The Resurgence of Compton

In the words of Sheriff Jim McDonnell “Law enforcement comprises about one third of one percent of the population. Therefore, we must be successful in engaging the community to mobilize resources for the safety of communities.” Compton Station has heeded the challenge and recently been heralded for their successes in crime reduction, and their blend of community policing. Positive community perceptions are at an all-time high and residents have boasted about feeling safer in the city. So just how has this transformation occurred.

Compton Sheriff Station has addressed public safety by using a multifaceted approach using crime suppression, utilization of information from other law enforcement agencies, faith based programs, community collaboration and a renewed focus on youth and after school programs.

The Community is our Currency

In 2015 the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) selected the city of Compton to a part of the National Public Safety Partnerships Program (PSP). In turn the Violence Reduction Network Program (VRN) was piloted bringing additional crime reduction and community programs to the city. Due to success in the program and funding ending, city officials and Compton Station leadership expanded the program renaming it the Commission for a Better Compton (CBC). The CBC acts as a citizen advisory group committed to enhancing the quality of life and public safety for Compton residents. Members include clergy members, managers of nonprofit 501(c) (3) organizations, probation officers, lawyers and an organizational psychologist. They meet monthly with station commander, Captain Michael Thatcher and provide input on crime suppression, community outreach, community beautification and philanthropic activities.

In addition to patrol efforts, an integral part of the resurgence is work done by hand selected personnel assigned to the stations Gang Investigators, Narcotics Investigators, Special Assignment Team, Community Relations Team, Probation Department, United States Attorney, and federal agencies to include the FBI, DEA, and US Marshalls. Each agency has performed specific tasks to include attendance at community and youth events, fugitive sweeps, federal prosecution, quicker gun case screening and ballistic tests. Through the mutual efforts of each of Compton Stations law enforcement partners approximately 900 felony arrests, 2300 misdemeanor, 300 firearms seized, 370 search warrants, 800 Probation/Parole Searches, and 450 surveillance operations occurred during 2016 and 2017. Reductions have been seen in some Part 1 crime statistics and a leveling of the homicide rate.

To ensure this renewed vision continues a five year strategic plan has been developed as well as collaborating with academic institutions to measure success of programs initiated. In the future look for an on line community survey currently being developed by California State University Long Beach.

A Strong Foundation Begins with our Youth

Compton Station has a Youth Activities League (YAL) site located at 700 N. Alameda Street and provides youth an opportunity for after school activities. Two deputies are assigned to the program which caters to youth from 7 to 20 depending on the program. Compton boxing coach Joe Zanders was formerly an Olympic boxing coach and well known in the boxing circles.
Recently Compton hosted a variety of Silver gloves boxing tournaments. The founder of the “Bridge to Skate Program” Chantelle Heroux is a former X-Games competitor. This program teaches children how to build and ride skateboards. Karate Master Reginald Fulton a 6th Degree Black Belt teaches self-defense, self-confidence, and discipline. California State Dominguez Hills collaborates with the YAL to offer an academic enrichment program titled “Pathways” which provides ongoing homework, reading support, and college readiness. Music lessons provided by the “Harmony Project” teach wind, brass, and string instruments. The program has grown to include Music Studio Production classes in an on-site recording studio. Rounding out the programs is the “Holifield Community Garden” which is an organic garden created to teach horticulture. Celebrity Chef Curtis Aikens, who has hosted several notable shows on television’s Food Network including Pick of the Day, From My Garden, Meals without Meat, and others, is a mentor to the youth and teaches a healthy eating lifestyle class. The garden has grown from its original eight 4X8 plots to 20 plots and has been able to provide the community with free fresh fruits and vegetables grown by the youth.

Integration of Community Programs
Compton Station also has three programs that provide other resources to at risk youth and formerly incarcerated community members.

The Compton Male Academy (CMA) is a comprehensive confidential eight week life skills program, designed to offer “at risk” males ages 12-18 experiencing behavioral, and academic difficulties, life skills and mentoring opportunities.

Project Restoration is a twelve week program designed to combat the recidivism of community members on probation or parole. Compton Station and Faith Inspirational Church have developed a twelve week program that instructs attendees on strategies and resources to combat the cycle of recidivism. Four classes were held in the last two years with plans to conduct two more in 2018.

Expungement Clinics are held once a year in collaboration with Faith Inspirational Church and Christian Legal Aid. Announcements are made to the general public through Compton Station social media accounts.

Undoubtedly, the city of Compton and Compton Station have captured the essence of community policing and are ready to make further strides toward public safety. For further information on any of the Compton Station programs or if you’re interested in making a tax deductible donation the youth programs please call the Operations Section at (310) 605-6500 or (310) 605-6557.