



Leaders at the Core of Better Communities

2009 Annual Awards Program

Program Excellence Awards Nomination Form

Deadline for Nominations: March 13, 2009

Complete this form (sections 1 and 2) and submit with your descriptive narrative.

SECTION 1: Information About the Nominated Program

Program Excellence Award Category (select only one):

- Community Health and Safety
Community Partnership
Community Sustainability
Strategic Leadership and Governance

Name of program being nominated: City of Montgomery Youth Outreach Collaborative

Jurisdiction(s) where program originated: City of Montgomery Ohio

Jurisdiction population(s): 10,000

Please indicate the month and year in which the program you are nominating was fully implemented. (Note: All Program Excellence Award nominations must have been fully implemented by or before January 31, 2008, to be eligible. The start date should not include the initial planning phase.)

Month: August Year: 2007

Name(s) and title(s) of individual(s) who should receive recognition for this award at the ICMA Annual Conference in Montréal, Québec, Canada, September 2009. (Each individual listed MUST be an ICMA member to be recognized.):

Name: Cheryl Hilvert

Title: City Manager Jurisdiction: City of Montgomery, Ohio

Name: _____

Title: _____ Jurisdiction: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____ Jurisdiction: _____

SECTION 2: Information About the Nominator/Primary Contact

Name of contact: Don Simpson
Title: Chief of Police Jurisdiction: City of Montgomery, Ohio
Street address: 10150 Montgomery Road
City: Montgomery State/Province: Ohio
Zip/Postal Code: 45242 Country: United States
Telephone: 513-985-1600 Fax: 513-985-0870
E-mail: dsimpson@ci.montgomery.oh.us

Nomination for 2009 Program Excellence Award

Community Partnership Category

City of Montgomery, Ohio

As a suburban Cincinnati community of 10,000 residents Montgomery, Ohio supports an affluent population and a nationally recognized school district. The youth of the community benefit from an environment where resources and opportunity remain plentiful. However, despite this privileged environment, juveniles are not immune from the temptation to engage in inappropriate behavior, such as underage drinking and drug abuse. The Montgomery Police Department noticed a statistical increase in juvenile arrests from the years 2002-2006 particularly in the areas of underage drinking and marijuana use. Similar trends were seen across the nation with underage drinking being listed as the number one health issue for youth in America.

Coincidentally, another disturbing trend was rapidly developing during this time period. Advances in technology such as internet social networking sites and cell phones were being used by kids to distribute pictures and videos of themselves engaged in a plethora of unsuitable behaviors. The combination of underage drinking, drug abuse and sharing of pictures and videos had led to serious consequences for some of the areas youth.

Members of the Montgomery Police Department quickly recognized the need for a multi-faceted approach to address these concerns. Education, prevention and partnership with other entities was seen as the most effective way to reduce these trends. Officers sought

commitment and support from the local school district, the local prosecutor's office and a regional coalition aimed at preventing teen substance abuse.

Using existing resources within the police department and a small amount of capital, police officers created a dynamic educational program titled "Caught in the Web, Don't Let it Happen to You!" This program included examples of blurred photos and videos of local youth engaged in drinking and drug abuse. All of the material had been pulled from the internet where adolescents had posted what they believed were private pictures. Officers and prosecutors teamed together to produce a two hour presentation aimed at shocking kids into understanding the dangers of this type of behavior.

The first presentation to high school students during a school assembly received rave reviews. The school principal explained that she had never seen hundreds of teenagers sitting in total silence shocked by what they had seen. News of the program quickly spread as students informed their parents and educators shared their views. Within weeks the police department had received dozens of requests from local schools to present the program. During the 2007-2008 school year nearly 12 schools from 6 school districts hosted the program. Parent groups, teachers associations and faith-based organizations also held trainings. Several local media outlets included coverage of the presentations in their local news casts. The program continues to be in high demand throughout greater Cincinnati.

In addition to the "Caught in the Web" program, the city's police department spearheaded an effort to create a series of "Parent to Parent" nights in the local school district. These meetings were designed to inform parents of the increase in underage drinking at the junior high level. Emphasis was placed on educating parents of the statistical increase in alcohol use during these years. Studies have shown that 8th grade tends to be the year where alcohol abuse by teens significantly increases. The "Parent to Parent" night also allowed parents an opportunity to discuss the many challenges of raising teenagers. Many parents expressed their appreciation for the chance to speak with the police officers in a setting where they could work together to prevent problems. Internet safety was also discussed as an area where junior high students began to use social networking sites and cell phones.

Partnership with a local youth coalition was also viewed as a valuable conduit for reaching out to the community on these issues. The Northeast Community Challenge Coalition exists as a non-profit organization aimed at preventing substance abuse among teens. The police department worked with the coalition to sponsor and host a town hall meeting to discuss and raise awareness about underage drinking within the community. With nearly 150 attendees the Town Hall Meeting was an opportunity to engage a part of the community previously unaddressed. In addition local business owners and convenience store employees were invited to attend server/seller training aimed at educating them about the problems associated with serving or selling to minors. Officers felt an obligation to reduce the availability of alcohol to teens by educating business owners and their employees about the problem.

The combination of efforts contained in the Youth Outreach Collaborative, in addition to our traditional programs such as D.A.R.E., has significantly reduced the number of alcohol and drug related arrests in our community. The number of youth alcohol related arrests during 2008 dropped to its lowest level in the past 7 years. In addition, the total number juvenile arrests dropped to double digits after 5 consecutive years of being over 100. The multi-faceted approach of education, prevention and partnership within the community has proven to be a successful approach to addressing one of our nations leading health concerns for youth.

Submitted by: Don Simpson

Chief of Police

City of Montgomery Ohio