



LAW ENFORCEMENT'S

SECRET WEAPON

*Police foundations support and even pioneer
public-safety enhancements*

By Daniel P. Smith

Effective and fair policing is one of the basic responsibilities of any healthy government. But like health care, education, and even national defense, sometimes the funds to experiment and grow and improve don't come from public coffers—they come from forward-thinking private philanthropy.

Take the case of Anjelica Castillo, known for more than two decades as “Baby Hope.” In 1991, construction workers discovered Castillo’s corpse down a 30-foot embankment off Manhattan’s Henry Hudson Parkway. Her malnourished body had been folded in half, wrapped in green cloth, stuffed into a black garbage bag, and packed inside a 32-quart blue cooler lined with Coca-Cola cans. The tragic murder mystery engrossed the city, and the New York Police Department.

For two years, investigators traced every potential lead. They attempted to discover exactly where the soda cans

were purchased. The little girl’s skull was shipped to Canada to produce a computer-generated image of her face that investigators hoped might produce tips. It was “one dead end after another,” says current NYPD deputy commissioner of internal affairs Joseph Reznick, then a squad commander involved in the case.

Eventually, detectives buried the little girl. But they continued to follow up on the case periodically, even fingerprinting items left at the girl’s gravesite. “I’d ride over to Saint Raymond’s Cemetery on Easter Sunday and I’d see detectives at her gravesite,” Reznick says. “This was personal for them.”

On the 25th anniversary of the horrid discovery, police blitzed the city with fliers and posters and urged local media to again spotlight Baby Hope, pointing people to NYPD’s Crime Stoppers hotline. The

Contributing editor Daniel P. Smith is author of On the Job: Behind the Stars of the Chicago Police Department.



following afternoon, a woman called to say, “I don’t know if this will help,” but she had a friend who had told her years before that she believed her half-sister had been murdered. The detective on the line gathered details, and the tip led them to the baby’s mother. Police arrested Conrado Juarez, who confessed to abusing and murdering the four-year-old girl.

“If not for that woman calling Crime Stoppers, that little girl still wouldn’t have a name, an identity, and we wouldn’t have been able to deliver justice,” says Reznick.

The Crime Stoppers tip line, created in 1983 and administered ever since by the New York City Police Foundation, provides monetary rewards for information that leads to violent felony arrests and indictments. It is credited with helping NYPD officers solve more than 5,600 violent crimes, including more than 1,400 murders and attempted murders, over the last three decades.

The first police foundation

The first police foundation grew out of a 1971 corruption scandal in New York City. Business and civic leaders wanted reform, and thought a stream of independent funding could strengthen the police department, heighten the quality of services, and improve the relationship between the police and the community. The New York City Police Foundation that they created was the first nonprofit of its kind for funneling private contributions into the improvement of policing.

“At the time, police were seen as pariahs,” says Dale Hemmerdinger, a longtime supporter of the NYCPF and its current board chairman. Department funding was drying up. Morale was bad.

Right from the beginning, the police foundation showed an interest in acquiring for officers new products or services that could make quantum improvements in the way they accomplished their work. In the first years of the 1970s, 18 NYPD officers were killed by gunfire in the line of duty. Not long after DuPont’s invention of Kevlar made bulletproof vests conceivable, New York’s police

foundation purchased 18,000 armored vests and gave them to officers. That curbed the spike of deaths, and led before long to the acceptance of body armor as a standard, city-issued essential at departments around the country.

In another notable early investment, the foundation rescued the city's mounted police from being disbanded. During New York City's bleak and financially stressed 1970s and early 1980s, horse-mounted police were dismissed by critics as expensive nostalgia or ceremonial frivolities. But mounted units provide valuable, hard-to-replace services in crowd control, special-event policing, and high-traffic civic-event management.

The "10-foot-tall cops" assure the public of police presence, which reduces public disorder in itself. And the officers command much better visibility over large gatherings than cops on foot or in cars. One mounted officer can often accomplish the work of several individual officers on the ground, according to police officials. Mounted police can also be great for community outreach, attracting friendly attention from children and adults alike, and seem more approachable than officers in cars or on the beat. For these reasons, the foundation donated more than 100 horses and substantial capital to stabilize the unit when it was teetering on the edge of closure.

"These two programs—providing the first bulletproof vests, and saving mounted police—immediately demonstrated what we could accomplish with Police Foundation funds," says NYCPF executive director Gregg Roberts, "which was important, because we were a new concept, and we had to show people there were things we could do that would be hard to accomplish with public funds."

Having quickly established its utility, foundation leaders began to explore how they could become an ever-sophisticated partner, anticipating needs and fueling new experiments in crime prevention, control, and solving. To encourage innovation, they began funding sometimes risky pilot programs that extended beyond the department's normal budgetary process. Some projects struggled to produce the desired results, but many others became ingrained in

Soul Support

Police officers are regularly exposed to humanity's most jagged edges. This takes an emotional and spiritual toll.

Aspects of the age-old pressures on cops have recently gotten worse. With fatalities among police officers rising dramatically in the last two years—including a 30 percent increase in the number of officers killed in the line of duty—stress among patrolmen has gone up. Between 17 and 19 percent of police officers now show signs of post-traumatic stress (compared to 3.5 percent among the general population).

Enter police chaplains, who offer cops something few others can: an available, non-judgmental, and confidential ear where they can unload their fears and worries, and receive guidance or encouragement in response. "If a police officer accepts that his work has a spiritual dimension, that it's noble to promote good and suppress evil, that adds motivation, energy, and engagement, in a job that needs those things," says retired Chicago Police Department chaplain Father Tom Nangle. "If there's no sense of the spiritual in police work, then it's one of the worst jobs in America."

The Chicago Police Chaplains Ministry is a 501c3 that serves some 13,000 Chicago officers, as well as retirees. The organization receives donations from businesses, corporations, and foundations, but the bulk of its budget arrives from individual donations, largely from retired officers. Father Dan Brandt, a former accountant who now spearheads the group, pegs the average donation at around \$50.

Police chaplains are most often volunteer clergy. The La Crosse Area Law Enforcement Chaplaincy, for instance, consists of 24 ministers from different denominations who have offered to serve about 400 officers in their western Wisconsin county. "It's their own dime and their own time," says Mark Clements, the pastor of a local Christian church. "As chaplains, we all work for the good of the people who police our streets."

There are also charitable groups that offer police psychological support from a secular perspective. Brad Lindmark remembers getting the call in 2015 saying that his older brother Greg, a 53-year-old retired deputy chief from the Rockford, Illinois, Police Department, had committed suicide. "Honestly, I never fully understood the demons he faced," Lindmark admits.

He and other family members launched the Greg Lindmark Foundation just months after Greg's death to help other officers navigate the choppy emotional waters of their profession. The organization provides officers across northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin free and anonymous access to licensed area counselors, picking up the tab for up to six visits—more if the situation demands it.

"When we get the bill, there's no name, no gender, no age, or other identifying information, just a generic patient number," Lindmark says. "We're trying to promote mental wellness for officers, which is every bit as important as physical wellness." The foundation also supports stress-management programs for local officers. "When officers are more emotionally healthy, they are better-performing professionals. That helps them, and also the public."

Lindmark hopes the foundation can expand its services to other areas and broaden its reach to include counseling for families of officers. "Greg's suicide was an eye-opener to me," Lindmark says. "Police do so much to help us. But who's helping them?"



NYPD operations, and were later adopted by police departments nationwide.

The list of experiments is long and varied. The foundation launched a community newsletter. It developed bomb-detonating robots. It produced popular, award-winning films on Constitutional law. It trained city residents on burglary prevention. It researched officers' mental health. It even pioneered today's body-camera technology.

"I say we pay for failures," says Dale Hemmerdinger. "When the police department leadership wants to try something and we think it has value, then we give it a shot. We relieve the political pressure of trying things that might not work."

Arguably the foundation's most smashing success came in the mid-1990s. NYPD Commissioner William Bratton started hankering for a computerized system that could track and analyze crime on a block-by-block basis. He thought this could spark new policing strategies, inform resource allocation, and increase accountability among officers and commanders at a time when New York was in the midst of a long crime wave and desperately in need of safer streets. Accurate to-the-minute data about crime patterns had never been collected before.

The resulting project, funded with seed money from NYCPF (\$20,000 to purchase technology for police headquarters, followed by a few hundred thousand dollars to take the operation citywide), was

called CompStat. It digitized crime information on a nearly as-it-happens basis. With that data in hand, police leadership could map local crime spikes and troughs, and develop modest immediate objectives for turning trends in a positive direction—and then hold precinct commanders responsible for meeting those goals.

In CompStat's opening year, crime in New York City dropped 12 percent. A long run of year-over-year declines followed. Within a decade and a half of CompStat's debut, violent crime rates in the city had fallen to less than one-third the rates of pre-CompStat New York. Annual homicides, once as high as 2,245 in 1990, are on track to come in at around 300 by the close of 2017. "A marvel of American law enforcement" is the *New York Times* verdict on CompStat.

"When you look at where New York City was and where it is today in terms of crime, no one would ever have believed the numbers we've achieved," says New York City philanthropist Andrew Tisch, a longtime supporter and current trustee of the NYCPF.

Heralded by some as the most transformative policing innovation in the last 100 years, the immediate feedback provided by CompStat allowed the police to know when their efforts were working, and when they needed to try something different. The result was an explosion of new micro-experiments, then quick sharing of information on the successes. The CompStat mechanism, and many of the street techniques it sparked, are now commonplace in police departments across the U.S. "To know we helped take this from the germ of an idea into something that is the basis for changing the way policing is practiced everywhere is immensely rewarding," says Tisch.

The next century

After the World Trade Center attacks in 2001, the New York City Police Foundation dramatically expanded its reach and expectations. It added a new goal of helping modernize the department to better fight terrorism, while also helping the city as a whole cope with the new demands of battling terror.

One of the first foundation initiatives after the attack was to improve mental-health services available to stressed first responders. It partnered with Columbia University/New York-Presbyterian Hospital to provide counseling to officers and their families that was both free and non-NYPD affiliated. This allowed patients to skip bureaucratic red tape and to have confidence that their consultations would remain private and off their job record. "People were suffering after 9/11 and they needed help immediately," says Roberts.

The foundation then started to directly propel the department's counterterrorism efforts. It purchased the city's first vapor-wake detection dogs, a team of Labradors capable of sniffing out airborne particles from explosives, and tracking suspects through crowded urban landscapes.

New York's police foundation also spurred the International Liaison Program. This remarkable initiative posts members of the NYPD's Intelligence Bureau in 14 terrorist hotspots around the globe—including Tel Aviv, Abu Dhabi, Madrid, Paris, Montreal, Toronto, London, and Sydney—to interact with local law enforcement. This is an innovation way beyond traditional law-enforcement practices, says Susan Birnbaum, current NYCPF president. The immediate goal is to feed intelligence back to New York. A longer-term goal is to borrow expertise from cities with the most exposure to terror. "The idea is to take moments of violence, learn from them, and bring back new knowledge to the department."

The foundation pays about \$1.4 million each year to station the officers and their families abroad in these 14 hotspots, while the police department pays about \$1.6 million for salaries. The experiences of these officers continue to sharpen the investigative, resource-deployment, and training strategies the NYPD uses to battle terror attacks. "This is a proactive program," says Birnbaum. "It improves our understanding of terrorism, and has helped keep our city safe."

The police foundation in New York has also continued to improve the department's technological infrastructure. Its gifts launched the city's Real Time Crime Center in 2005. The first of its kind in the U.S., the RTCC is able to rummage through expansive amounts of New York's criminal data—arrest records, warrant information, photos, and more—and provide that data to the field in minutes. The RTCC also includes satellite imaging and mapping technology that can oversee units in the field, and track suspects. "NYPD Google," Roberts calls it. The foundation contributed \$1.8 million to get the RTCC in motion. The city later invested \$11 million to build out the center and enrich the data.

Payoffs from the center are frequent. In a recent armed robbery of a Greenwich Village restaurant, for instance, the suspect had "sugar" tattooed on his neck and used a silver revolver. RTCC personnel ran that single tattoo tidbit against its database, finding 499 individuals with such a marking. Of those, 498 were prostitutes. The outlier was a man with a long history of armed robberies in which he used a silver revolver. That information was communicated immediately to

the field, where witnesses identified the suspect, and NYPD officers made the arrest. Other cities, from Hartford, Connecticut, to Modesto, California, have since opened similar crime centers linking surveillance cameras, gunshot detectors, and other technology in the field with central databases, to knock down criminal activity.

The foundation has also put resources into improving the relationship between each NYPD precinct and the community it serves. This work takes many forms: food drives, cops-and-kids events, the establishment of a community liaison between the precinct and neighborhood leaders, and more. Recognizing that police cannot be effective without support from local residents, the goal is "building greater collaboration and trust," says Jeffrey Barker of Bank of America, a police foundation donor.

Hemmerdinger emphasizes that these neighborhood efforts flourish in part "because we're an independent, nonprofit organization." The foundation is an arm of civil society, not a government entity. That makes it easier for it to act as an honest broker and "bring together community leaders, residents, and members of local law enforcement. We are the bridge between the police department and the communities of New York."

Outside the big apple

The success of the NYCPF has inspired cities across the U.S., spurring a ripple of other police foundations designed to help their local departments build capacity, strengthen public safety, and enhance connections between officers and the communities they serve. "From our bylaws to specific program details, we've openly shared whatever we can with others," Roberts says.

Sparked by the 1998 arrival of Commissioner John Timoney, a former high-ranking officer in New York City who had seen the value of the Big Apple's police foundation firsthand, civic leaders in Philadelphia launched their own version. At the time, the Philadelphia Police Department was scrambling to outfit its officers with ballistic vests, and the foundation adopted that cause. It provided



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Direct Donor Action for a Safer City

The Orlando-Kissimmee region of Florida turned into one of the most dangerous places in the country to be a pedestrian. Nearly 600 people died crossing a road in the area between the years of 2003-2012. The Winter Park Health Foundation saw this as a serious public-health problem, and decided to offer its help to make local streets safer.

The foundation provided \$100,000 to launch a program called Operation Best Foot Forward. This paid for plainclothes police officers to cross some of the most notorious intersections during dangerous times. Reckless drivers were radioed to nearby officers in cars, who issued warnings and tickets. From 2012 to 2016, thousands of these citations were given out, and this changed driver behavior.

Best Food Forward supplemented the plainclothes work with community education about pedestrian safety. It also made engineering recommendations for improving certain intersections. This unconventional private-public partnership worked. The rate at which drivers yielded for pedestrians at crosswalks on roads with speed limits of 35 mph or less shot up from 17 percent to 63 percent, and the area moved down from the first to third most dangerous for pedestrians in the country. While auto-pedestrian casualties continue to rise across the country, Operation Best Foot Forward is putting the brakes on them in Orlando, and has recently expanded to a few other Florida counties. —*Abby Jaroma*

approximately 300 vests to officers each year until the lifesaving equipment was covered in the city's budget.

Several years ago, Philadelphia Police Foundation leaders and board members decided they could do even more. First they researched successes at other police foundations that could be adopted in their town. Then they put together a detailed list of potential initiatives and presented it to prospective donors, including corporate partners like Motorola, Macy's, and Home Depot.

One result was a resurrection of the city's mounted patrol, which had evaporated in 2004 due to the city's financial shortfalls. The foundation collected donations, found a stable, outfitted trailers and cars for transporting the horses, and rescued animals headed to slaughter. Today the unit has a full stable of horses and all the necessary equipment, and mounted officers are present every day in key commercial zones around the city and wherever crowds need to be managed.

The foundation's current wish list for donors includes programs designed to increase officer training, materials for youth programming, social-media threat-monitoring software, a new campaign for recruiting police officers, an upgrade of 240 outdated computers located in district houses, and body cameras for street officers. "Yes, the city is paying for the police department, but that's often to maintain the status quo," Philadelphia Police Foundation president Maureen Rush says.

When Christian Anschutz of Denver's Anschutz Foundation sent \$5,000 to the Denver Police Department as an expression of solidarity after the 9/11 attacks, he was amazed to be told that was the largest contribution the department had ever received. The police chief then asked Anschutz if he would help establish an organization that could serve as a liaison among Denver citizens, the business community, and the city police department. The Denver

Police Foundation emerged in 2003 as an independent 501c3 with its own board made up of business leaders and donors, pastors, and community members of all sorts. "We work very closely with the department, but there are no police officers on our board," says Anschutz. "A police foundation should be independent from the department it serves."

He elaborates that "the police foundation in Denver will not purchase basic equipment like cars, weapons, bullets, or fund personnel. We believe that local governments have an obligation to provide standard law-enforcement services. Our job is to provide equipment and training and new technology that extends beyond that basic budget."

The thriving organization now provides training, specialized equipment, community-outreach initiatives, and more. In one of its earliest gifts, the foundation provided gunshot trauma kits to patrol officers. The kits, packed with tourniquets and a blood coagulant, saved the life of an eight-year-old gunshot victim, as well as a Denver Police officer who was shot seven times in the line of duty. They are now carried on the uniform of every officer, and stocked in cruisers.

More recently, the foundation paid more than \$300,000 to install a state-of-the-art simulator at Denver's police academy. Virtual scenes surround up to four officers at a time and play lively, realistic scenarios ranging from active shooters at the city's football stadium to a hostage situation at Denver's 16th Street Mall. There is no delay—responses are instantaneous. The simulator can even shoot back, jolting officers with a painful taser shock when they are hit. The pain reflex, psychologists have found, can be an indelible aid to learning.

All recruits train on the simulator. The SWAT team does regular exercises on it. Everyday officers brush up their skills. Full weapons training can even be done on the machine. "Our firearms range is located across town," Anschutz notes. "Learning to shoot and practicing in the simulator frees up range time."

The Denver foundation's support for technology extends beyond the simulator, he reports. "Businesses can

provide the funds to purchase observation cameras that the department will install and monitor. So if there is an area that's having lots of break-ins, a business improvement district can take action. That's a very proactive way to address high-crime locations."

"Another thing we are proud of is our crisis-intervention training," says Anschutz. The foundation helped the Denver police become one of the first departments in the country to give mental-illness training to all recruits. After one year on the job, all officers then take a mandatory 40-hour training on how to deal with people in a crisis.

To support positive outreach, the Denver Police Foundation provides a small Commander's Outreach Fund to each of the city's six districts. This gives the district head about \$5,000 per year that he and his officers can use for creative initiatives like holiday parties for children and their parents, gang-prevention activities, and quick community responses at the commander's discretion. To strengthen community bonds, the foundation also sponsors "Cookout with the Cops" events, community picnics where police distribute school supplies to thousands of area students. There is a billboard program that links officers with the community, and an awards luncheon honoring valiant acts.

"Lots of people and organizations want to stand behind law enforcement, because they see the importance of public safety," says Anschutz. "Police foundations are a way to convert that support into action."

The Los Angeles Police Foundation has also had a productive record. When William Bratton, the former NYPD top cop, became the LAPD chief in 2002, he leaned on the police foundation to help launch an L.A. version of CompStat. At the time, only \$50,000 of his \$1 billion budget was devoted to information technology. Private money was the quickest route to getting crime-beating technology into the hands of officers. "There's enormous importance to breaking out of the blue cocoon and going to mix with donors in any given community,"

Bratton told *Philanthropy*. "They are the people who can make a difference."

More recently, the L.A. foundation has helped its police department eliminate a shortage of sexual-assault evidence kits, and repurposed a former L.A. Fire Department helicopter. "What we do for the department isn't being done by anyone else in the city," says Los Angeles Police Foundation executive director Cecilia Glassman.

On the Gulf Coast, the New Orleans Police & Justice Foundation hired well-regarded policing consultants like the late Jack Maple to study New Orleans public safety and make recommendations. It helped churches, businesses, and residents install more than 200 security cameras in crime hot spots across the city.

Over the last 15 years, the Atlanta Police Foundation has played a part in reducing the violent crime rate in Georgia's capital city by 58 percent. It has helped increase the department's street patrol, brought advanced technology to Atlanta's officers, and pulled business and community members into new partnerships with the police.

And in the nation's northwest corner, the Seattle Police Foundation has provided funds to the city's police department for employee training, safety equipment for street officers, and community outreach. Helping officers make hundreds of positive connections with Seattle's minority residents has been a priority.

Beyond the resources they supply, suggests Philadelphia Police Foundation board member Tom Riley, there's another often-overlooked benefit they provide. They connect business leaders, concerned citizens, and property owners with police in a way that builds personal relationships and fosters communication. "There's benefit in knowing each other. It's a loss for society when the public sees police as just another bureaucracy,"

Ohio resident Carol Hribar had long wondered "what the heck cops did and why they did it that way." In 1999 curiosity gave way to clarity when Hribar enrolled in the Westerville Police Department's inaugural Citizen Police Academy. Over 11 weeks, Hribar and 17 other community members visited the town's police station for evening presentations. "Quickly, a lot of my questions were answered," Hribar says. "And a lot of my perspectives changed."

Citizen Police Academies are now staged by departments all across the country to help residents better understand police training, capabilities, and challenges. One week, enrollees might learn from a SWAT member, narcotics officer, or gang specialist. They may have a hands-on activity the next time, like conducting mock traffic stops. Some CPAs visit the gun range or a local jail. Most conclude with a ride-along.

"The idea is to open the channels of communication in a casual setting and confront the misperceptions out there," says Richard Powers, a retired lieutenant with the South Bend Police Department in Indiana. He started that city's CPA program in 1999 and saw more than 1,200 graduate by the time of his retirement in 2012. "We close the classroom door and say, 'You've got our attention, and we have yours:'"

Graduates emerge more informed about their police department, more comfortable in communicating with it, and more mindful of the anxieties that surround the profession. The CPA initiative has proven so successful that special spinoffs have been created to target teens, seniors, Spanish speakers, and other groups. Alumni sometimes end up volunteering to help their local police with work ranging from chaperoning children on police visits to assisting with administrative tasks to disseminating community surveys. In places, CPA alumni have organized themselves into nonprofit groups that work on public safety. "Every department in America has limited resources," reminds Hribar. "The Citizen Police Academies are all about making a stronger community for police and citizens alike."

Riley says. His interactions with officers through the police foundation have given him rich perspective into neighborhoods, emerging problems, natural leaders, and such in neighborhoods where the Connelly Foundation, his philanthropic employer, aims to improve social services and education.

“Police offer a lot of knowledge and insights that help us understand our neighborhoods and grantees better,” he says. “That’s something very valuable to civil society.”

Outside cities

Police foundations are not solely the domain of the nation’s metropolises. Tustin, California, a city of some 82,000 located near Anaheim, California, started its police foundation in 2010. The foundation has funded a pilot program for an officer to mentor 4th and 5th grade students in leadership and team-building. It has provided emotions training for officers, and well as skills in interacting with the homeless. Other small- to medium-size cities and towns across the U.S., including Boca Raton, Newport News, and Bozeman, have set up police foundations. “Any community with willing and supportive community members can have a police foundation,” Anschutz contends.

Philanthropist Howard Buffett has created a model largely focused on the needs of rural America through his foundation. Buffett made public safety one of its priorities in 2014. Two discoveries influenced that decision. First, “our foundation has worked in a lot of tough places, and we’ve learned that you can’t really accomplish much if you don’t have rule of law,” says Buffett.

The more personal influence was Buffett’s own service in auxiliary and volunteer deputy-sheriff positions in his hometowns. Calling these experiences “the greatest education of my life,” Buffett’s frontline work exposed him to the police profession’s inherent challenges. So the Howard Buffett Foundation has committed more than \$57 million to over 70 public-safety projects in recent years.

In Arizona, the foundation helped the sheriff’s office install a modern radio system with upgraded towers and encryption. The new system has improved officer response times, boosted safety, and helped cops combat the traffickers in drugs and humans who had been intercepting law-enforcement communications and eluding apprehension. “We hope our work here serves as a model for private investment in public institutions,” says Buffett.

In Illinois, the foundation partnered with a local sheriff’s office in 2016 to offer drug users a chance to voluntarily turn themselves in and receive treatment instead of prosecution. The effort is modeled after the Police Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative in Gloucester, Massachusetts. “Every community in the U.S. is facing serious issues with drug addictions, and we can’t simply arrest ourselves out of this problem,” Buffett says.

Also in Illinois, Buffett has provided full K-9 operations—dog, vehicle, equipment, and training—to about 65 counties. The dogs have helped officers track and recover lost children, detect drugs, and restrain subjects. Another venture brought high-ranking police from 23 U.S. agencies to Scotland to learn how officers there are trained to de-escalate hostile situations without weaponry. Buffett also devoted \$15 million to the construction of a new 46,000-square foot center near Decatur, Illinois, where officers hired to protect rural Illinois communities too small to have their own training facilities can be given advanced instruction in everything from weapons use to courtroom procedures to booking arrested suspects. “If we expect police to go out and protect people and property, then we need to give them the training and equipment to do that,” argues Buffett.

“Everything depends on public safety. If you don’t have it, then any city will struggle,” says NYCPF board chairman Hemmerdinger.

There are few philanthropic activities that have allowed him to feel so much that he is working on the side of good, says Denver Police Foundation board chairman Christian Anschutz. “We often ask our police to take on societal roles and responsibilities that others have abandoned or neglected,” he says. “When we can support our police officers in smart, thoughtful ways, it strengthens the department and the community.” **P**



“We often ask police to take on societal roles that others have abandoned. When we support our police, it strengthens the community.”



Police, Crime and Race

This is adapted from remarks by Wall Street Journal columnist Jason Riley at the recent 2017 Annual Meeting of The Philanthropy Roundtable.

I can't think of a more dishonest discussion taking place today than the one about race and crime. In the media, on college campuses, in philanthropy, among politicians, even in the world of sports, a fundamentally dishonest narrative has taken hold. Activists are eager to break down police shootings by race, but hesitant to break down criminal behavior by race. Which gives the public a distorted picture of what is happening.

We can't pretend there aren't legitimate reasons for why black neighborhoods draw police attention. The cops are there because that is where the 911 calls originate. The rates at which crimes are committed is much higher in poor black neighborhoods. Tension between those communities and police will continue so long as crime continues there at elevated levels.

That doesn't mean that there are no racist cops or no cops who abuse their authority. What it means is that racism or rogue officers or poverty are inadequate explanations for today's entanglement of many black men in the criminal-justice system. Do you realize the black violent crime rate was lower in the first half of the twentieth century than it is today? Was there less black poverty and white racism back then?

In a typical year these days, police are involved in approximately 2 or 3 percent of black shooting deaths. It's even lower in places like Chicago, where there were about 2,100 shootings in the first half of last year, with a total of nine involving police. More than 99 percent of Chicago's shootings were carried out by civilians, not cops, and almost all of the victims and shooters

alike were black. Obviously young black men roaming the streets of the Windy City fear getting shot by other black men, not police. But you would never know that reading the media coverage.

New York, where I live, has the nation's largest population, the nation's largest police force, and detailed records on police shootings since 1971. In that year, police shot 314 people, 93 of them fatally. Two decades later, in 1991, the number of police shootings had fallen to 108 and fatalities were down to 27. By 2015 the number of people shot by New York City cops had tumbled to a total of 23, with eight fatalities. So we're talking about a reduction in police shootings and deaths of more than 90 percent in the nation's largest city.

The story is similar in other places. Police shootings of black people have fallen more than 70 percent nationwide since 1970, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. Evidence shows that police are much less likely to use their weapons than they were in the past, especially with black suspects. The idea of trigger-happy cops out there today gunning for black men is a myth.

Yet today we have an entire movement, Black Lives Matter, based on this myth. They think there is some epidemic going on. It's a narrative that has gained tremendous currency based on anecdotal evidence, social-media videos that have gone viral. But there is no data to support this. We have reached a point where the facts don't matter; what matters is controlling the narrative.

Last year a black economist at Harvard named Roland Fryer released a study of more than 1,300 police shootings going back to the year 2000. He said he had expected to find racial bias in the data. Instead, he found none. In fact, he found that officers were 47 percent less likely to discharge their firearms before being attacked if the subject was black than if the subject was white.

Honest discussion of race and crime is important, because violence has enormous social and economic consequences. Businesses leave crime-ridden neighborhoods. Jobs follow. Property values fall. Crime thus causes poverty. One reason that blacks were progressing economically at a much faster rate in the first half of the twentieth century, despite frequent racism, is because black communities were much less violent then.

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Evidence shows that the idea of an epidemic of trigger-happy cops gunning for black men today is a complete myth.

Handcuffing the Police Hurts the Poor Most

Philanthropy spoke with inner-city leader Bob Muzikowski of Chicago—one of the American cities where neighborhoods have become less safe in recent years—to learn more about how local policing has been changed by the race and crime “narrative” described in the nearby article by Jason Riley.

I’ll start by saying that we have had a tremendous experience with the police. Our police in Chicago are great. In Chicago, only 1 to 2 percent of the 4,000 shootings last year had any police involvement. Most of the homicides are civilian against civilian, black on black, and not with a licensed handgun. It’s gang members shooting each other for control and revenge.

What’s most tragic is that of the 768 murders this year, the police haven’t arrested anybody in two thirds of the cases. The police start investigations but no one will offer leads. There is a code of silence.

This murder spike has been compounded by anti-police publicity in the press. When the cops are chasing a kid now, they know it could turn into a huge controversy. So the cops just don’t go. The murder rate has doubled in Chicago, and this is one of the main reasons why.

In a recent national survey by Pew, 73 percent of all police officers said they are now reluctant to use force, even when it is appropriate to do so. Fully 93 percent of all officers have become more concerned about their safety. This is the so-called “Ferguson Effect.” And here in Chicago it has produced a crime wave that’s hurting everyone—but poor people most of all.

We’ve handcuffed the Chicago Police Department, and it has resulted in hundreds of black deaths. The gangbangers know the cops aren’t coming. I saw a kid this year walk right up to a police officer and say, “F*** you” to him. And the cop didn’t do anything. Three years ago, he would have put that kid in the back of his car, there would have been consequences. Not now.

It’s not as if the police don’t have the tools to respond. The Chicago police have cars, helicopters, more guns than every gang,

more trained people who could act. The police department could crush any 20 gangs, all at once. But they’re not allowed to because of the politics today.

For things to change, the mayor would have to have the guts to unshackle the police department. The police would of course be charged with obeying the law—no shooting people running away, no brutality. But to do this difficult job they’ve got to kick some doors down.

Some newspaper columnists would call it fascism. There are plenty of people who prefer the status quo—hundreds of extra black deaths every year—over ever having a cop jump on the wrong guy once. But many, many people are getting killed. It’s no time to be politically correct.

Of course unleashing the police to stamp out gang murders is just the first thing we need. People have to come back to faith and take an interest in the welfare of the weakest people in our society. Righteous people have to intervene instead of hiding from controversies.

That’s why my wife and I choose, as Christians, to live in a poor part of inner-city Chicago and raise our family here. It could get us killed; we’ve had some close calls. But if the Lord of the universe was willing to come down to Earth and get beaten to death on a cross, the least we can do is take an interest in bad neighborhoods and try to make them better. And to do that we need the help of police who aren’t fearful they’re going to be hung out to dry if they try to intervene.

Pastors to the Rescue

In the past generation, few American cities have been as troubled by poverty, violence, and economic decline as Baltimore. The city has seen its population decline by a third since 1970. Its crime rate is astronomical: Baltimore is on track to top 300 murders in 2017, more than New York, a city with nearly 14 times the population. For many Americans, the modern emblem of Baltimore is not the Bay crab or the Orioles, but a burning CVS that was shown on television during the April 2015 riots following the death of 25-year-old Freddie Gray in police custody.

Searching for ways to restore trust between the city police and the black

community, Baltimore’s police department has turned to local clergy. There have been police chaplains in Baltimore since the 1970s, but in 2014 Melvin Russell—a 35-year veteran of the Baltimore Police Department, and an assistant pastor—began revamping the program. Russell took reforms he had pioneered as commander of the troubled Eastern District, where his community-policing reforms helped drive crime rates to a 40-year low, and began to apply them citywide. As part of this, he created a “chaplaincy academy” and developed a plan to put volunteer chaplains to work assisting police officers in interacting with community members, crime victims, and bystanders.

Russell aims to have over 200 trained volunteer chaplains working on rotating shifts across the city. One challenge was the need to rewrite a policy that precluded any person from serving as a chaplain if he or she had a record, since “some of our best clergy on the street are those who have a history and can better relate to people in the community.”

Pastor Todd Yeary of Douglas Memorial Church says the new program has given the city’s religious leaders a view into the challenges that police face. Riding with police officers on their daily rounds “allows you to step out of your imagination and engage with your senses,” says Yeary. “It really gives you a sense of what it feels like when you go from zero to 60 when a call comes in from a dispatcher, or when someone is in a crisis and police have to intervene in a way that isn’t like the traditional notion of policing.”

The police chaplaincy program faced its most trying test during the Freddie Gray riots, just weeks after the first cohort of volunteer chaplains graduated. Local clergy were essential in acting as liaisons between police seeking to restore order and community members seeking to express what Yeary describes as “a very deep pain.” He was among the local clergy who put themselves in the thick of events the first night of the riots. Pastors linked arms and marched the streets. They worked to break up crowds that were preventing fire-department personnel from reaching fires that threatened to spread.

Russell, Yeary, and others aim to use local clergy’s credibility with both skeptical black residents and alienated police officers to help bridge Baltimore’s community-police divide.

—Justin Torres