2017 that has created the blueprint for the types of programming that will held at the new building. A grand opening picnic is planned for the spring of 2018.

Circle Terrace Survey

In 2017, the Columbia Heights Police Department conducted their third survey in three years in the Circle Terrace neighborhood and surrounding areas. While the first surveys focused on community makeup and demographics, this third survey was aimed at creating a plan of action for the new community center that was built at the end of 2017. The police department hosted a stakeholder meeting earlier in the year where several members of community-based organizations were in attendance, including the Columbia Heights School District, the Anoka County Attorney's Office, Southern Anoka Community Assistance, and the Anoka County Community Action Program. After this meeting, a list of brainstormed ideas and possibilities was created, including the classes and programs that could be hosted within the confines of the new building. With this list of programs and initiatives, the CHPD created a survey and went door-to-door in the Circle Terrace neighborhood to ask them which programs interested them most. ESL (English as a Second Language) classes, parent education, after- school activities for kids, recreation activities, drug education, and mental health services were just a few of the top vote getters. We look forward to working with our partners to provide programming that meets the needs of our community for 2018 and beyond.



Cover of the Circle Terrace neighborhood survey

Major Department Initiatives

Pathways Program

In early 2017 the Columbia Heights Police Department hired Darry Jones and Troy Vaughn for the position of part-time Community Service Officers (CSOs). Both young men had recently completed bachelor degrees in Criminal Justice, but they had not yet completed the required coursework in order to be eligible to be licensed as police officers. A new suburban law enforcement program – Pathways to Policing – kicked off in 2017. The Pathways program is designed to take individuals with bachelor's degrees and put them through the required coursework to be licensed as police officers in Minnesota. The program's emphasis is on preparing non-traditional candidates to work in the field of law enforcement. Students attend class full time at Hennepin Technical College for twelve weeks and graduate eligible to take the MN POST (Peace Officer Standards and Training) Board licensing exam. CSO's Darry Jones and Troy Vaughn started the program on June 12 and continued working part-time for the CHPD while attending class full-time.



Chief Austin, Officer Vaughn, Officer Jones, Mayor Schmitt and Sergeant Markham after the Pathways graduation ceremony

On September 29, 2017, Mayor Donna Schmitt, Chief Lenny Austin, City Manager Walt Fehst, HR Director Kelli Bourgeois and Sergeant Matt Markham attended the first-ever Pathways Program graduation at Hennepin Technical College to congratulate Darry Jones and Troy Vaughn on their successful completion of the program. Both men took and passed the MN POST test, and were subsequently hired as CHPD officers. The Columbia Heights Police Department is grateful to the city's administration and elected officials for their support of our participation in the Pathways Program.

Community Survey



In 2014 the police department conducted a community survey to measure the effectiveness of police service delivery in the City of Columbia Heights. The feedback from the survey was positive while also providing good framework upon which the police department could grow. In 2017, we repeated the community survey to measure progress and ensure we are meeting the expectations of the community. The survey was conducted by interns as well as civilian police employees that went door to door in the community. Police accountability is a main value component of the Columbia Heights Police Department and conducting community surveys is one of the ways in which we ensure we are delivering a high level of service. Completed survey results are published on the police department web page.

A huge thank you goes out to our Intern James Halbert and our Pathways graduates Officers Vaughn and Jones who had the task of going out in the summer heat and surveying residents. We could not have completed the surveys without their hard work.

Police Operations

Chief of Police: The Chief of Police is responsible for creating an organizational structure most conducive to maximizing resources for effective and efficient delivery of police services to the Cities of Columbia Heights and Hilltop. The Chief also ensures and maintains a work environment for employees that fosters professional growth, career development and mentoring. Scott Nadeau was the Chief of Police through the end of July 2017, and Lenny Austin was appointed to that position in November 2017.

Patrol Division: The Patrol Division responds to all emergency and non-emergency calls for service. There are 14 patrol officers who are supervised by four shift Sergeants. The Sergeants are supervised by the Captain. The objectives outlined in the department's Strategic Plan form the guideline for the patrol function including an emphasis on patrol officers acting as problem-solvers, not just report-takers.

Investigations Division: The Investigations Division reviews all police reports of criminal incidents, and these cases are assigned based on the type of crime and solvability. The Investigations Sergeant oversees one officer assigned to general investigation, two officers assigned as School Resource Officers at the Columbia Heights High School and Columbia Academy Middle School, and one officer who is assigned to the Anoka Hennepin Drug Task Force. The Investigations Division works closely with the Patrol Division and other law enforcement partners to ensure a successful resolution on cases.

Street Crimes Unit: This two officer unit which began operations in mid-2012 is an extension of a detail formerly known as the "Summer Initiative". The SCU is designed to focus on specific areas in the city to target crime and nuisance activity issues using problem oriented policing (POP) strategies.

Community Service Officers (CSOs): The Community Service Officers are uniformed civilians who function in a support role to the patrol division. There are one full-time and five part-time CSOs working under the direction of a Sergeant. Their duties include code enforcement, prisoner transports, subpoena service, traffic control details and interacting with the community's youth at Open Gym.

Support Services: The Support Services staff provides a variety of technical, clerical and information technology services important to the operation of the department. There are three Records Technicians, an Information Systems Specialist, and a Police Office Supervisor.

On April 18, 2017 the CHPD along with its Multi-Cultural Advisory committee (MAC) hosted a forum on immigration at the Church of All Nations.



Chief Nadeau

opened the evening with remarks including this statement on Immigration:

"The Columbia Heights Police Department has not, and will not, be asking for the immigration status of those we come into contact with. As a police agency it is essential that we have the trust of all of our residents and that we do not have or create barriers to residents wanting to work with us or report crimes."

Discussion at the forum centered on questions resulting in an open and informative conversation.

We'd like to thank everyone who participated in the discussion on this important and special thanks to Pastor Jin Kim and his congregation for hosting us, and to Degha Shabbeleh for acting as moderator.

2017 Police Department Budget

The Police Department's budget for 2017 was authorized at \$4,317,525. This budget is comprised of three main sections, the first being Personal Services which is by far the largest portion at \$3,768,127. This section includes all the line items related to the payment of the department's personnel. The CHPD has an authorized roster of 27 police officers, one full-time and five part-time Community Service Officers, and five Support Services employees.

The Supplies section is the smallest portion of the Police Department's budget, set at \$180,068 for 2017. Office supplies, uniform items to include protective vests, computer equipment and general supplies are examples of the line items in this section.

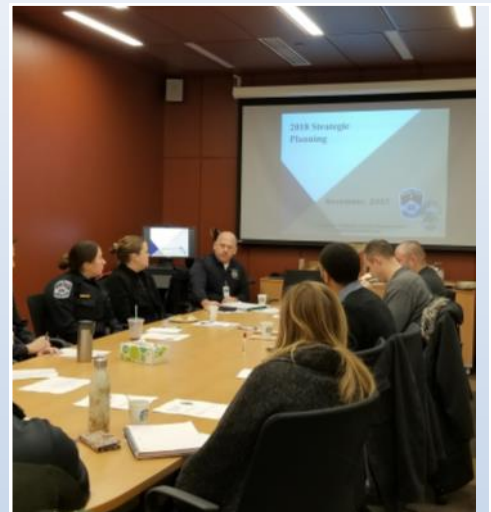
Other Services and Charges is the third section of the budget, with a 2017 amount of \$369,330. Other Services and Charges is made up of the line items for things like training, cell phones and building utilities, and maintenance of the department's vehicles.

The 2017 Police Capital Equipment budget was \$133,531, which included funds for the purchase of two marked utility vehicles for patrol use and one unmarked vehicle, along with various equipment for those vehicles and the related set-up costs.

Strategic Planning

2017 marked another successful year for the Columbia Heights Police Department's strategic plan. These plans are created annually, and then reviewed quarterly, to ensure that we are addressing all the needs of our community both accurately and effectively. The CHPD's strategic plan is broken down into five strategies: Problem Oriented Policing, Community Oriented Policing, Communication, Accountability, and Training/Equipment. Each strategy lays out the entire year's goals, along with initiatives, projects, and other items that make up our objectives for that year. Prior to the finalization of the strategic plan, the department meets with multiple community members and stakeholders, including the Columbia Heights School District along with students and parents, faith-based leaders, business owners, Neighborhood Watch, other City departments, as well as the mayor and city council. Once all input is gathered, it is then analyzed and implemented into the strategic plan, so the Columbia Heights Police Department's strategic plan truly is an extension of community needs and goals.

Each quarter, members of the department from all levels sit down and review the strategic plan, ensuring that the department is on track to accomplish all objectives laid out in the plan. Community outreach initiatives such as Teen Academy, Open Gym, and Coffee with a Cop, as well as proactive initiatives such as the Street Crimes Unit and All Hands Day fall under the strategic plan. By including input from community members, front office staff, officers, and supervisors throughout the entire process, we have been able to increase the department's successes by enhancing community buy-in and increasing department investment. The CHPD's well-thought-out strategic plan is roadmap used to focus our energy, resources, and time, and allows us to achieve the goals set forth through community input and from within the department itself.



Members of the Police Department met offsite to discuss the 2018 Strategic Plan.

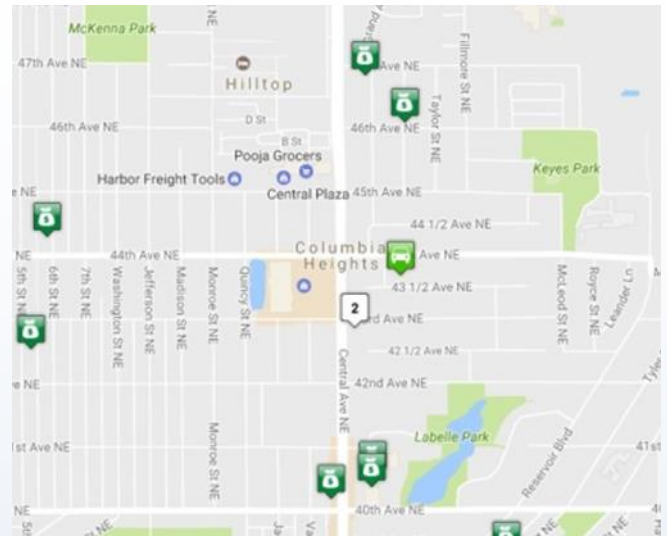
The CHPD's 2018 Strategic Plan can be found on our website at:

www.chpolice.com

2017 Crime Statistics

Easy Access to Online Crime Maps

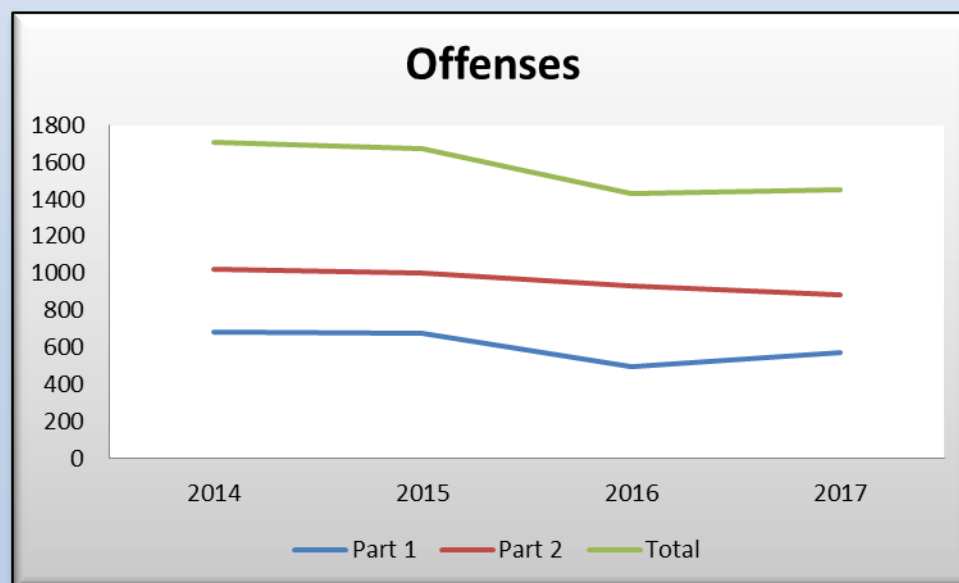
The Columbia Heights Police Department believes knowledge and transparency are key components of the relationship between police and the community. To further these efforts we make our crime information available for anyone with internet access at **communitycrimemap.com**. This is a great tool to look at what is happening in a neighborhood or city-wide, and has many search features to narrow in on the information you want.



Crime Numbers are flat for 2017

There was a slight uptick in Part 1 crimes in 2017, mostly due to an increase in theft related crimes. Our Part 2 crimes continued the downward trend with overall crime coming in flat at 2% over 2016, and down 13% from where it was in 2015. The number of people arrested is down 9% from 2016.

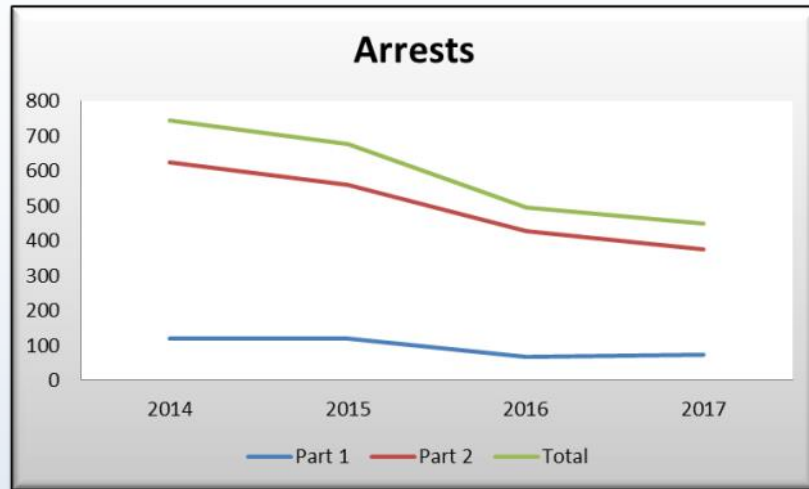
Offenses							
	2017	2016	2015	2014	1 yr % Chg	2 yr % Chg	3 yr % Chg
Part 1	570	496	673	686	15%	-15%	-17%
Part 2	883	934	1000	1022	-5%	-12%	-14%
Total	1453	1430	1673	1708	2%	-13%	-15%



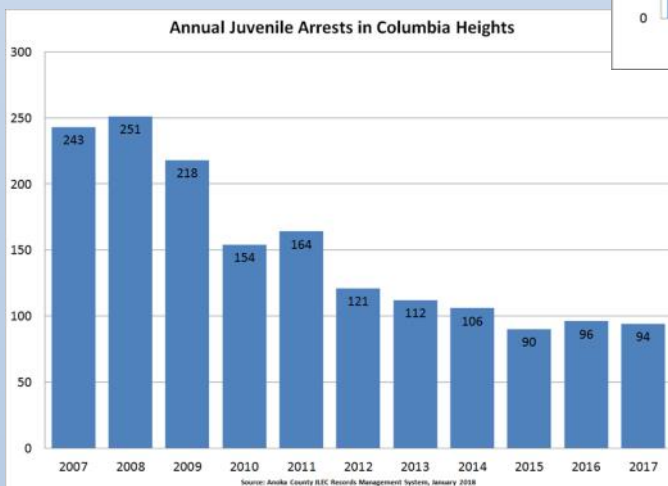
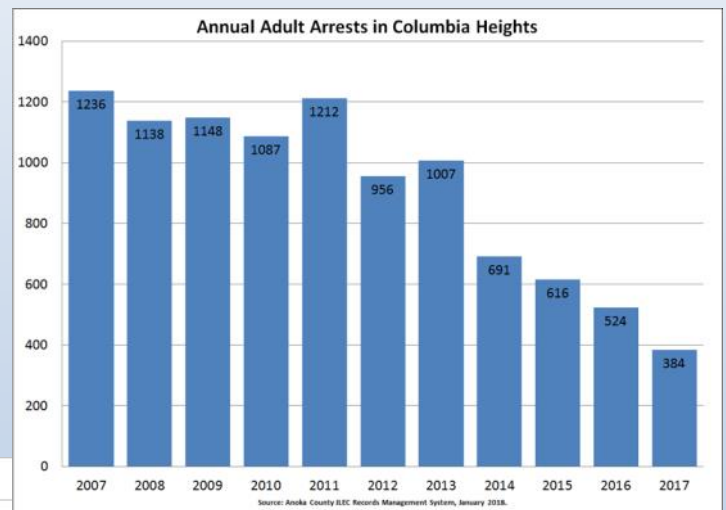
2017 Crime Statistics

Arrests

	2017	2016	2015	2014	1 yr % Chg	2 yr % Chg	3 yr % Chg
Part 1	74	67	119	119	10%	-38%	-38%
Part 2	374	428	558	624	-13%	-33%	-40%
Total	448	495	677	743	-9%	-34%	-40%



2017 juvenile arrests are down very slightly from the low number in 2016. Adult arrests are down by almost a third from the number in 2016.



Community Oriented Policing

The Columbia Heights Police Department continues to focus on the core philosophy of Community Oriented Policing. The main tenet of this philosophy is a strong partnership between the community and the police where problems are solved together. We continue to support and foster our great relationship with the community by engaging in multiple programs where we interact together and work to make the community a safer and more enjoyable place to live, work and play.

Rental Property Outreach

Regular contacts continued with many of our almost 1,000 licensed rental property owners in the city of Columbia Heights. The communication to rental property owners continues to be an important function in order to improve safety and livability in Columbia Heights. Through various forms of communication, including quarterly trainings, the CHPD continued to educate landlords and help bring them into compliance with the ordinances involving rental properties. Training topics included Property Maintenance Code requirements and how to deal with illegal renters, how evictions are processed, and non-discriminatory practices in rental housing.



Landlords listen to non-discriminatory practices training

Business Watch

The Columbia Heights Police Business Watch program nearly doubled the number of participants in 2017, bringing the total members to 156. Officers assigned to the Business Watch spend time during their regular patrol shifts meeting with the business community to share information, troubleshoot problems and provide needed support. This group also serves as a network and partner when problem solving crime issues affecting our business community.

Lee Carlson Center Chili Cook-Off

In 2017, the City of Columbia Heights team defended their champion title for the Bridgeview Chili Cook-Off. The team again won top honors for the chili and look forward to continuing this pattern in 2018. Proceeds from the event benefited the Lee Carlson Center.



Community Oriented Policing

Neighborhood Watch

The Columbia Heights Police Department has over 167 active Neighborhood Watch groups. The hallmark of these groups is based on getting to know your neighbors and your neighborhood so you are in a position to recognize and report suspicious behavior. 2017 training included officer accountability, police use of force, and information on the Muslim culture.



Sergeant Museum explains crime stats at a Neighborhood Watch meeting

Cultural Outreach

A partnership with the Adult Education Center continued in 2017 with several class meetings. Officers attended sessions and spoke about policing and answered questions posed by the students. The students are from a variety of cultural backgrounds and many have a limited understanding of American policing and laws.



Officer Nightingale (32 years on the job) and Officer Vaughn (3 days as officer) attend a session of the Adult Education Center



Sergeant Museum attended the Ecuadorian festival and was met by his growing fan club in the parking lot. The festival is held in front of 4005 Central Avenue and brings in many visitors to celebrate an important holiday.

Community Oriented Policing

Mental Health Outreach

In June, members of the Columbia Heights Police and Fire departments served lunch at Bridgeview Community Connections in Fridley. Bridgeview is a drop-in center for those diagnosed with severe and persistent mental illness, and many community members receive services there. It is a great opportunity to answer questions and chat with members.



Sergeant Johnston, Fire Chief Gorman, Officer Supervisor Olson and Assistant Fire Chief Larkin take a break from serving lunch

Community Picnics

In September, the police department hosted an Eat and Greet event on Circle Terrace in conjunction with the beginning of the construction of the new Community Building. There were many community partners that attended the event to offer and educate on the services that they offer. There were many community and neighborhood members that attended and we all enjoyed good conversation.



In June, the police department joined other city departments and community partners for a picnic at Huset Park. The police department demonstrated a squad car and spoke to residents interested in learning about police services.

Top Left: CSO Miller and Officer Farah with a group of kids at the Circle Terrace Eat and Greet

Bottom Left: Two happy kids get a chance to sit in a squad car

Above: Chief Austin talks to residents at the Huset Park Picnic



Community Oriented Policing

National Night Out

Columbia Heights participated in the 34th Annual National Night Out event. Citywide there were 51 parties, with over 1300 community members participating. Officers enjoyed a night of community, connection, and meaningful dialogues. This event further reminds us of the power of community, and what can be accomplished when we come together. It is our privilege and honor to serve this great community of Columbia Heights, and National Night Out continues to be one of our favorite initiatives.



Above: Officer Wood takes a selfie with CSO Almosawi and a neighborhood NNO group



Top Right: Officer Nightingale tries to recruit future officers at a neighborhood event



Bottom Right: Officer Piehn sits next to Council Member Murzyn and talks to residents

Senior Road Show

The police department visited several senior living locations in 2017 as part of the Senior Road Show. The program included a short presentation on relevant topics, followed by an opportunity meet and ask questions. The CHPD enjoys the opportunity to connect with seniors, many of whom have lived in the Columbia Heights community most of their lives.



Left: Tech O'Brien shares a laugh with a resident at a Senior Road Show event

Right: Sergeant Museum and Investigator Noll visit over coffee and cake with attendees at one of the road shows



Community Oriented Policing

Coffee with a Cop

Coffee with a Cop continued on a monthly basis in 2017 with venues ranging from the VFW to an annual favorite at Dairy Queen. This program is a great opportunity for the community to connect with the police department with no speeches, no agendas - just coffee and conversation.



Clockwise from Top Left: Chief Austin visits with kids at the very popular Cone With a Cop at Dairy Queen

Officer Urbaniak at the VFW

Officer Nightingale at our National Coffee with a Cop Day hosted at the station

Chief Nadeau and Officer Farah at the Turkish Center

CSO Wellman visits at Community Grounds



Police Reserves

The Columbia Heights Reserve Unit is a volunteer organization comprised of members of the Columbia Heights community. These members support the police department and the Columbia Heights-Hilltop community through a variety of tasks that include patrol, transports and participating at special events. Reserve members receive specialized training related to their areas of responsibility. The Reserve Program has been a part of the Columbia Heights Police Department for over half a century, and thousands of hours of volunteer time have been donated. The Columbia Heights Police Department continues to be grateful for their service to their community and plan to grow the program in 2018.



Wellness

The CHPD continues to go above and beyond when addressing officer and employee wellness, an important pillar of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. While employees are still given the opportunities to work out on duty, the department continues to look at new and improved techniques for addressing officer wellness. While in previous years we have hosted nutritionists and heart-health specialists, 2017 marked the year of mental wellness. We brought in a meditative specialist who gave officers and front office staff the tools to lower stress levels through breathing and mediation exercises that anyone can use at their desk or in their squad car. A mindfulness video was created for anyone to use at their own leisure. As we move forward, we continue to look for ways to address the health and wellness of our staff in order to provide all our employees a better quality of life, both at and outside of work.

Multi-Cultural Advisory Committee

The Columbia Heights Police Department's Multicultural Advisory Committee, also known as the MAC, was started in the summer of 2016, making 2017 the first full year for the MAC. The group is made up of approximately 12 volunteers who live, work, pray, or study in the City of Columbia Heights. These volunteers met monthly with the police department to discuss a myriad of issues facing the city including topics like immigration, police procedures, use of force, youth outreach, and improved communication. The MAC assisted the CHPD in hosting community dialogues in 2017, including one on immigration policies within the city. The MAC was also crucial in the Circle Terrace Building initiative, and they will be an important piece of the puzzle as we move forward by hosting classes and outreach opportunities at the newly constructed building. The MAC will continue to improve on police-community relations through regular meetings, transparency, and positive dialogue.

Holiday Train

The Columbia Heights Police Department partnered with the Minneapolis and St. Anthony Police Departments for the 2017 Canadian Pacific Holiday Train event on Saturday, December 9. This is the second year for Columbia



Heights to host the train and it has been a popular event.



Problem Oriented Policing

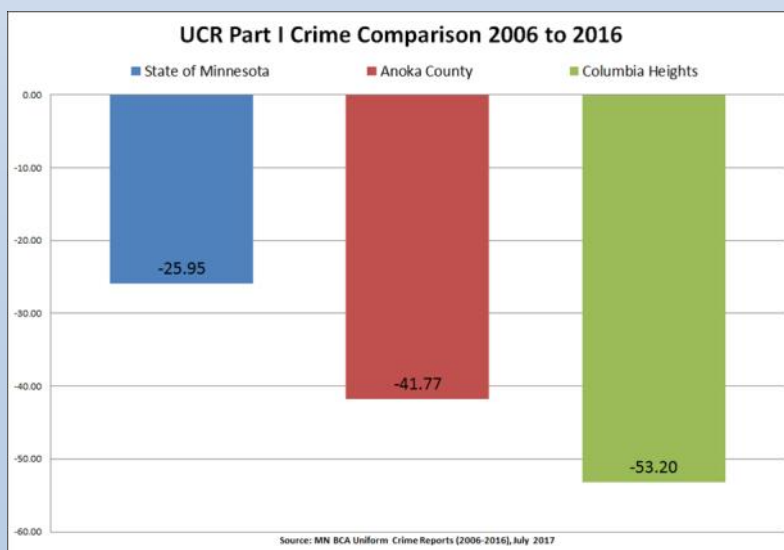
Problem Oriented Policing is one of the five strategies of Columbia Heights Police Department's strategic plan. Problem Oriented Policing, or POP, is the policing strategy that effectively utilizes department resources, community partnerships, and various enforcement methods to reduce crime, which continues to decline in Columbia Heights. 2017 focused on strategies of enforcement that included the Anoka-Hennepin Drug Task Force (AHDTF), our Street Crimes Unit, and crime mapping and statistical analysis.

Officer Bonesteel completed his three-year assignment with the AHDTF in early 2017. Officer Dale Sorensen was assigned to the task force several months later and has been operating out of the AHDTF for the last quarter of 2017. Detectives Bonesteel and Sorensen conducted several search warrants in the city, and their investigations resulted in multiple felony drug arrests. Narcotics enforcement will continue to be a priority of the Columbia Heights Police Department, as departments everywhere look at new and efficient ways to tackle the problems surrounding drug use.

The Street Crimes Unit (SCU) is another proactive enforcement team that addresses quality of life and crime issues within the city limits. This year, Officers Sorensen and Hilden were initially assigned to the unit. Once Officer Sorensen was assigned to the AHDTF, Officer Ryan Scheevel was assigned to take his spot on the Street Crimes Unit. Staffing issues within the department kept the SCU from being on the street for several periods during the year. Even with these challenges, the SCU was responsible for over 100 proactive arrests throughout 2017, including several felony arrests for drugs, burglary, and robbery.

Another valuable POP initiative hosted annually by the CHPD are our All Hands Days. These All Hands Days are hosted on several occasions throughout the year and are aimed at addressing known crime issues and hot spots, as well as positive community outreach. These days are often paired with community events such as the last day of school and homecoming. This allows officers the opportunity to enforce youth issues such as truancy and curfew, while at the same time using positive communication and creative outreach to better address issues on levels beyond just enforcement.

Modern statistical analysis and improved officer training and resources continue to be contributing factors to driving crime down to some of the lowest rates in the last 50 years. Our successes spur us on to finding for innovative ways to maintain the decreased crime rate and the increase in public safety



Columbia Heights Crime Decline Outpaces Anoka County and State of Minnesota

Part 1 Crime in Columbia Heights has dropped over 50% from 2006 to 2016. When compared to Anoka County, Part 1 crime in the county dropped just under 42% in the same time period. Statewide Part 1 dropped 26% from 2006 to 2016. We are very proud that our hard work has helped achieve a crime reduction that is double what the state as a whole is experiencing. These comparisons are made using the BCA's Uniform Crime Report which comes out in July, the 2016 edition is the newest available.

Training

Every officer on the CHPD has now completed a week-long training in Crisis Intervention Techniques (CIT). CIT is a law enforcement mental health crisis response which teaches de-escalation. Because the CHPD believes in this approach, our 2017 Strategic Plan required that all officers be trained in CIT by the end of the year. The CHPD has also started including training in de-escalation as part of our annual use of force training.



CHPD Chief Austin, Sergeant Fischer, Officer Hilden, Officer Farah and Officer Scheevel are in the group photo from a CIT training

Leadership Skills Program

One of the objectives of the 2017 Strategic Plan was to seek new and improved methods of leadership training for all levels of staff, which is also a pillar of 21st Century Policing. The CHPD partnered with Dr. Mirja Hanson, a professor of the Leadership Program at the University of St. Thomas and a well-respected consultant in the fields of leadership, community action, and organizational development to develop and provide the training.

Dr. Hanson worked with supervisors, officers, and front office staff to create a program specific to the needs of the Columbia Heights Police Department. In June, the department began an eight session leadership skills course taught by Dr. Hanson. This class was optional for employees to attend, but there were over 21 students in the class made up of staff from all levels in the police department, as well as the Columbia Heights Fire



Department. The class was free to all who attended, and after 8 sessions of learning a survey was completed which found that the class was received with overwhelmingly positive results. The CHPD will continue to look at additional leadership training as we continue to use creative partnerships to benefit the department and its staff, as well as the community as whole.

Youth Outreach

Anti-Bullying Reading Program

In 2009, the Columbia Heights Police Department teamed up with Highland Elementary to address bullying with Kindergarten, First and Second graders. Officers and staff members go into the classrooms twice a year and read a book that provides an important message about bullying to the students. In 2014, the program expanded and now nearly all CHPD staff, sworn and non-sworn, participate in the program which also extends to Valley View Elementary, Immaculate Conception School, and Global Academy. The visits also provide the young students with an opportunity to ask questions and meet someone from the Police Department in a positive interaction.



The School Resource Officers have access to the School District's Bullying report forms, and they work with school staff as an additional resource for students to intervene with bullying concerns and behaviors. This continues to be a positive way for students and staff to have an opportunity to address any bullying concerns.

Sergeant Pletcher (above) and Officer Nightingale (left) share some of their favorite story books during the Anti-Bullying Reading Program

School Safety

Since 2015, the police department has collaborated with the Columbia Heights Fire Department, Allina Paramedics and the Columbia Heights School District for our bi-annual Active Shooter training sessions. District and school personnel are on hand to observe our training, to include engaging an active shooter in the building and removal of victims with the aid of the Fire Department and paramedics. Following the trainings, a debriefing session is held with all the departments involved. This training allows an opportunity for the District to observe, understand and prepare should an event actually occur in a school building. In 2017, CHPD held another training of this nature at Valley View Elementary during spring break while school was closed for the week.

The police department also continues to provide extra assistance to the traffic congestion during start and dismissal of the school day at Valley View Elementary and Columbia Academy, an initiative we started in 2013. The traffic assistance provided by the Police Department has been successful in raising the awareness of the drivers who pick up and drop off students, and make for a safer route to and from school for students who walk to school. In 2017, the CHPD conducted a traffic control study to determine what, if any, additional resources are needed regarding school traffic safety. The results of that study will be completed in early 2018.

Youth Outreach

D.A.R.E.

The Columbia Heights Police Department has been teaching D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) to the 4th and 5th grade students of Columbia Heights School District for over 25 years. The School Resource Officers teach the curriculum at Valley View, Highland and North Park Elementary Schools. This combined effort creates approximately 285 D.A.R.E. graduates each year. Through the D.A.R.E. curriculum, students learn to avoid drugs, alcohol and tobacco, and how to make safe and responsible decisions.

Chief Nadeau speaks at one of the D.A.R.E Graduations



Open Gym

The Columbia Heights Police Department currently holds and supervises five Open Gym sessions per week. On Mondays after school, CHPD hosts an open gym for middle school-aged kids at the Hylander Center. On Tuesdays after school, one open gym is hosted at the Hylander Center for high school-aged kids only, and a second is held at Columbia Academy for middle school students. On Wednesdays before school, an open gym session is held at the Hylander Center for soccer only. Finally, on Thursday after school, the Hylander Center is open for high school-aged kids again. These Open Gym sessions are designed to provide our youth with a safe place to go play before or after school. In 2017, there were a total of 6,814 youth attendees to open gym program.



Top: Officer Piehn plays defense at Open Gym



Left: Officer Wood and CSO Almosawi with a group of girls taking a break from Open Gym

Youth Outreach

3 on 3 Basketball Tournament

At the end of the 2016/2017 school year, the CHPD hosted a 3-on-3 basketball tournament as a spin-off of the Open Gym program. The tournament was designed to give the students who participate in the open gym program throughout the year a fun way to end the school year, and to garner continued interest in the program for the upcoming summer and following school year. Approximately 150 students participated in, or came to watch, the 3 on 3 tournament in 2017. Another tournament is being planned for 2018.



Officer Vaughn, Officer Piehn, Officer Wood and CSO Miller with part of the winning girls team



Officer Vaughn and Officer Piehn with the winning boys team

Big Brothers Big Sisters

CHPD has partnered with Big Brothers/Big Sisters Twin Cities since 2011, and is the only department in Anoka County involved in the program. Department staff who volunteer to be a Big Brother or Sister go into the school to meet their matched student. The two will play games, read, make crafts and develop a mentoring relationship. The partnership first started at Highland Elementary and has since expanded to Valley View Elementary and Columbia Academy.

In 2017, the CHPD and BBBS partnered to begin a pilot program for a high school-aged youth sports mentorship program, starting with the boys basketball program. The program goals are to mentor high school athletes through common interests with officers, such as sports. The goal is to help them navigate through life with things like grades and teamwork, as well as to help prepare them for life after high school sports in areas like college prep and job placement.



Investigator Noll thinks about his next move in a game of Sorry!

Teen Academy

For the second year in a row, CHPD hosted a Teen Academy in 2017. The program was expanded this year to a two-day program. After the second day, students who successfully completed the program were able to participate in a ride along with a CHPD officer. This Academy was designed for students who have an interest in law enforcement or are considering a career in law enforcement.

Thirteen students participated this year, and there are plans to expand the program even more in 2018 since it was so well received by those participants.



Left: Participants got to practice a traffic stop in the garage



Top Right: Officer Huebner walks a participant through Field Sobriety tests while he is wearing the impaired vision goggles

Chemical Abuse Awareness and Prevention

Since 2016, the High School Resource Officer has conducted classroom presentations on alcohol and opioid abuse to the 10th grade health classes. In 2017 there were approximately 130 kids in each of the presentations, which were broken down into smaller classes of about four classes each. For the alcohol presentation, the School Resource Officer utilizes fatal vision goggles simulating alcohol use to show students what happens when their vision is impaired while trying to perform basic tasks such as walking, balancing, or operating equipment. During the opioid presentation, the School Resource Officer shows the video "Chasing the Dragon" to the students, and then conducts a classroom discussion/presentation with the assistance of guest speakers. The guest speakers this year were the parents of a young Columbia Heights male who died after overdosing on heroin, and a former CHHS graduate who is a former pill and heroin user that has now gone through recovery and has stayed clean. The presenters make this information all the more powerful and compelling due to the current national opioid epidemic.

Pizza with a Cop

For the past two years the CHPD and CHHS have partnered to host a "Pizza with a Cop" session at the High School. Metro Transit PD also helps out with this event. This simple idea provides police and teens an opportunity to sit together over pizza to discuss police-related topics, which the teens come up with ahead of time by filling out a comment card with at least one question each. "Pizza with a Cop" is the youth version of our already successful "Coffee with a Cop" program. In 2017, 60 kids participated and many more are already asking when we will be hosting it again in 2018.



Columbia Heights Police Association

The Columbia Heights Police Association (CHPA), a non-profit organization of current and retired employees of the Columbia Heights Police Department, was founded in 2008. The CHPA is funded through a combination of member dues, fundraising and private donations. The primary mission of the CHPA is to provide support to Columbia Heights law enforcement employees and their families. CHPA donations are made when police officers are killed or injured in the line of duty, or the Police Department is presented with a need that cannot be funded through traditional means.



Columbia Heights Police Give Back

Our core values are “Committed. Helpful. Professional. Dedicated.” It’s more than a slogan for us. Those are the principles we try to live by, remembering that we are lucky to be in working in public service. Here are some of the ways that the men and women of the CHPD made a difference in our community during 2017.



Tech Gomez plays a board game with his Little Brother

Several of the department’s employees are mentoring youth at Highland Elementary, Valley View Elementary, and Columbia Academy through the Big Brothers Big Sisters program. We’re in our sixth school year participating in this important program, and now there are employees from other city departments and community members involved in mentoring too. We strongly believe that mentoring can make a difference in the life of a child, and we’re proud to be partnering with the Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Greater Twin Cities in this effort.

Most of the department’s employees are involved in the Anti-Bullying reading program, where we visit elementary school classes twice each school year to read a book and visit with kids about bullying prevention. This important part of our youth outreach gives us a chance to reinforce the information the students are learning in school about bullying.

The “Heights Bikes” program was successful for its third straight year. In May of 2017, the CHPD partnered with Robert Putz from Wells Fargo



Officers, CSOs and school officials take a picture with the bikes that went to Valley View Elementary students

Bank, the Columbia Heights School District, the Columbia Heights Police Association and the Fridley/Columbia Heights Rotary to give bikes, helmets and locks to 12 Columbia Heights students. The bikes were donated by the City of Columbia Heights/Police Department, Robert Putz donated his time to repair the bikes, the Rotary Club donated the helmets and the Police Association donated the bike locks.

Columbia Heights Police Give Back



Investigator Noll, Sergeant Johnston and Information Specialist Nihart with their beards

For the sixth year, CHPD participated in the “Movember” initiative to raise funds and awareness for men’s health issues by growing facial hair. Officers were allowed to wear mustaches and neatly trimmed beards during the month of November if they were pledging to raise money for this important cause. This year, the CHPD Movember team raised \$1,000, giving us a five-year total of almost \$8,500 raised.

For the third year, the CHPD joined with other community volunteers for the Sheridan Story, a statewide non-profit organization that supports children of families in need with a consistent supply of nutritious food every weekend. Volunteers from the PD worked with project organizers and representatives of Highland Elementary to distribute food discretely into participating students’ backpacks. Each participating student receives a four to five pound bag of food at the end of each week.

The Police Association administers the annual Curt Ramsdell Scholarship which is named in honor of Officer Curt Ramsdell who was killed in the line of duty on July 30, 1977. The \$1,000 award is given each year to a student who embodies Ramsdell’s dedication to public service. The 2017 scholarship in the amount of \$1,000 was given to Vanessa Pesantez, a Columbia Heights High School senior. Vanessa was chosen for her exceptional educational accomplishments, as well as her participation in various outreach activities.

This year, the CH Police Association sponsored the 8th annual Shop with a Cop project, coordinated by Sgt Justin Pletcher and funded by the Police Association and our generous donors. This year we shopped with 21 families, which is a new record for us! Officers and other members of the PD go shopping with our recipients and help them pick out holiday items like toys and clothes for their kids. Sometimes the families decide to purchase essentials like food and household items too. We here at the CHPD love this project; it’s heartwarming to be able to help people who might be struggling, and we really enjoy meeting and spending time with these amazing members of our community.



Sergeant Johnston with Curt Ramsdell Scholarship awardee Vanessa Pesantez

Left: Officer Farah and Officer Piehn after a shopping trip

Right: Tech Peterson and Officer Nightingale get ready to go shopping





Defining Values of the Columbia Heights Police

Mission Statement

The Columbia Heights Police Department is committed to active partnerships with the community in order to protect lives and property, innovatively solve problems, and enhance the safety and quality of life in the communities we serve.



2012 Recipient & 2015 Finalist

Core Values

Committed: As a group we are committed to the honest and fair treatment of all our community members, while recognizing that each citizen has different needs and values.

Helpful: Employees of the CHPD will strive to meet the needs of our community and the people that we have contact with. We are mindful that we draw our authority from the public, and it is our mandate to assist others whenever possible.

Professional: The employees of the CHPD will hold themselves to the highest professional standards, utilizing the best practices in law enforcement to carry out our duties professionally and with integrity.

Dedicated: The CHPD is dedicated to excellence in its delivery of law enforcement services. We will seek opportunities to serve in a manner that exceeds expectations and adheres to the ideals of the United States Constitution and our professional Oath of Honor.

21st Century Policing

Trust between a Police Department and the people it serves is critical to public safety. In 2014, a task force was brought together by then-President Barack Obama to identify best practices and recommendations for how police departments across the country can promote effective crime reduction while building trust. The task force developed recommendations, each with action items around six “pillars,” which are widely lauded as the gold standard of policing for the 21st century. The Columbia Heights Police Department had been practicing many of these pillars even before the release of the report, and we continue to use them to build an even better agency – a model agency for the 21st Century.

We are committed to transparency, trust and service with respect. The pillars outlined in the “Final Report of the President’s Task Force 21st Century Policing” provide a guideline for us now and into the future.

Going the extra mile to make a difference!

On Monday, April 3, 2017, School Resource Officer Jason Piehn and several members of the Columbia Heights High School's Muslim Students Association (MSA) for which Officer Piehn serves as an advisor, volunteered in packaging MannaPack meals at Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) in Coon Rapids. FMSC works with distribution partners to reach the most needy and vulnerable malnourished children and struggling communities in over 60 countries around the world, to include Somalia, which is experiencing a food shortage due to drought as well as a history of conflict and strife. Together with the other volunteers that night, they packaged 108 boxes of food, or 23,328 meals, which is enough food to feed 64 kids for an entire year!



Serving the Columbia Heights Community Since 1921

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