

**ATLANTA POLICE DEPARTMENT  
1998 HERMAN GOLDSTEIN AWARD NOMINATION  
SOUTHWEST ATLANTA APARTMENT MANAGERS  
NOMINATION OF MAJOR T. A. KNOX**

Nominee: Major T. A. Knox, commander, Patrol Zone Four, which is the southwest quadrant of the City of Atlanta.

A. Scanning

Major T. A. Knox is commander of Atlanta Police Zone Four, which covers the southwest portion of the City and is home to a number of apartment communities, especially along the Martin Luther King Drive and Campbellton Road corridors, which also include a mix of commercial and single family owner occupied houses. Crime analysis revealed a pattern of criminal activity that often involved repeat offenses by the same perpetrators, even after these individuals had been evicted from rental property in the area due to their criminal activities. Further analysis revealed that career criminals who were evicted for their activities simply moved to another rental property in the same vicinity and resumed their life of crime from a new base of operations. This pattern perpetuated the cycle of crime in the neighborhood, as career criminals moved freely from one rental location to another within the geographic area. Major T. A. Knox, the commander of the patrol zone, recognized the impact this situation was having on the crime rate in the zone, and determined that one way to reduce crime was to keep career criminals out of the area. To do so, Major Knox organized the managers of the apartment complexes in the area to partner with the police to keep the criminal element from having a base of operations in the zone from which to operate. The approach was quite simple, to remove the perpetrators who resided in the neighborhood and for apartment managers to share information among one another regarding problem tenants, that is, those tenants who were habitually late paying rent, who damaged apartment property and who broke the law and apartment rules. Such an approach could benefit both the apartment managers and the community. Accordingly, Major Knox determined that a partnership with apartment managers to address the problem of habitual offenders keeping a residence in the area to use as a base of operations for their criminal activity would best attack the crime problem in the zone.

## 2. Analysis

Under the direction of Major Knox, zone personnel examined the frequency of arrests of individuals to determine the extent to which a small number of offenders were committing the majority of crimes in the area. Atlanta has long been plagued by a large number of petty property offenses, such as auto break-ins and thefts from porches. Based on this analysis, further study was done to indicate that these perpetrators consistently lived within the geographic boundaries of the zone. These perpetrators took advantage of the opportunities that came with living close to their victims. Potential victims were 'cased' in advance to set up crimes at times when the victim would be most vulnerable. An innovative approach was needed to reduce the number of crimes committed by those who took advantage of their proximity to the victims, an advantage they maintained by keeping a residence nearby. Further analysis revealed that renters who were frequent lawbreakers also were frequently problem tenants for their landlord, damaging apartment property, breaking apartment rules and often late paying rent. From this information, Major Knox concluded that a partnership with apartment owners and managers would be mutually advantageous.

### C. Response

Based on available information, Major Knox considered several possible options, ranging from a sting operation to catch career thieves to focused police patrol to target high crime areas. The Zone was already participating in the PACE (Police and Community Empowerment) program, which was initially grant funded to devote eight police officers assigned to the zone to exclusively conduct community oriented policing activities, including frequent attendance of neighborhood meetings and forging partnerships with the community to identify area problems that cause crime (such as abandoned vehicles and buildings) and cooperating to eradicate those problems. Based on the success of this program, Major Knox determined that another type of partnership between the police and apartment managers would also result in lowered crime rates and a stronger bond between the community and police. Accordingly, Major Knox organized periodic meetings of area apartment managers and police officers to share information about problem

tenants and to discourage rental of apartments to known career criminals. Further, police officers in attendance gather intelligence regarding criminal activity and perpetrators to assist in ongoing investigations.

#### D. Assessment

Initial results of this partnership between apartment owners and police has been positive, as the apartment managers have enthusiastically embraced the concept, while apartment owners have been so enthused that some have invested in upgrades of the properties. Further, during the first quarter of 1998, crime in the Campbelltoii Road area has declined by 16% and crime in the Martin Luther King Drive area has gone down by 12%. It is not possible to isolate the degree to which this program resulted in this crime reduction, as other Department-wide strategies, such as operation "Street Heat" which focused the use of paid overtime police enforcement on the apprehension of career criminals was also instmmental in removing many of these career criminals from circulation in the area. The combination of several enforcement strategies has resulted in a crime reduction Cilywide and it is therefore difficult to determine the impact of one approach in isolation, but rather to conclude that the synergy of all these approaches is working to reduce crime.

Clearly, the most visible result of the partnership between police and apartment owners is the establishment of a long term working relationship between the two parties for the betterment of the neighborhood.

agency and Officer Information

1. At what level of the police organization was this problem-solving initiative adopted (e.g., the entire department, a few select officers, etc.)?
2. Did officers or management receive any training in problem-oriented policing and/or problem solving before this project began or during its execution?
3. Were additional incentives given to police officers who engaged in problem solving?
4. What resources and guidelines (manuals, past problem-solving examples, etc.) were used, if any, by police officers to help them manage this problem-solving initiative?
5. What issues/problems were identified with the problem-oriented policing model or the problem-solving model?
6. What general resources (financial and/or personnel) were committed to this project, and of those resources, what went beyond the existing department budget?
7. Project Contact Person:

Name: Dan Boozer  
Position/Rank: Administrative Services Manager  
Address: ^5 Ponce de Leon Avenue  
City/State: Atlanta, GA 30308  
Phone: (404) 817-6782  
Fax: (404) 817-6888  
E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

You may include up to ten (10) pages of supporting documents, such as newspaper clippings or magazine articles, in addition to the text, charts, tables and graphs. Unfortunately, videotapes cannot be considered.

Prepare a letter from the agency chief executive nominating the project for the award. Please address the letter to the Herman Goldstein Award Selection Committee.

Submit (8) copies of the completed application package (nomination letter, abstract and description, and any supporting documents) postmarked by the deadline of June 11, 1998.

PERF will publish a compilation of the leading projects. By submitting a project, you agree to allow PERF to include your work in the book so that your success is accessible to the entire field.

Send packages to the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF), 1120 Connecticut Ave., NW, Suite 930, Washington, DC 20036, U.S.A., Attention: Herman Goldstein Award.

Direct inquiries to Jim Burack of the PERF staff at (202) 466-7820 x276 or e-mail <jburack@policeforum.org>

CHECK EXAMPLES OF COMPLETED POP PROJECTS AT: <www.PoliceForum.org>. (See below for free agency account)

POPNET PROBLEM-SOLVING DATABASE

POPNet fills a critical need—providing a central listing on the Internet of problem-oriented policing projects from around the world.

POPNet is located on PERF's homepage:<<http://www.PoliceForum.org>>.

Although award entries must be made via hard-copy, you are strongly encouraged to submit your entry directly to POPNet as well. Although the questions that appear on POPNet are slightly different from the set of questions asked above, the format is the same. Once you have completed the award package, you will have little difficulty answering the POPNet questions.

Access to POPNet is free to law enforcement agencies and researchers, but an account is required. Please contact Anne Grant via e-mail at <[agrants@policeforum.org](mailto:agrants@policeforum.org)> or by telephone at (202) 466-7820.

Those submitting projects for the Goldstein award consent to the listing of their project on POPNet.