

WEED & SEED IN-SITES

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Weed and Seed Turns to Existing Resources: Bacatown Poised To Renovate Historic Site

The vacant building that houses the historic police station and jail at St. Philip and North Dorgenois Streets in New Orleans, Louisiana, received a new lease on life April 30, when Mayor Marc Morial handed the keys to community leaders. This community, known as Bacatown, is now charged with renovating the building and turning it into the Bacatown Community Resource and Neighborhood Policing Center.

The Bacatown center is a \$310,000 project sponsored by the Bacatown Community Development Corporation (CDC), which received financing for development from the city of New Orleans, Baptist Community Ministries, New Orleans Weed and Seed, and the Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC).

"This wonderful building will be a true community resource, providing continuing education and other neighborhood services and serving as a base for the New Orleans Police Department's community policing program," said Mayor Morial. The center will be located in the New Orleans Weed and Seed area, which is bounded by Canal, Rampart, Esplanade, and Broad Streets. It will serve as an anchor for the Broad Street end of the emphasis area.

"This is a perfect example of an effective Weed and Seed partnership," said EOWS Director Stephen Rickman. "The city, the community, the [New Orleans] Police Department, the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Justice Department, and the LISC have joined together to support a development that not

only will increase the police presence, but will also anchor a comprehensive community rebuilding effort." Formed with the help of LISC in 1993, the organization has already completed several affordable homes for sale to area families and has identified other sites in the neighborhood for future development and renovation. The CDC, which joined the Weed and Seed effort in 1996, canvassed the neighborhood and held a town hall meeting about the police station, which has been vacant for 15 years. Overwhelming sentiment was in favor of creating a neighborhood center and community policing facility.

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New Orleans Mayor Marc Morial, U.S. Attorney Eddie J. Jordan, and EOWS Director Stephen Rickman in front of the future Bacatown Community Resource and Neighborhood Policing Center.



FROM THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR

Stephen Rickman

Director

Executive Office for Weed and Seed



Hello Weeders and Seeders:

We are moving expeditiously ahead with the processing of your funding applications, preparing our fall and

winter training schedule, and planning for our 1999 national conference. I have visited many sites over the past several months and remain impressed with the enthusiasm and energy generated during the implementation of Weed and Seed strategies. Although success in implementing strategies varies, all in all, staff

impressions, data from our sites, and results from an empirically based national program evaluation show that we are making a difference.

Crime reductions are attributable to your efforts, and the quality of life in your neighborhoods is improving. We will not be shy in sharing your experiences with others, including other communities and local, State, and Federal officials. They need to know about programs that work! We will be adding numerous new sites to the Weed and Seed family in the coming months. We hope that some of the "old hands" at our current sites will mentor participants at our new sites and help ensure that they get off to a great start. A successful Weed and Seed effort requires, first and foremost, a well-planned strategy that includes and involves all key players in this process. Visit our updated Web site for information about our new and ongoing sites. I look forward to meeting members from our new sites in the coming months.

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U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
Executive Office for Weed and Seed
810 Seventh Street NW.
Washington, DC 20531
Phone: 202-616-1152
Fax: 202-616-1159

Stephen Rickman Director
Robert M. Samuels Assistant Director
Wanda Keyes Heard Special Assistant to the Director
Cheryl Driscoll Supervisory Program Manager
**Edison Aponte, Faith Baker, Ila Blue,
Paul Casagrande, Michael K. Connor,
Carla Friestad, Robert Hendricks,
Stacy Larsen, Louise Lucas,
Meredith Nielsen, Andrew Press,
Susan Tashiro** Program Managers
Claude Thomas Administrative Officer
John Harris III In-Sites Editor

Please send all submissions, comments, or address corrections to the above address.

Weed and Seed Fights Truancy Throughout the Country

John Harris III

In-Sites Editor

As students prepare for the beginning of another school year, the Executive Office for Weed and Seed continues to work with its sites to prevent truancy. Here is a sampling of truancy prevention activities that have been implemented in several Weed and Seed sites.

Charleston, South Carolina

Charleston Weed and Seed Coordinator Carolyn Brown is pleased with the results of her city's truancy prevention efforts. She gladly reports a dropoff in the need for truancy officers. "We began the [Weed and Seed] program in 1991 with eight officers. It eventually dropped off to four, and now we only have two officers," Brown stated. "And that's because of the [program's] success. Our statistics show that, out of the 1,600 truant students picked up in the past 6 years, only 6 percent of those cases have had to be picked up more than twice. We've also had a 28-percent decrease in [daytime] crime."

Brown also credits the program for deploying the officers during summer vacation. "During the summers, the same officers patrol the swimming pools and playground areas to help maintain order and to get the children to familiarize themselves with the officers during the summer months." Brown

also noted that truants from as far away as 50 miles from Charleston are picked up and returned. "If the children are found to be expelled or suspended, they are then transported to their homes," Brown said. "They don't need to be out in the street. Not only are they jeopardizing others; they are putting themselves in harm's way. They too can be victimized."

Fresno, California

To combat Fresno's high truancy rate, The House of Hope Truancy Prevention Program was implemented this past spring, with the help of the East Fresno Boys and Girls Club. Positive results are being seen throughout the area.

"Within a 3-month period, 410 students have been picked up by [Fresno's] P.D. [Police Department] or Fresno County Probation," said Nora Benavides, Fresno's Weed and Seed Coordinator. "According to [Fresno] P.D., property crimes have been reduced by 10 percent, and now the program is starting to see even more support."

Benavides said Fresno's program is a collaboration of the Fresno Police Department, the Fresno County Probation Department, the Fresno Unified School District, and the Fresno County Office of Education. Children picked up for truancy are transported to a truancy center, evaluated, and given counseling. They attend classes that teach them ways of resisting peer pressure to use drugs or join gangs. They also receive home visits from counselors and are mandated to participate in neighborhood cleanups. Aftercare programs help to further the rehabilitation process. Parents are contacted and brought in for counseling and education as well.

Durham, North Carolina

The Durham truancy prevention program is in its infancy. Its goal is to

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Augusta Joins Weed and Seed: Barton Village Strives To Knock Out Drugs and Crime

John Harris III

In-Sites Editor

There are many benefits to joining the Weed and Seed program, and City Commissioner Lee Beard of Augusta, Georgia, considers partnership in the fight against drug use to be one of the most important benefits of this successful initiative. Beard, one of several speakers at Augusta's Weed and Seed Official Recognition ceremony, thinks a successful, strategic effort to combat drug sales and use in the Barton Village neighborhood will have a major effect on other areas.

"Drugs are definitely the biggest problem," said Beard. "And as an offshoot, the community suffers from a multitude of crimes, robberies, car thefts, etc. I think Weed and Seed generates a very positive, cooperative spirit. If we can keep that spirit going, the results will be worthwhile. Once we're able to weed out the drugs, then I think we'll see a domino effect with the rest of the crime."

City officials, media, and other interested citizens attended the June 18, 1998, Official Recognition ceremony, which included an address from EOWS Program Manager Carla Friestad. "This is a strategy that is growing," said Friestad during her brief address. "All of the agencies involved—Federal, State, and local—you should be proud of yourselves; this program is about you."

U.S. Attorney Donnie Dixon made the trip from Savannah to Augusta for the ceremony, relishing his role as the deliverer of good news. As a Federal prosecutor, "most of the time, in situations like these I have to deliver bad news, and often times the people I'm talking about deserve it. Today's news is different. We are helping to change the community."

Although funding for the Augusta Weed and Seed Program is still pending, the weeding and seeding operations have been ongoing. Augusta Weed and Seed Interim Director Lillian-Katherine Blancos projects plenty of success for the program. She noted that, although Barton Village is the only official Weed and Seed site in Augusta, several other communities are attempting to duplicate the crime prevention and rehabilitation efforts in their neighborhoods.

"Everyone has just done a wonderful job of working together," said Blancos. "Other neighborhoods have seen how Barton Village has been working, and now the [Weed and Seed] program is expanding to them. The concept has caught on, and everyone has bought into it. As long as the committed partners and neighborhood associations work with each other, [Augusta Weed and Seed] will be a fine program."

Ex-Gang Members Answer Call To Serve

John Harris III

In-Sites Editor

At the Fresno, California, Resource Development Workshop in April, two ex-gang members, Michael Zavala and his protégée, T.J. Delagarza, had stirring stories to tell about their dangerous associations with local gangs. The attentive members of the crowd was so moved that they gave standing ovations to both speakers.

Zavala spent over 1 1/2 years in prison for attempted murder and robbery, as a member of the notorious Fresno Bulldogs gang. His transformation through Fresno's Cornerstone Church Youth Outreach Program entitled G.A.N.G.S. (God's Answer for Neighborhood Gangs) is part of the reason he believes there is an urgent need for more outreach programs in Fresno. "By the grace of God I have been

able to turn my life around," he said. "But there are so many kids out there who need the kind of help that I received. But this program isn't going to stop [crime] overnight. A lot of social workers think that working 9 to 5 is enough to help get rid of the gang problems. We have to quit the traditional [approach], even if it means working [with youth] after 5 p.m. I thank God that Cornerstone Church was there for

me. They are always here to answer the call and help kids who are in trouble."

Zavala is concerned with what he sees as disproportionate emphasis being placed on incarceration instead of preventive initiatives. "I believe there has to be a balance. It's amazing how much money is going into the prison systems, when what we really need are education and prevention programs," Zavala said.



Jason Sanderson and Charles Williams spend free time at the East Fresno Boys and Girls Club.

"Kids also need a creative outlet and people who are willing to listen to them and the problems that they're going through. I think [Weed and Seed] is doing a good job of offering both [prevention and education]. Speaking for my organization and church, we've developed a good relationship with the [Fresno] P.D. [Police Department]. You can tell that all of them are making an effort to keep that balance. Starting

with Lieutenant Jerry Dyer, they [the police] are making an effort to support grassroots organizations. The people in the communities see this and they respond to it. And now, we're setting the model for other towns—the way law enforcement and the community are collaborating. You see a lot of relationships being built. People get to know that [the police] are people too, and they learn a lot about the people. We teach one another about each other's lifestyles."

Zavala points to the Cornerstone Church's ability to draw kids like Delagarza into the program and away from gang life. He noted that the ability of the staff and volunteers to listen is an important quality. "I could relate to the volunteers who worked there," Zavala said. "They listened to kids and kept in contact with them on a regular basis. Kids really need someone they can talk to about the problems they're having. Some people think they can just give kids jobs and their problems will go away. But that's not going to do it. You have to deal with the pain that these kids are feeling."

Far too often, the pain translates into violence for many youth, Zavala noted. They often substitute gangs for family, staying with their adopted "family" well into their adult years. "It's a trip. You see guys who are 30 years old still in gangs. And no matter how old you are, gangs just don't make sense. Some of these kids are killing each other over the color of a \$1.99 [gang] rag."

Delagarza has his own story to tell. His mother fell into a coma shortly after his birth. He fell victim to the streets at an early age. Zavala, however, was able to reach out to the troubled teen and turned an almost certain high school dropout into a productive member of society.

“When I first met T.J. he was kind of immature,” said Zavala. “He had a lot of bitterness inside of him, but it was understandable because of what happened to his mom and his dad, who were killed while he was young. He’s lived everywhere. About a year ago, someone from our church talked to him, and since then he’s given his life to the Lord. Now he’s very serious about school, and we’re looking at putting him on our staff.”

Members of the East Fresno Boys and Girls Club Stand Out

More than 70 Resource Development Workshop participants took a short bus ride to the East Fresno Boys and Girls Club located in the southeast section of Fresno, California. The

visitors were given a tour of the facility by club staff and were introduced to two outstanding club members—Danny Morris and Jason Sanderson. Morris, a 16-year-old junior at Roosevelt High School, is a junior staff member at the club. An outstanding football, basketball, and track athlete, he also finds time to serve as president of his school’s chapter of the Anti-Tobacco Coalition and to serve on various committees at the Boys and Girls Club. Sanderson recently earned a trip to Orlando, Florida, after winning a local fine arts award.

“Danny is a role model for the youth here,” said East Fresno Boys and Girls Club Program Director Ron Zisler. “He’s been chosen as the club’s Youth of the Year for 2 out of the last 3 years. As a junior staff person he helps out our staff and he holds a lot of leadership roles. Jason is also participating in leadership roles, as well as sports, even though he’s still kind of new to the club. Both of them serve as excellent examples. They’re both very respectful, well-mannered young men.”

Fresno Hosts Resource Development Workshop

John Harris III

In-Sites Editor

To Weed and Seed Executive Director Stephen Rickman, Fresno, California, served as the perfect backdrop for the Resource Development Workshop. In his address to 400 workshop attendees, Rickman gave both historic and current examples of how Fresno makes the most of its resources.

“Fresno has a history steeped in resource development,” he said. “When the early settlers arrived they thought to themselves, ‘We’re sitting here in the middle of a desert; what can we do about this?’ But they had a vision. They looked at the climate and said, ‘It’s dry and arid, but we can see snow on the top of the mountains. Let’s figure out a way to get some of that snow down here in the valley.’ So what did they do? They built canals for irrigation. And because of their resourcefulness, we now sit in one of America’s bread-baskets.”

Fresno’s recent Weed and Seed activities have been impressive. Citizens of diverse nationalities and

backgrounds have worked together to implement many successful programs that have received favorable reviews. “Fresno is a microcosm of America’s future,” Rickman said. “There are Chinese Americans, Japanese Americans, African-Americans, Mexican Americans, and Vietnamese [Americans]—so many ethnic groups. Why [host the workshop in] Fresno? This Weed and Seed [program] has achieved great success in getting folks to work together. It is a model of an effective Weed and Seed [program]. Human capital in Weed and Seed sites is our most valuable resource. And in the long term, our most valuable resource is young people.”

The workshop featured many small group breakout sessions on various neighborhood resources. Representatives from around the country shared information on topics, including health and neighborhood services, Brownfields projects, business resources, local volunteer and service groups, education resources, and crime prevention through the arts. Participants also received brief training and consultation on neighborhood resource assessment, the Internet as a resource, identification of private funding sources, and methods for obtaining local government support for Weed and Seed efforts.

AmeriCorps Shows Its Green Thumb to Washington, D.C.

John Harris III

In-Sites Editor

Although the aesthetic potential has always been evident, the Brown Junior High School playground in Southeast Washington, D.C., needed the caring hands of many to reveal its charm and beauty. In less than 4 hours on a hot, spring day in May, a group of AmeriCorps Mid-Year Convention attendees joined EOWS staff and Brown Junior High School students to turn the playground into an eye-catching venue worthy of an impromptu visit from Washington Mayor Marion Barry. A band of nearly 100 amateur landscapers braved temperatures hovering around 90 degrees to complete the AmeriCorps convention service project.

Generous amounts of energy and calories were expended as the group painted, shoveled, mulched, raked, swept, clipped, cleaned, and grilled hot dogs and hamburgers. “We worked for only 4 hours, and this place looks like a downtown park,” said Linwood Paul, who along with Leslie Bourne, co-founded Fulcrum Learning Systems. “I think that the young people in this area, whether they consciously realize it or not, will be affected by what we’ve done here today. They could be walking down the street and not really pay too much attention, but subconsciously, it will grab their attention. They’ll notice that the glass that was once on the side of the street isn’t there anymore. They’ll see the bright paint on the basketball court and the colorful mural on the wall. It looks beautiful around here.”



EOWS Program Managers lend their muscle to the efforts of AmeriCorps in Washington, D.C., at Brown Junior High School. Shown here from left to right are Cheryl Driscoll, Ed Aponte, Michael Connor, Andrew Press, and Paul Casagrande.

AmeriCorps representatives from seven cities—Indianapolis, Indiana; Las Vegas, Nevada; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Northwest Austin, Illinois; Phoenix, Arizona; Syracuse, New York; and Washington, D.C.—participated in both the cleanup effort and the convention.



AmeriCorps volunteers help spruce up the Brown Junior High School basketball court by painting a mural.

Weed and Seed Turns to Existing Resources

(Continued from page 1)

Police Chief Richard Pennington hailed the resource center as an ideal location for the police department’s community policing program. “This historic building, both symbolically and actually, lies at the heart of this community. From here, you can see both the problems, which the heightened police presence will address, and the potential, the new homes and future development sites of a vital neighborhood determined to rebuild itself.”

Delaware Conference on Gangs Provides Information, Ideas, and Solutions

Arthur H. Garrison

Weed and Seed Project Director
Delaware Criminal Justice Council

On June 5 and 6, 1998, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Delaware, Wilmington Weed and Seed, and the Delaware Criminal Justice Council hosted a 2-day conference in Newark, Delaware, entitled "Gangs, Drugs, and Violence: How Law Enforcement and the Community Can Respond." The event, attended by more than 100 people, was held at the Christiana Hilton with support from the Executive Office for Weed and Seed. EOWS met its goal, bringing together national and regional experts to discuss the issues of drugs, gangs, and violence.

Wanda Keyes Heard, Special Assistant to the Director of EOWS, was the keynote luncheon speaker and provided insight on the expansion efforts of the national Weed and Seed Initiative. She outlined some of the new requirements being established for new sites applying for Official Recognition in fiscal year 1999.

Presentations and discussion groups provided educational and technical information on topics such as better implementation of the Weed and Seed strategy, the identification and structure of gangs, illegal firearms trafficking, and

the improvement of police and community communication. Kim Ogg, Weed and Seed Project Director for the Mayor's Office in Houston, Texas, gave an informative presentation on gangs. Ogg outlined specific indicators of gang presence, why children join gangs, and the financial aspect of belonging to a gang. She emphasized that gangs are no longer established on racial or ethnic identities and *all* communities are vulnerable to gang activity.

Paul Maloney, U.S. Drug Enforcement Agency Resident Agent in Charge of the District of Delaware, provided a presentation on drug trafficking and the route drugs take into the city of Wilmington. Maloney included a history on the area drug trade since the early 1980s and identified key players within the trade.



EOWS Special Assistant to the Director Wanda Keyes Heard and Chloe Coney of Florida's Community Corporation test the computers at the Wilmington, Delaware, Safe Haven.

Former gang member Eric Estrada highlighted the conference with a dynamic address. Estrada told of his transformation from troublemaker to Pepperdine University law student, using visual aids to convey his message.

Conference attendees also visited the William "Hicks" Anderson Community Center, as well as the new Multi-Plex Meeting Place in downtown Wilmington, which is a part of the Weed and Seed area's community economic development program.

From the Editor



One of the most enjoyable aspects of my job is when I'm able to venture outside the office to meet the people at the core of Weed and Seed's efforts. In May, EOWS Program Manager Faith Baker and I were fortunate to meet up with Laveta Barnett and Gil Rowe, the Orlando, Florida, educators re-

sponsible for organizing Grand Avenue Elementary School's tour of Washington, D.C., and Williamsburg, Virginia. While enjoying the atmosphere at Washington's Union Station, Rowe noted that many of the children in his group had never been out of the Orlando area, which made the trip for these 30 attentive and curious fifth graders even more special.

Nearly 2 weeks later, I accompanied six other EOWS staff members to AmeriCorps Service Day at Brown Junior High School in Southeast Washington, D.C. I had a great time with the hard-working AmeriCorps members and students. In just a few short hours we were able to give the Brown Junior High School playground a completely new look. The facelift had an immediate impact on the

students; I overheard two students praising the basketball court's new look while taking a break inside the school. The comments made by the young men prove that the little things we do in life have an impact on the lives of our youth.

The Drug Education for Youth (DEFY) Program has been in full swing throughout the summer. Our fall issue will devote plenty of its space to the many DEFY camps across the country.

In closing, I would be remiss not to thank Megan Walline, our past *In-Sites* Editor. Megan left plenty of material that was published in the June/July edition. Don't forget to send stories and pictures of events, programs, and other happenings at your local Weed and Seed site. An overload of material for upcoming editions is a pleasant problem to have. I challenge everyone across the country to swamp me with plenty of correspondence! Please send any submissions to my attention at EOWS by mail or by fax at 202-616-1159. You may call me directly at 202-616-7317 or 202-616-1152. I can also be reached via e-mail at harrisj@ojp.usdoj.gov.

John Harris III
In-Sites Editor
 August 1998



Grand Avenue Elementary School students and staff take in the sights at Union Station in Washington, D.C.

EOWS/National Guard Teleconference Focuses on Youth

On May 6, EOWS and the National Guard brought together more than 1 million viewers from 160 downlink sites across the Nation for "Taking Back Our Youth," the second of four teleconferences in The America Series, to help children overcome the major problems they face.

Law enforcement and juvenile court officials, substance abuse treatment providers, school leaders, and U.S. Attorneys were among those viewing the 1 1/2-hour broadcast. Produced in Fort Rucker, Alabama, the teleconference focused primarily on three programs, The Illinois National Guard First Choice Bootcamp; the Escambia

County, Florida, Juvenile Drug Court Treatment Program; and a second Florida initiative, the West Palm Beach Police Department's Truancy Interdiction Program.

"We know that prevention and early intervention programs can save money, and, more importantly, save lives," said EOWS Director Steve Rickman. "These efforts are a critical part of reducing crime and revitalizing neighborhoods."

The First Choice Bootcamp stresses discipline, education, and physical and mental well-being for teens ages 16 to 18. First Choice also provides mentors to at-risk third-and fourth-grade stu-

dents. Since the program began, suspension rates in participating elementary schools have fallen by 55 percent, while truancy rates have dropped by 45 percent. The Escambia County Juvenile Drug Court Treatment Program offers substance abuse treatment, drug testing, and counseling for youth. The West Palm Beach Police Department's Truancy Interdiction Program identifies truant youth and provides counseling for youth and their families to prevent future truancy.

Copies of this broadcast and the previous broadcast, "Taking Back Our Communities," can be obtained by contacting Penne Soltysik or John Harris at 202-616-1152.

Weed and Seed Fights Truancy

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reduce student truancy 50 percent by the year 2000 using the following techniques:

- Both parent(s) and student will sign a contract with the school to guarantee attendance.
- Police officers will patrol school areas.
- Truant officers will be given daily information on truant students.
- Truant officers will actively pursue truant students.
- Parents will be informed immediately if their children are truant and the consequences of their truancy will be explained.

- Human service's agencies will be immediately involved.
- Truant officers will follow cases through the court system.
- Student populations will be educated about the costs of truancy to their lives.

Shreveport, Louisiana

The Shreveport Police Department has entered into a contractual agreement with the Rutherford House Teen Curfew Center. Established for over a year and a half, the Rutherford Center is a clearinghouse that allows police officers to pick up and transfer teenagers who violate the city's curfew ordinance. Once they are picked up, the youths are

detained in the Rutherford Center until a parent, guardian, or concerned adult appears. Records of truancy violations are completed and stored for juvenile court purposes.

The Partnership for Family Involvement in Education now offers free activity kits to help parents and teachers plan for the America Goes Back to School Program. The plan is an annual effort that focuses attention on improving education across the Nation, especially during the back-to-school period from August to October. To send for a free activity kit, call 1-800-USA-LEARN or visit the U.S. Department of Education's Web site at <http://www.ed.gov/Family/agbts>.

What's Working

Batting a Thousand . . . AmeriCorps and WESCO Indianapolis, Indiana

Weed and Seed Indianapolis was busy in April providing quality programs for both children and adults. On April 3, the Westside Business Chamber of Indianapolis hosted a "Tax Time Forum," which included the assistance of several Internal Revenue Service (IRS) staff. The IRS staff presented computer software demonstrations on tax preparation for the small business owner. AmeriCorps member Charlotte Rowley and several area small business owners were instrumental in planning this event.

On April 18, Weed and Seed Indianapolis, in conjunction with the Westside Cooperative Organization (WESCO), hosted a free baseball clinic for nearly 50 youth from the Indianapolis Weed and Seed area. Razor Shines, a former minor-league all-star player with the Indianapolis Indians, served as the guest instructor for the day. Shines and other volunteer instructors focused on



Former Minor League All-Star baseball player Razor Shines demonstrates baseball fundamentals during a free clinic in the Indianapolis Weed and Seed emphasis area.

the game's fundamentals, including fielding, throwing, and batting.

WESCO also held an Earth Day march on April 25. The march was staged to protest crime and other social problems as well as environmental issues. More than 100 residents of the Haughville, Hawthorne, and Stringtown neighborhoods attended the event. Several area neighborhood-based organizations participated.

Brown Street Academy Cleans Up Milwaukee, Wisconsin

On April 24, 1998, more than 600 Brown Street Academy students participated in the Drug Education Awareness Committee's Drug Prevention Expo and Clean Sweep in the Milwaukee Weed and Seed neighborhood of Mid-Town. Brown Street Academy students, parents, teachers, and other adult volunteers worked together to pick up 350 bags of garbage in a 17-block radius from the school. During the afternoon, students were visited by McGruff the Crime Dog,



McGruff the Crime Dog has the children's full attention at the Brown Street Academy's Drug Education Awareness Committee's Drug Prevention Expo and Clean Sweep in Milwaukee's Mid-Town neighborhood.

K-9 units from the Milwaukee Police Department and Sheriff's Office, and representatives from the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) Program.

Milwaukee Weed and Seed staff noted events, such as the Drug Prevention Expo and Clean Sweep and the Brown Street Academy afterschool programs, and organizations, including the Pieper Boys and Girls Club and Mid-Town Neighborhood Association Safe Havens, have had a direct, positive effect on neighborhood children.

From 8 to 80, SeedTech's a Hit Washington, D.C.

Music and positive words from local movers and shakers highlighted SeedTech's official opening on the morning of June 6 at C.W. Harris Elementary School in Southeast Washington, D.C. SeedTech, Weed and Seed's Technology Initiative that has been in place for several months in the Nation's Capital, was officially recognized with a ceremony that included a parade and performances by area glee clubs and drill teams. The initiative's

primary goal is to provide training and technical assistance in the use of computer technology to prepare individuals who live in Weed and Seed areas with vital job skills for the 21st century.

"It was a very nice event," said EOWS Training and Technical Assistance Specialist Meredith Nielsen. "There was so much going on. This is a program for people of all ages; it will be great for Weed and Seed sites. It's revolutionary. It's seeding and empowerment to the ultimate." Nielsen also noted the participation of senior citizens who wish to gain technological knowledge. "There is already a waiting list to use these computers. The senior citizens have shown a lot of enthusiasm. They seem to be really anxious to learn how to use the Internet and e-mail so they can communicate with relatives across the country."

Nielsen said senior citizens have access to the computers from 8 a.m. until 3:30 p.m., then students become first priority. J.C. Nalle Elementary School and Capitol View Library have been conducting SeedTech operations for several months.

Grand Avenue Students Visit the Nation's Capital Orlando, Florida

Thirty fifth graders and ten staff members from Grand Avenue Elementary School, home of the Orlando, Florida, Weed and Seed Safe Haven, took a 5-day trip to Williamsburg, Virginia, and Washington, D.C., in May. The group arrived in Williamsburg on the morning of May 4 and visited the Jamestown and Yorktown settlements and colonial Williamsburg.

On May 7 the group traveled north to the Nation's Capital, where they visited numerous historic sights including the Capitol, the District Building, and The

Smithsonian. The group also spent several hours with EOWS Program Manager Faith Baker, who informed the group about the Weed and Seed program during question and answer sessions. Following a lunch stop at Union Station, Baker accompanied the tour group to the White House where they visited with Florida Senator Bob Graham.

"We had such a wonderful time," said Bennye "Laveta" Barrett, Grand Avenue School's Improvement Specialist. "We had a ball. The kids were so excited about going to the White House, and taking pictures with the Senator was very nice. We really had a great time in Virginia. Just seeing all of the history, the mansions, the African villages, Frederick Douglass' home, the African storytellers. I really would like to see this turn into an annual event. It's the best history lesson that these kids could have."

Wheeling Makes Weed and Seed History Wheeling, West Virginia

A year after starting its Weed and Seed Initiative, the city of Wheeling took its place in EOWS history as West Virginia's charter site. A May 28 press conference announced the town's new status as an officially recognized site. "The Weed and Seed designation is the result of many months of work and collaboration with the city, many community organizations, and the residents of the East Wheeling community," said Lisa Zukoff, Executive

Director of the Wheeling Housing Authority.

Wheeling deployed its weeding component early in May with the execution of six arrest warrants for drug distribution. The warrants, distributed on May 12, were a collaborative effort among the Wheeling Police Department, the Ohio County (West Virginia) Sheriff's Department, the Martins Ferry and Bellaire Ohio Police Departments, and the U.S. Marshals Service. Four days later, several neighborhood groups banded together for East Wheeling Beautification Day. O.N.E. Wheeling (an acronym for Our Neighborhood Empowered), an initiative of the Wheeling Housing Authority, was established to encourage local students and other volunteers to beautify and cleanup the community.

Throughout the month of May, the Wheeling Police Department implemented its community policing program. "Community policing is one way for the department to maintain close contact with the people," said Wheeling Police Chief Joe Petri. "Instead of dealing with people when they have

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East Wheeling Beautification Day participants with members of the Wheeling Police Department.

What's Working

(Continued from page 11)

problems and just going from one call to another, we can deal with the people on a more personal basis.”

The local Weed and Seed office will be located at the West Virginia Northern Community College's Hazel-Atlas Building.

Shreveport Weed and Seed Wins State Award and Continues Its Mission Shreveport, Louisiana

The Shreveport, Louisiana, Weed and Seed Youth Enrichment Program/Safe Haven was selected as one of eight winners of the 1998 Criminal Justice Award. Richard Leyoub, Attorney General for Louisiana, invited the Shreveport Weed and Seed Program representatives to participate in a brief ceremony in the State capital of Baton Rouge on June 24.

A month earlier, during mid-May's weeding phase, a 2 1/2-day crackdown on crime and city code violations in the East Shreveport neighborhood of Stoner Hill ended with 26 arrests. An additional 40 traffic tickets were issued during the operation, and 9 inoperable cars were served with “move-or-be-towed” stickers in an effort to cleanup the community.

The operation was prompted by concerned residents who voiced their displeasure with frequent streetcorner drug sales, loud music, and public drinking, among other problems. Arrests were made for drug possession, battery, theft, failure to appear in court, and various other felony and misdemeanor crimes.

“We received lots of positive feedback from residents while we were out here,” said Sergeant Danny Fogger, who estimated that Weed and Seed-funded police overtime hours will amount to \$3,000 to \$4,000. About 50 Stoner Hill residents dropped by the Shreveport Police Command Center during the operation to report crimes and to visit.

“I was glad the police came out,” said Stoner Hill Neighborhood Action Group member Frank Sykes. “I think what they [the police] did will make a difference.” Local Weed and Seed coordinator Mary Ellen Hoffman noted that more than 100 Stoner Hill residents completed neighborhood survey forms during the operation. Their main concerns corresponded with the most frequent complaints. “Those concerns will continue to be addressed in followup operations,” Hoffman said.

Comprehensive Health Dallas, Texas

The collective, charitable efforts of churches, hospitals, social service organizations, doctors, and volunteers are helping those in the East Dallas Weed and Seed area who cannot afford health care or struggle with its costs. Since March, Central Dallas Ministries has provided many free health services. These services include physical exams, health evaluations, immunizations, and cancer screenings. In addition, Church Health Ministries, a group of Christian doctors and nurses, offers spiritual guidance to patients. This joint effort allows patients to heal both the body and soul.

An area effort called The Meadows Foundation recently endowed Church Health Ministries with a \$240,000 grant that will help to expand their services.

Weed and Seed Resource Library

The Reading Shelf

❑ *Drug Identification and Testing in the Juvenile Justice System.* Demonstrates innovative ways to identify and intervene with juvenile substance abusers. The publication assists juvenile justice agencies seeking to develop programs to identify, screen, and test youth for illicit drug use.

❑ *When Your Child Is Missing: A Family Survival Guide.* Contains advice from parents and family members of missing children on what to expect, what can be done, and where to go for help in a missing child situation. It explains the role that various organizations and agencies play in the search for a missing child and discusses important issues that need to be considered by family members.

❑ *1997 Report to Congress—Title V Incentive Grants for Local Delinquency Prevention Programs.* Encourages the community to collectively focus on preventing juveniles from entering the justice system. It reviews current trends in juvenile justice, provides a brief overview of program implementation activities nationwide, and reports on the coordination of State and Federal efforts to support local delinquency prevention programs.

For copies of any of these publications, please call the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse at 1-800-638-8736, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. e.t.

Weed and Seed Racine Stays Busy

The first half of the year has proved to be an eventful one for the Weed and Seed Initiative in Racine. In January area Weeders and Seeders pledged to attain the following goals:

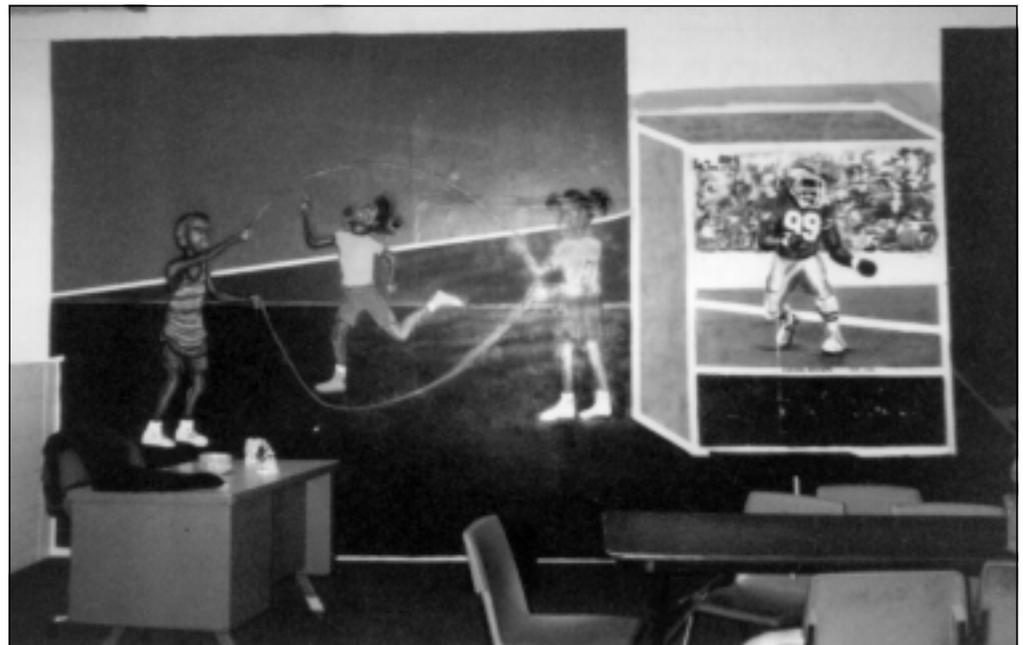
- To work effectively with local law enforcement to provide a safe environment for families, especially children.
- To reject violence and substance abuse.
- To keep properties clean and in good repair.

On April 18 Racine Weed and Seed held its annual cleanup. Each household was given five garbage bags to fill and dispose of at the neighborhood dumpster. Those who participated in the cleanup were rewarded with free flowers and vegetables. Residents of the Weed and Seed area also received free exterior house paint regardless of their income. In order to receive the free paint, property owners completed a short questionnaire and submitted it to the Weed and Seed Racine headquarters. Statistics showed recently that the northside area experienced a 23-percent reduction in violent crime. During the past year, the Racine Weed and Seed area began a number of law enforcement and crime prevention initiatives, including:

- Establishing a task force to investigate large drug distribution organizations with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), Racine Police and Sheriff's departments, and the U.S. Attorney's Office.
- Funding the building of a new Racine Police substation.
- Providing additional lighting and security measures.
- Funding additional weekend hours at the Martin Luther King, Jr., Center to provide educational, social, and recreational activities for area youth.
- Supporting initiatives to offer English as a second language classes at the Martin Luther King, Jr., Center.

Charlie Lott, an area resident who serves as Chair of Racine's Weed and Seed Committee, can tell the difference in the quality of living. "As a long time resident, I have seen more than our fair share of problems in this neighborhood. [The Weed and Seed efforts] have not only brought down crime, they have also improved the appearance of the neighborhood and the sense of community among the people who live here. I'm excited about what we have been able to do so far."

Coming Soon! The 1999 Weed and Seed Poster Contest



Mural on display at the Wilmington, Delaware, Safe Haven.

Executive Office for Weed and Seed Program Managers

The Executive Office for Weed and Seed's Program Managers cover 178 different sites across the country. The following is a list of Program Managers and their assigned sites.

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Edison Aponte: | New York 14, Connecticut 5, Massachusetts 4. |
| Faith Baker: | Florida 19, Washington, D.C. 3. |
| Ila Blue: | Minnesota 9, Michigan 8, Tennessee 2, Kentucky 1. |
| Paul Casagrande: | New Jersey 4, Pennsylvania 3, South Carolina 3, Louisiana 2, Maine 2, Mississippi 2, Virginia 2, Delaware 1. |
| Michael Connor: | Wisconsin 4. Project Manager for Institute for Law and Justice (Technical Assistance and Technology Issues). |
| Carla Friestad: | Illinois 6, Georgia 5, Alabama 4, Indiana 3, Kansas 2, South Dakota 1, Montana 1, Nebraska 1, and New Mexico Indian Tribes 1. |
| Robert Hendricks: | Texas 13, Maryland 3, Nevada 2, Iowa 1, New Mexico 1, Oklahoma 1. |
| Stacy Larsen: | North Carolina 8, Missouri 6, Ohio 6, West Virginia 1. |
| Louise Lucas: | Program Manager in charge of Quality Control and Grant Closure. |
| Meredith Nielson: | Project Manager for the National Congress for Community and Economic Development, Kids House, SeedTech, and Drug Education for Youth (DEFY). |
| Andrew Press: | Grants Management Specialist in charge of Asset Forfeiture Funds. |
| Susan Tashiro: | California 11, Arizona 4, Washington 3, Colorado 2, Utah 2, Hawaii 1, Oregon 1. |

Heads Up!

Upcoming Weed and Seed Events:

- The Weed and Seed Technology Conference will be held on October 29–31, 1998, in Fort Worth, Texas. For information, call 202–616–1152.
- “Taking Back Our Communities,” the fourth teleconference in The America Series, will air on November 5, 1998.
- The Weed and Seed National Conference will be held in July 1999 in Houston, Texas. For information, call 202–616–1152.

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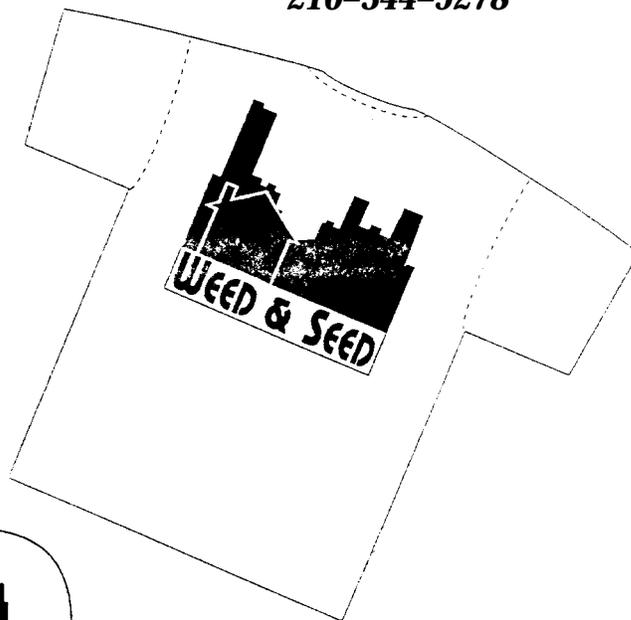
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Calendar of Events

September

10–16 The Council for Urban Economic Development will host training courses in Economic Development Finance from September 10 to 12 and will conduct its annual conference from September 13 to 16 in San Diego, California. For more information, call 202–223–4735.

25–26 A strategy development conference for new sites seeking Official Recognition will be hosted by the Executive Office for Weed and Seed in San Jose, California. Strategies must be developed under EOWS guidelines with leadership from local U.S. Attorneys. For more information, call 202–514–0709.

October

12–14 The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) Conference, “The Power of Prevention,” will be held in Washington, D.C. For more information, contact NCPC at 202–466–6272 or your local U.S. Attorney’s Weed and Seed liaison. A special Weed and Seed track will be offered to the first 500 Weed and Seed registrants.

November

9–10 The Weed and Seed Law Enforcement Conference will be held in Phoenix, Arizona. For more information, call 202–514–0709.

13–17 The Council for Urban Economic Development (CUED) will host two separate events in Tampa, Florida. On November 13 and 14, CUED will present a training course in Business Retention and Expansion. From November 15 to 17, a conference entitled “Expansions and Relocations: Corporate Strategies and Community Responses” will be held. For more information, call 202–223–4735.



January

20–26 The Council for Urban Economic Development will conduct two events in Tempe, Arizona. “If You Build It, Will They Come?” is the title of the January 20–23 conference. An economic development planning training course will be offered on January 25 and 26. For more information, call 202–223–4735.

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Office of Justice Programs
Executive Office for Weed and Seed

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