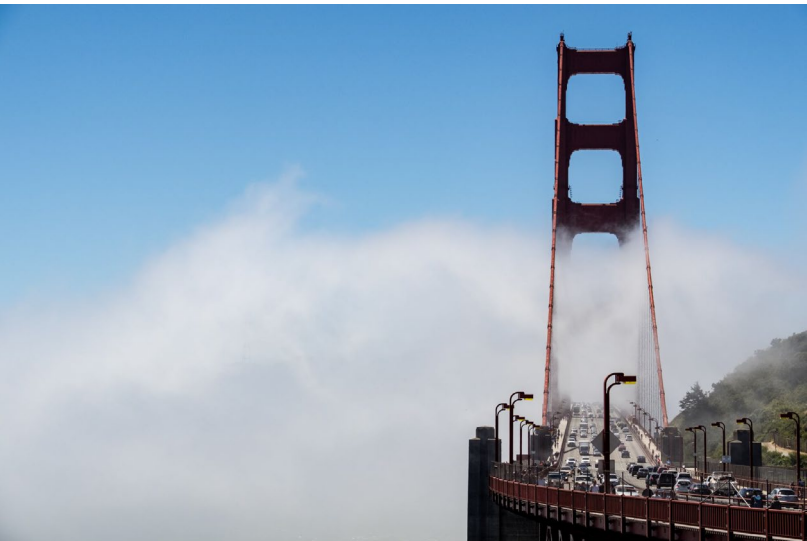


ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES FOR CULTIVATING CONNECTION AND COMMITMENT

JODY SAUNDERS, *Chief Communications Officer*



CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH
Police
Department



ABOUT ME

ABOUT VBPD PAO

Created July 1985 to facilitate timely and accurate information to the public by the way of the media

Operates under the supervisions of the Chief Communications Officer

Staffed full-time by:

- Chief Communications Officer (civilian)
- Public Information Officer (sworn)
- Media and Communications Coordinator (civilian)



GOALS OF THE VBPD PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

Inform & Educate



Build Trust & Credibility



Engage the Community
& the Department



Bolster VBPD Reputation





PUBLIC PERCEPTION

- What's the national narrative right now about police?
- What the local narrative about police where you live?
- Do the two influence each other?

*“People see us through the
lens of their experiences.”*

WHAT IS A CITIZEN POLICE ACADEMY?



Definition

A program that educates community members about law enforcement, its functions, and responsibilities.



Purpose

Foster positive relationships, enhance understanding, and promote collaboration between police and citizens.



IMPORTANCE OF ENGAGEMENT

Build Trust: Establishing trust between the community and law enforcement.

Community Policing: Enhancing community involvement in crime prevention.

Reduce Misconceptions: Addressing stereotypes and misunderstandings.

Enhance Safety: Empowering citizens to be active partners in public safety.

CITIZEN POLICE ACADEMY

Ages 18+

12-week Program

6:30 – 9:30 P.M.



SENIOR CITIZEN POLICE ACADEMY

Ages 55+
8-week Program
9:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.





YOUTH CITIZEN POLICE ACADEMY

Ages 14 - 18
18-week Program
6:00 – 8:30 P.M.



EMPLOYEE CITIZEN POLICE ACADEMY

Ages 18+
15-week Program
9:00 – 11:00 A.M.



HISPANIC CITIZEN POLICE ACADEMY

Ages 18+
10-week Program
6:00 – 9:00 P.M.

So how do we reach them?

KIND OF.. EVERYWHERE

TRADITIONAL COMMUNICATION TOOLS:

- Local News
- Social Media
- Website
- Email Marketing

GRASS ROOTS EFFORTS

- Go Where They Are:
 - Faith-Based Organizations
 - Markets
 - Schools / Adult Learning Centers

WORD OF MOUTH MARKETING

- Make Advocates Out of Your Students; Let Them Help Recruit



BUT ESPECIALLY HERE





PRIDE

911

POLICE

VIRGINIA BEACH

VBPD

PRIVATE PARKING

ARCY

PLEMENTS.COM

MENTS.COM

PLEMENTS







What are the benefits of effective engagement?

**Strengthened
community-police
relations.**

**Increased reporting
of suspicious
activities.**

**Humanize the
badge**

**Improved public
safety and well-being.**

**Enhanced police
accountability.**

**Empowered
citizens.**

**Enhanced crime
prevention efforts.**

**Reduction in
crime rates.**

**Building a resilient
and supportive
community.**

DISCUSSION

What engagement strategies have you tried?

What works well? What doesn't?

What are your biggest challenges or obstacles?

Questions?