



SPOKANE POLICE DEPARTMENT
CHIEF OF POLICE
CRAIG N. MEIDL

Strategic Initiatives
February 2023 Report



Public Safety and Community Health Committee Briefing
February 6, 2023



Excerpts of Commendations
(Personal Identifying Information has been removed)

Thank you to all involved in the response to Lewis and Clark High School today. I got to feel today, firsthand, what it feels like to be a mom of a child in a real active shooter situation (as I knew it at the time). I felt my heart breaking and sheer panic and the distinct feeling that I needed to get there NOW and save him. I wanted to express my deepest gratitude to all the officers involved in the incident this morning. My son goes to the school. Your response to immediately enter the school without hesitation to save my child, to put your lives in danger to save my child is something I cannot ever repay you for. No matter that it ended up being a terrible hoax. Your officers didn't know that at the time. I know this may seem menial but my gratitude for you today cannot be measured. Thank you, each and every one of you, from simply...a mother.

As a parent of two students at Lewis and Clark high school, I wanted to take a moment to express my deepest gratitude to the Spokane Police. Over the weekend, my freshman twins and I processed a lot about their experience on Friday but what repeatedly brought tears to my eyes was the fact that the police officers were entering the building. As we all know too well, that is not the case of every police department across the country. So it is with my whole heart, I want to say thank you! I wish I could thank each officer who went in the building. Each officer that was ready to do what needed to be done to protect what is our city's most valuable asset: our children. When words are insufficient, thank you will have to suffice.

Dear Chief Meidl, Last Saturday, my aunt had passed away at her residence and I was called to the condo by her daughter. After some of the paramedics departed and **Lieutenant Rich Meyer** arrived, the remaining paramedics filled in Lt. Meyer. The Lt. called the Medical Examiner's office and released my aunt to be transported to Heritage Funeral Parlor. He was very kind and called Heritage to arrange transport. Lt. Meyer showed great professionalism and compassion towards the daughter and me and remained until Heritage arrived for transport. We cannot thank Lt. Meyer enough for all he did during that difficult time.

I had the great opportunity to go on a ride-along with **Officer Daniel Rhine** on day shift. I found him to be courteous, professional, and extremely competent in his work. This was my first ride-along during day shift. I learned the nature of calls are much different from other shifts I had previously gone on ride-alongs. Officer Rhine explained he responds to a lot of stolen vehicle calls. Sure enough, our first call was recovering a vehicle involved in a carjacking. As he investigated, we learned the car was involved in a larger string of crimes committed by a suspect and we ended up towing the vehicle to the property facility. I spent the rest of my ride-along at a hospital waiting for an individual to wake up and escort to jail. While were responded to only a few calls, I was able to observe Officer Rhine be thorough in his work, especially the carjacking call. I observed him call the car owner and talk them through the recovery process of their vehicle and patiently answer all questions. He also communicated with others from different shifts to get as much information on the suspect. He even hoped to tie the vehicle we found to the suspect by calling jail to see if the suspect had the keys to this vehicle when searched at jail. Officer Rhine made me feel welcome and he did his best to answer of my questions. He represented himself, the Spokane Police Department, and law enforcement very well.





Internal Affairs Unit Update

January 1 through December 31, 2022, Commendations and Complaints

Commendations Received: Total: 231

Complaints Received: Total: 87 (74 from community)

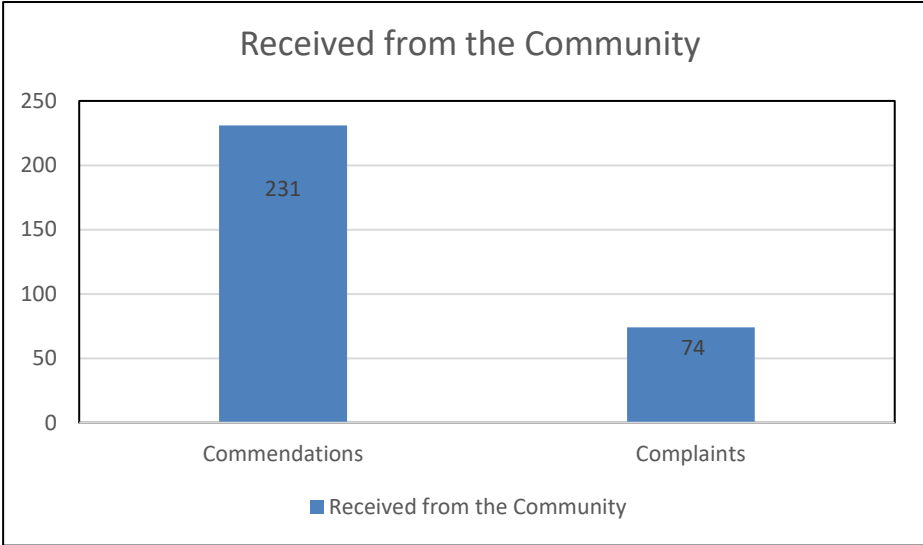
Closed Out as Inquiries: 8 (As of December 31, 2022)

An inquiry is an initial complaint about employee conduct which, even if true, would not qualify as a personnel complaint and may be handled informally by a department supervisor and shall not be considered complaints.

Source of Complaints—January 1 through December 31, 2022

Received by the Office of Police Ombudsman	Total: 31
Received by the Spokane Police Department	Total: 56
Internally Generated by the SPD	Total: 13
Generated by the Community	Total: 74

The department consistently receives more commendations from the community than complaints. In 2022, SPD received three times more commendations than complaints.



Use of Force Update

2022 Non-Deadly Reportable Use of Force Incidents

From January 1- December 31, 2022, there were 79 non-deadly use of force incidents, including 19 K9 contacts and 60 other types of force (e.g., TASER). Six incidents involved both a K9 and other force.

2022 Deadly Force Incidents (Officer-Involved Shootings)

From January 1- December 31, 2022, there were five deadly force incidents.

Incident 2022-20012711 (Pending Administrative Investigation)

Incident 2022-20012711 took place on January 24, 2022, in the area of 2400 E. Desmet. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) completed the criminal investigation. The Spokane County Prosecutor's Office completed their review and found the shooting to be justified. The case is with Internal Affairs for the administrative investigation.

Incident 2022-20134271 (Pending Criminal Investigation)

2022-20134271 took place on August 3, 2022, in the area of 2nd and Sheridan. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) is conducting the criminal investigation.

Incident 2022-20156670 (Pending Criminal Investigation)

2022-20156670 took place on September 4, 2022, in the area of 2900 E. Wabash Avenue. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) is conducting the criminal investigation.

Incident 2022-20184192 (Pending Criminal Investigation)

2022-20184192 took place on October 16, 2022, in the area of 100 S Cedar. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) is conducting the criminal investigation.

Incident 2022-20214924 (Pending Criminal Investigation)

2022-20214924 took place on December 4, 2022, in the area of Morton and Illinois. The Spokane Independent Investigative Response (SIIR) is conducting the criminal investigation.

Items of Interest – Hiring and Recruiting

With the award of a grant from Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission, SPD has enhanced ongoing recruiting efforts. SPD has made progress on four recruiting goals and, as a result, SPD has experienced increased applicants sending their Public Safety Test scores to SPD. During September-December 2022, SPD recruiters attended six Public Safety Tests to speak with candidates.

The two Public Safety Tests in Spokane yielded 40 candidates sending their scores to Spokane, 10 (25%) from underrepresented communities.

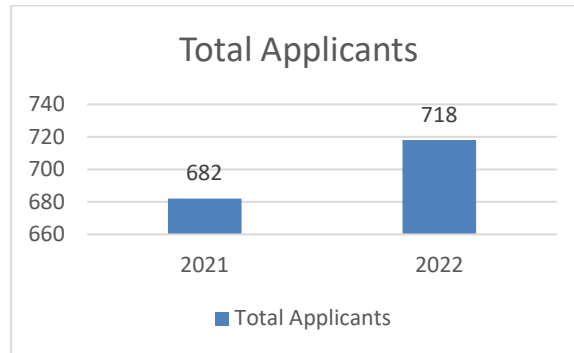
The four Public Safety Tests to which the cadre traveled yielded the following: 39 total candidates with 21 from underrepresented communities (54%).



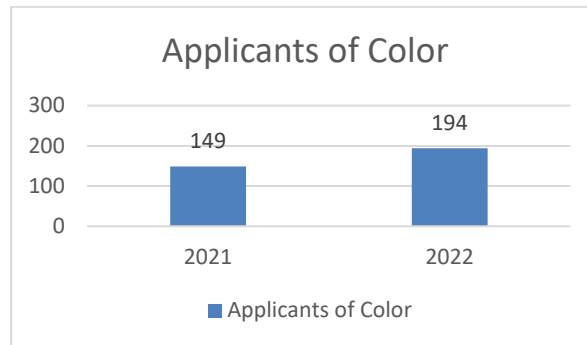
Recruiting Results in 2022 (From Public Safety Testing) – January-December 2022

Overall, since the inception of the grant in 2022, we have seen positive results.

Through the use of WSCJTC grant funds, the Spokane Police Department enhanced recruiting efforts in February 2022 and continued those efforts through November 2022. We have experienced a 5% increase of total candidates passing the PST and sending their scores to Spokane, comparing full-year 2021 numbers (682) to 2022 numbers (718).

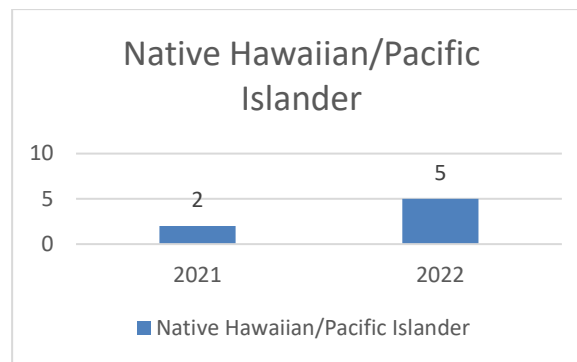


Candidates from underserved communities have also increased during the grant implementation period. The number of candidates who are people of color has increased 23%, increasing from 149 in 2021 to 194 in 2022.

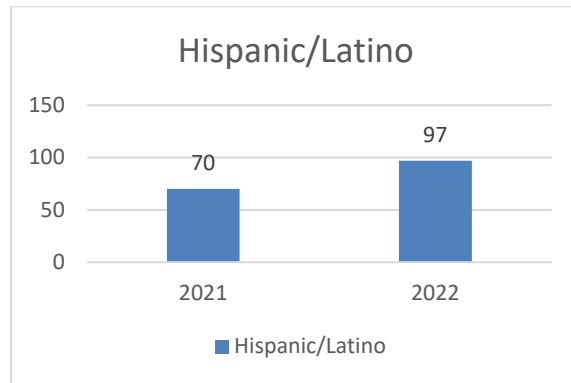


Since the implementation of the grant, we have seen the following significant gains:

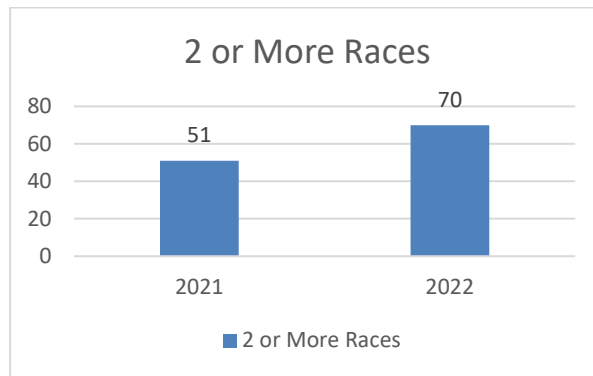
The number of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander candidates increased from 2 in January-December 2021 to 5 in January-December 2022.



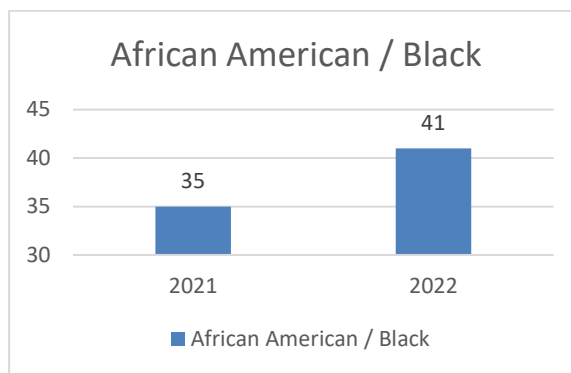
We have experienced a 31% increase in Hispanic/Latino candidates, 70 in January-December 2021 to 97 in January-December 2022.



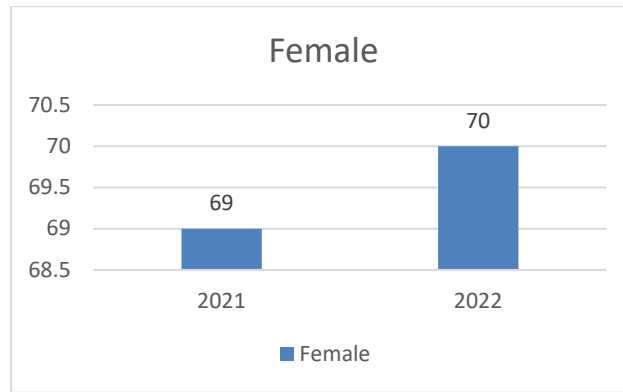
We have experienced a 27% increase in Multi-Racial candidates, 51 in January-December 2021 to 70 in January-December 2022.



We have experienced a 15% increase in African American/Black candidates, 35 in January-December 2021 to 41 in January-December 2022.



We have seen a modest gain of female candidates (1.4%) during the grant implementation period.



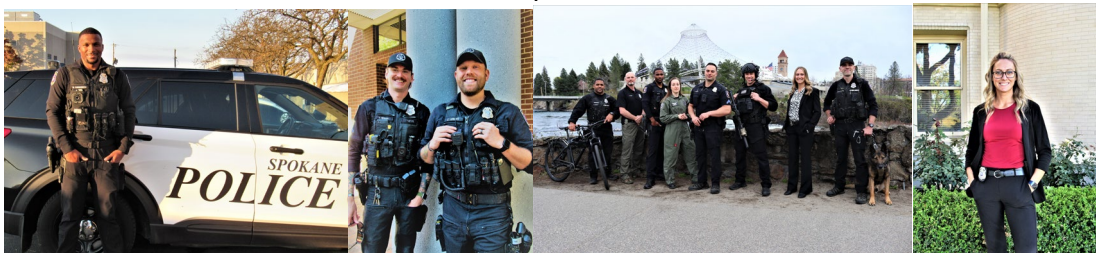
We did not experience an increase in American Indian/Alaskan Native or Asian candidates. However, recruiters did not encounter many candidates from those communities at Public Safety Tests or other events during this recent reporting period.

Caveat: Sending PST scores to SPD is a first step in the hiring process; it precedes applications with Civil Service. The hiring process (background investigation, interviews, physical ability test, psychologist evaluation, medical examination, polygraph) takes approximately 2-3 months to complete. After an entry level officer is hired, the officer spends several months in the Basic Law Enforcement Academy (BLEA). Space is limited in the three BLEA academies in Spokane, with SPD entering a maximum of 30 candidates a year. BLEA graduates then must complete several more months of training with a Field Training Officer, usually about 18 months after hire before the officer can respond to calls on a solo basis.

These applicants that are reflected in the Public Safety Tests above may be hired in 2023 and come into service in 2024, so we do not experience the results of our recruiting right away. However, the department is moving in a positive direction with the increase in interested candidates from underserved communities.

Since the inception of our WSCJTC grant in December 2021, we hired two lateral officers in December 2021 and we hired 28 officers in 2022, (20 entry level and 8 lateral) bringing the total to 30 officers hired during the grant implementation period. **8 out of 30 (27%) were from underrepresented communities.** Underrepresented communities include 1 Asian; 1 Black/African American, 2 Hispanic, 2 Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and 2 females.

This is critical to having a diverse Spokane police force, especially with retirements. In the last two years, retirements included six female officers, two Hispanic officers, two Native American officers, one Black officer and one Multi-Racial officer. Some of our Department Recruiters below:



Noteworthy Arrests

Bank Robbery Arrest

On January 3, 2023, at 4:45 pm, Spokane police officers responded to the South Hill Washington Trust Bank for a bank robbery. SPD identified the suspect in the bank robbery incident as David E. Allen (54). Allen was linked to the Downtown Banner Bank robbery on December 29, 2022, as well as the South Hill Washington Trust Bank robbery. On January 6, 2023, SPD's Major Crime Unit, along with the SPD SWAT team, arrested Allen at his residence in Deer Park without incident. Allen was booked into the Spokane County Jail and was charged with two counts of 1st Degree Robbery.

Suspect Arrested in Multiple Unprovoked Attacks Charged with Murder

On December 17, 2022, SPD officers responded to three separate assaults involving five victims. The first took place at Wall and Spokane Falls Blvd when a man walked up to two women who were sitting on the ground, sprayed them with bear spray, kicked them in the head, and walked off. Not long after this attack, two people sitting outside a business on W. Main St were both punched in a similar unprovoked manner. Later the same day, a woman standing outside a store in the 9400 block of North Division was also sprayed with bear spray and then kicked without warning or provocation. Several days later, on December 20, 2022, a man in a bathroom of a store in the 9700 block on N. Newport Highway was punched and hit with a hammer in another random attack.

SPD's Major Crimes Unit immediately began investigating these seemingly unrelated attacks and eventually investigators were able to piece the separate incidents together and develop probable cause to charge a suspect. Gary B. Ault was charged with Assault 1st Degree, Assault 2nd Degree, Assault 3rd Degree, and Unlawful Possession of a Firearm 1st Degree. Ault was booked into the Spokane County Jail. His bond was set at \$175,000. Ault has 14 prior felony convictions to include Burglary, Theft, and Possession of Stolen Property.

Spokane County Sheriff's Office Major Crime Detectives were investigating a murder in north Spokane County when they developed probable cause to charge 37-year-old Gary B. Ault with Murder 1st Degree and Burglary 1st Degree in the death of 83-year-old Richard Purdy on December 26, 2022. SCSO Investigators worked with SPD Major Crimes Detectives after they learned Ault was already in custody at the Spokane County Jail on separate charges brought by the Spokane Police Department on December 27, 2022.

Violent Crimes Task Force

The Violent Crimes Task Force continues its focus on removing prolific and violent offenders from the streets. Since becoming operational in June of this year, the VCTF has successfully taken into custody over 45 individuals identified as violent offenders, who were actively wanted for crimes ranging from drive by shooting, first degree assault and murder. The VCTF works in cooperation with the Spokane Police Departments investigative and tactical units as well as our federal partners in the pursuit of violent criminal offenders.



On January 6, 2023, SPD officers arrested Shayne J. Winston (20) and Devin K. Robinson (20) for multiple charges to include money laundering, forgery, and organized crime. VCTF recovered about 251.1 grams of cocaine still in a brick form, ammunition, \$15,000 cash and four vehicles.

VCTF arrested Winston for 3 counts of unlawful possession of a firearm in the first degree, possession of a controlled substance in the 1st degree and 2nd degree theft. Robinson was arrested for money laundering, forgery and leading organized crime. Both were booked into the Spokane County Jail where they currently remain.



Outreach Update

Thrive International

Community Outreach officers met with Thrive International to plan future collaboration, such as classes for new refugees. SPD has delivered classes to foreign-born communities involved with other local non-profits about how to report a crime, what to do if stopped, if they are a victim of a crime, and other law enforcement interactions.

Interacting with Law Enforcement Course includes:

- The various law enforcement agencies and their role: Local, state, and federal (Customs, Homeland Security, FBI, DEA).
- SPD's duties: Investigate crimes, community caretaking, education
- Use of Force
- Due Process
- How to Report a Crime (911 vs Crime Check), what happens next
- What to Do when Police are knocking at your door
- What to Do if you are stopped and detained, or stopped while driving
- Domestic Violence (what constitutes a DV relationship, mandatory arrest)
- No-Contact Orders
- Parental Discipline (what is considered assault and abuse)
- Police Investigations (including our work with advocacy organizations, translators)
- Understanding Consent per Washington State law
- Community Outreach, Community Resource Officers, Other Units in SPD

SPD also brought over Refugee Cards, which individuals can present to police whenever there is an interaction. The card lists their native language and a contact person who can help them.

SPD's K9 Unit was also involved in helping the Ukrainian refugee community that Thrive serves. The communities were in need of linens and school supplies for the children. K9 handlers reached out to their fellow SPD officers and together they were able to purchase more than 100 bedding articles and plenty of school supplies to bless community members. A visit from K9 Ciro made the delivery even more special.



Northeast Community Center

Community Outreach officers met with leadership at Northeast Community Center to discuss future collaborations, including the Farmers Markets, Hillyard Festival, and summer programming.

Safety Education with Boy Scouts

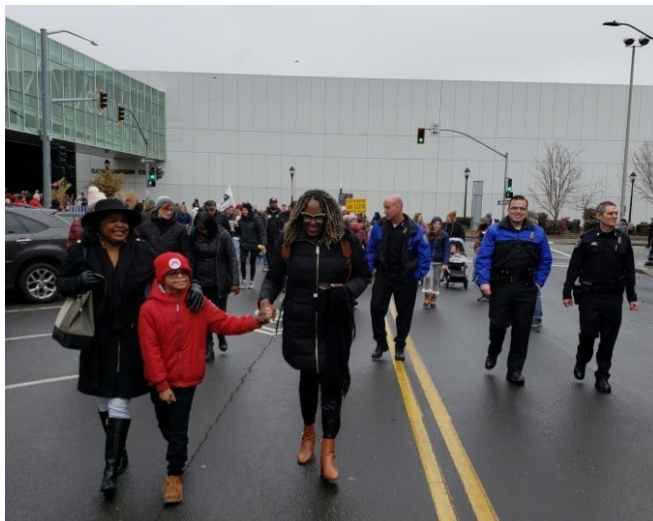
A Community Outreach Officer met with Boy Scout Troop #151 at Skyline Elementary. The officer spoke with the troop about safety issues of which they should be aware. This included stranger contacts, walking home and what to do if they get lost. The officer also spoke to the children about police work and showed them police equipment.

NewTech Advisory Board

Community Outreach officers met with the Newtech (Skills Center) Criminal Justice class committee to discuss future partnerships. SPD's teen prevention program, Youth & Police Initiative (YPI), will be taught in March at the school.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Parade

Community Outreach Officers and SPD leadership participated in the pre-parade gathering and marched in the parade. Chief Meidl received a thank you note from Freda Gandy, Director at the MLK Center and coordinator for the event. "Hi Chief. Your officers did an amazing job yesterday. Kevin Keller is amazing to work with. Thank you for everything."



Spokane Police TAC Team officers worked the Walk for Life march on new “Fat Tire” bikes made specifically for snow and icy conditions. They started the morning on snow covered streets in downtown Spokane and then escorted the march through the streets. The community engagement was great and brought several good comments about the new bikes from citizens. Most importantly, there were no bicycle wrecks or injuries even though the streets were slick.

