

Leadership and Education Training In the Nation's Largest Sheriff's Office

By Mike Parker, Captain, LASD

Large Yet Efficient - The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department www.lasd.org

Patrol, jails, courts, transportation, detectives, and special assignments, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) does it all, and in a big way.

- *Sheriff Leroy D. Baca*, elected 1998
- *Largest sheriff's department* in the nation
- *Third largest policing agency* in the U.S. (*after NYPD & Chicago PD*)
- *Annual budget of \$2.5 billion*
- Every specialized unit a U.S. law enforcement agency can utilize, including over 72 distinct units of assignment
- *18,000 budgeted employees*, including 10,000 sworn and 8,000 civilian personnel, as well as over 830 reserve deputies, 420 youth explorers, and the largest law enforcement volunteer program in the nation including over 4,000 civilian volunteers
- *At least 58 different languages are spoken* by the culturally diverse employees and volunteers of the LASD.

When sheriff's deputies from Los Angeles County are asked about where they are assigned, the answer is often a temporary one. With all the options available, within a few years, that same deputy will likely be at a new and different assignment, rapidly learning new skills and facing new challenges.

As the nation's largest and most diverse sheriff's office, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD) has a great variety of assignments which require its employees to possess many unique qualities. Yet as varied as the LASD can be, it still has much in common with every law enforcement agency in the nation, especially when it comes to leadership.

Leadership is needed by every organization to be successful. Since his election in 1998, Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca has emphasized that every employee must recognize that each is a leader, regardless of rank or position. To be great leaders and to lead the sheriff's department in the present and into the future, Sheriff Baca has said you need to reach out internally to all personnel "to create a climate of innovation." He added that for leaders at all levels of the organization to demonstrate true leadership they need three key elements: "High Standards, Best Efforts, and Noble Thoughts."

Leadership and education training and mentoring by quality leaders are among the best ways to develop leaders in an organization. After all, how else does one learn leadership? Sheriff Baca has said, "Learning is a way of life." To maximize the potential to learn, leaders throughout the organization have created and implemented a variety of programs that have become part of the culture of the LASD.

Leadership and Training

The *Deputy Leadership Institute (DLI)* was created over ten years ago. Sheriff Baca described the DLI as "a ground breaking leadership development program founded on the principle that leadership is intrinsic in the professional law enforcement officer and can be developed in each of us." DLI is designed to enhance our ability to be leaders in the communities we are entrusted to protect. DLI helps each of us recognize our leadership responsibilities and enhance our leadership skills, both personally and professionally. All employees of the LASD have the opportunity to benefit from the DLI experience.

The *Regional Community Policing Institute – California*, is led by the LASD. It offers high-quality training and technical assistance to about 440 law enforcement agencies, local govern-



PHOTO BY JAIME LOPEZ, LASD

ments and communities throughout California. Seminars focus on a wide variety of training related to community policing and specialty areas such as school violence and disaster preparedness, counterterrorism prevention and leadership development such as Stephen Covey's 7 Habits for Highly Effective Law Enforcement. (www.rcpi-ca.org)

Beyond the LASD basic training academy which has graduated over 3,000 sheriff's deputies and hundreds of police officers over the past four years, *LASD advanced training courses* continue to help develop the skills of deputies, civilians and supervisors. Some of these include: Field Operations Deputy (patrol) School, Dispatcher School, Field Training Officers School, Detective College, Civilian Supervisory School, Custody Incident Command School, Sergeants Supervisory School, Field Operations Sergeant's and Lieutenant's Schools, and the Captains College.

Leadership and Professional Development Coordinators are department members who accept the responsibility of directing and assisting fellow employees in gaining access to the opportunities available throughout the Department. These opportunities include the LASD University Consortium, as well as other external educational and training institutions which would allow them to enhance their professional and personal growth. This is one of the efforts to assist and encourage Department members who are seeking to develop their leadership attributes, as well as enhance their professional and personal growth.

An additional resource available to Department members is the "Leaders behind the Star" booklet. The booklet that was developed by LASD employees contains brief reflections on leadership and information about where more leadership training resources can be found.

Core Values and Public Trust Policing

A law enforcement agency's set of core values are the guiding principles that shape the culture and focuses on what's important concerning what the public should expect from those providing the service. All recruits recite the Core Values in the academy daily, it is on all LASD business cards and literature, it is often mentioned in performance evaluations and interviews, and Sheriff Baca consistently discusses it with employees and the public at every opportunity.

Our Core Values

As a *leader* in the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, I commit myself to *honorably* perform my duties with *respect* for the dignity of all people, *integrity* to do right and fight wrongs, *wisdom* to apply common sense and fairness in all I do and *courage* to stand against racism, sexism, anti-Semitism, homophobia and bigotry in all its forms.

Public Trust Policing is the use of police resources in a manner that includes the public's participation in the mission of public safety. It is incumbent upon law enforcement to recognize that without the full faith and cooperation of the public, the mission

Massive Patrol Operations – Localized, Diversified, and Interlinked

- Sole *patrol policing agency* for over 4 million of the county's 10 million plus residents
- Includes 40 *contract policing cities* of the county's 88 cities as well as the 90 *unincorporated county areas*, totaling over 3,100 of the county's 4,083 square miles
- Patrol personnel alone comprise the *nation's seventh largest patrol policing force*
- *Nation's largest contract policing agency*
- *Second largest transit police force* in the U.S., policing over a million daily commuters riding the buses and trains of the Los Angeles Metro system and six-county Metrolink trains.
- *Largest community college policing agency* in the nation (nine campuses of the L.A. Community College District, which serves more than 130,000 students)
- 23 *patrol stations* plus scores of sub-stations and transit and college policing stations
- Patrol areas range from densely populated urban communities in West Hollywood, Compton and South and East Los Angeles, to Marina del Rey, Catalina Island, and the beach city of Malibu, to the mountains of the Angeles National Forests, desert communities of the Antelope Valley, and scores of suburban cities and communities



PHOTO BY HUNTER LEUM

Biggest Jail System in the Country

- Staffs and operates the *largest county jail system* in the nation
- *Eight separate jails housing a total of about 20,000 inmates* daily, with an Average Length of Stay (ALOS) of 39 days
- *Over 165,000 inmates are processed through the Inmate Reception Center annually*, with over 800 inmates released every 24 hours
- Men's Central Jail is the *largest jail in the free world*
- Twin Towers Correctional Facility is the *largest de facto mental health facility* in the U.S. with over 2,500 incarcerated mentally ill inmates in a facility of over 4,000 inmates
- Nation's *largest intergovernmental service agreement for housing Immigration and Customs Enforcement detainees* (over 1,300) at the Mira Loma Detention Center
- The jail Food Services Unit *produces 88,000 meals a day*
- *Largest jail inmate transportation system* in the nation. *Transportation deputies drive over 2.5 million miles per year* to transport inmates (equal to five round trips to the moon).

Nation's Largest Court System

- *Nation's largest county court system* has 48 different geographically dispersed courthouses with over 600 Superior Court judges and bench officers
- *Trial Courts policing contract comprises the LASD's largest contract*
- Provides court security, bailiffs, lock-up, judicial process service and enforcement



of public safety is severely impaired. The process of public trust policing involves moving from what was generally known as a closed system to an inclusive and open system of public participation in the public safety mission. The *LASD Public Trust Policing* booklet illustrates five principles of *Public Trust Policing*.

Education

The *LASD University Consortium* coordinates partnerships with 22 different colleges, universities and law schools. This has resulted in over 1,000 Associates, Bachelor's, and Masters degrees, as well as JD's and PhD's being completed or nearly completed by LASD employees. It offers employees and other peace officers reduced tuition costs, courses at LASD work sites, and options for online University degrees. The value of an educated work force can ultimately be measured by the reduction of public complaints and reduced employee misconduct. Educated employees make different choices that lead to effective decisions and better outcomes.

Education-Based Discipline (EBD) is an innovative alternative to traditional disciplinary suspensions. EBD reduces management-employee conflict and embitterment that results from withholding employees pay. Instead, offering optional behavior-focused education and training department-wide, that enhances communication, character, competence and trust (see May/June, 2009 *Sheriff Magazine*).

The *International Liaison Unit* works with foreign consulates and foreign police agencies regarding law enforcement topics and is augmented by the *Cultural Exchange Program*. Sheriff Baca and LASD employees have exchanged information with officials from more than 40 different countries, either by visiting their countries or by their police officials meeting with the LASD in Los Angeles County. *Police Diplomacy: A Global Trust* is an LASD booklet that explains many of the ways international police cooperation is accomplished and the importance of these efforts in policing a diverse community.

Progress

When done right, a powerhouse of progress can be made when a sheriff's department makes progress and innovation a priority. With education and leadership training, our personnel can develop their leadership skills and best serve the public while advancing their abilities and broadening their perspectives.

Sheriff's deputies and civilian employees are unique in the nation's criminal justice system. Municipal police departments do an excellent job focusing on patrol and investigative functions. Meanwhile, many sheriffs' departments handle patrol, investigations, jails, courts, inmate transportation, and specialized units that interrelate with them all. These combined responsibilities make sheriff's deputies among the best informed about the nation's criminal justice system. By leading the functions and interactions of all aspects of the criminal justice system, sheriff's deputies do it all. 🌟

Captain Mike Parker is the unit commander of the Sheriff's Headquarters Bureau of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Information about the topics described in this article can be found at www.lasd.org.

Vehicles, Equipment and Resources

- *Fleet of over 5,100 vehicles* including over 2,000 marked radio cars, 27 boats, & 20 aircraft (17 helicopters & 3 fixed wing)
- Vehicles travel over 56 million miles per year
- 650-800 mobile digital computers logged on at any one time
- Is only one of two police agencies in the nation (*including Michigan State Police*) who conduct annual testing of police vehicles for police agencies & manufacturers feedback (since 1974)
- Lead agency in charge of the Los Angeles Regional Tactical Communications System (LARTCS). LARTCS is one of the largest public safety interoperability communications systems in the nation, and members are drawn from over 100 local, state, and federal agencies and three counties. The U.S. Dept. of Homeland Security and U.S. Dept. of Justice have declared LARTCS a model for the nation.

Shared Innovations, Multi-Jurisdictional Teamwork and Cooperation

- LASD is the Mutual aid and emergency operations coordinator for the region. Coordinating the response of federal, state, and local public safety resources during earthquakes, civil unrest, catastrophes, and other major events. (Fifteen federally declared disasters in the past 15 years.)
- LASD Counter Terrorism Unit which works in conjunction with the seven county, multi-agency, Los Angeles Joint Regional Intelligence Center (JRIC) and the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force.
- Hertzberg-Davis Forensic Science Center (Crime Lab) at California State University, Los Angeles
- Los Alamitos joint training center
- Multi-agency Radio Interoperability

Diversity and Population Powerhouses- Los Angeles County and the State of California

- With over 10 million people, Los Angeles County has the largest county population in the nation, with more residents than 42 individual states of the U.S.
- 4,083 square miles includes 88 cities and 90 unincorporated communities
- One out of three people who live in Los Angeles County was born outside the U.S., and more than 50% speak a language other than English at home
- One out of four Californians, and one out of every 29 people who live in the U.S. live in Los Angeles County
- One of eight people living in the U.S. (U.S. pop. 301 m) live in California (pop. 38 m).
- Only 33 of the world's countries have more people than the State of California.

Information about the leadership and education training topics described in this article can be found at www.lasd.org.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

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