



WEED & SEED **INSITES**  
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Conference  
Highlights

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# contents

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## On the Cover

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## SUMMER/FALL 2003

**3** Letter From the U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of New York

**4** What's Working

*Law Enforcement*

*Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment*

*Neighborhood Restoration*

**20** Conference Corner

**27** Winners

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FROM THE U.S. ATTORNEY FOR THE  
EASTERN DISTRICT OF NEW YORK

# letter

Weed and Seed has become rooted in the American landscape as a model of community resilience to crime. It is thus natural for communities to look to Weed and Seed for guidance in the area of homeland security. I was proud to take part recently in a Homeland Security Townhall Meeting organized by the East New York Weed and Seed Steering Committee. This event exemplified the strength and vitality of the partnerships formed among law enforcement agencies and the community through Weed and Seed.



Prosecutors, police, and the community represented by the Weed and Seed Steering Committees have come to know and respect each other through mutual commitment to reducing crime, providing safe havens for children, and restoring neighborhoods. Through Weed and Seed, residents have rallied together as courageous and effective fighters when drugs, abandoned buildings, prostitution, and gangs plagued their communities. They come together, organize, and work hard to get their neighborhoods on a healthy track—they know about homeland defense.

How fitting it is for Weed and Seed leaders to convene a forum for concerned people to come together to meet another challenge—the threat of terrorism. I am confident that we can work together with great effect to overcome the threat of terror in our communities as we have with other problems we have faced. A good understanding of the issues of terrorism is the critical first step. We must know what the danger is, what is being done about it, and what we can do. That is why these meetings are so important.

I encourage all Weed and Seed Steering Committees to consider convening meetings with Federal, State, and local agencies that are responsible for public safety, emergency services, public education, public health, and environmental protection. They will be able to provide you with information on the nature of the threat faced by your community, what steps are underway to prevent threats from being carried out, and what you can do as committed citizens to enhance your safety and security.

As leaders in Weed and Seed, you truly represent your community, and you are vitally important to our strength and effectiveness in dealing with the threat of terrorism. The purpose of terrorism is to instill fear in the community. When communities come together to address these threats, we prove that we are not overcome by fear, but are committed to protecting the freedoms and ideals that make our cities and our country so great.

So put your experience in Weed and Seed to work against the new threat of terrorism: get informed, stay informed, and share the information with family and neighbors. We are all responsible for keeping our communities safe. Our Weed and Seed partnerships are good examples of how we—government and community—can work together to face new challenges and make our communities stronger and safer.

*Roslynn R. Mauskopf*  
United States Attorney  
Eastern District of New York

# East New York Weed and Seed Holds Homeland Security Townhall Meeting

In the wake of September 11, 2001, and the continuing threat of terrorism, communities across America have begun focusing on new types of public safety issues. In Brooklyn, East New York Weed and Seed Steering Committee members were increasingly asked by neighborhood residents,

What can we do as individuals to make our community safe from terror attacks? How prepared are the schools, hospitals, and emergency services to defend against terrorists, and to minimize consequences of an attack?

The East New York Weed and Seed Steering Committee hosted a Homeland Security Townhall Meeting to answer those critical questions and establish a dialogue between key government agencies and the community. The U.S. Attorney's Office helped produce posters to announce that the meeting would be held at the Thomas Jefferson High School auditorium on April 10, 2003. Arrangements were made to personally brief local community leaders and to transport senior citizens to the meeting by bus.

The publicity made clear that the purpose of the townhall meeting was

- To give the community a first-hand account of how government agencies have prepared for terrorism-related emergencies.
- To provide the community with information on how to properly prepare for and respond to emergencies.

The Weed and Seed program is well known and respected in the East New York section of Brooklyn. Its reputation has been built on dogged persistence in improving safety and quality

of life in the community. Steering committee members felt it was appropriate to take responsibility for bringing the community together to face a new problem—uncertainty and fear of terror attacks.

U.S. Attorney Roslynn Mauskopf welcomed attendees to the meeting. Weed and Seed leaders Eze van Buckley and Jeanette Ruffins introduced the panel and moderated the discussion that followed presentations by local and Federal officials. Various government agencies and other organizations were represented by their respective members.

Kevin Clark, of the Office of Emergency Management, explained that his office is the coordinating agency for New York City in case of an emergency and maintains a 24/7 watch command with mobile command posts. Sgt. Yvette Aguiar, of the New York Police Department's Counter-Terrorism Division, explained that her recently formed division maintains a command center, which is a repository for intelligence information concerning terrorism.

Gerard McCarty, of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, described the organization's function, which includes the management of Federal agencies responding to emergencies and coordination of the recovery response. He also explained the importance of individual action and urged citizens to plan on how they will take care of themselves in emergency situations.

Greg Thomas, of the New York City Department of Education, reported that each of more than 1,100 area schools has submitted safety plans to the department that first responders can access online before they respond

to an incident. Deputy Borough Commander Edward Kilduff, of the New York City Fire Department, reported that emergency responses are now managed by a nationally certified incident management team that has received special Federal training in incident responses.

Sarah Roberts, of the city's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, described the public health and mental hygiene missions of her department and how they are met through surveillance, coordination, and communication. Arnaldo Salinas, Senior Director of the Guardian Angels, a nongovernmental organization, presented information on providing safety training to members of the community.

Residents of East New York left the meeting with a better understanding of how government agencies are prepared for terror threats and an appreciation of what individuals can do to prepare for, and respond to, a possible terrorist attack.

This meeting on homeland security is an example of a lasting effect of the U.S. Department of Justice's investment in community-based programs. Weed and Seed has given people an opportunity to take responsibility for public safety in their community and a forum through which they can partner with law enforcement agencies. In Brooklyn's East New York neighborhood, Weed and Seed has become synonymous with working toward a safer community, no matter what the threat.

For more information on planning a Homeland Security Townhall Meeting, contact Eze van Buckley at 718-346-8489, ext. 522. 

# U.S. Attorney Melgren Meets With Wichita/Sedgwick Weed and Seed

*Riley Williams, Coordinator, Wichita/Sedgwick County Weed and Seed  
Steve Nevil, LECC Coordinator, U.S. Attorney's Office  
Lt. Wanda Givens, Weed and Seed Coordinator*

**E**ric Melgren, U.S. Attorney for the District of Kansas, visited the Wichita/Sedgwick County Weed and Seed Steering Committee meeting in October to discuss the Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) program. PSN is a Federal initiative introduced by President George W. Bush and U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft designed to reduce gun violence in neighborhoods across America. Mr. Melgren described what PSN will mean to local communities, how he anticipates the program will work, and that this initiative is one of his district's top priorities.

Dr. Leonard Wesley, Chairman of the Steering Committee for the Wichita/Sedgwick County Weed and Seed site, was pleased that the U.S. Attorney had stopped by to enlighten the 40 committee members in attendance about his future plans. Several Wichita neighborhoods had experienced recent episodes of violence and joined Weed and Seed to garner support for their efforts to change the image of their areas.

"We are appreciative of the information provided to us in this presentation and are glad that Mr. Melgren took the time to share his vision on PSN before it was introduced to the media," said Wesley.

Jackie LeGrand, Director of Senior Services and a member of the steering committee, also addressed the gathering and said that she was excited about the support for senior citizens, one of the most valuable resources in a community, to join in the efforts to strengthen our families' ability to keep our neighborhoods safe. Several community-based service providers

have joined with the Fairmount and Kenmar neighborhood associations to provide a safe environment and supervised evening and after-school activities for neighborhood youth. She said that being informed about the U.S. Attorney's plan for attacking violence in Kansas helps keep neighborhoods feeling connected and their active residents prepared to answer questions that will arise about PSN.

In the coming year, U.S. Attorneys' Offices statewide will implement a training program to reach out to law

enforcement and local prosecutors to ensure that reducing gun violence will be foremost in their area plans. A media campaign is also planned to focus public attention on the rising tide of gun violence. As part of the outreach portion of PSN, many U.S. Attorneys' Offices are partnering with Weed and Seed components to accomplish this goal. Wichita/Sedgwick County Weed and Seed hopes to play a role in this effort and will continue to be a positive force in the community by keeping the community involved and informed. 🏠

## Fairmount Park Reclaimed After Double Homicide

The Fairmount Neighborhood Association in Wichita, Kansas, says no to violence and wants its park to continue to be used by the children and families of the community. Sparked by a tragic shooting that cost the lives of two young adult gang members who chose to settle a dispute in the park, the Fairmount Neighborhood Association organized and promoted the Fifth Annual Harvest Fest to reclaim the park. Supporting the association in its endeavor were the Wichita Police Department, Wichita Housing Authority, Wichita Family Services Institute, Inc., Wichita/Sedgwick County Weed and Seed, Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Kansas Army National Guard, and the Hot 107.9 JAMZ radio station.

The Harvest Fest attracted more than 600 parents and children to the park for a night of pre-Halloween activities. So many children attended that they had to be placed in age categories to attend a drug education and awareness lecture before they could participate in a variety of games. Each child was given a Jack-o-Lantern filled with treats and enjoyed hotdogs, chips, and soft drinks. Parents were given free smoked turkey legs. Afterwards, children and parents participated in an old-fashioned hayrack ride through the neighborhood to cap off an enjoyable fall night and broadcast the message that the park once again belongs to the community.

The children and parents were ecstatic about the event and the good time that they had while interacting with their neighbors and the Wichita police officers who provided security. Wichita Police Chief Norman Williams was among those who attended the event.

# Gulfton Weed and Seed Apartment Outreach Initiative

*Nyelene Qasem, Weed and Seed Coordinator*

Gulfton is a 3.4-square-mile section of southwest Houston, Texas. The area has more than 60 apartment complexes and 60,000 residents, including many low-income immigrants, refugees, and undocumented workers who have a negative view of the police. Often, residents do not report crimes and become further victimized by robbers, gang members, and hoodlums. Weed and Seed Steering Committee members decided that it would be beneficial to bring police officers into the community so residents could see that they are there to help them.

The Gulfton Weed and Seed Initiative has been bridging the gap between the Houston Police Department (HPD) and residents of the Gulfton community since 1998. Initially, Houston police officers knocked on doors at more than 40 apartment complexes conducting a quality-of-life survey and taking residents complaints about living conditions and crime. Officers investigated any code violation complaints that they received to gain the residents' trust. They distributed magnets with police phone numbers and the hours of the HPD Gulfton Storefront office, a resource directory of free services available in the community, and a flier about informational meetings where the community can meet the police, ask questions, and discuss community issues.

The community meetings are held on various evenings in apartment complexes. The HPD captain for the Fondren Division and the Weed and Seed liaison officer attend every meeting. A community outreach worker facilitates the meetings and translates for the captain and officer. The officer talks about how the police can help create a safer community and explains that officers cannot ask for immigration



*Cilia Teresa, Apartment Outreach Coordinator, and Cenaiyda Carranza, Truancy Reduction Coordinator, speak to community residents about curfew and truancy laws and how they affect their children.*

documentation unless an individual has committed a crime. The officer also explains that calls for service are assigned from greatest to least need and how residents can file a complaint about an officer, as well as when to dial 9-1-1 and when to call dispatch.

The captain explains how he assigns patrol units to the area according to the number of calls for service and that it is important for residents to call when there is trouble in a complex so he knows where to assign the most officers. Residents are then allowed to ask questions of the HPD representatives. Myths about police can run rampant in the community, so receiving information directly from officers

helps clear up confusion about how HPD works.

Since the program began, outreach meetings have been held at more than 48 apartments, with an average attendance of more than 35 residents at each meeting. The meetings have generated more calls for service in Gulfton and a large increase in traffic to the HPD Gulfton Storefront, as well as more contacts with area service providers requesting officers to assist with community events and safety presentations.

For more information about the Gulfton Apartment Outreach Initiative, call Nyelene Qasem, Program Coordinator, at 713-314-3550 or Officer Joe Esquivel at 713-773-7940. 🏠

## Civic-Minded Youth

Gulfton United Minds was formed in 2001 to organize team-building activities for youth in the Gulfton area. Funded by Gulfton Youth Development, this group of youth between ages 12 and 16 organizes group community service projects and learns about civic responsibility.

During the past 2 years, United Minds youth have completed two park cleanups, served on the Gulfton Youth Development Steering Committee, worked as juror counselors at the Campo del Sol Summer Day Camp Program, and held a beach party for three youth councils in Galveston, Texas. But their biggest accomplishment was the Haunted House they held last Halloween for the children of the Gulfton community.

The group took weeks to plan, design, solicit donations, create scripts for character actors, design costumes, and coordinate lighting, music, and security for the Fifth Annual Gulfton Haunted House. More than 700 residents brought their families to this free event at the Weed and Seed Safe Haven. Houston police officers monitored the activities to ensure the event was safe. Children and their parents were led into the Haunted House and were treated to 15 minutes of ghouls, ghosts, and Blair Witch adventures. Candy bags were given to all children who made it through the tour. Younger children had their own activities: a pinata, balloon games, pumpkin bowling, and musical chairs.

# Salt Lake COPS Advance Meth Initiative

Chief Charles F. "Rick" Dinse, Salt Lake City Police Department

With the efforts of the Salt Lake City Weed and Seed site, the Salt Lake City Police Department began to track criminal activity associated with methamphetamine. An assessment of the problem in Salt Lake City found that clandestine labs increased 41 percent from 1997 to 1998 and that treatment admissions for methamphetamine had increased 25 percent from 1990 to 1997.

To combat the use, distribution, and production of methamphetamine and other dangerous drugs, the department forged a collaborative effort known as the Salt Lake City COPS Meth Initiative. The Meth Initiative was established in January 1998 with funding from the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) and the U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance. The initiative is a partnership of more than 30 agencies including law enforcement, child protective services, prosecution, the courts, medical providers, substance abuse treatment, environmental protection, and public schools. The partners' work group is organized into five subcommittees: Law Enforcement, Prosecution, Child Endangerment, Treatment, and Public Awareness.

## Law Enforcement

The Intelligence Office is a key component of the police department's Meth Team and provides the technical and computer expertise to combat today's drug manufacturing and distribution networks. This support has resulted in greater hours spent in the field by detectives and more thorough and complete investigations. Since implementing the office, response time to the drug hotline has decreased by more than 400 percent, even though the volume of calls has increased more than 150 percent. This has had a

positive impact on the community because residents receive a response to their complaint within 2 weeks and sometimes even get immediate relief.

The Salt Lake Valley Health Department has implemented countywide regulations for the cleanup of chemically contaminated properties. In addition, statewide legislation has been proposed to mandate timely decontamination and rehabilitation of such properties.

## Prosecution

Prosecution Subcommittee members wrote and helped pass the Endangerment of a Child or Elder Adult Statute in 2000. During the 2002 legislative session, the statute was amended to facilitate prosecution under the law. Anyone who exposes a child or elder adult to controlled substances, drug paraphernalia, or chemical substances can be charged with a felony offense. In Utah, child endangerment crimes are victim crimes and subject violators to enhanced penalties. One of the subcommittee's priorities has been to provide training on the amended statute to law enforcement and prosecutors statewide.

## Child Endangerment

One of the Meth Initiative's major successes is Salt Lake's Drug Endangered Children (DEC) program, which addresses the growing epidemic of children who are exposed to dangerous drugs and chemicals. The DEC program combines the resources of law enforcement, prosecution, child protective services, environmental health, and medical personnel to provide a combined response in drug cases involving children. The agencies have put together joint protocols to be implemented when children are

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found at scenes where narcotics are present.

Children exposed to drugs are often subject to physical and emotional neglect and live in filthy conditions. Primary Children's Medical Center developed protocols for treating children with possible drug or chemical exposure. Children who have been exposed to drugs are transported to the center's emergency department where they are evaluated and treated for any health problems.

Some 54 percent of children tracked by this project from 2000 through 2002 tested positive for multiple drugs through a hair analysis test. At present, it is unknown what the long-term effects are to children who are exposed to methamphetamine. The National Institute on Drug Addictions is working with medical personnel to conduct a descriptive study of children who are exposed to methamphetamine and other dangerous drugs.

In March 2003, the Meth Initiative held a Drug Endangered Children Conference, in Salt Lake City, Utah. Training was provided about the resources available to address the problems associated with youth and drugs.

**Treatment**

One of the most important projects of the Treatment Subcommittee was the creation of the Women and Children Residential Program, which was designed to address the gap in services for pregnant women and infants who are born exposed to drugs. Treatment services for pregnant women have been expanded to provide immediate access to services, outreach services for high-risk clients, and a system of intensive collaboration and case staffing between involved agencies.

**Meth Initiative Training Classes**

**Drug Endangered Children**—Training on Salt Lake's Drug Endangered Children Program, designed for law enforcement, prosecutors, and child protective services workers.

**Meth: Production, Use, and Consequences**—Signs and symptomology of meth and other dangerous drugs. Includes information on the health, social, and legal consequences of narcotics.

**Law Enforcement Clandestine Lab Course**—Clandestine lab identification, search and seizure, child endangerment, and Health Department cleanup regulations.

**Toxicology and Clandestine Lab Regulations**—Environmental health training on Salt Lake County regulations, methamphetamine production, and the health and safety aspects of a clandestine lab.

**Innkeepers Course to Narcotic Interdiction**—Legal information, trafficking trends, and drug identifiers for owners, managers, housekeepers, and desk clerks.

**Child Endangerment Statute**—Training on Utah's amended Endangerment of a Child or Elderly Adult Statute with tips for successful prosecution and alternative charging options.

Pregnant women and women who have given birth to a drug-addicted infant are immediately transported from hospitals and crime scenes to detoxification units and then directly into treatment services.

The Meth Initiative has also been involved with Utah's Third District Drug Court programs in both felony drug cases and juvenile court cases, in which children have been removed from their parents' custody by social services. These programs use the assets of various agencies such as the courts, law enforcement, and treatment to combat the far-reaching effects of addiction.

**Public Awareness**

The Public Awareness Campaign consists of public service announcements, billboards, direct neighborhood contacts, educational videos, pamphlets,

and a collaborative training effort initiated through the partnering agencies for public schools, landlords, utilities, social service agencies, and hospitals. Through the campaign, citizens learn about the health dangers associated with meth labs as well as the financial impact meth labs have on the community and their effect on neighborhood safety. As citizens recognize the indicators of meth labs, they become empowered to help keep their neighborhood safe. The involvement of the community in law enforcement efforts is a key component to implementing long-term solutions.

For more information, contact Marjean Searcy, Project Coordinator, at 801-799-3357, or at the COPS office, Ed Mixon at 202-616-1314. 🏠

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See back cover for details.**

# Sixth District High Risk Unit Lowers Risk to the Public

Gary Hinzman, Director, Iowa Department of Correctional Services

The ability to closely monitor the activities of violent, high-risk offenders is paramount to preventing new destructive behavior. Their numbers include career criminals, antisocial individuals, and prolific offenders who do not want to be supervised by probation or parole officers. While discussions abound about what works with supervision, corrections officials agree on a few factors:

- Recidivism rates are highest in the first year following an offender's release.
- Offenders with psychological problems or mental illness can maintain community stability with consistent and frequent supervision contacts.
- Violent offenders with alcohol and other drug problems can best be kept in treatment by staff who have the specialized training to deal with that population on the street.

These are the profiles of offenders who, without this structure and supervision, ultimately commit heinous acts, including acts of terrorism.

Adequate resources have never been available to develop initiatives to address the public safety problem of offenders who abscond from their parole/probation supervision. Frequently, corrections thinks absconders are law enforcement's problem and law enforcement sees them as a corrections issue. It is safe to assume that these fugitives, while they remain unsupervised, have a negative impact on public safety and continue to victimize their communities. Violent offenders have demonstrated that their lives are in serious need of change. Absconding from supervision magnifies the fact that their behaviors are out of control and that returning them to supervision is in the best interest of public safety.

## Creating the Cedar Rapids High Risk Unit

To respond to the need for supervision, the Sixth Judicial District Department of Correctional Services, headquartered in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, created a High Risk Unit (HRU) of parole and probation officers trained by the Iowa Law Enforcement Academy. HRU has two supervisors and eight certified officers. This unit closely manages the high-risk population in accordance with department standards for high-risk offenders.

The department has developed the electronic capacity to share offender information and profiles with Cedar Rapids street officers and area law enforcement. The chief judge of the district ordered that a clause be added to our standard probation agreement that requires all offenders on probation to submit their home, vehicle, or personal possessions to a search at any time by probation officers or law enforcement officers working with probation officers. These are powerful investigative and enforcement tools that probation can use to improve public safety.

Two recent examples of HRU using this search standard resulted in positive outcomes. In one case, HRU officers were sent out to conduct a routine check on a probationer who would not report for an appointment. It was suspected that she was using drugs. Arriving at her residence, HRU officers heard several voices within the residence before a male finally answered the door and denied there were any other occupants. A search of the residence turned up five other people and officers discovered a methamphetamine lab and distribution operation. Of the six people in the residence, three were on adult supervision and two were on juvenile

supervision. The case was referred to Federal prosecutors.

Another case involved the random check of a client for compliance with supervision conditions. A delay in answering the door, nervousness on the client's part, and furtive movements inside the apartment gave the officer further cause to investigate. The Cedar Rapids Police Department arrived with backup and a K-9 search uncovered a 59-gram rock of crack cocaine. The K-9 officer commented that this was the largest quantity of drugs discovered by the unit in some time. An occupant in the apartment who happened to be there from a neighboring State was charged in Federal court.

An example of tracking down fugitives took place when three inmates escaped from a residential facility in Coralville, Iowa, which is in the Sixth District. One inmate was serving a 25-year sentence for second-degree sexual abuse, another was serving a 5-year sentence for lascivious acts with a child, and the third was doing time for forgery. They had not returned as scheduled on a Saturday evening. HRU staff received a tip on the whereabouts of one of them on Monday morning and by Monday afternoon all three were arrested and placed in custody by HRU officers.

## Developing Important Partnerships

Partnering with local law enforcement has also proved to be a valuable tool. HRU was asked to work with an Iowa State trooper who had a probationer under surveillance for suspicion of possible meth production. He was on supervision for possession of a firearm as a felon. Recent reports provided information that he was discharging firearms in his backyard and poaching

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deer. A raid of his residence resulted in the arrest of an absconder from another Iowa district. Additionally, chemicals and material for making methamphetamine, several firearms (rifles and handguns), and the carcasses of two poached deer were discovered. Charges filed as a result included felon in possession of firearms, possession of methamphetamine, possession of stolen property (firearm), and child endangerment. There was a 4-year-old child in the home who had access to the weapons and drugs.

Partnering with law enforcement is an integral part of corrections supervision but cannot be relied on too heavily when performing routine duties. Consequently, HRU was established to aggressively look for absconders, conduct special investigations, supervise those identified as being most dangerous, and check locations and facilities that might be perceived as havens for offenders participating in covert activities that promote and conceal the most dangerous members of society. A computerized imaging system was developed to enhance communication by sharing offender photos and vehicle and home pictures. The system also can map and plot the residences of offenders instantly to help eliminate any gaps in tracking the more subversive criminals.

With overcrowded prisons, judges can be forced to sentence some high-risk offenders to community supervision. Too often, aggressive offenders perceive this type of sentence as an opportunity to wreak havoc in the community, hoping that corrections officials will not be able to keep track



Members of the Cedar Rapids High Risk Unit.

of them. Additionally, many offenders use the Interstate Compact for the Supervision of Parolees and Probationers to further the goals of their criminal drug operations and extend their tentacles into other States. Once under supervision in another State, they have greater freedom to operate because it is difficult to get courts to quickly review cases of offenders from outside their State's boundaries. To help with this matter, HRU has started to share information with Federal task forces to map the locations where these offenders are heading to determine set patterns.

Since 9/11, the U.S. Attorney General's Office has asked its field offices to work with State and local law enforcement and corrections officials to reduce gun-, domestic-, and drug-related violence. The Sixth District responded by developing an objective protocol to identify the 25 highest risk, violent offenders in the community. Working with law enforcement and local and Federal prosecutors, the district's HRU provides a more intensive level of supervision for compliance. This helps deter future crimes or acts of terrorism. Noncompliant

offenders are returned to residential facilities, the violators program, jail, or prison. All noncompliant offenders are considered for prosecution in Federal courts.

### Combating Terrorism

The terrorist acts in Oklahoma City and New York City have caused the entire criminal justice system to take another look at offenders who could be involved in future activities of this nature. Terrorist organizations are actively recruiting in American prisons, and some domestic organizations have expressed sympathy with foreign terrorist causes. Consequently, members of HRU have membership in law enforcement intelligence and gang organizations. These members work closely with the Federal Bureau of Investigation to identify potential terrorist suspects and with local and Federal drug task forces.

HRU's supervisor was asked to become a member of the Terrorism Task Force for the Northern District of Iowa. The district director has been asked to become a member of the statewide task force for Partnerships for Safe Neighborhoods, covering the Northern and Southern Districts of Iowa. It is apparent that others see the role of probation and community corrections as crucial to community safety and homeland security.

In summary, the need to monitor high-risk offenders is paramount. Cooperating and conducting joint operations with law enforcement and effectively monitoring for compliance holds one of the keys to solutions for creating safer, healthier communities. 🏠

# COORDINATION SAVES LIVES

# Neighborhood Enhancement: A Positive Team Approach

*Capt. Ronald W. Shipp, Jr., Peoria Police Department*

Thinking outside the box generates great results when it comes to neighborhood enhancement. After receiving direction from the Peoria, Illinois, Weed and Seed Steering Committee to increase neighborhood-policing activities, city departments met to identify new strategies to address the quality of life in the Weed and Seed area. The meeting resulted in the formation of the Neighborhood Enhancement Action Team (NEAT).

NEAT pooled all of the city's departments and the Weed and Seed coordinator into one team. Representatives from each department met to identify areas where the various ordinances that deal with quality-of-life issues in the neighborhoods under their aegis could be jointly addressed. They met monthly to assess their progress and set dates for neighborhood assessment in order to improve the quality of life in Weed and Seed neighborhoods. Those meetings addressed problems regarding code violations and enforcement, voluntary compliance, and operational issues.

NEAT members decided that they would take at least one action per week to enhance enforcement and

compliance activity in the Weed and Seed site. Information from followups conducted after visiting the various neighborhoods in the Weed and Seed site was shared with department heads and legal staff about the need to revise outdated codes.

Although city departments had worked together in the past, they had never joined together in a structural way to address problems in neighborhoods that often overlap between the services provided by each department. The insight gained by working together created a new synergy between city departments. The productivity outcome was measured by the three-digit percentage increase in the number of properties found in violation of city codes and that were now being brought into compliance.

The city's three oversight committees for problem properties also were combined under NEAT, which now reports on all problem or complaint properties to the city council and city manager. To better oversee these properties, a better database using MS Access instead of MS Excel was created. The synergy spoken of earlier manifested itself when two police officers, Phil Fisher and Jeff Kice, with

the assistance of a computer programmer and input from all of the city departments, devised a better program to capture and report data. The data collected now include not only information about problem properties and issued citations, but also digital photographs of the properties.

A database has been constructed that enables NEAT to track and identify problem or chronic problem properties. By storing this data on a network drive, enabling input by NEAT, and allowing each department to access the information, city departments are communicating better about what each has done with a particular property.

By tapping the collective minds and resources in the city, NEAT has achieved remarkable results. Quality-of-life and safety issues are now being addressed with input from both city staff and neighborhood groups, and individual complaints are addressed in a more timely, effective, and efficient manner.

For more information about NEAT, contact Capt. Ronald W. Shipp, Jr., at 309-494-8323. 🏠

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### *In-Sites*

Attention: Carol Neylan  
Executive Office for Weed and Seed  
810 Seventh Street NW., Room 6142  
Washington, DC 20001

Your photos will be returned if you include a self-addressed envelope. Visit [www.usdoj.gov/eows/insites.htm](http://www.usdoj.gov/eows/insites.htm) for more information on submitting your story to us. What's happening in your neighborhood? We look forward to hearing from you! —Carol Neylan

# Four Federal Agencies Tackle Lead Paint in St. Louis

Annemarie Offer

In November 2001, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and Executive Office for Weed and Seed joined to create a Lead Paint Education and Awareness Campaign focused on the seven Weed and Seed neighborhoods in St. Louis, Missouri. The agencies committed \$150,000 to the project, with EPA, Region VII, approving an additional \$30,000.

"It is our intent to focus this training in Weed and Seed neighborhoods exclusively," said Kim Norman, Executive Director of Operation Weed and Seed St. Louis. "This will allow us to present a model with measured effectiveness that could be replicated by the city of St. Louis and enhance the current lead paint initiative underway. As the city of St. Louis leads the Nation in lead paint contamination, it is also our intent to use this negative statistic in a positive fashion—presenting a successful demonstration project to the Nation that could be replicated in other cities with lead paint contamination issues."

Lead poisoning of children is a serious health concern in the St. Louis region. Most homes and apartments built before 1978 in St. Louis have paint that contains lead. Lead paint, paint chips, and even small amounts of lead dust pose a serious health hazard to children. Clinical studies indicate that lead-poisoned children are seven times more likely to drop out of school than children who are not, are six times more likely to be reading impaired, and have a 38-percent greater risk of participating in delinquent behavior.

Lead poisoning has been linked to attention deficit disorder, hyperactivity, neurological problems, and kidney damage. Although the effect of lead poisoning is not reversible, it is 100-percent preventable.

The Lead Paint Education and Awareness Campaign focused on training landlords, visiting health care professionals, contractors, and community leaders who come in direct contact with lead paint issues in these neighborhoods. These individuals are now able to assess possible lead paint contamination, appropriately dispose of lead paint, and refer those affected to health care professionals for treatment. Key elements of the campaign included a 2-day conference, workshops at community conferences, a targeted marketing campaign to reach community leaders in Weed and Seed neighborhoods, and development of protocols for visiting health care professionals who provide care for residents.

The Lead Free 2003 conference was held in St. Louis September 13–14, 2002, and kicked off a 12-month public awareness campaign about lead poisoning prevention efforts in the region. Partners for the campaign included the St. Louis Lead Prevention Coalition, Metro East Lead Collaborative, and St. Clair County Intergovernmental Grants Department. Local sponsors of the conference included the St. Louis Lead Prevention Coalition, Mercy Health Systems, U.S. Bank, St. Luke's Hospital, Husch & Eppenberger, and Fred Weber.

Conference speakers included Herbert Needleman, M.D., and Susan Thornfeldt. Dr. Needleman is a pediatrician and child psychologist at the University

of Pittsburgh Medical Center and a distinguished researcher who determined the developmental implications of excessive exposure to lead. He has worked tirelessly to force governments and industry to confront the implications of his findings and has received the prestigious Heinz Award in the Environment for his contributions to the understanding and prevention of childhood lead poisoning.

The mother of a lead-poisoned child, Susan Thornfeldt is a nationally known speaker on childhood lead poisoning. Ms. Thornfeldt is Director of the Maine Lead Action Project and serves on the board of the Alliance to End Childhood Lead Poisoning.

Other presenters at the conference included the Honorable Francis Slay, Mayor of St. Louis; Dr. Rebecca Tominack; Chris King of the St. Louis University School of Public Health; State Senator Patrick Doherty; Kim Norman of Operation Weed and Seed St. Louis; Kara Penn of the Metro East Lead Collaborative; Judy Riehl, Executive Director of the St. Louis Lead Prevention Coalition; and Jerry Wessels of the St. Louis City Department of Public Safety.

Operation Weed and Seed St. Louis is chaired by U.S. Attorney Ray Gruender. Mayor Slay, Chief of Police Joseph Mokwa, and Jennifer Joyce, St. Louis Circuit Attorney, serve on its steering committee.

For more information on Lead Free 2003 or Operation Weed and Seed St. Louis, contact Annemarie Offer at 314-968-8285 or e-mail [annemarie@leadfree2003.com](mailto:annemarie@leadfree2003.com). Additional information is available at [www.leadfree2003.com](http://www.leadfree2003.com). 

# AtlantiCare Foundation Opens Second Atlantic City Weed and Seed Safe Haven

Jennifer Tornetta, Public Relations Manager, AtlantiCare

A former abandoned building in Atlantic City, New Jersey, has become the AtlantiCare Foundation's second Atlantic City Weed and Seed Safe Haven site. More than 20 businesses and organizations and hundreds of individuals throughout New Jersey contributed to the Safe Haven refurbishment project by donating almost \$179,000 worth of services and equipment to the \$213,000 project.

Atlantic City Weed and Seed is recognized and funded through the Executive Office for Weed and Seed under the leadership of the U.S. Attorney's Office and the AtlantiCare Foundation. A component of Weed and Seed, Safe Haven provides a safe place for children to spend after-school hours.

"This newest Save Haven site will give children who live in Atlantic City worthwhile alternatives to being on the street, positive role models, and helpful guidance," said Deputy U.S. Attorney Lee A. Solomon. "This collaborative effort to build a safe place for children enhances the community in many ways, which will show their effect in years to come."

Located behind the police ministration at 2315 Arctic Avenue, the site had been renovated before 1994 for use by the Atlantic City Police Department.



AtlantiCare's newest Atlantic City Weed and Seed Safe Haven site.

The current renovation for Safe Haven was accomplished with support from the city, the police department, and the New Jersey Casino Reinvestment Development Authority. AtlantiCare's Weed and Seed program initiated the refurbishment project in February 2002. The project also received a \$15,000 Atlantic City Community Development Block Grant.

Joseph Jingoli & Son Construction Management, of Lawrenceville, New Jersey, contributed \$50,000 of resources to the project. Owner Joseph Jingoli donated the expertise of construction manager William Francesconi, who coordinated and supervised everything from adding the new roof to installing the new floor.

"Being part of the renovation was a tremendous experience," said Francesconi. "We went through all the normal approval and building processes. The only difference was, since most of the building work was donated, we really had to coordinate our work around contributors' schedules. Some people worked early mornings, others nights, others whenever they could fit it into their regular jobs."

The Casino Reinvestment Development Authority contributed \$16,995. "The newest Safe Haven site is truly a gift from the community for the community," said Edward Gant, the authority's Board Chairman. "The success of this special project is an example of the power of voluntarism and the crucial role businesses play in positively influencing young people."

"By working together, we're providing young people with a wonderful resource," said Gwen Meusburger, Executive Director of the AtlantiCare Foundation. "Safe Haven enhances the lives of those it touches and contributes to the health and well-being of our community."

In addition to replacing the roof and raising and tiling the floor, the work included installing new heating and air conditioning, electricity and lighting, and smoke detector and alarm systems; replacing the gas meter; modifying the restroom to make it accessible to people with disabilities; adding siding to the exterior; painting the interior; and installing new windows to give the children some natural light.

"The improvements to the building are incredibly impressive," said Sergeant Michael Tullio, spokesman for the police department. "Everyone who contributed to the weeding and seeding of transforming this building into a Save Haven for children should be proud of what they have created."

Safe Haven offers children educational, emotional, physical, and social support. It provides tutoring and homework assistance 5 days a week and offers computer access, arts, crafts, and games. Social programs include reading clubs, basketball teams, a gardening club, community park cleanup programs, and other group activities. Through Kids Café, children are provided with a full dinner twice a week. Safe Haven also hosts parent group meetings and links children and families who are struggling with behavior and anger management problems with appropriate resources.

Operation Weed and Seed is foremost a strategy—rather than a grant program—which aims to prevent, control, and reduce violent crime, drug abuse, and gang activity in targeted high

*(continued on next page)*

# Weed and Seed Partners With Professional Women's Football Team

Dee Brooks, Youth Services Coordinator, Cleveland Weed and Seed

The Weed and Seed site in Cleveland, Tennessee, has formed an unusual and historic partnership. The site has been adopted by the Chattanooga Locomotion women's football team in the Southern Conference of the professional National Women's Football Association (NWFA), which finished the 2002 season with a 4 and 4 record.

The Weed and Seed strategy uses partnerships to weed out the negative aspects of a neighborhood and seed in positive programs, and Locomotion players are involved in many of these activities. They participate in Treasures in Trash, a neighborhood cleanup effort; National Make a Difference Day, in which the team cleaned up a neighborhood home and kept the family living there from being evicted; and National Night Out Against Crime. They also mentor at-risk girls from the neighborhood through the U.S. Navy/Executive Office for Weed and Seed's Drug Education For Youth (DEFY) program.

The owners of the Locomotion, Ken and Tammy Hall, sponsor a Weed and Seed night at a home game each season. Weed and Seed youth are given free transportation to and from the game, free admission, and are recognized at halftime. They also get to see their Youth Services Coordinator



Dee Brooks (left) holds Lt. Ken Simpson of the Cleveland Police Department aloft with help from Chattanooga Locomotion players and youth from the Cleveland Weed and Seed site.

in a different role: I play defensive end for the Locomotion.

Thirty-two teams are participating in NWFA's 2003 season with several more slated to begin play in the 2004 season. NWFA CEO Catherine Masters began the league in 2000 with 2 teams, expanded to 10 teams in 2001, and to 21 in 2002. She likens the Locomotion's partnership with Weed and Seed to the one between the National Football League and United Way and is excited about

the possibilities it brings. Planned activities for summer 2003 include sports mini-camps, a health and nutrition fair, and a Christmas float in this year's parade.

"It's a really great thing for our teams to participate in community service activities, and to be able to work with the Weed and Seed program is just fantastic," said Masters. 🏠

## AtlantiCare Foundation *(continued from previous page)*

crime neighborhoods. The strategy involves a two-pronged approach. Law enforcement agencies and prosecutors cooperate in "weeding out" criminals who participate in violent crime and drug abuse. "Seeding" brings human services to the area, encompassing prevention, intervention, treatment, and neighborhood restoration. A

community-orientated policing component bridges weeding and seeding strategies.

The AtlantiCare Foundation raises funds to support the programs and services of the Atlantic City Medical Center, including the Heart Institute, the Joint and Spine Institute, and women's and children's health care

services. The foundation also supports numerous community outreach programs designed to improve the quality of life in southeastern New Jersey. Approximately 400 children are currently enrolled in the after-school program at AtlantiCare's first Safe Haven site in the Patsy Wallace building at 2231 Arctic Avenue. 🏠

# Massachusetts Attorney General Takes Oath at Boston Weed and Seed Site

*Jennifer Grigoraitis, Development Coordinator, Safe Neighborhood Initiative Division, Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General*

On January 15, 2003, Massachusetts Attorney General Tom Reilly took the oath for his second term at the Jeremiah E. Burke High School in the Boston neighborhood of Grove Hall, the target area for the Boston Weed and Seed site. Attorney General Reilly chose Burke High School for his inauguration to recognize the neighborhood's successful collaboration of crime prevention and community development efforts and to honor the work of the community residents and agencies implementing the Weed and Seed strategy.

Grove Hall received official recognition as a Weed and Seed site in 1996. Weed and Seed partners include the Office of the Attorney General, Project RIGHT, the Boston Police Department, the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office, the city of Boston, representatives from State agencies, Grove Hall service providers, neighborhood associations, and community residents.

In 2002, Boston Weed and Seed established the Multi-Unit Housing Initiative to address violent crime in the multiunit apartment buildings overly concentrated in Grove Hill. Additionally, with Byrne Federal formula funds allotted by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety to the Office of the Attorney General, Boston Weed and Seed and its partners are in the second year of a pilot project for juveniles returning to the target area after a period of physical custody in the Massachusetts Department of Youth Services.

Among the notable participants at the inauguration were Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney, Lieutenant Governor Kerry Healey, Boston Mayor Thomas Menino, Associate State Supreme Court Justice Roderick

Ireland, former U.S. Attorney Wayne Budd, and Rev. Ray Hammond of the Bethel AME Church. Students from the Burke High School choir performed the National Anthem, and the school's Marine Corps Junior ROTC Honor Guard led the Pledge of Allegiance and participated in the Posting of Colors with the Boston and Massachusetts State Police Departments' Honor Guards.

In his inaugural address, Attorney General Reilly spoke of the success of the Weed and Seed strategy in helping the community take back its neighborhood. "Ten years ago, if you walked outside of this school you would have seen a community under siege," Reilly said. "Gang wars, gun violence, open drug dealing, things that should not be tolerated anywhere. But the people of Grove Hall stepped up. They realized that more is accomplished by working together. Looking back from where we are now, it is like night and day."

Despite these accomplishments, Attorney General Reilly reminded the audience that there is still work to be done. "As proud as [the residents] are of the progress they have made, they will also tell you how fragile a peace this is. They believe that they can make this neighborhood an even



*M. Daniel Richardson, Boston Weed and Seed Coordinating Council Cochair, State Representative Marie St. Fleur, Attorney General Tom Reilly, State Representative Gloria Fox, and State Representative Elizabeth Malia at the inauguration.*

better place to live," Reilly said. "They need our continued support. We have to let them finish the job."

Attorney General Reilly continues to monitor the progress of the Grove Hall community. On June 12, 2003, he participated in the graduation ceremony at Burke High School to express his gratitude to the students who made his inauguration so special and to help celebrate their accomplishments.

The Attorney General's Office is the grantee for Boston Weed and Seed and provides grants administration, management, and two prosecutors as in-kind donations to the effort. All Weed and Seed funds are directed to the Boston Police Department and community-based organizations.

For more information on Boston Weed and Seed, contact Jennifer Grigoraitis at 617-727-2200 or e-mail [jennifer.grigoraitis@ago.state.ma.us](mailto:jennifer.grigoraitis@ago.state.ma.us). 🏠

# Las Cruces Weed and Seed Forms Multiple Partnerships To Create Dynamic Community\*

Jeff Barnet, Reporter

Walking past the 900 block of north Tornillo Street in Las Cruces, New Mexico, one gets the impression that there is a celebration going on. Dozens of children are running and playing on a colorful, new playground. Inside the adjacent building, others debate the geometry of pool shots while adults receive tutoring and take classes in math, English, and other subjects. Across the street, in a cozy adobe house, police officers and city administrators share a small space where a constant stream of children and people from the neighborhood come and go.

Even this glimpse of the A. Fielder Memorial Safe Haven is inadequate to explain the dynamics of this lively, friendly part of town. The Weed and Seed program which began in the Mesquite Street Historic District in February 2000 has not only taken root, it is bearing fruit. The A. Fielder Safe Haven has become a city within a city, a community in the fullest sense of the word, a place where neighbors are helping neighbors and everyone, even the police, are counted as neighbors.

"There was a time people were afraid to walk through this neighborhood, especially at night," said Melissa Molina, police officer for the city of Las Cruces. "We got tired of arresting the same people and then seeing them back out on the streets a week later dealing drugs or on heroin."

Molina and fellow officer Tom Schnebly first heard of the Weed and Seed concept at a conference in California in 1999 and proposed that the district should seek a Weed and Seed grant for the Mesquite Street neighborhood. Two police chiefs have supported their proposal and the U.S.

Department of Justice (DOJ) has provided the funding. Molina and Schnebly, along with officer Lauris Gallegos, have patrolled the police substation across from the Fielder house since 2000.

## Getting Weed and Seed Involved

Initially, the Mesquite Street neighborhood was seeded with money for community policing and neighborhood restoration. Harvey Fielder, the son of Avron Fielder, sold his family home to the city for use as a community and after-school care center. Other organizations soon followed to create the synergistic, symbiotic growth characteristic of the Safe Haven community.

The county sheriff's department; New Mexico Adult and Juvenile Probation Divisions; code enforcement office; local courts; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; Federal Bureau of Investigation; and Border Patrol; among others, coordinate with the city to patrol the area. The area is home to 3,400 families, approximately 75 percent of whom live below the poverty level.

"The police can take the criminal element out, but if we don't change the dynamics of the area, the criminals will move back in," said Schnebly. "Now they are not welcome back unless they want to get assistance, rehabilitate, get their lives back on track. Otherwise, they have to keep on moving."

The number of domestic violence calls in the area has dropped 35 percent since the program began. In addition, there have been no homicides and drug arrests have increased. A key component to the increased safety in the area is that the U.S. Attorney can

give longer sentences to convicted drug and violent offenders who commit crimes in the designated area. Saturation patrols and increased community policing are only part of the Weed and Seed Safe Haven phenomenon.

"This is a team effort with people from the community," added Molina. "The emphasis is on being proactive, stopping situations before they start. We listen to the community. We focus on education and building relationships."

The adobe house substation is part of that effort. "We know the people by name, we know their families, they know us," said Schnebly. "As long as the community wants us here, we'll be here."

"This is not just a crime prevention program or a youth program," said Amy Gillihan, the city's interim coordinator for the Weed and Seed program. "It's about community. The Safe Haven is for kids and adults, a learning environment where they can grow together."

Gillihan said the budget for the program is \$325,000 a year. (The city received its third \$225,000 DOJ award on March 7.) The Federal grant will run for 5 years, until 2005, at which time the city plans to pick up the program. However, the city and other Weed and Seed partners will need to continue to seek and secure new grants.

"It's encouraging that you have young people and adults comfortable with law enforcement, having access to educational opportunities, feeling confident about living in the neighborhood, and having a sense of ownership of the building," Gillihan said.

According to Gillihan, the continued success of the program depends on the already vital cooperation between local agencies involved in the Safe Haven. Volunteers are always welcome to help with all kinds of activities. Among the organizations that have partnered with the Weed and Seed program are Jardin de los Ninos, the Las Esperanzas Neighborhood Association, La Casa, AmeriCorps, the Court Youth Center, Southwest Counseling, the Community Action Agency, New Mexico Works, the Las Cruces public schools, Dona Ana Branch Community College, and Families and Youth, Inc.

### Educating the Community

Dona Ana Branch Community College began offering classes in July 2001 as part of a grant written by Marjorie Burr, who saw that the college needed to reach out to the Mesquite District. To date, 528 students have taken classes offered free by the college, according to Luly Valencia-Glenn, Learning Center coordinator.

"Many of the students never even had the idea that they would become educated," said Valencia-Glenn. "We try to be flexible, caring, and open to the needs of the community. Some of our students are scared of going back to school. A big smile is very important here. We want to help give our students confidence."

When the college began to recruit students for the East Side Center, Valencia-Glenn said she and others went door to door in the community.

They recruited wherever they could, including local churches such as Our Lady of Faith. Many East Side Center students are now enrolled at the college's main campus.

The manner in which the college has involved multiple organizations to help its students is typical of the mutually beneficial way in which the Safe Haven community has developed. For example, college students who need daycare in order to attend school can leave their children with Jardin de los Ninos. Students and instructors from the school's building trades program partner with the Las Esperanzas Neighborhood Association to repair roads and buildings in the historic district. The New Mexico Department of Labor helps train student volunteers. Students who are learning to speak English also teach their teachers Spanish. The East Side Center is a full school-to-work service, complete with a "Magic Closet," a collection of elegant clothes students can borrow for job interviews.

Siria Urrutia, who arrived in Las Cruces by way of Chihuahua City and Chicago, is one of the center's many success stories. The 25-year-old mother of four hopes to earn her GED in August and plans to attend the college branch to study business administration. Before she came to the center she said she was struggling through life. Now she is encouraged about her future.

"I like the way I have been treated here," Siria said in Spanish. "The students and the teachers treat me very well."

Through the college's coordination with Susie Cordero, administrative assistant for the office of U.S. Senator Pete Domenici, Siria was able to gain her work permit. "I have had a lot of opportunities opened up for me here," Siria said.

Valencia-Glenn said the center serves students from ages 17 to 80. Miguel "Mike" Mendez, 72, enrolled at the

center to complete his GED and improve his English. Mendez completed fifth grade in Zacatecas, Mexico. Although he has lived in the United States since 1951 and has run a successful plumbing business, he wants to go to college.

"Without this place, I'd still be in fast food," said Angela Mendoza, an East Side Center student turned volunteer math tutor who plans to start at the college's main campus in August 2003. "It's near to my home, it's easier. I like to work with people. Here there are more needs. People here work with each person, they cover the needs they have. There are people from countries all over the world. We are a huge family."

### Making It a Family

A huge family is a good description of what is happening at Safe Haven. People from all over the city come and go at the Fielder building every day. Children swarm the playground, basketball courts, and pool tables. Occasionally, they take points they have earned and cash them in at the police substation for toys and other gifts. The substation seems like the center of a laid-back all-day barbecue party. It is also probably the only police station with big paper butterflies hanging from the ceiling.

After having her picture taken with her fellow police officers and the children in the after-school program, Molina told the kids they had to clean up the building for the special visitors they were expecting: local businessmen interested in donating money for higher quality after-school snacks. She pointed to the vacant lots to the south where there might soon be a college branch campus.

"We will continue to grow here," said Molina. "We will write the grants; we will do whatever it takes. Someday we'd like to see something like this be citywide." 🏠

*\*Adapted with permission from the Bulletin, Volume 35, November 11, © 2003 Kilpatrick Newspapers, Inc., Las Cruces, New Mexico.*



Officer Schnebly stands with two kids from the A. Fielder Safe Haven.

# Demolishing a Decade-Old Dilemma

Hal Johnson, Weed and Seed Coordinator  
 Vikki Martin, President, Ferguson Road Initiative

The Fair Park Inn in Dallas, Texas, was originally a Howard Johnson's Motel, a place where locals went during the 1960s for dinner or ice cream. Located at Ferguson Road and Interstate 30, the main entryway into the Ferguson Road community in the East Dallas area, it provided an inviting welcome to the neighborhood. Unfortunately, by the mid-1990s the inn had closed.

"The Fair Park Inn deteriorated into a vacant, gutted, unsecured, dilapidated eyesore that was nothing more than a magnet for drug dealers, prostitutes, vagrants, and vandals," said attorney Dolores Wolfe, President of the Enclave at the Ash Creek Homeowners Association. "This embarrassing structure was seen by thousands of I-30 motorists as the gateway to the lower Ferguson Road community. Unfortunately, it served as a deterrent to those who might otherwise want to live here, shop here, worship here, or build a business here."

Efforts to improve the property date back to 1996, when the Claremont Addition Neighborhood Association began a campaign to have the city of Dallas demolish the structure. The efforts were supported at the time by the Support-Abatement-Forfeiture-Enforcement (SAFE) team of the Dallas Police Department. The ultimate goal of this special investigative unit is to reclaim, restore, and revitalize Dallas neighborhoods that are suffering from the adverse impact of crime. The SAFE team had investigated the property and recommended demolition. The matter went before the city's Urban Rehabilitation Standards Board which, without community input and against SAFE's recommendation, voted to rehabilitate instead of demolish the structure.

"We were very disappointed with the board's decision," said Sgt. Mark Smith of the police department's

Interactive Community Policing unit. "The community had been successful in having an apartment complex with ongoing city code and criminal violations torn down earlier and felt that this was the one true solution to the Fair Park Inn."

Although the owner rehabilitated the property to some extent, it continued to be in violation of city codes and became a haven for drugs and prostitution. Shortly after a murder took place at the site in October 1998, the police department was able to have the property closed. The next 3 years saw a period of ownership changes, failed promises, and continued deterioration.

During this time, the Ferguson Road Initiative (FRI), a community-based organization that received a Weed and Seed grant in 2000, became involved. FRI soon realized that the Fair Park Inn had become the rotten apple in the Ferguson Road corridor's barrel.

"It was clear that the Fair Park Inn was the catalyst for panhandlers, large scale graffiti, and boarded up buildings in that area, since these problems were concentrated at the edge of the community within a few hundred yards of the inn," said Deon Gordon, Chair of FRI's Economic Development Task Force. Ms. Gordon has been a leader in developing FRI's strategy to bring in \$50 million of investment and create 500 new jobs in the Ferguson area within the next 5 years. "If FRI's Weed and Seed economic development strategy was to be effective, the Fair Park Inn had to go," she said.

In October 2001, City Councilman Leo Chaney, Jr., and representatives of the Dallas Police Department, code compliance department, city attorney's office, and city manager's office met with representatives from the Ferguson Road community to



Demolishing an eyesore.

seek resolution to the problem of the inn. At that meeting, it was disclosed that the city of Dallas was becoming more aggressive with code violations and would be using Chapter 54 of Texas State Law to address the problem. Chapter 54 is often a stronger vehicle than city ordinances for closure and demolition of long-term nuisance properties.

At the state district court hearing, the judge called for mediation between the city of Dallas and the Fair Park Inn's owners. The city entered into an agreement with the owners, giving them until August 2002 to bring the building up to city code and make it operational. When no rehabilitation took place, the city filed a Contempt of Court motion against the owners in September 2002.

Shortly afterward, Wolfe filed a brief naming FRI and five neighborhood organizations as Friends of the Court. This allowed FRI and others to participate in the case. FRI President Vikki Martin submitted an affidavit outlining the infamous history of the property and included a videotape and still photographs showing the extent of decay, danger, graffiti, and litter at the site. Before a hearing scheduled for October 21, 2002, the inn's owners agreed to settle the case and demolish the structure within 60 days.

*(continued on next page)*

# Atlanta Weed and Seed Slam Dunks Community Restoration

Atlanta Weed and Seed's Pittsburgh neighborhood celebrated the dedication of two renovated outdoor basketball courts located at W.L. Parks Middle School. The courts had been neglected for years and were in need of a makeover.

Atlanta Weed and Seed, the Atlanta Hawks professional basketball team, and Home Depot teamed up to renovate the courts. On March 13, the ribbon-cutting ceremony to unveil the refurbished courts was attended by various community leaders, corporate partners, NBA legends, political figures, and students.

The Atlanta Hawks' mascots, Harry the Hawk and Sky Hawk, entertained the crowd while the Hawks' dance team conducted a clinic for Parks Middle School girls. The boys perfected their jump shots with help from former Harlem Globetrotter Michael Douglas.

Besides Douglas, special guests included Hawks Coach Terry Stouts, basketball legend Dominique Wilkins, Hawks radio voice Steve Holman, and Antje Wortman, the widow of former Hawks Director of Scouting Gary Wortman.



*The Atlanta Hawks Dance Team conducts a clinic for Parks Middle School girls on the refurbished court.*

To memorialize Wortman, who died of cancer in 2000, the Atlanta Hawks Court Renovation Program builds and renovates basketball courts in underprivileged neighborhoods throughout Atlanta, Georgia. The Hawks and

Home Depot put down new pavement and installed new backboards, rims, nets, and fencing. This was the third newly built or refurbished court sponsored by the program. 🏠

## Demolishing a Decade-Old Dilemma *(continued from previous page)*

"I believe wholeheartedly that the reason the owners decided to settle out of court is directly the result of FRI's actions, guided by Ms. Wolfe in partnership with the city attorney's office," said Martin. "The Ferguson Road community celebrates this victory achieved through strategic planning and preparation of videotape, photographs, and

affidavits which documented the chronic violations at the property."

"FRI was successful because of our unwavering perseverance and positive attitude, our ability to gain the respect and involvement of the Dallas Police Department and city attorney's office,

our strong backing from the community, and the clout of the Weed and Seed cachet," said Rev. Hal Johnson, Coordinator for FRI's Weed and Seed site. "This is a major milestone for economic development for the Ferguson Road area and has changed us from victims to victors." 🏠

### Correction

In the spring 2003 issue of *In-Sites*, the gentleman appearing in the photo of the Bread & Butter Café (p. 15) was not Michael Wilson but Keith Bacon.

# 2003 Weed and Seed National Conference: Working Together Works

Alex Schneider, Gary Clawson, and Carol Neylan

On May 25–28, 2003, three New Mexico Weed and Seed sites (Albuquerque/La Mesa, Albuquerque Westside, and Las Cruces), the city of Albuquerque, and the U.S. Attorney’s Office (USAO) for New Mexico helped the Executive Office for Weed and Seed (EOWS) host the 2003 Weed and Seed National Conference, “Working Together Works.” The conference was attended by approximately 1,500 participants representing Weed and Seed site coordinators, residents, community leaders, USAO personnel, Federal law enforcement agents, State and local sworn law enforcement officers, prosecutors, probation/parole officers, and many other partners.

The conference provided participants with training and informational tools to help Weed and Seed sites develop and implement comprehensive multi-agency approaches to law enforcement, crime prevention, and community revitalization. It also

offered opportunities to learn best practices, share success stories, and exchange ideas about unique programs in Weed and Seed communities throughout the country. The conference reinforced Weed and Seed’s commitment to build and maintain effective and sustainable public/private partnerships, strengthen neighborhoods, and ensure community safety.

Preconference learning labs offered in-depth instruction on benchmarks, strategy development, steering committees, sustainability, developing new leaders, and evaluation.

This fifth national training conference also offered more than 64 workshops on topics that included

- Preventing Gang Crimes Through Innovative Approaches.
- Community Contributions to Addressing Domestic Violence.

- The Role of Law Enforcement in Reentry.
- Project Safe Neighborhoods.
- Increasing Effectiveness by Evaluating Your Weed and Seed Strategy.
- Community Policing Strategies for Rural and Native American Communities.
- Effective Multijurisdictional Law Enforcement Coordination.
- Increasing Youth Involvement in Weed and Seed.
- Faith-Based/Community-Based Prevention Programs.
- Successful Crime Prevention for Federally Assisted Housing/Environmental Design.
- Improving the Physical Environment in Your Community.

Opening ceremonies featured a Memorial Day Remembrance that included the Presentation of Colors by the Joint Color Guard of the Albuquerque Police and Fire Departments, the Pledge of Allegiance by the Wings of Eagles Youth Group, and a stirring rendition of the National Anthem by Officer Kevin Rowe of the Albuquerque Police Department. Welcoming remarks were delivered by Bob Samuels, Acting Director of EOWS. Following remarks by Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Tracy A. Henke of the Office of Justice Programs, David C. Iglesias, the U.S. Attorney for New Mexico, welcomed attendees to Albuquerque and New Mexico, the “Land of Enchantment.” Final opening remarks were given by U.S. Representative Heather Wilson of New Mexico.

One of the highlights of the conference was a southwestern networking



Performers at the opening ceremony festivities.

fiesta hosted by the Mayor of Albuquerque and featuring regional food, music, and entertainment to welcome the hundreds of Weed and Seeders who gathered under the desert sky at the city's beautiful and popular Bio Park. On Monday, participants were given tours of the Trumbull/La Mesa Weed and Seed site and the Indian Culture Center where guests were treated to a traditional meal and a Native American Memorial Pow Wow. Tuesday night featured a tour of the Westside Weed and Seed neighborhood and a reception in Olde Town hosted by the New Mexico Weed and Seed sites.

Tuesday's keynote luncheon speaker was Robert Woodson, Founder and President of the National Center for Neighborhood Enterprise. His common sense approach was a big hit with the audience.

Plenary sessions addressed many issues:

- Cheri Nolan, Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Justice Programs, explained her agency's Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative.
- June Koegel, of Maine Weed and Seed and Volunteers of America,



*Beverly Watts Davis, Director of HHS/CSAP (former Weed and Seed Coordinator in San Antonio, Texas) addresses the conference regarding the Bush Administration's major objective to reduce substance abuse by 5 percent.*



*Maj. Gen. Arthur T. Dean (ret.), Chairman and CEO of Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, explains how the coalitions can help reduce substance abuse.*

provided the perspective of a site coordinator and service provider on the reentry issue.

- Beverly Watts Davis, former Weed and Seed site coordinator in San Antonio, Texas, and now Director of the Center for Substance Abuse of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, spoke about funding for substance abuse prevention and training resources.
- Major General Arthur T. Dean (ret.), head of the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, addressed ways of pursuing President Bush's goal of reducing substance abuse by 5 percent a year over 5 years.
- Luis Quijas, former Chief of Police for the High Point, North Carolina, Weed and Seed site and now Assistant Director for Law Enforcement Coordination at the Federal Bureau of Investigation, explained how sites can ensure that information that is important to domestic preparedness gets where it needs to go.
- David Farley, Coordinator for Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Weed and Seed, talked about his experience in connecting site activities with domestic preparedness.
- Beverly Alford, Director of Training for the COPS Office, talked about the availability of training for Weed and Seed sites through the Regional Community Policing Institutes.
- Anthony McMahon, of the Small Business Administration, explained the resources of his agency.
- Michael Cruz, Coordinator for Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Weed and Seed, shared his experiences as a site coordinator.
- Rev. Dr. Wilson Goode enlisted support for the Amachi program to help mentor children of incarcerated parents.
- Patrick Purtill, Director of the U.S. Department of Justice's Faith-Based/Community-Based Task Force, explored how sites can build on their already impressive level of cooperation with faith- and community-based entities.

Conference participants appreciated the entertainment breaks provided by Weed and Seed sites; the Santa Ana Dancers; and the Lumberton, North Carolina, Police Department DARE band.

*(continued on next page)*

The countless details handled and efforts made by more than 100 volunteers demonstrated that “Working Together Works.” EOWS would like to thank all of the New Mexico host committee members (see box) for helping to make the 2003 Weed and Seed National Conference an enjoyable and successful learning experience for its participants.

### New Mexico Host Committee Members

**Leonard Garcia**  
Albuquerque Convention Center,  
Director

**Cecilia Padilla-Quillen**  
Albuquerque Convention and  
Visitors Bureau

**Millie Santillanes**  
Albuquerque Cultural Affairs,  
Director

**Gabriel Marquez**  
Albuquerque Fire Department

**Ritchie Simplicio**  
Albuquerque Indian Center

**Stephen L. Picou**  
Albuquerque International  
Support, Noise Program Manager

**Trish Brown**  
Albuquerque Police Department,  
Crime-Free Multi-Housing

**Lt. Michael Callihan**  
Albuquerque Police Department,  
Southeast Area Command

**Lt. Mike Gonzales**  
Albuquerque Police Department,  
Southeast Area Command

**Capt. Paul Chavez**  
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Westside Area Command

**Lt. Ed Perea**  
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**Deirdre Candelaria**  
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**Esther Garcia**  
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**Ralph Gonzales**  
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**Donald Raley**  
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**Charmaine Gutierrez**  
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**Mick McMahan**  
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**Frank Del Margo**  
New Mexico National Guard

**SGM Alex Garcia**  
New Mexico National Guard,  
Drug Demand Reduction

**SSG Reyes Marquez**  
New Mexico National Guard,  
Drug Demand Reduction

**Al Park**  
New Mexico State Representative,  
Bernalillo County, District 26

**Shannon Robinson**  
New Mexico State Senator,  
District 17

**Nancy Sanchez**  
Prevention Policy Board, Coordinator

**Kathy Wright**  
State of New Mexico Second  
Judicial District Attorney's Office

**Bill Hock**  
State of New Mexico Second  
Judicial District Attorney's Office,  
Community Prosecution  
Coordinator

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**Don Gould**  
Trumbull Landlord Association

**Sharleen Gould**  
Trumbull Landlord Association

**Rosa Sena**  
Trumbull Landlord Association

**Rumaldo Armijo**  
U.S. Attorney's Office, District of  
New Mexico, Executive Assistant  
U.S. Attorney

**Denise Gutierrez**  
U.S. Attorney's Office, District of  
New Mexico, LECC

**Ron Lopez**  
U.S. Attorney's Office, District of  
New Mexico, LECC

**Alfred Perez**  
U.S. Attorney's Office

**Pat Holmes**  
Weed and Seed, Neighborhood  
Project Developer

**Bonnie Vallo**  
Weed and Seed, Coordinator

**Joan Jones**  
Westside/South Valley Weed and  
Seed

**Chris Sanchez**  
Westside/South Valley Weed and  
Seed

**Jim Hunter**  
Westside Community Activist

## 2003 EOWS Coordination Honor Awards

**“Weed and Seed is essentially a coordinating strategy.”**

—Deborah J. Daniels  
Assistant Attorney General, OJP

In 2002, EOWS Acting Director Bob Samuels initiated the Coordination Honor Awards to recognize coordination efforts in which people and organizations are working together effectively in their Weed and Seed site. The activities must relate to one or more of the four elements in the Weed and Seed strategy: law enforcement, community policing, prevention/intervention/treatment, or neighborhood restoration. This year, 10 Coordination Honor Awards were presented at the national conference. Seven sites also received Honorable Mentions for their coordination efforts. Brief descriptions and contact names for this year's selected programs are listed below. Once again, congratulations to all of the award winners and to the many organizations that were nominated this year!

### Lawrence/Methuen Community Coalition *Lawrence, Massachusetts*

The Lawrence District C Weed and Seed Coalition has ensured that residents are actively involved in improving their neighborhood. Through a series of low-cost or no-cost activities, residents are a part of the revitalization and economic development efforts. The partners have organized and facilitated numerous activities, including Graffiti Wipeouts, a National Night Out to celebrate “a night against crime” with block parties that enabled police and fire departments and community residents to interact positively, and neighborhood public safety and health awareness events. In addition to the residents who



*The West Newlove Weed and Seed site in Santa Maria, California, is recognized at the national conference for its efforts to combat domestic violence. From left are Faith A. Baker, EOWS Program Manager; Ramon Martinez, community resident; Cpl. Felix Esparza, Beat Coordinator/Youth Resource Officer, California Police Department; and Ginnie Sterling, Special Project Manager for the city of Santa Maria.*

participated, a number of community partners helped make these events a success, including the Lawrence Police Department, Central Catholic High School, Essex County District Attorney's Office, Lawrence Fire Department, Lawrence Mayor's Office, State and local officials, Greater Lawrence Family Health Center, Greater Lawrence Community Action Head Start Program, YMCA of Greater Lawrence, Essex County Sheriff, U.S. Attorney's Office, Massachusetts State Attorney General, Arlington Park Tenant Association, Whitman Neighborhood Association, North Broadway Neighborhood Association, Lawrence Housing Authority, and the City of Lawrence Office of Planning and Development.

**Contact:** Richard Rodriguez,  
Rrodriguez@lawpd.com,  
978-794-7900, ext. 681

### Detroit Police/Wayne County Drug House Seizure and Abandoned Properties Project *Detroit, Michigan*

Through this collaboration among the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office, City of Detroit Mayor's Office, Detroit Police Department, Weed and Seed 11th Precinct, and area residents, the precinct's neighborhoods are being reclaimed from slum landlords, abandoned properties, squatters, and drug dealers and other criminals. To date, legal action has been taken on more than 140 houses and abandoned properties in the target area. Seized properties are cleaned up, secured, and put up for auction so community partners can bid on them and to help people become homeowners. Sales of these properties have generated \$275,000.

*(continued on next page)*

**Contact:** Sojourner Jones, weedandseed11@aol.com, 313-891-6818

**“God’s Gym” Safe Haven, Calvary Tabernacle Church Corpus Christi, Texas**

Recognizing the need for change in the community, Pastor Mike Lohman of the Calvary Tabernacle Church, Weed and Seed, and other partners created “God’s Gym,” where services address almost every risk factor identified in the community. The result has been a place where people can feel safe, develop a positive attitude, and have their dreams encouraged. God’s Gym provides residents with free opportunities to develop body, mind, and soul through sports, resources, and programs and demonstrates how faith-based organizations and governments can work together to improve local communities. Partners include the U.S. Attorney’s Office, Corpus Christi Weed and Seed, National Urban Technology, Salvation Army, Corpus Christi ISD, Parks and Recreation, Christian Credit Counseling, Workforce Network, Fighting to Rid Gangs, Corpus Christi Police Department, Corpus Christi Housing Authority, Habitat for Humanity, and the Nueces County Sheriff’s Office.

**Contact:** Harold Smith, harolds@cctexas.com, 361-880-3419

**West Newlove Neighborhood Domestic Violence Solutions Project Santa Maria, California**

This collaboration involves the Santa Maria Police Department (SMPD), Domestic Violence Solutions for Santa Barbara County, and the Santa Maria Valley Youth and Family Center. It was formed as a result of residents’ requests for family counseling and domestic violence prevention and intervention programs. Partners provide community outreach, parent education and support, and domestic violence counseling and services. This includes men’s and women’s support groups, with the women’s group

facilitated by a community resident trained in domestic violence counseling. With additional funding from the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office on Violence Against Women, SMPD has hired two domestic violence investigators, Domestic Violence Solutions has hired two advocates, and the Legal Aid Foundation of Santa Barbara County now has a full-time attorney focusing on legal issues involving domestic violence. Reporting of domestic violence has increased and, since December 2002, 10 victims have been provided with support and legal assistance. Additional partners include the U.S. Attorney’s Office, the Legal Aid Foundation of Santa Barbara County, and CARES, Inc.

**Contact:** Ginnee Sterling, gsterling@ci-santa-maria.ca.us, 805-925-0951, ext. 368

**Project Fresh Start, Winston-Salem Weed and Seed Winston-Salem, North Carolina**

Project Fresh Start is a nontraditional community employment initiative that provides job training and placement for young adult offenders or potential offenders in Weed and Seed neighborhoods. This 12-week coordinated job program offers life skills, job readiness preparation, training and vocational skills, and employer recruitment and job placement, along with drug screening and access to substance abuse and mental health treatment. The project’s goal is to build safer communities by providing permanent jobs for its participants to minimize the likelihood of repeat or new criminal activity in neighborhoods with high numbers of distress indicators. Partners include the U.S. Attorney’s Office, Weed and Seed, VisionsWork Youth Services, Winston-Salem Urban League, Winston-Salem Police Department, Department of Community Corrections, Workforce Development, Winston-Salem Service Corps, and the Visions Streetworker Program.

**Contact:** Alvin Atkinson, atkinsona@wssu.edu, 336-750-3470

**Coordinated Law Enforcement Team, St. Louis Weeding Committee St. Louis, Missouri**

Residents and Weed and Seed police officers partner to identify and address neighborhood “hotspots,” and officers use information provided by residents to make successful arrests. The Coordinated Law Enforcement Team educates citizens and coordinates law enforcement efforts in various settings to find the best means of Federal, State, and local prosecution available in individual cases. Information from residents and new crime mapping tools have provided the quantitative and qualitative information to target neighborhood areas most affected by criminal and nuisance behavior. Partners include the U.S. Attorney of Eastern Missouri, St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department, St. Louis Circuit Attorney’s Office and Counselor’s Office, St. Louis City Neighborhood Stabilization Office, and Weed and Seed.

**Contact:** Kim Norman, kim.norman@usdoj.gov, 314-539-2773

**“Stop Hatin’ Start Celebratin’” Martin Luther King, Jr., Day Men and Boy’s Non-Violence Breakfast Indianapolis, Indiana**

The breakfast was first held in 1992 to address violence with the “boyz,” and has since been able to share with men of the community the emotional, spiritual, and financial aspects of gun violence. An area once plagued by gunshots and visible drug dealing has started to come back, block by block, through community policing and crime reporting as residents seek to reduce violence. More than 165 youth have pledged to abstain from gun violence. Partners include the Mayor of Indianapolis, Indianapolis Police Department, Weed and Seed Safe Havens, Marion County Prosecutor’s Office, Westside Community Ministries, Project Safe Neighborhoods, U.S. Attorney’s Office, U.S.

Army, Park Rangers, Asante Children's Theater, Marion County Health Department, Indianapolis Housing Agency, National City Bank, Westside Concerned Dads, Westside Development Corporation, Indianapolis Neighborhood Housing Partnership, and the 91st Street Christian Church.

**Contact:** Renita Minor, indywesco@aol.com, 317-327-7902

### Youngstown Weed and Seed Adult Parole Authority Project Youngstown, Ohio

This partnership between the Youngstown Police Department, Adult Parole Authority, Community Corrections Association, Weed and Seed block watches, and Weed and Seed Steering Committee works to reduce the recidivism rate in the target area, enhance reentry programs for parolees, and provide neighborhood restoration through neighborhood cleanups and beautification projects. Since the project began 3 years ago, there has been a dramatic decrease in reported crack-houses and homicides, rapes, robberies, and other crimes.

**Contact:** Lt. Ron Foley, LTYPD@aol.com, 330-742-8238

### Operation Counter-Sign Orange Township, New Jersey

Operation Counter-Sign is a strategic initiative to interdict gang activity through intelligence gathering and networking, enforcement, and prevention. School resource officers addressed gang recruitment and activity in and around schools, and gang awareness seminars have increased community awareness. Targeting higher ranking members of gangs and organized crime units has resulted in the arrest of six gang members who await trial on Federal narcotics charges and the disruption of an interstate weapons trafficking operation. Coordination partners include the U.S. Attorney's Office; Drug Enforcement Administration; Federal Bureau of Investigation; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; U.S. Postal Inspectors; New Jersey State Police; New Jersey Department of Corrections; New

Jersey Department of Parole; Division of Criminal Justice; Essex County Prosecutor's Office; East Orange Police Department; West Orange Police Department; and the Newark Police Department.

**Contact:** Valerie Jackson, weedseed@aol.com, 973-266-4111, ext. 5451

### Winwood Community Cleanup Seminole County, Florida

This was a comprehensive effort to create a cleaner, safer neighborhood using the Seminole County Sheriff's Office, Code Enforcement, Roads Department, Salvation Army, Meals on Wheels, and East Altamonte community resources. Ninety-five tons of unwanted refuse was removed from residents' property to maintain easements and right-of-ways, junk vehicles were tagged, homeowners with inadequate address identification were helped to properly identify their property, elderly and special needs residents eligible for

Meals on Wheels were identified, and crime prevention and community resources were provided.

**Contact:** Michael Robbins, michael\_robbs@seminolesheriff.org, 407-665-6576



*EOWS would like to thank Derrick Mitchell, pictured above with David C. Iglesias, U.S. Attorney for the District of New Mexico, for his outstanding contributions as the official photographer for the 2003 Weed and Seed National Conference. Some of his photos are featured in this conference article. Derrick started a photography business after completing Project Reconnect, an affiliate of the Gwen Bolden Foundation and Chaffey College.*

### 2003 Honorable Mentions for Coordination

**Workforce Development Program** (Aurora, Colorado)  
*Contact:* Dawn Barrett, dbarrett@ci.aurora.co.us, 303-739-7929

**Atlantic City Weed and Seed Safe Haven Police Substation Rehab Project** (Atlantic City, New Jersey)  
*Contact:* Mary Hunt, mary.hunt@atlanticare.org, 609-407-7658

**Waipahu Juvenile Task Force** (Waipahu, Hawaii)  
*Contact:* Maile Kanemaru, maile@auw.org, 808-543-2216

**Weed and Seed Habitat for Humanity Blitz Build a Home Project** (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma)  
*Contact:* Ed Martin, emartin825@aol.com, 405-297-3635

**East Point Police Department Youth Alternative Intervention Program** (East Point, Georgia)  
*Contact:* Everlean Merritt, emerritt@eastpoint.org, 404-765-1146

**Weed and Seed Steering Committee Community Oriented Policing Subcommittee** (Las Vegas, Nevada)  
*Contact:* Franklin Simpson, jsimpson@ci.las-vegas.nv.us, 702-229-2330

**Lents Town Center Urban Renewal Project** (Portland, Oregon)  
*Contact:* Sharon White, WeedSeed@spiritone.com, 503-988-6127, ext. 228

## The 2003 Weed and Seed National Poster Contest Winners

In conjunction with the Weed and Seed 2003 National Conference, "Working Together Works," the Executive Office for Weed and Seed sponsored a National Poster Contest that invited youth to draw a picture that embodied the theme "How Weed and Seed Has Changed My Neighborhood."

Entries depicted different visions of Weed and Seed, and the winners were selected on the basis of colorful artistry, artistic talent, and originality. Copies of the winning posters were displayed in the exhibit hall during the national conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and the winners were recognized during the plenary session on Monday, May 26, 2003.

Entries were grouped into four categories based on the entrant's age/grade. The 2003 National Poster Contest winners are as follows:

**Category I:** Katee Espericueta, an 8-year-old, second grader, from Richard E. Miller Elementary School in Phoenix, Arizona, won for her colorful drawing of a revitalized drug house. It depicts weeding and seeding in a community that changed the drug house into a welcoming home and safe place in which to live.

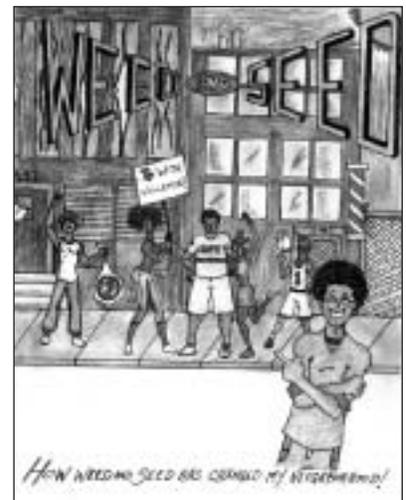


**Category II:** Sylvia Larsen, an 11-year-old, fifth grader from Creekside Park Elementary School in Anchorage, Alaska, won for her crayon drawing of people working together, which depicts community involvement. According to Sylvia, her picture represents "the many different people who are blessed to share in being Americans and that this blessing requires that we all be willing to support and protect America."



**Category III:** Articia Taylor, a 13-year-old, seventh grader from the Walter L. Parks Middle School in Atlanta, Georgia, won for her drawing of a flower, depicting how Weed and Seed has changed her neighborhood. In describing her picture, Articia explained that the roots of evil and bad things, represented by words associated with negative and bad elements in her community, are trying to kill the flower, represented by a beautiful yellow flower surrounded by positive and good words. These words represent the good things Atlanta Weed and Seed has planted and implemented in her neighborhood. The beautiful yellow flower prevails over the weeds.

**Category IV:** Orrice Magee, a 15-year-old, 12th grader from Inkster High School in Inkster, Michigan, won for his artwork depicting his belief that Weed and Seed strives for excellence in the community. Orrice's drawing shows Weed and Seed working to minimize violence and drugs by sponsoring programs that promote positive life choices.



Congratulations to the winners! Each received a personal computer loaded with education software and a printer and was presented an award at the national conference.

# Lents/Brentwood-Darlington Weed and Seed Partners Receive Chief's Forum Awards

Sharon White, Weed and Seed Coordinator

Residents, community members, businesses, and organizations serving Lents and the surrounding communities have a reason to celebrate—one organization and one individual were recognized with a Chief's Forum Award at a May 19 ceremony. The Chief's Forum, a policy advisory group to the Portland (Oregon) Police Bureau's Chief of Police, recognizes citizens and bureau members for distinguishing achievements in community policing and community building.

Larry Graham, Senior Neighborhood Officer with the Portland Police Bureau, received a Certificate of Appreciation for developing positive relationships with community members, responding to the concerns of citizens and service providers, and collaborating on crime prevention issues. Officer Graham is involved in multiple community policing activities in Lents and is a positive partner in the Lents/Brentwood-Darlington Weed and Seed strategy to weed out gangs, drugs, and violence. His general demeanor reflects kindness and an intention to help. He works to develop creative solutions and is a team player interested in solving community safety issues.

The Wattles Boys & Girls Club Keystone Warriors were recognized at the same ceremony with a Youth Recognition Certificate. This teen club has taken on volunteer, neighborhood restoration, and leadership responsibilities that have enhanced their neighborhood and strengthened



Officer Larry Graham receives the Certificate of Appreciation award from Chief of Police Mark Kroeker. They are flanked by Chief's Forum Cochairs Norm Costa and Melissa Delany.



Wattles Boys & Girls Club Keystone Warriors receive the Youth Recognition Certificate from Chief of Police Mark Kroeker. From left to right, the youth photographed are Ivan Juarex, Nalika Jackson, Samantha Lorenz, Samantha Adams, and April Erickson.

their community. In June 2002, the Keystone Warriors accepted the challenge of working with local police officers and community residents to paint a home owned by a low-income, elderly, handicapped individual. The project included 6 hours of removing old paint, taping windows, and repainting the house. This project to work with

local police officers and community members is one example of the extraordinary work the youth engage in every day as members of the Keystone Warriors.

For more information, contact Sharon White, Weed and Seed Coordinator, at 503-988-6127, ext. 228. 🏠

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