Getting Out in Front

American Leadership Forum
Great Valley Chapter

Held at the University of the Pacific
March 14, 2015

May 2015
This convening was offered through the Great Valley Chapter of the American Leadership Forum (ALF). The program graduates a cohort of Fellows each year, which represents many facets of leadership within the three county area: Merced, Stanislaus, and San Joaquin.

The ALF Fellows program begins with the premise that what America needs is citizen leaders who can bridge diversity and build networks of bonded relationships across diversity. The very act of learning through relationship building is what makes ALF unique as a social change program. Without the capacity to build new mindsets with others, communities are often paralyzed in power politics. Getting Out in Front provided an opportunity for participants to learn from each other.

Emergent Change is used to describe the dynamics of change that is not driven from the top but rather emerges through the efforts of those living the need for change. This is the community change model that we use within ALF.

Emergent change efforts come from within the culture of real work and real life. The first step is to learn. This learning is amplified if there are diverse perspectives and opportunities to create insights together. Expanding insights generates energy across existing network boundaries, and bridges differences not from theory but from the excitement of doing something new.

It is not the responsibility of one person or one entity to develop and hold trusting relationships between the community and law enforcement: collective cooperation and willingness from all levels within our communities will help us “get out in front.” We thank you for being part of our learning journey and look forward to building a new path together.
On March 14, 2015, over 140 regional leaders from law enforcement, community service organizations, churches, business, government, and educational institutions gathered at University of the Pacific in Stockton, California, to discuss community relations and law enforcement in San Joaquin, Stanislaus and Merced Counties. The event, Getting Out in Front, was convened by the Great Valley Chapter of the American Leadership Forum. The morning session included a keynote speech by Civil Rights Attorney Constance Rice, and a panel discussion of ALF regional leaders. In the afternoon, attendees participated in a roundtable discussion on actionable ways to make our region a model for healthy and respectful relations between law enforcement and the community. Each table of participants focused on three questions and the central discussion on each are as follows:

**WHAT ARE WE DOING WELL?**
- Enhancing understanding between law enforcement and their communities through open communication
- Focusing on law enforcement and schools and youth
- Increasing law enforcement’s appreciation for diversity
- Making efforts in community development

**WHAT DO WE NEED TO STOP?**
- Citizens blaming law enforcement for our problems
- Negative, unbalanced reporting on local issues by the media
- Citizens not having their concerns and perceptions addressed openly
- Traditional policing by law enforcement

**NEW INITIATIVES TO FOCUS ON**

**INCREASE:**
- Collaboration between law enforcement and the community
- Support for community policing
- Youth engagement with law enforcement
- Police recruiting, especially minorities, women, and local faces
- Communication between law enforcement and the community

**SUPPORT:**
- Educational opportunities for officers
- Offender programs
- Youth programs and activities in general in our communities
- Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and Homeless Programs
- Families, parenting, and personal responsibility
Sincere thanks to all of our participants for the time and thoughts into Getting Out in Front. Our discussions demonstrated that, while our communities have much work to do, we have a lot to be proud of.

This report summarizes the responses to each of the three questions, and identifies major themes that emerged. The data related to the questions is provided in the Appendix. The many and varied recommendations that came out of the Getting Out in Front convening will require ongoing individual and collective actions - large and small - on the part of all of our citizens.

The hope is these recommendations will help focus our energy. Some activities are already underway in Merced County. In addition, a follow-up discussion was held with ALF Senior Fellows to address ways ALF can continue to contribute to the creation of safe and vibrant communities. We encourage each of you to look over the output of this report and ask yourself - how can I, or the organizations I am in, take these initiatives forward? What is it that I can do to make a difference in my community?

In January, 2016, ALF will administer a questionnaire to Getting Out in Front participants to collect data on progress to date relevant to community relations and law enforcement in our three counties, and to determine the value in holding a shorter morning session in April, 2016, to further learn from each other as we share thoughts on our future.
Ongoing Themes

Below the themes related to each of three major questions are provided. The themes were created on the basis of the number of comments made by participants, beginning with those most frequently mentioned. Data in the Appendix shows the individual comments that were grouped into these themes.

What actions are we already undertaking well, which we need to continue and do even more of?

- **Enhancing understanding between law enforcement and their communities through open communication** (11), community-focused policing (6), programs such as citizens’ police academies (9), neighborhood watch (6), advisory boards, activities leagues, and forums (6), and other specific programs (12).

- **Focusing on law enforcement and schools and youth** (4) through school resource officers (6), explorers/cadets (6), and other specific programs including Merced's Police Citizen’s Academy, Community Oriented Police Services (COPS), Right Turn (educating youth on drugs and crime), youth mentoring, f.t. Student, Gang Task Force and Summit, and pairing students with local heroes at Delta College, Ports, Thunder (5).

- **Increasing law enforcement’s appreciation for diversity:** Race/ethnicity/language/socioeconomics through the Hmong law enforcement association, grants for reducing racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system, recruiting officers from local communities and minorities, bridging language barriers, and increased visibility in higher socioeconomic status communities (9).

- **Making efforts in community development** through acknowledging the need for diversity and maintaining different cultures (1), and the actions of non-profit groups (1), faith-based organizations (4) and other programs (7).

What should we STOP doing?

- **Citizens blaming law enforcement for our problems** (11): communities need to take responsibility, listen, act (12) and work across boundaries as a team with the police to implement solutions (8).

- **Negative, unbalanced reporting on local issues by the media** (11), especially social media (3).

- **Citizens not having their concerns and perceptions addressed openly:** related to abuse of authority; selective enforcement of ethnicites, the mentally ill and homeless; and use of violence when intervening in protests (12).

- **Traditional policing by law enforcement** - community policing should be mandatory (4).
What new programs should we implement in our communities to make a major difference?

- **Increase collaboration between law enforcement and the community** (5) through committees and task forces (3) that are culturally diverse (3), and involve the faith-based community (2).

- **Increase support for community policing** (8) and encourage officers to live in the communities in which they work (4).

- **Increase youth engagement with law enforcement** through mentoring and reading programs, explorers, resource officers, reading programs, and a heroes program that partners local neighborhood athletes with the police department (10).

- **Enhance police recruiting, especially minorities, women, and local faces** (7), and establish high school career academies (3).

- **Increase communication between law enforcement and the community** through on-going meetings and presentations, especially incident debriefs and statistics (8).

- **Support educational opportunities for officers** through scholarships; offer sensitivity training as well as counseling on psychological profiles (8).

- **Support offender programs** (4).

- **Support youth programs and activities in general** in our communities (11).

- **Support mental health, substance abuse and homeless programs** (8).

- **Focus on families**, parenting and personal responsibility (8).
**Summary Statement**

*Enhancing understanding between law enforcement and their communities through open communication*

- Community-focused policing
- Programs such as citizens’ police academies, neighborhood watch, advisory boards, activities leagues, and forums
- Other specific programs

**Individual Comments**

### INCREASED COMMUNICATION

- Beginning the conversation
- Opening lines of communication via social media conversation forums and dialogue - Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, mobile apps
- Communication between police and community groups appears to be reasonably good
- Community groups meeting with the police by invitation of the police
- Police chiefs are engaged and participation is interactive
- Communicating - community with law enforcement and business community with law enforcement
- We are communicating
- CAB: communication, positive or negative is happening. It is important for collaboration and forming outcomes
- Communication and collaboration
- More community links with police officers and community members
- More community engagement

### CITIZEN’S ACADEMIES ON LAW ENFORCEMENT

- Citizens Academy advocates: create people who can serve as advocates
- Citizen’s Police Academy (Merced)
- Citizen academy in Merced
- Continue citizen’s academy
- Outreach to communities - citizen’s academy partnerships
- Citizens Academy - police dept.
- Police citizens academy
- Citizen academies
- Academy SJ- Courts and community SJ & Stan

### NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAMS

- Neighborhood Watch
- Neighborhood watch/National night out
- Neighborhood Watch
- Neighborhood watch
- Neighborhood watch
- Community involvement with law enforcement, i.e. neighborhood watch

### COMMUNITY FOCUSED POLICING

- Community oriented policing is shaping as law enforcement generations change - we must stay the course
- Community oriented policing
- Community Policing program
- Community Resource officer
- DART Team – officers walking downtown in Merced
- PDs are developing mission statements that reflect service to the community
ADVISORY BOARDS, ACTIVITIES LEAGUES, AND FORUMS
• Attending and participating in community organization meetings
• Law enforcement forum- In Stockton, Milton, and Merced County
• Police Activities League program in Merced
• Atwater used to have Atwater PAL-Police Activities League
• Community advisory board 24 diverse members
• Police CAB- Community advisory board

OTHER SPECIFIC PROGRAMS
• Police clergy in Modesto across all religions
• Sheriff pastor committee
• Stockton Peace Keepers Program
• Project CEASEFIRE- but it needs to be done in the prescribed manner
• DRC- Daily Reporting Center
• More specific programs such as CHP’s El Protector Program
• Stanislaus County Integrated Forensic Team, mental health services- homeless, crime reduction
• Parenting/Gang Prevention Classes
• Gang intervention
• Agencies with agencies
• Marshall plan- need to understand community to implement
• CTC

OTHER INDIVIDUAL COMMENTS
• Good hiring standards for officers
• Boots on the ground
• Developed missions and practices focused on serving our communities
• Code enforcement in Merced- non punitive, negotiators
• Cameras

Focusing on law enforcement and schools and youth (4) through school resource officers (6), explorers/cadets (6), and other specific programs (5) including Merced’s police citizen’s academy, community oriented police services (cops), right turn (educating youth on drugs and crime), youth mentoring, f.t. student, gang task force and summit, and pairing students with local heroes at Delta College, Ports, Thunder.
• Youth involvement with all elements of law enforcement
• Involve youth in community and events, variety of programs, cross-organization programs
• Lodi – interaction with youth
• Stockton Youth Activities League
• Continue school resource officers
• School resource officers
• School resource officer: feeds explorers and cadet programs
• School officers in schools
• School resource officers
• Presence in schools- includes after, walk around
• High school aged programs like explorers that lead to good futures; some in law enforcement.
• Explorer program, cadet program
• Explorers/Cadet programs
• Explorers program
• Explorer programs through Boy Scouts of America
• Explorers program through BSA (16-18), cadets (over 18)
• F.T. Student: must pass a background check at 20-21 choose a career path, send to academy, paid $13 per hour: law school, probation, sheriff’s dept., officer, CSI
• Police citizen’s academy- Merced police dept.: grant funded program Merced PD force
• COPS (community oriented police services), Right Turn (Ed. youth on drugs and crime), youth mentoring
• Kids are key: pair up with local heroes, Delta College, Ports, Thunder, Media component
• Gang task force and summit- grade school/3rd grade education, community involved

Increasing law enforcement’s appreciation for diversity: race/ethnicity /language/Socio-economics through the Hmong law enforcement association, grants for reducing racial and ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system, recruiting officers from local communities and minorities, bridging language barriers, and increased visibility in higher socio economic status communities (9).

• Hmong law enforcement association,
• Reducing Racial and Ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system, grant opportunities: Both Stanislaus and San Joaquin Counties have received these grants
• Minority community recruiting
• Recruiting from the community
• Bridging language barriers
• Bilingual police liaisons
• Mental health training for officers
• Increased visibility in higher SES communities - Socio economic status
• CHP Latino programs

Making efforts in community development through acknowledging the need for diversity and maintaining different cultures (1), and the actions of non-profit groups (1), faith-based organizations (4) and other programs (7).

• Acknowledging the need for diversity and maintaining different cultures
• Nonprofit groups working with their constituents to better the community as a whole
• Feet Changing Lives (Merced, at-risk communities)
• Feet Changing Lives- needs a lot of work but it is something
• PACT- People and Congregations Together (San Joaquin)
• West Modesto Clergy Council
• Recreational Modesto Teen Center
• Peace Center, MLK Committee, Proactive Community- Modesto, Stan
• Adopt families in need during holidays
• Boys and Girls Club
• Lodi – homeless task force, hand up not hand out
• Early start literacy programs
• Project uplift and first tee

What Should We STOP Doing?

Summary Statement | Individual Comments
--- | ---
Citizens blaming law enforcement for our problems (11): communities need to take responsibility, listen, act, (12) and work across boundaries as a team with the police to implement solutions (8). | • Making law enforcement solely responsible for solving all issues
• Stop blaming law enforcement for all the bad issues
• Stop blaming police for every tragic encounter- community’s role
• Stop placing blame on cops
• Stop vilifying law enforcement, a few sensationalizing stories on law enforcement is not full picture
• Stop calling all police officers racist
• Stop thinking police work is easy/simple
• Stop thinking it’s “their” problem and disrespecting law enforcement
• Stop looking to law enforcement to solve every problem
• Anti-police rhetoric
• Negative perception within a community
• Stop negative perceptions
• Stop only discussing and not acting- we NEED ACTION!
• Stop apathy toward citizen responsibility (community)
• Community cannot sit idly by
• There is no “I” in team
• Stop complaining, making excuses, using the word “I,” being territorial
• Stop working in silos
• Stop the isolation of individuals- make neighbors
• Stop passing the problem off instead of working to seek and implement a solution
• Stop talking and start listening
• Stop talking down to communities from the outside- rather pay attention and listen: we don’t necessarily know best, the community needs to address themselves
• Stop perpetuating culture of distrust in families/communities
• Stop living in fear
• Stop being so extreme on whose side we’re on (law enforcement or public)
• We need to see both sides and come to a balanced understanding
• Stop the “Us and Them” mentality
• Stop waiting for an invitation to collaborate with cops.
• How to get community leaders to step up and address their own issues- to partner with law enforcement to lead
• Stop creating separation (all of us) : community, police, sheriff, etc.
• Stop white/mainstream system, beating around the bush, and the distance between each other
• Stop stereotyping – police and the community

**Negative, unbalanced reporting on local issues by the media** (11), especially social media (3)

• Stop media sensationalism
• Stop highlighting negativity, be more balanced (media)
• Media needs to be checked: the entire incident needs to be considered, making a story out of nothing
• Stop negative reporting: impairs our ability to attract people to our area, negative reputation continues to be propagated
• Stop using and relying on media for factual information when polarization is what they use to make money
• Stop not telling our stories- Celebrate possibilities
• Media: Reporting true story, access to community
• Media out of balance with reality, not accurate, TV and newspaper
• Media is out of balance with reality- is not accountable
• Stop the reckless media actions: lack of accountability
• Media accountability, in all forms: TV, print, and social media (people do not have to take any ownership of their words)
• Social media has no accountability, can slam and spin anything, perceived as truth, it spreads quickly: viral. Negative C. Valley reporting
• Social media spins the truth
• Stop losing control of the message in the press/social media (PD)
### What New Programs Should We Implement in Our Communities to Make a Major Difference?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary Statement</th>
<th>Individual Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Increase collaboration between law enforcement and the community** (5) through committees and task forces (3) that are culturally diverse (3), and involve the faith-based community (2) | • Respect- must rebuild respect for badge  
• Communication and collaboration (police/community)  
• Law enforcement reaching out to the community  
• Meetings between law enforcement and the community to open dialogue  
• Establish consortium in each county: create consistency, establish roles  
• Community Action task force- BRASS, patrol, activists, leaders, owners  
• Community Advisory Committee  
• Gang member forum with police in a safe setting  
• Have more cultures at the table, not just a few  
• Education to diffuse stereotypes – within the community and police  
• Create diverse community advisory groups to the police depts.  
• Collaboration between police and faith based community  
• Start chaplain program |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increase communication between law enforcement and the community through ongoing meetings and presentations, especially incident debriefs and statistics (8).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Ongoing community meetings- No scary presentations, communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do many presentations in the community- evening coffee with a cop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community debrief program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Program for incident debrief- as comparison, healthcare has become more transparent in discussing adverse events and it has shown to increase trust</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community law enforcement discuss incidents to promote accountability and responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Educate community- volume of total incidents vs. police shooting unarmed persons, volume of calls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Post event community debrief – connect with family and community after an incident to explain role of law enforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Update City websites to have current and accurate information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increase youth engagement with law enforcement through mentoring and reading programs, Explorers, resource officers, reading programs, and a Heroes program that partners local neighborhood athletes with the police department (10).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Youth outreach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Younger engagement with law enforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Expand UC Merced police mentors program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Police mentor programs, explorers, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Do more with explorers program: need funding/grants/ fundraising (officers have 501c3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More school resource officers- need to dedicate budget, target middle school kids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Youth programs with law enforcement like read w/a cop at a class (literacy and introduction)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Heroes Program- local high school and college athletes team with police to go into schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Intervention at schools – career options, reading, basketball</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Officers eat at schools for lunch</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Increase support for community policing (8) and encourage officers to live in the communities in which they work (4).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Restore community policing funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community policing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Refocus on community policing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community policing- Educate the community about police here to serve them. Building trust between police/citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Community policing. We need to create more tactics in the community policing, such as crime prevention, build more mutual trust between police and citizens, and both share ownership for preventing crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Neighborhood watch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Have community service requirement for officers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Retired police officers can serve as community leaders and mentors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Get cops to live where they work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cops need to live where they work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Get officers to live where they work so they are invested in their community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Have law enforcement live within their communities (zoo keeper mentality)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Enhance police recruiting, especially minorities, women, and local faces (7), and establish high school career academies (3).</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Increased funding and recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Additional recruiting in Hmong, Latino, &amp; African American Communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increased multiculturalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Minority recruitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Outreach for both genders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• More “Girl” programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recruit local faces at early age - the actions you take at the 14-18 year or older level will impact your future, hard to get past peace officer tests due to history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Law enforcement career academies (HS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Create feeder programs (cadet programs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• High school police career academy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Support educational opportunities for officers
through scholarships, offer sensitivity training as well as counseling on psychological profiles (8) Support offender programs (4).

- Help cops get a college degree- used to be a path from the military to college to law enforcement
- Scholarship opportunities for law enforcement officers
- Education for active officers- make it required and affordable
- Cultural/Racial/Ethnicity Sensitivity training for police
- Counseling for cops to deal with their psych. Profile
- Screening for PTSD for officer and recognizing in public
- Wellness program for officers
- De-dress training for officers
- VORP- victim offender reconciliation program
- Positive incentives for high risk or high crime individuals if they are willing to change for the better
- Increase transitional services for youth and ex-offenders
- Restorative justice

### Support youth programs
and activities in general in our communities (11)

- More youth activities
- Youth Community Action Board
- Youth Accountability Boards
- Mentoring programs
- More mentoring programs
- Develop more programs for GIRLS in the community
- More multi-cultural groups in the HS
- Communication strategies to reach the youth generational differences, develop programs to create dialogue
- Improved Education/Literacy
- Increase vocational education programs
- Start a collaborative gang intervention program

### Support mental health, substance abuse and homeless programs (8).

- Fund more programs that are already in place: mental health, animal shelters, alcoholics anonymous, boys and girls club
- Mental health services
- Improve mental health services
- Mental Health
- Substance abuse services
- Substance abuse
- Homeless program: Veterans, housing, medical and health services
- Homeless help center (one stop shop)

### Focus on families,
parenting and personal responsibility (8).

- Family Strengthening
- Increase family interest
- Parenting programs
- Repair broken families
- Strengthen families and community intervention or community involvement
- Difficult conversation on personal responsibility
- Father/family engagement
- Connecting families at risk with positive community
• Finance the community service programs we have now
• Return services to the level in which allows for law enforcement to be service based
• Intervention guides for law enforcement – mental illness, sexual assault, domestic violence; leverage area experts
• Budget metrics connected to outcomes
• Less restrictions on becoming a law enforcement officer
• Pass immigration and regulatory relief reform: both will help create jobs and put people to work and get off the streets
• Legalize marijuana
• Support economic development
• Diversity in positions and opportunities for employment
• Positive media campaigns
• Admitting that we have a problem and doing all we can to take the necessary steps in finding a solution
• Being a part of our community. Not just standing on the sidelines
• Slum lords – hold them accountable
• Train mayors/city councils/city managers how to select a progressive/community focused/break up the good old boys club kind of chief
• Require drug testing with public assistance
• Find a transformation leader who will change the culture
Thank you to our Sponsors!

- University of the Pacific
- Delicato Family Vineyards
- Merced School Employees Federal Credit Union
- AT&T
- City of Livingston California
- Prime Shine Carwash
- American Leadership Forum Senior Fellows
- Merced County
- Holt of California
- CAT
- RFC

Supervisor John Pedrozo

15.