

LOS ANGELES POLICE DEPARTMENT



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96-29

August 14, 1996

Dean Ronald Clarke
Police Executive Research Forum
1120 Connecticut Avenue Northwest
Washington D.C. 20037

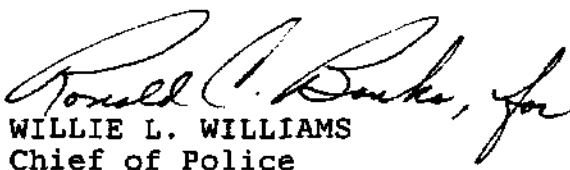
Dear Dean Clarke:

The Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) is pleased to nominate Police Officer III Sol A. Lebus in the individual category and the Hollywood Domestic Violence Section in the team category for the 1996 Herman Goldstein Excellence in Problem Solving Award.

The LAPD is committed to encouraging its officers to develop responses to problems through the application of the SARA model format, working in partnership with the community. These nominations represent the success of the Community Policing effort in the City of Los Angeles.

If you have any questions regarding the nominations, please call Management Assistant Antoinette Vasquez, Community Policing Group at (213) 847-4882.

Very truly yours,


WILLIE L. WILLIAMS
Chief of Police

Enclosure



HERMAN GOLDSTEIN EXCELLENCE IN **PROBLEM SOLVING AWARD**
HOLLYWOOD AREA
TEAM NOMINATION

Hollywood Area is pleased to nominate the following Domestic Violence Section, Major Assault Crimes Unit, Hollywood Detective Division, personnel for the **1996 Herman Goldstein Excellence in Problem Solving Award**:

Detective III Serge Riyevski, Serial No. 20516
Detective II Michael Pinnaro, Serial No. 17667
Detective II Juan Valencia, Serial No. 21684
Detective I Ginger Roberson, Serial No. 26252
Detective I Margaret Comrie, Serial No. 25352
Detective I Donald Watkins, Serial No. 21836
Police Officer III Raymond Conboy, Serial No. 20676
Police Officer III Lisa Governo, Serial No. 25535
Technical Reserve Officer Anne-Marie Lardeau, Serial No. R2254
Civilian Volunteer Suzanne Hazel
Civilian Volunteer Katherine Laurie
Civilian Volunteer Sharon Hamilton

The four basic steps of the problem-solving model (SARA) have been addressed by the Domestic Violence Section as indicated in the following outline.

I. SCANNING

Family-related violence and crime are responsible for a large percentage of calls for service received by the Police Department. In 1994, the LAPD responded to 65,000 emergency 9-1-1 calls for domestic violence. Domestic violence is a repeat crime, where the same victims and children are harmed repeatedly, and officers are consistently called to the same home.

According to the Journal of the American Medical Association, nearly a third of women visiting emergency rooms are there because they have been injured during a domestic violence incident. A recent study by the March of Dimes confirms that domestic violence starts or increases during pregnancy and is a major cause of low birth weight and birth defects.

Beyond the drain on police resources and the immediate harm to victims and their children, domestic violence is a major cause of youth violence. Children learn behavior patterns and conflict resolution techniques from their parents at an early age. Children can become desensitized to violence when it is perceived as normal and inevitable in their family. More than 80 percent of violent criminals in jail today grew up exposed to domestic violence and/or child abuse. An effective response to domestic violence is an investment in the future.

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In 1994, the LAPD created a Major Assault Crime (MAC) Unit in each geographic division to handle domestic violence, sex crimes and child abuse cases. Each MAC Unit was given the freedom and responsibility to analyze the patterns of domestic violence in its Area and to implement appropriate response. To be effective, the response needed to go beyond traditional law enforcement methods and to coordinate the efforts of police with other public and private agencies. The Hollywood MAC Unit took this mission to heart.

II. ANALYSIS

Community members were most concerned about visible street crime and were not aware of the connection between domestic violence, youth violence and violent crimes. Despite the high level of media attention, domestic violence was too often viewed as a secondary issue. Community expectations that something could and should be done were low.

Short of great bodily injury, many community members, and even some police officers, did not view domestic violence as a "crime" and considered it a private matter to be handled within the family. Many community members were not aware of current laws and of the institutional police response. They were reluctant to get involved or to call the police.

This problem was particularly severe in immigrant and non-English speaking communities. In many cases, these residents did not consider domestic violence to be a crime. In addition, they feared and distrusted the police.

The ethnic composition of Hollywood Area is:

- Hispanic 39.4 percent,
- European-American 27.1 percent including a large, first generation Russian community,
- Asian-American 16.8 percent composed of Thai, Filipino and Korean communities,
- American-American 10.0 percent with a large first generation population,
- African-American 4.7 percent.

Non-English speaking victims are particularly isolated and are often unable to reach out for help. Leaving a domestic violence situation is not perceived as an option by a victim who cannot function outside of a cultural community.

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Hollywood Area residents live in a variety of neighborhoods including multi-level apartment buildings and single-family residences. Rental properties account for 78.6 percent of the occupied housing units. This factor increases the mobility of families after a domestic violence incident and reduces detectives' ability to conduct follow-up investigations and provide long-term support to the victim.

Victims usually do not report the crime until a repeated pattern of violence or threats has occurred. Victims who are still in a relationship seldom cooperate with the prosecution of the case. They may even commit perjury due to fear, hope or shame.

Officers viewed domestic violence calls as frustrating, complex and dangerous. They became discouraged when the victim did not cooperate or was not grateful for their assistance when the immediate danger was over. Officers had nothing to offer victims beyond a traditional law enforcement response which was resented and ineffective. Officers did not have needed tools, such as cameras and support services, to fulfill the mandate of the new protocol they were supposed to follow.

Detectives did not get sufficient information in the preliminary investigation reports and were often unable to build solid cases. Their workload and time constraints prevented them from conducting a thorough follow-up investigation and from taking the time to counsel victims. Suspects often evaded meaningful consequences for their actions. There was little long-term accountability which led to a high rate of recidivism.

Shelters were usually full and not immediately accessible to victims in need. An officer who attempted for several hours to place a victim waiting in the police station lobby with children, was unlikely to offer such assistance again. Shelters were also reluctant to get involved with the police. Other support services, such as counseling and legal assistance, were scant and unknown to victims, officers and detectives.

HI. RESPONSE

Eliminating the problem was not a reasonable expectation, but reducing the problem, although a difficult and long-term goal, could be addressed. Reducing the harm caused by the problem and improving the way domestic violence cases were handled were definitely goals within reach.

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During the summer of 1994, Detective III Rich Papke and Reserve Officer Anne-Marie Lardeau looked for local resources, made contacts and developed a relationship with each agency.

In September 1994, an initial meeting of the "Hollywood Partnership Against Domestic Violence" brought together all MAC detectives, the patrol captain, representatives of the City Attorney, the District Attorney, the City Council, the Center for the Pacific-Asian Family (CPAF), the Los Angeles Commission on Assaults Against Women (LACAAW) and the Los Angeles Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center (GLCSC).

The following goals of the partnership were established:

- to foster communication and cooperation between its members,
- to achieve a synergistic and pro-active approach to the problem of domestic violence in the Hollywood community,
- to reach out to new members,
- to keep the partnership dynamic,
- to seek input and suggestions to continually improve service to the community.

A document describing the partnership agreement, local resources and the contributions of each agency was drafted and* is amended each month to include new resources and update information. The document includes the names of all detectives working the MAC Unit and is regularly distributed to all participating agencies. This is particularly important to CPAF shelter personnel who often deal with police impersonators over the phone.

In 1995 Lieutenant Ronald C. Sanchez and Detective III Serge Riyevski established a quarterly schedule for the "Hollywood Partnership Against Domestic Violence" meetings. These meetings currently include representation from the Armenian Relief Society, Children's Bureau of Southern California, the Church of Scientology, Hollywood Community-Police Advisory Board (C-PAB) representatives and batterers¹ treatment programs with the Assistance League of Southern California (ALSC) and the Los Angeles Counseling Center.

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The first priority was to address the emergency needs of victims who were afraid of being killed and needed a safe shelter.

The Center for the Pacific-Asian Family (CPAF) established a special protocol to address this need and patrol officers were informed of this protocol during roll call training. Although CPAF cannot guarantee that a victim will be accepted, it has never failed to do an intake by a Hollywood officer or detective during the past two years. This enables officers to offer shelter to a domestic violence victim in fear for her life and/or the life of her children. Due to the routine turnover of officers in Hollywood Division, this information, along with rape and child abuse resources, is now printed on a card included in the division information package.

The next goal was to assist victims of domestic violence by making them aware of the nearest resources available, free of charge, to support them.

These resources included shelters, 24-hour hotlines, counseling, assistance with restraining orders and legal help. Pamphlets containing specific information and referrals designed for the diverse ethnic and cultural groups living in the Hollywood community were compiled, or written and translated by local volunteers (English, Spanish, Armenian, Cambodian, Farsi, French, Hebrew, Japanese, Korean, Russian, Tagalog and Vietnamese). Pamphlets are also available for gay and lesbian victims. This referral information needed to be easily accessible to patrol officers and detectives.

The Hollywood Rotary Club and local volunteers donated money to purchase 14 Domestic Violence (DV) kits for each patrol car, the front desk and the detective office. The DV kits contain the referral pamphlets, Emergency Protective Order forms, a Polaroid camera, film and a teddy bear donated by Good Bears of the World. To insure acceptance by officers, the DV kits remain in the trunk of the patrol car. They are removed, cleaned and refilled once a month by the Hollywood Explorers and a reserve officer. As of July 1996, the DV kits have been in the field for 22 months.

In 1995, Detectives Riyevski and Pinnaro recruited and trained volunteers to assist detectives working domestic violence cases in the MAC Unit. The volunteers call the victims to obtain needed information and to provide counseling and referrals to local resources available to support them.

The strong and consistent use of referrals is designed to help victims help themselves by giving them an understanding of domestic violence dynamics and realistic expectations about the future of their relationship. Trained counselors help a victim identify safety concerns and make her or him aware of available protective measures. The referrals also support local partner agencies who are dependent on grants for their survival and assist them in providing new needed services. The creation of support services for domestic violence, rape and child abuse in Armenian and Thai, along with an increase in Russian counseling availability is a current goal.

Officers needed to be supported with additional training and given the tools necessary to handle domestic violence calls.

To supplement regular LAPD training, during the past two years, a series of presentations about domestic violence were made to the officers during roll call. Doctor Sandra Baca from Mending Place, a domestic violence counseling center, explained why victims do not leave. This helped officers to stop blaming the victim and appreciate the need to obtain independent corroborative evidence. Major Assault Crime Unit detectives conducted numerous roll call training sessions and gave officers the skills needed to complete a thorough preliminary investigation, thus ensuring a strong case without relying on the victim.

The Polaroid cameras in the DV kits were a welcome tool for the officers. Following their introduction, 23 out of the first 25 arrest cases came in with photographic evidence, leading to an immediate increase in filing rates by the City Attorney and the District Attorney's office. As a result, the LAPD is now going to provide better high-resolution Polaroid cameras and film to officers in all divisions.

In 1996, to assist officers with thorough preliminary investigations, Detectives Pinnaro and Riyevski created a supplemental form designed for easy gathering and recording of needed information. With the support of Detective Lieutenant Ronald C. Sanchez and Patrol Captain Michael Chambers, the form was well received by patrol officers. The quality of preliminary investigation reports improved dramatically, leading to a further increase in filing rates by prosecutors. The supplemental form will soon be used in all LAPD divisions.

Also in early 1996, Detectives Riyevski and Pinnaro recruited volunteers to staff the Domestic Assault Response Team (DART). This program had been successfully implemented in Van Nuys Area by Commander Jim McMurray when

he was the Area captain. Trained agency and community volunteers, including the Hollywood District Attorney Victim Witness Representative Suzanne Hazel, are paired with reserve officers and respond to the scene of domestic violence incidents to relieve patrol officers. Domestic Assault Response Team provides immediate counseling and support to the victim and the children. The team obtains Emergency Protective Orders (EPO) when needed, serves the EPO to suspects in custody, accompanies victims to the hospital, and assists victims with safety precautions or relocation to a safe place. In Hollywood, the team also conducts detailed interviews with the victim and witnesses to obtain information for the crime report and to identify possible cases of sexual assault and child abuse.

The DART program provides a high level of service to the victim, improves overall response time by freeing patrol officers to respond to other calls, and assists detectives by conducting immediate follow-up investigations while the victim and the evidence are available. Regular meetings with DART volunteers foster continuous improvement of the program. The DART teams are currently deployed during weekend P.M. shifts.

A current goal in Hollywood is to extend their deployment to seven days a week by using probationary officers. The new officers would gain a better understanding of the human factors in domestic violence cases and valuable experience conducting follow-up investigations.

Improved victim support increases cooperation with the prosecution. Independent corroborative evidence builds a solid case and enhances the chances of a conviction. The aggressive and successful prosecution of domestic violence cases helps curb recidivism by making suspects accountable for their actions. A current goal is to keep track of repeat offenders through improved communication with the probation department and local batterers' treatment programs.

IV. ASSESSMENT

As a result of Hollywood's efforts, there has been a significant increase in the filing rate of cases and in the convictions obtained by the City Attorney and the District Attorney's office:

- 75 to 80 percent of non-arrest cases result in a criminal filing.
- 97 percent of arrest cases result in a criminal filing.
- the percentage of felony filings is increasing.

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Partner agencies, such as LACAAW and CPAF, have noticed an increased demand for the services by Hollywood victims.

Officer attitude is harder to measure, but the dramatic improvement in the quality of the preliminary investigation reports and the increase in Emergency Protective Orders indicate interest, cooperation and knowledge of the laws and the domestic violence protocol.

Victim satisfaction with the improved response is expressed on a case-by-case basis. Expressions of gratitude by victims are very rewarding to both officers and volunteers and keep the DART members motivated.

The following success stories are examples of the numerous cases which emphasize the importance of a cooperative partnership between law enforcement, government agencies, service providers and the community.

A victim feared for her life after severe and repeated abuse. The investigating officer called the shelter which accepted the victim and her three children. One of the children did not speak at the time of the intake. After a week in the shelter, the child started speaking again and revealed a pattern of child abuse by the stepfather against two of the children. When the victim decided to return to her home, the shelter reported the child abuse and the Department of Children and Family Services got involved to protect the children.

Another severe case of repeated violence involved 22 reports during the previous two years alone. The victim had always refused to cooperate with the prosecution or recanted her testimony at the last minute. Detectives, prosecutors and victim advocates were discouraged. A community member familiar with the MAC Unit contacted the investigating officer to report that the victim was now ready to cooperate. The officer shared the information with the District Attorney and the City Attorney Victim Advocates who had dealt with her in the past. They renewed their efforts and the victim testified for the first time, helping the District Attorney obtain a conviction and jail time for the suspect. A former employer is now helping the victim reinstate her teaching credentials so she may teach again.

Reaching out to the community to change perceptions and expectations about domestic violence and to reduce the incidence of the problem is a challenging and long-term goal. Success is also difficult to measure since outreach efforts may cause an initial increase in reporting by victims and community members.

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The number of domestic violence incidents recorded by the LAPD in Los Angeles increased from 19,418 in 1986 to 65,000 in 1994. However, the number of domestic violence murders decreased from 59 in 1986 to 53 in 1992, 45 in 1993 and 33 in 1994.

In September 1994, the Hollywood MAC Unit established a partnership with the Gay and Lesbian Community Services Center and started referring victims and suspects to the Center's Counseling Department. Within two months, the number of cases involving gay or lesbian victims doubled.

Although an increase in reporting may actually be a sign of progress, the Hollywood Partnership Against Domestic Violence hopes that increased community awareness of human factors, laws and support services will promote early intervention and prevention.

A domestic violence prevention program in local schools targets students, parents, teachers and counselors. The Hollywood MAC Unit has created visual aids and made presentations in Hollywood High School and Joseph Le Conte Middle School. The LACAAW has an active and successful school and teen domestic violence prevention program.

The MAC Unit also reaches out to the clergy through the Greater Hollywood Health Partnership which provides health services to 25 local churches. The multi-lingual pamphlets were included in a resource book given to all member churches and a presentation was made to 60 members of the clergy and nurses. In 1996, a local church requested a presentation to the congregation following its Sunday service. City Attorney Victim Advocate Chris Natividad donated her time and reported a high level of interest and support by the priest and the congregation.

The Mac Unit has also reached out to immigrant communities by making presentations about domestic violence and child abuse in citizenship classes with the support of the visual aids and multi-lingual pamphlets.

In 1995, the involvement of the Hollywood C-PAB and its domestic violence representative Susan Rabinovitz has opened the door to a new dimension of community outreach. A current effort, coordinated by Cathy Friedman from LACAAW, involves MAC detectives, the Chamber of Commerce, public and private agencies and will culminate with a public education campaign in October 1996.

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Public service announcements and video tapes are being prepared and translated for use by radio stations and television programs targeted at monolingual Hispanic, Russian, Armenian and Pacific/Asian communities.

Posters and brochures are being prepared including local referrals and a message in English, Spanish, Russian, Armenian, Thai, Tagalog and Korean. The Church of Scientology is donating photographic art, graphics and printing. The Hollywood Explorers have committed to placing and maintaining 100 posters with holders and brochures in local businesses. The brochures will also support outreach efforts by the speakers' bureau and during major events such as National Night Out.

A local speakers' bureau, including MAC detectives, City Attorney and service provider representatives, will coordinate and make presentations to local groups. They will also participate in talk-radio programs and non-English television education programs.

A survey of community members to record knowledge and attitudes about domestic violence has already been made and will serve as a basis to judge the effectiveness of the October 1996 campaign.

By integrating domestic violence in its community-policing plans, the Hollywood Community-Police Advisory Board has given the Hollywood Partnership Against Domestic Violence a new dimension and a realistic hope of changing community attitudes and attaining long-term prevention goals.

The men and women of the Domestic Violence Section, Major Assault Crimes Unit, Hollywood Detective Division, are nominated for the Herman Goldstein Excellence in Problem Solving Award for their exceptional performance while serving the community during the period January 1, 1996 through July 31, 1996. Their dedication, diligence, and knowledge provided superior training and motivation which resulted in the training and education of the patrol and detective division and the community, in domestic violence awareness and prevention. Through their efforts in educating the community, this Domestic Violence Section is responsible for getting first, second and even third time victims to make a stand and face their abuser. This has been a major factor of the reduction in recidivism amongst Hollywood abusers. They are a credit to the community, the City of Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Police Department.