Los Angeles Police Department

Cadet Program

"Leaders Today. Leaders Tomorrow. Leaders for Life...."
LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT
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An Historical Perspective...

Over the past five decades, the Los Angeles Police Department has been widely recognized as a world leader in creating opportunities to partner with the people we have pledged to serve. Embodied in our celebrated motto, “To Protect and To Serve” represents the mainstay of not only what we do but even more importantly, who we are. Our Department has continually built upon and revolutionized community alliances by successfully reaching out to and collaborating with thousands of residential, business and civic leaders with the goal of building better communities by sharing a common vision of reform and making that vision actionable for the good of the community.

An important dimension of our broader community outreach effort has been the LAPD’s steadfast advocacy of the youth who call Los Angeles home. Within the boundaries of our sprawling metropolis which spans nearly 475 square miles resides a rich tapestry of millions of youth who come from all walks of life, representing an ethnic, social, religious and economic diversity unlike that found anywhere else in the Land. Although many of these young people hail from privileged or otherwise conventional environments, countless others dwell in underprivileged and underserved communities that lack the fundamental resources necessary for these extraordinary youth to thrive and live abundant lives. It is to these youth the LAPD has made a conscious and deliberate choice to turn its acute focus with the realization that the vast majority of them have the ability to flourish if only provided the basic essentials of life they need to prosper: caring, purpose and a sense of hope.

Long considered the LAPD’s “signature” youth initiative, the Cadet Program was originally launched in the early 1960s as the “Explorers” and was designed to attract adolescent youth who embraced a desire to enter a law enforcement career. From those humble beginnings nearly five decades ago, the LAPD has created an entirely new youth blueprint now known as the Cadet Program.

Re-introduced in January 2010, the Cadet Program is a strategic and enduring campaign designed to afford community youth an opportunity to succeed by providing them with an array of services to include instruction, guidance and mentoring by skilled Los Angeles Police Department personnel. As a result of an unprecedented outreach campaign, the growth of the Cadet Program since its inception has been seismic. Each new Cadet class typically exceeds 300 participants. The total Cadet population now exceeds 4,000 youth who hail from 272 public and private high and middle schools in every enclave of metropolitan Los Angeles and beyond.
The Cadets - A Path to Success...

Designed for students ages 14 through 20, the Cadet Program places strong emphasis on discipline, leadership, scholastic excellence and life-skills development. After the initial application process, youth enter a dynamic 18-week Cadet Academy held at the LAPD Ahmanson Recruit Training Center which prepares them as Cadets - and future leaders.

Further evidence of this enormously successful youth campaign is the extraordinary academic success of participating youth. During the 2009 / 2010 school year, the graduation rate for Cadets in their senior year of high school was a remarkable 96%. Although Cadets must have a grade point average of at least 2.0 to become members, one of the many objectives of this unique organization is to encourage educational competence by providing them enhanced instruction, emphasizing positive learning techniques and rewarding academic achievement.

Recruits participate in a wide range of academic offerings as well as a rigorous fitness regimen. During the training, sworn LAPD officers deliver a challenging curricula that has as its foundation life skills, public-speaking, teamwork, administration of justice, conflict resolution and character development. Physical training is another important academy course which teaches the importance of cardiovascular excellence and teamwork. Upon successful completion of their training, Cadets participate in a full graduation ceremony to celebrate their important achievement.

Upon graduation, Cadets are assigned to a “post” at one of the 23 LAPD police facilities where they continue to thrive through relationships with fellow Cadets and mentorship from specially trained police officers. The mentorship by officers serves to develop positive, life-long interactions that ultimately strengthen the police/community bond.

The Scholastic Curricula...

The 18-week Cadet Academy term features the following medley of lessons taught by experienced Los Angeles police officers is aimed at providing academic enrichment and deepening students' learning experience:

- The Josephson Institute “Six Pillars of Character”;
- Planning for the Future;
- Public Speaking;
- Financial Literacy;
- Tolerance and Diversity;
- Administration of Justice;
- Conflict Resolution;
- Traffic Enforcement;
- Physical Fitness;
- Drill and Facing Movements;
- Health and Safety;
- Emergency Preparedness and Disaster Training;
- Mentoring.

**Cadet Program Posts - A Place to Grow...**

There are presently twenty-five Cadet Posts within the LAPD. The vast array of sites throughout the City of Los Angeles virtually eliminates the barriers of time, distance and accessibility that prevent youth from participating in constructive opportunities. Yet another subtle but legitimate benefit of Cadet youth participating at police station program sites is that it “demystifies” police facilities by making them more “approachable” and casual public spaces, thereby reducing the anxieties traditionally experienced during contacts with police officers.

The idea of belonging to a special fraternity of like-minded youth is a powerful feature of membership at the Cadet Posts. The near gravitational influence of peer pressure with today’s youth can at times be extremely harmful, especially when those associations involve individuals with poor social norms. Cadets align themselves with other achievers at a unique “sanctuary” where they are able to practice positive behaviors with others who embrace a strong desire to succeed.

While assigned to their posts, Cadets have an opportunity to become involved in a wide range of exciting activities designed to provide them with new experiences, such as:

- Youth Leadership Day,
- Youth Investment Summit,
- College / Career Days,
- Los Angeles Times Journalism Training,
- Terrorism Awareness / Disaster Preparedness,
- Camping and other outdoor activities;
- Assignments at various sporting and public venues;
- Athletic competitions such as the “LAPD SWAT Challenge”.

**Advantage - Cadets...!**

The advantages of the Cadet experience are as multi-faceted as they are many.

**Volunteerism**

Cadets provide scores of volunteer hours per month. The total number of Cadet volunteer hours last year exceeded 45,000.

**Impact on Cadet Parents**

One of the most compelling reactions by Cadet parents is how much their lives have been changed as a result of the transformation in the lives of their children.
Scholarships and Grants

The Cadet Program regularly awards academic and performance scholarships, trips, social gatherings and providing other enrichment opportunities.

Improving Communities

The Cadet Program provides the more meaningful metrics of education, prevention and intervention strategies, which can positively change communities.

The Cadet Program has proven to be a reliable and transformative solution to the LAPD’s crime prevention and reduction objective. Our recruitment efforts aimed at youth who reside in traditionally disadvantaged and underserved communities have proven extraordinarily positive. Our experience has informed us that many young people who bequeath their lives to gang membership and social disorder do so not merely out of a desire to become criminals. Instead, they often find themselves on that path simply because of a lack of choices. The Cadet Program represents a powerful alternative to this inevitable outcome and provides youth a positive path that leads to a bright future.

www.LAPDCadets.com