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**DOJ CONNECT**

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**

**“HIRING TOP COPS: STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS”**

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 24, 2006**

**SPEAKER:**

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ANNOUNCER: This is DOJ Connect. Today's program: "Hiring Top Cops: Strategies for Success."

LES WITMER: Welcome to our national webcast and satellite broadcast entitled, "Hiring Top Cops: Strategies for Success." Today we have a distinguished panel of experts who will share their knowledge and experience.

I am Les Witmer, and I am your moderator for today's program.

This webcast and satellite broadcast is being seen by thousands of viewers across the nation. During the program, you will have the opportunity to submit your questions to the panel by sending them to [questions@dojconnect.com](mailto:questions@dojconnect.com). Also, check out the DOJ Connect website for useful resources and links.

Today's program is developed was developed within the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community-Oriented Policing Services, in partnership with the National Native-American Law Enforcement Association, the International Association of Chiefs and Police, the Police Executive Research Forum, the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training, the National Center for Women and Policing, the National Sheriffs' Association, the National Organization for Black Law Enforcement Executives, the International City/County Managers' Association, the Police Foundation, and the Regional Community Policing Institute.

The broadcast will be archived and available for reviewing at [dojconnect.com](http://dojconnect.com), and now let's get started.

Hiring and retention is a top priority for law enforcement across the country. That is why our first message today is from the attorney general of the United States, Alberto Gonzales. Under his leadership, the Department of Justice has intensified its efforts in recruiting, hiring, and retaining officers. His message today underscores a strong commitment of support by the Department of Justice. And now we bring you Attorney General Gonzales.

ATTORNEY GENERAL GONZALES: Good afternoon. All of us who are involved in law enforcement know that recruiting and retaining top-notch law enforcement officers is the essential foundation of all the work that we do. Every organization or business, public or private, is anxious to hire the right people. But the law enforcement agencies, finding and holding on to quality officers is more than an ordinary management concern; it is critical to the safety of the public we protect. We seek the best and brightest to put on the uniform and risk their lives everyday to protect the rest of us.

These men and women must be sharp, brave, and moral. They must be calm, professional, and fair, even under the most trying circumstances because they have an

awesome responsibility, not just because they serve and protect, but because they represent the power and authority of the government. This means that their behavior is heavily scrutinized.

The more I learn about the situations our men and women in law enforcement face each day, the more I admire their willingness to serve because theirs is a stressful life, stressful not only for themselves, but for their families. Good officers must have abundant reserves of moral and physical courage; they must be in remarkable physical condition; they must be able to evaluate unpredictable situations in a split second and to respond without losing their self-control.

We need thousands and thousands of people like this, and once we find them, we need to guard against the problems of burnout and demoralization. We need to not only respect and admire our officers but to make sure that our respect and admiration are adequately communicated to them and to their families, and to make sure that our appreciation is more than just talk. We need to work hard to make sure that as they risk their lives to protect our families they are able to invest adequate time and energy into their own families.

Today's webcast is a good opportunity to think strategically about these concerns. I hope that you will find the insights and strategies of the seasoned law enforcement experts on today's panel to be useful, and I hope the discussion will assist your own good work, whatever your role in supporting law enforcement in your home community.

Thank you. May God bless you, and may he continue to bless the United States of America.

MR. WITMER: Thank you, Attorney General Gonzales.

And now today's first panel of experts: Joining us today from East Palo Alto, California, is Chief of Police Ronald L. Davis. Johnny DuPree is mayor of the city of Hattiesburg, Mississippi; and Albert Najera is Chief of the police department in Sacramento, California. Full bios of all our guests are available on DOJ connect website.

Welcome to the program. Before we begin the discussion, let's listen to Ed Daley who will give us an insight on hiring and retention in the small community. Mr. Daley is the city manager of Winchester, Virginia, and the 2006, 2007 president-elect of the International City/County Managers' Association.

ED DALEY: I think the smaller community has the opportunity to bring the officers into the community, make it more of a – again, I'm reusing the word family orientation, but look at the community as the family, that they are part of that community and they are oriented to trying to meet that community's need rather than looking at where they may be rotated regularly and they're always in a different area working and they don't have any direct contact on a continuing basis. And the more we can make them part of the community, again, a family orientation there, but bring them into that

community, the more they are going to be concerned about it and the better job they're going to do there, and the more they're going to want to stay with that job.

MR. WITMER: Well, it's apparent that law enforcement agencies across the country are facing increasing challenges in attracting qualified men and women to join the force or to join the profession. And as City Manager Daley just talked about, one of the keys to this can be the community, the involvement of the community. I guess the first question then is what can a mayor or city officials, city managers, council member, what can they do specifically and how can they help law enforcement in general in recruiting, hiring and retaining qualified officers?

MAYOR JOHNNY DUPREE: Well, Les, first of all I think we have to acknowledge the fact that the attorney general said, and that is that we are asking police officer to get out on the front line, to protect us by putting their lives on the line to start out with. And the obvious think that we can do as city managers or mayors is to make sure that they have an adequate pay. And they're doing that, putting their lives on the line; taken away from the family, as the attorney general said. They're spending many hours out on the streets, and many of those hours away from their families. That's in the pocket.

Now, there are some things that we might be able to do – hopefully we'll be able to do as forms of incentives, housing incentives that we can do for them. And, you know, everybody knows about the rising cost of fuel, even being able to – allow them to take their cruisers home with them instead of sitting there at the shop. So there are many things that we can do, but more than anything else, all of that comes to one word, and that is support, making sure that we support our men and women who are out on the front line protecting us.

CHIEF ALBERT NAJERA: You know, Les, the issues are huge for recruitment. It's a national problem; I think we're all aware of that. And the issues that the mayor just mentioned are of primary importance. The men and women in our organizations need to feel that they're supported by their government, especially by those heads of government where there's a city manager or mayor, city council; all three.

The men and women in the uniforms need to feel like they have some support; they need to feel like they're properly compensated. We don't have to be the highest paid in the state; we don't have to be the highest paid in the region, but the pay has to be commensurate with what is going on in the region so that a law enforcement officer doesn't have to be embarrassed when he's talking to his peers about how much money he's making.

CHIEF RON DAVIS: If I can add, I had a side conversation with the mayor earlier today and he was actually giving me some salary figures. And I think that underscores how a public official, an elected official can support the police. One is understanding exactly what your people are making, understanding what they're making in surrounding communities, and compare that to the profession and not to another city

employee necessarily. And if you understand that, then set the goal to try to make it comparable, as we talked about.

Now, that may not happen in a day, it may not happen in a year, but I think acknowledging that they are not comparable, acknowledging that you would want to take it to another level, and acknowledging that you support them, that they deserve it, will make people have patience, understand the support, and they see that from the elected leaders, I think you have a better chance of retaining. But if elected officials are in denial and basically pretend that there's no problem with the issue of salary or benefits, then you can suffer high attrition rates.

MR. WITMER: I guess the follow up to that is how can executives be involved – city officials, executives, be involved in dealing with the community? What can they do with the community to make sure that the community understands this and supports them?

MR. DAVIS: If I could start with that and then go to the mayor, I mean, we keep saying the word, “community policing” in pretty much everything that we talk about, but I think that's it. If you have a relationship with the community then you need to share your successes, your challenges, and even your failures.

And this is not a failure; this is a challenge. So educating the community about why you have an attrition rate; educating the community about what kind of benefits people are making; educating the community about how the recruiting process goes, how long it takes, that maybe only three out of 100 people may get hired will give them the kind of understanding and patience that I think an executive needs. But I think the executive, whether it's the police chief or the mayor or the city manager, has to take the lead, and has to be visible in the community, accessible to the community, and have those relationships established well before the conversation about recruitment starts.

MR. DUPREE: And community policing – I agree with you – community policing is more than – well, first you have to identify the community, and the community is more than just the people who you see riding around; it's the business people, it's the school officials, it's the media; it's all those different organizations tied up into one. But they all have to understand – when you talk about pay – I did share it with the chief – that in Hattiesburg, \$27,000 is the incoming salary for someone out of class. Well, in the surrounding areas \$29,000 or \$30,000. That has – the public needs to know that. The only way you can get that information out is to involve the public in that.

The way we do that – we have won a national award from the neighborhood council where we take about 40 neighborhood associations that we have in Hattiesburg, and once a quarter we actually invite those representatives to come and we talk about community issues, we talk about policing issues. The police chief comes and detectives come, and if they have issues then we talk about those. We look at community advisory committees. And I think I talked to you all earlier that the police community advisory committee was actually the committee that did a report at our last council meeting that

made two recommendations: one, that we need to increase the pay of police officers, and two, we need more police officers.

MR. NAJERA: You know, there's an awful lot of pressure sometimes on the mayor or on a city council or a city manager to increase the numbers of police officers. We all have crime issues. It's no secret that violent crime in this nation has been going up, especially in the last year, and so you get increased pressure as a mayor to get more cops out on the street, and that's good and bad.

But for me as the police chief, it becomes really difficult when you start getting pressure from your political leaders to increase the number of cops out there without at least thinking about the quality of the people that you are hiring. Hiring quality police officers takes time, training quality police officers takes time, and if you start short cutting the process, in the long run you're going to be in a worse position than you are without quality people.

So if I could give mayors and city managers and council people out there a word of advice, it's don't put a lot of pressure on just getting the numbers out quickly because it's not going to happen quickly in terms of getting good folks out there.

MR. DAVIS: And it takes money. I think that you said it takes time, but it takes money, and it's not the kind of investment where the numbers come back. So if you test 200, we would pretty much know that you'll be lucky to get five or six. And so I think it's not the quantity I think Chief Najera is alluded to, but if you get five or six good, solid, ethical, community-based officers, then you're helping to shape the future of the organization versus 10 just to fill a vacancy, that you didn't disciplinary problems, and you'll destroy trust and confidence.

So I will have to agree with Chief Najera that we feel the pressure sometimes to fill the vacancies, and even once it's funded, and once we start the aggressive hiring process, and even once we hire them it may take up to nine months to get them in the field to where the public sees them, but we just have to stay the course with regards to quality first.

MR. DUPREE: See, that's why retention is so important.

MR. DAVIS: Absolutely.

MR. DUPREE: You only have a certain pool; That pool is only so large, especially in a place like Hattiesburg, Mississippi, or the Deep South, or wherever. You know, our numbers are not like they are in the West, or maybe even a little bit further East. And so you only have certain pool. And so we've got to be real creative in retaining the people that we have.

MR DAVIS: Absolutely.

MR. DUPREE: And that's why we look at pay, and we also look at incentives though, like Fannie Mae that allow you to have a down-payment assistance program for your police officers and be repaid over a 10-year period, or however you design the program because that pool is only so large, and we need to be creative in retaining the people that we have. They have put their lives on the line for us and we need to make sure that we take care of them.

MR. WITMER: That focuses right into a question we got from one of the viewers already. "Recent studies have shown that the current applicants are looking for more from a profession than just a job, such as retirement plans, flexible work schedules for families, and tuition reimbursement to name a few. Are city police agencies willing to offer more to get top talent?"

MR. NAJERA: That hits the nail on the head right there, is that agencies need to be flexible in terms of their work schedules. If you're hiring single women, for instance, that are mothers they're going to have to have flexible schedules. They need sometimes, part-time programs that are offered out there so that they can take care of the issues that they see at home. It's a difficult process; it's not easy. There's union issues; there's staffing issues; there's all kinds of concerns that you have as a police chief and as a police leader. But if you're going to go after that segment of the community out there, you need to be targeting them and making sure that your organization is structured appropriately to handle their concerns and their needs so that reader was right on it in terms of what we need.

MR. DAVIS: We're going to have to rethink the way we think the way we manage a lot of our organizations. And I think we can take some lessons from the private sector that have been innovative with issues of on-site child care, flexible hours. And most of us have been in the profession for a while. And not to date ourselves, but we come from a different era where it's very para-military, very disciplinary, very structured; you worked 12 hours a day even if you worked an eight-hour day. You worked – this was a – the job became your life.

And I think, and probably for a good reason, is that this generation looks at a more balanced and temperate approach. They enjoy their time off. They want to spend time with their family. They're looking long range. They want to look at retirement, benefits, investments, differed compensation. And if we're going to be competitive, not only within the agencies, but to delve into some new markets, then I think you either flex, change, adapt, or perish. It's going to be that simple.

MR. DUPREE: And I totally agree. You know, police officers are asking for the same thing that other professions are asking for, no more, no less. And again, we've got to be creative to figure out how can we bring that kind of creativity into the police department. One of the ways we're going to have to do it is to make sure that we listen to the police officers. I'm not sure that as an executive that we actually listen to the police officer; what their needs are, what their desires are. In order to make that work, we've got to be – and community policing in its most infinite definition, is applying that

terminology to all aspects of your city. If you really want to be creative, you've got to include other people in other agencies, other organizations in order to be creative to do just that.

MR. WITMER: We've been talking, folks, a little bit on recruiting out there. What about the retention of the force itself? What, again, can the city executives, mayors – what can they do as far as the retention and recognition of the police force?

MR. DUPREE: Well, I think I told you earlier, you know, support is a big word. One of the things that we do in Hattiesburg, our police chief makes sure that – if we can't pay them what we think they deserve that we make sure we recognize them for the things that they do. You know, often times just a thank you or atta boy – I know that our sheriff does a – has a ceremony all the time where he has an atta-boy ceremony, where he makes sure that we recognize those officers that do good things, that go above and beyond.

As executives, we make sure that we recognize those individuals at graduation ceremonies, that we recognize the families when they do something outstanding. Support is just a big word, and retention – it goes further than just pay all the times. It really does go further than pay. I think it's respect, it's support, it's making sure that you know that – that the officers know that you have an open-door policy; that they can come and talk to you. It has a lot to do with the community that you live in. If the community supports to the police officers then you'll make it to where, hopefully, those police officers won't want to go anywhere else. And again, that's community policing in its infinite.

MR. DAVIS: We can take some lessons, if you think about it, from the military. In the once sense, I think the mayor and Chief Najera are right about being comparable with pay where it's not embarrassing. But you can have some of the highest spirit, décor, and camaraderie in the units that people are making a \$1,000 a month. But they believe in the organization, they have pride, they believe in the mission, they have confidence in the leadership, and they see the support. And I think that you cannot undervalue or underestimate the value of support.

I'll just give an example for my department in East Palo Alto. On November 2<sup>nd</sup>, we have an awards ceremony where hopefully 10 to 15 officers will receive awards just for outstanding jobs that they have done. I can't offer them much, other than our gratitude and the gratitude from the mayor, and the city council, a certificate, but it's to try to let them know that we appreciate them because I think they're the best around. And so sometimes – I agree; it's not money, but retention is about having pride in the organization and having a shared mission where people actually see where the department's going because they want to be part of something special and go with you. If you don't have that then you can lose your people to things like an extra \$200 a month and that's what happens.

MR. NAJERA: Really, in summary, it's how about – it's how your employees feel about their job; it's how they feel about the people that they work with and we haven't talked much about that, but the idea of the team is very, very important. And



then they feel – it's very important how they feel they're treated by their superiors. If they're treated fairly, if they have a voice in what happens in the organization, it will go a long ways towards mitigating other issues such as pay issues and those kinds of things that some communities just don't have the resources that others do to keep folks.

MR. WITMER: Let me ask you this, what role does the media, say the news media, in covering your daily operations – not just when you send out a new release to them, but covering your daily operations, what role does that play in recruitment and retention?

MR. NAJERA: The media is key in terms of how employees feel about their organization. The pride in and the respect that they about feel about their organization really is reflected in the media and if an organization is doing a good job of getting out the real story of what happens in their police departments, the real story about what happens in their organization, and the quality of the people that they have in there, it's huge in terms of a person's own appreciation for their organization.

MR. DAVIS: I don't care if you have five officers or 5,000, if you haven't identified someone to be a public information officer that has the skills to work with the media, I think you may be making an error. And if you don't manage your relationship with the media then you're allowing an outside entity to brand your organization. And I think the way you work with the media is the same way you work with the community: open, candid, forthright, and accessible.

And sometimes the news is not good but often times it is. And if you're willing to be candid when things are not good then I think the media is willing to support you when things are good, so that – for example, my agency, we put out press releases at least once a month. Now, not all them makes the media and we understand that but it also lets the media know what we're doing and are positives, so that we want to be branded not by the latest homicide that occurred, but branded by the kind of response that we have to that homicide and how work together as a community.

Recently, we had a tragedy where one of my officers was killed on January 7<sup>th</sup> this year, and I thought the media did an outstanding job, not just the tragedy of the officer being killed, but how they covered him, how they humanized him, and how they were able to find community members and anecdotes about how the officer spent time with them, and how he helped them, and how he was willing to go the extra yard. And I think that put a human face on the department, and it made people realize that the police department is really nothing more than people trying to serve other people. And that was very key for us.

MR. DUPREE: I agree with all of what the chief said. You know, the media is the window into our living room. They give the public, whether they live inside the area or outside the area, a view of what it's like in your area. What is it like in Palo Alto and Sacramento and Hattiesburg, Mississippi? It tells them exactly what it's like. Now, they can paint that picture as being half full or they can paint that picture as being half empty;

it's up to them. But if you're trying to recruit or retain – and it's because the media also sets the psyche for that person – if you read something, you believe it.

And so it determines economic development; it determines whether you're going to have new businesses coming into town or businesses leaving; it determines whether you're going to have new officers coming into your town or officers leaving. It plays a vital role in all that we are talking about, recruitment and retention officers, but it also goes beyond that. It goes to economic development, which goes to the viability of your community. It goes to the viability of your schools; it's all encompassing.

MR. NAJERA: I think if there's one mistake that all police organizations make is not putting enough resources into their media relations. And media relations goes beyond the 6:00 news, and it goes beyond the daily newspaper.

MR. DUPREE: Correct.

MR. NAJERA: More and more, people are getting their news from the Internet, and more and more people are interacting and getting their news from blogs. And I think departments need to pay attention to those two upcoming technologies – not upcoming; they're here – and really put some resources into putting out our stories on those kinds of media, and trying to compliment what goes on the 6:00 news and in the daily newspapers.

MR. DUPREE: And I'm real proud of what some of the media is doing in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Billboard companies are putting up billboards asking for recruiting police officers in Hattiesburg. They're doing it free. They're doing on any vacant billboard that they have across Hattiesburg and even outside of Hattiesburg.

MR. WITMER: You know, I think we have a picture of that that we're going to put up on the screen that tells a little bit more about it.

MR. DUPREE: Well, they actually – they created the billboard, and as they created the billboard, and they vacant one that's nobody has rented or leased out, they will actually put that billboard up, and they will leave it up until somebody actually decides that they want to lease it. And then we've had a company that produced and played a commercial for us in actually recruiting police officers. We've taken that across the state as we have allowed our officers to go across the state, and actually do personal interviews with potential officers.

MR. NAJERA: Can I use that billboard? (Laughter.)

MR. DUPREE: Anytime you want too. (Laughter.)

MR. WITMER: Here's another question that's come in, something we haven't talked about. We're talking about different organizations or different segments. "What role does the police union play when it comes to hiring the best of the best?"

MR. DAVIS: If I can start, I think they play a critical role. There's a lot of confusion about police unions in the organizations, but I think it's fair to say that the police union is part of your leadership team. They may not be part of your management team, but it's absolutely part of your leadership team. And they represent the numbers so they should have the pulse of the membership. And by working out there every day, they know who they want to work next to them. And I think if you can fully engage the police union association to serve as recruiters, to motivate the ranking file, to get behind the recruitment efforts, it goes a long way.

I mean, recently in East Palo Alto our HR director met with our union president. Now, one of the things that I would caution is we met with them earlier to do an aggressive campaign but it kind of faltered. We didn't produce and so we lost the momentum. So you have to make sure you're prepared to meet with them, to give them some direction, and allow them to go out in the community, to go out to job fairs, to go out to benefits, and to be your number-one sales person and cheerleader for the organization.

And there's two benefits, one, the candidate will see it, and two, it starts increasing organizational pride and morale within the organization, and that's the side benefit that's really immeasurable.

MR. NAJERA: I think if there's one that that hurts recruitment efforts, is union unrest in an organization. It absolutely kills you, especially if you're looking at lateral officers and getting incumbent officers from other places that may want to come to your city. If there's union problems there, they're going really stand off. We've seen that occur before.

MR. DUPREE: And of course, we don't have unions in Hattiesburg or even in Mississippi that's working that. Yes. (Laughter.) Well, it's not a utopia but it's anyway. (Laughter.) But, you know, I think what we're talking about is a fraternal organization, and I think that's internal. I mean, it may not be organized and such as a union, but we're talking about fraternal organizations that have morale and they want to make sure that they are respected in those kinds of things. I mean, it's the crux of we're all talking about.

MR. DAVIS: Yeah, and even though I laughed, it could be a disadvantage because by having a union, the primary function is to work towards to better the benefits of the membership, and by hiring the right people goes toward that goal. And so actually it's a positive thing. But I know that we joke about –

MR. DUPREE: Well, and –

MR. DAVIS: (Inaudible, cross talk.)

MR. DUPREE: Yes, you're talking about, you know, increasing pay and those kinds of things, that's what we're for. That's what the elected official is for.

MR. DAVIS: That's right.

MR. NAJERA: If you have a good union that is well organized, that is looking out for its members, you're working on parallel tracks towards the same thing.

MR. DUPREE: That's right.

MR. WITMER: Good information. To give us another perspective on how cities are dealing with these issues, let's now listen to Jerry Sanders, the Mayor of San Diego. Prior to that, Sanders served as San Diego's chief of police.

JERRY SANDERS: One of the things that I think is really important, also, recruiting processes and hiring processes take a long time in law enforcement. At one point when I was chief of police, it was an 18- to 24-month process from the time you took the test to the time you started the academy. I know we took only three out of every hundred that applied. Only three actually graduated from the police academy so it's a constant winnowing process as you go through.

We need to look at much more streamlined processes. Those processes were set up when they didn't have computers and when you couldn't make checks in the same way, when you couldn't schedule medical appointments in the same way. We need our hiring to reflect that so that we're giving a job offer out to many of these people a month, month-and-a-half after we initiate the process with the understanding that they may not be able to complete the academy when they're done because we find some issue but much of this can be done much quicker than it has in the past, and I think it's an old model that we work off of.

And a good example is we're very lucky to be in San Diego where we've got the Marine Corps and the Navy, and literally the largest concentration of military personnel in the country, and yet we don't expedite them through any quicker, even though they've had all the medical clearances. They have life experience; they have discipline; they have all those things that we need. If we don't take advantage of that, it takes just as long to hire one of them as it does somebody who has never had a job in policing before.

So I think we need to be much more innovative and we really need to speed these processes up so we don't lose them, number one, to other agencies; number two, to other competing job interests because there are so many jobs out there right now that are attractive to the type of applicant that we have. We need to tie them up right away, bring them in and let them see the end of the process very quickly.

MR. WITMER: Mayor Sanders talked about the innovative ways in dealing with recruiting among other occupations, and that can be a problem. Who is your target

audience that's out there? There are other people competing for these. What are some of the innovative ways that you've all been able to deal with that?

MR. DUPREE: Well, what we've done – I think Chief Najera has set it up pretty well to say that this is a national problem that we have, retention and recruiting of qualified police officers, top cops as you've termed it. What we've done in our area with – two things basically. We've formed a regional mayors' association, regionalism. We've recognized the importance of having as many elected officials as we can in this process. We're bringing in people to speak to us from ATF and the Attorney General's office to talk about crime and to talk about recruitment and those kinds of things that's important to all of us.

We're also recognizing the effect that television programs have on the young people, CSI. Everybody wants to be a forensic pathologist. And so what we've done, with the help of the federal government, and USM, and other local agencies, is to setup a CSI program to actually entice other young people to get involved. You know, we recognize that there's only a small pool of people that we can pull from, especially in Mississippi. There are only 2.5, 2.6 million people. And so we've got to increase that pool or that poaching that we talked earlier -- is going to continue from one agency to another agency to another agency.

MR. NAJERA: You know, especially for the smaller agency, they have to recognize that other organizations are looking for your people every day. You have to be on top of your game because, frankly, organizations like mine are trying to get your people every single day –

MR. DUPREE: Right.

MR. NAJERA: – and we're trying to put it out there as positive a message as we can. And so there has to be equal and opposite force from that other agency.

MR. DAVIS: But if I could add, coming from a small agency now, is your asking about innovative recruiting efforts. And I think, unfortunately, most of the agencies are targeting other agencies, and as alluded to the word poaching. And my concern, besides losing bodies, is that as we focus on poaching from one agency to another, that we're really missing the bigger picture – is why there's a generation that's not interested or excited about joining the police service. And I think our national recruiting efforts and even local, will have to focus on identifying how we get a whole new generation or a whole new industry or a group of people excited about police service, wanting to come to us, so that we're putting new blood into the industry –

MR. DUPREE: Exactly.

MR. DAVIS: – and simply allowing the domino to bounce around the checkerboard, where that is checker around the checkerboard. (Laughter.) But I think the idea is that we need to quit poaching from each other. To a certain extent, people

should have movement, but I think we're creating an environment where now even our recruitment efforts are slanted towards that. I can give you this signing bonus and I can give you what this agency can't versus the mentality that says, look, I'm going to give you something that's part of being something special; I'm giving you a profession, a career; come join us so that you can be part of this family, as I think that was mentioned by the speakers on the video.

MR. DUPREE: That's community policing again. It is a story that media tells; it's a story that the businessman tells; it's a story that the police officer tells in that jurisdiction, especially for young people at a college level, who are trying to decide where am I going? What type of profession am I going to pursue? And quite frankly, I think there are a lot of them that would do it if they knew the advantages that they could have from it and the excitement that they could have from it too and in the public good that they do.

You know, public service as all of us are – we're never going to be millionaires, so as public servants, we have to realize what we're doing it for is for our communities. That is what we're all here for anyways; it's about bettering our communities.

MR. WITMER: Here's a question that's come in. Mayor, you touched on the national involvement but this question asks specifically, "How can federal agencies assist state, local, and tribal agencies in recruiting, hiring, and retention efforts?"

MR. DAVIS: Money. (Laughter.) Grants. I think once you acknowledge that it is a national issue, I think we've got to have that discussion. And I thought about that, and I didn't come up with a good answer yet, but I think it does beg the question, what are we wanting from the federal agencies or the federal government? And maybe what we need right now is to look into that issue, why we don't have as much interest as we appeared to have maybe 20 years ago, if that even is the case – was it a perception? What kind of recruiting strategies are working, which ones are not? I mean, DOJ, Department of Justice, has done some great publications on innovative ways to recruit, but we need to dig a little bit deeper.

I think we can also look at – if you look at – remember the teacher shortage several decades ago, where it took kind of a – you know, whether it was forgiving college loans or something that would stimulate people to be in the police service that I think we need to talk about. I don't know if it's the solution but it's worthy of a discussion.

MR. NAJERA: In the early '70s there was a national effort through the law enforcement assistance administration, if I can remember that title correctly, where lots of police officers, including myself, actually were given stipends by the federal governments to go to school, to complete college. And that was in an effort to get police officers to go to college.

I think what would be very helpful now is if could offer tuition, free education to those people that are building towards becoming a police officer, where especially at the

junior college level, where we get so many kids that would love to go to college and be able to be eligible to join a police department, and so many of us now require college education, it would be helpful for the feds to be able to support these kids, to get them, to build them towards becoming a police officer.

MR. DUPREE: I totally agree. I think it needs to be a national dialogue on what we're just talking about. And there needs to be a partnership formed between local agencies and the federal government because what we're talking about is cyclical. We take care of it in the '70s and then the '80s we don't think about it. Then in the '90s we take care of it again, then in 2000 we just forget about it again. And we have to understand that this problem is not going to go away; this problem is going to be here, and we have to address the problems.

Now, local agencies, local government, if – and I remember the cops program. I'm sure you all can remember the cops program as the great – one of the terrific programs. I wish that program was still alive. Local government still had some things they needed to do. If cops hired those police officers, well, their local agencies had to commit to keeping those police officers on. And I think that was a great program. And, again, that was a partnership. It was in education and then partnership. And those are the two things that I think are missing on this topic.

MR. DAVIS: Les, I have something to say, I'm hopeful. Here we have a venue today that's obviously supported by the attorney general to talk about this critical issue. I think all of us agree, as we struggle with the increasing violence rates in our community, that for many of us, local policing is absolutely homeland security. And so we have to attack this issue, recruitment and hiring, with the same vigor, the same commitment as we do with the issue of terror or terrorism because I don't think you can separate them. So I mean, I think we got to have that national debate.

MR. WITMER: I guess that leads to a question. Since 9/11 – and, Mayor, in your case, you suffered a disaster, both from the standpoint of physically hitting the area and also an influx of people who went homeless. How have those things impacted your force, and how have they impacted recruiting and retention? What are the numbers like?

MR. DUPREE: Well, you know, after 9/11 we had 25 or 30 officers that were gone in a day's time to protect our country. Right now we have about 15 officers that are still gone; they haven't come back. Katrina, on the other hand, did the same thing, where some of our officers saw some better opportunities for pay, quite frankly. They went to other venues; some of them went out of policing all together. So it's been a challenge for us to maintain the police force that we've had, and some of those events have take its toll on us, as has even – we talked about the administration. You know, some of the philosophies of the administrations, some of the police officers didn't like me. That's the way it happens sometimes. Some leave for those kinds of reasons too.

But we have, in the past few months, have done just what we talked about, poaching. (Chuckles.) You know, it's sad to say, but that's what we've done. We've

gone out – I mean, last week we just swore in two young ladies from another jurisdiction. One had eight years of service; another had six years of service. But those are the things that we have to do. There's only – the pool is very small and those who are available are already working. And that's why I, again, agree with these gentleman, that we have to have a new dialogue that we can interest and tweak the interest of some young people and expand that pool and have some new blood to come into this profession.

MR. WITMER: You are talking about young people. What can school principals do or universities, local high schools, or even down from that, what can be down in that area?

MR. NAJERA: You know, one of the best things that we have done with our cops and schools grant that we have is to use our school resource officers as recruiters in the high schools. And we – we in the Sacramento Police Departments prefer to build our own, as we say. We start with our high school programs, and we have criminal justice academies in four magnet schools, in four magnet high schools in our cities.

We take those kids, and we build them through an ROTC-like program up until – right up until the point they graduate at 17, 18 years old, and then we continue with a career track from that point, where they can come to work in the police department some time, get their tuition paid, get their books paid in junior college, get health benefits, and a wage that is pretty good for a high school kids. And they are able to live on that wage, at least, while they are going to school.

And then by the time they are 21, they can decide if they want to join us, or if they want us to join us. And it's a match made in heaven for us. But it starts with that school resource officer from our cops and schools program.

MR. DAVIS: If I can – this brings an issue of some of the challenges I know the panelists and I are dealing with, especially as chiefs, and that is, you have to deal with some short-term strategies that may impact the long-term vision. And so when you look at growing your own, as Chief Najera is talking about, you are investing in schools that you can grow your own to be police officers. But, as you just start struggling with the shortages – the vacancies, then you have to pull your school resource officers out of the schools, and put them on patrol because you have increasing crime and violence and all of these vacancies.

So the challenges that many colleagues that are watching the webcast, is you have to be aggressive in dealing with your short terms, but you cannot abandon the long-term vision because what will happen is the reciprocal issue: you'll fill the vacancies today, but you'll have the same shortages three to five years from now, and you'll keep going over and over again.

Mr. DUPREE: It's true. And that's where regionalism comes in, even when you still talk about the short term, where you can take advantage of those other agencies that you have. Instead of poaching form them, use those resources, have those resources part



time or whatever, in order to use those resources, and let them go back. Don't poach on them, but have them help you.

MR. WITMER: We have got just a little better than a minute left in this section. We have got a question in, and I'm going to throw it to each one of you just for a brief comment. The question is, "What creative ideas do you have for small communities with limited resources." An example are something that – and again, we don't have a lot of time to go into detail, but maybe just leave on that. From your standpoint, from the chief and from the mayor's standpoint, what are some – what is one or two of the things that people should take away from this?

MR. DUPREE: Limited resources in small communities, I would think that you check all of the federal government incentive programs like – (inaudible) – again like we said, that would allow your officers to be able to get down-payment assistance if you can do that.

If they are taking a car home and if you have a cruise, let them take the car home. Those are the kinds of things that you can retain officers from. And you have to invite the people in your community into a dialogue so that the business people can also get involved. We talked earlier maybe about somebody starting a foundation. Those are some things that I think they can do.

MR. NAJERA: I think look to the strengths. What are the resources of that region? Is it recreation? Do you have a big sports area? Do you live in a mountain region where hunting and fishing is primo, where skiing, where bicycling is key? Play to your strengths, and try to market the strengths of your organization. Perhaps it's the sense of family within a small organization, that people love to join things that they are a part of, and play to the strengths of the smaller organization.

MR. DAVIS: Yeah, real quick, I think innovation and creativity. Resources cannot be the excuse, and it's adopt a the very (?) philosophy, bigger is not always better, and play on your strengths and let people know exactly what it is – in other words, we have a saying in my department, the biggest little police department in the nation, big-city challenges and excitement in a little family-oriented town that will embrace you as a part of the family. So play on the strengths and let people know exactly what you offer them, and in many cases, people will take small over bigger.

MR. WITMER: Thanks. Some good information.

The challenge of recruiting and hiring qualified people is a critical issue facing law enforcement in the United States, as we talked about today. Successful recruiting and hiring strategies are essential components for creating a culture of integrity and establishing mutual respect and trust with the community.

ANNOUNCER: Our spirit of service, essential to a proud profession, based on honor, integrity, and a call to serve, the necessary foundation of effective, responsive,

community policing. Truly effective law enforcement begins with the character of each officer, making recruitment more critical than ever. Recruiting, it goes beyond heroism and lure of adventure. Building a force with a focus on vital service to citizens and the community. Understanding that the quality of policing is linked to the individual behavior of officers and deputies.

This emphasis on excellence points to the goal of attracting the right people for the right position. In this changing climate, integrity becomes paramount. Jurisdictions are banding together to recruit more effectively. Community members are identifying potential officers. As a result, officer candidates are reflecting enhanced diversity, and a widening cultural awareness.

Some states and cities are using focus groups to determine community needs and expectations. More expansive, inclusive recruitment means creating innovative marketing campaigns using radio and TV, public service announcements, advertising, and striking visuals, all to attract the best, most dedicated officers. Jurisdictions are viewing recruitment as a long-term investment, calling upon professional marketing terms to brand their messages, offering incentives, including affordable housing and flexible shifts, forging creative partnerships that make agencies and their surrounding communities more attractive officer candidates.

Many jurisdictions realize that recruiting officers is just the start. Officer retention is the key to more effective policing, and avoiding the hidden costs of turnover. Establishing a force committed to professionalism and service is the key to maintaining quality community policing. Recruiting is an investment in a community's future, with everyone having a stake in the outcome. Recruiting in the spirit of service has never been more important. Law enforcement must reflect the best a community has to offer. That begins with honor, duty, and integrity.

MR. WITMER: Joining our discussion is Charles Hank, a lieutenant with the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, who oversees the recruitment and background checks for the department. Also joining us is Mayor Jim Previterra, head of the training division of the Hillsborough County Florida Sheriff's Office, who supervises the training and recruitment of that office. And staying with us is Chief Ron Davis, and Chief Albert Najera – remained with us from the first panel. So welcome to you all.

To get us started on this panel, let's take a minute and listen to Mayor Jerry Sanders of the San Diego – Mayor Jerry Sanders of San Diego, and Ed Daley, who we heard from before, as city manager of Winchester, Virginia.

MAYOR SANDERS: I don't think there is any one best practice for the recruitment retention. I think it's more of an opportunity we have all got to learn, particularly as the generations change. This generation has different priorities than the generation did, and the generation gap has shrunk so that this last generation is more like 10 years ago rather than the traditional 20 years ago. And they have different priorities. They have different needs. And we have to find out – and we have to be able to identify

what those needs are and determine how we can meet them, which is why we have to – the key is our officer involvement, getting them involved in creating the programs.

MR. DALEY: I think the standards are – they can't really be lowered in many ways. I mean, I don't think easing drug use or easing some of the other standards that are in effect – we need people who can read and write effectively, who are articulate, who are smart, who fit the psychology profile, go through the medical system and all of that. All of that is very important to all of us.

I do think you can take a different look, though, at some of the things that may not seem like much to us but the facial hair, some of the piercings of ears and things like that. We need to rethink some of that. And while it may not be attractive to our generation, it's going to be perfectly normal to the generation of people coming on, and I think we need to update our standards on some of those types of things, the grooming standards, rather than on the ones that are really the dividing line.

You know, I don't see that somebody who has got a drug usage history, a big one, is going to be of any use in the police department, and I don't think people would trust him, but I do think looks are something that can be done in a relaxed way that brings in people that are looking to do a good job, but may look differently than the way we did 30 years ago when we had white-sidewall haircuts and no facial hair.

MR. WITMER: Welcome to you both. And Jim, I might have said mayor instead of major, so we will get your title correctly. (Chuckles.)

What we heard there was some comments talking about changing the standards, maybe a need to reexamine the standards that we are now using? I would be very interested in hearing what the two of you, who are actively involved in this, what you think about this.

MAJOR JIM PREVITERA: Well, Les, I think that we cannot abandon the standards that the public expects from us. I think there are certain standards that we have to maintain, and there are certain standards that we need to raise, in fact, in this day and age because I think that the community expects that from us, and that the law enforcement in general expects that from us. We have evolved from a vocation, as I heard earlier, into a profession. And in order to be considered professionals and to attract professional people, then we have to have professional standards. There may be certain things with the changes in time and generational changes and philosophies that we can look at and reevaluate, but I don't think that abandoning standards is the answer or lowering them just for the sake of obtaining bodies. You know, it's quality versus quantity.

MR. : I agree with the major. I mean, we are in a profession where we have the power and the authority to take away someone's liberty and to take away someone's life. The public has a high expectation of the members of every law enforcement agency. On the other hand, we must make sure that the future candidates that we are seeking to

hire understand what our expectations are, and not only that the agency expects this but also the public.

You know, we have tattoo standards. We need to let folks know you can't have tattoos running down the side of your face looking like Mike Tyson or something like that. That might be offensive to certain people. You can't have piercings everywhere all over your body. Again, that might be offensive to someone. But we also have to let them know about the expectations in showing that you maintain integrity, you maintain some sense of responsibility, that as you – you know, most agencies do financial, records checks, and so forth. They do drive-in history, employment history checks. People need to understand before they become a police officer and come into the law enforcement field what is expected of them, and it's important we reach out to them at a young age and expose them to what those standards are.

MR. DAVIS: If I can add, I think we need to reexamine the entire system, the entire process. I mean, just 30 years ago, 40 years ago, there might have been a standard that you had to be 5'7", and that was geared for it to prevent women from being in the service.

And so when we have this discussion about reexamination, I agree with not lowering the standards, but we have to evaluate whether or not the standards are applicable. And so at some point, we have to define what are the standards, what are the requisite skills of being a police officer, and it may not be everything we have in a testing process. And if we are having a process that has a disparate outcome, then we are obligated to keep reevaluating it. I think we are obligated to take a look at how we streamline each process to make us more competitive, and whether or not what we are asking them to do is something that they are going to do in the job. And I think by doing that, you are not lowering your standards.

And the issue of piercing and tattoos, does that disqualify, do they come in with constraints that says no visible tattoos, you can't wear the piercings while you're on duty. What is that? It would be nice to reach them when they are young, but if they are not. Am I am going to lose a very good candidate because he or she has a tattoo on their arm, or do I constrain how they make that tattoo visible. So we have to really evaluate. Do they need to run four miles or is it a hundred yards because that is what a quick pursuit is?

Job-relatedness, it has to be related to the job. I think we are obligated to do that evaluation.

MR. : My perspective is that integrity is the single-most important characteristic that every police candidate has to have. You cannot have people that have issues with their honesty. We have seen too many agencies that are get in a hurry, they hire people that don't have those kinds of characteristics, and in a few years, they are paying the price. We have scandals that we have seen in major organizations all across

this nation because of poor backgrounding or because the hired people when they got in a hurry that didn't have the integrity standards.

In terms of the physical performance standards, my perspective is that we set that bar where we think it is appropriate, as Chief Davis indicated. Whatever we think is appropriate for our community, that is what it should be, but we train people to reach it. We don't expect them to walk in the door and be able to run 100-yard dash in four seconds or a mile in four minutes, but if that is the standard that we want to get to, which it isn't, by the way, we can train people to get to those standards. Our young people can meet our expectations if we set those expectations and then train them to meet that expectation.

MR. : Can I give you an example? When I was applying, there was an issue of did you smoke Marijuana, and we are looking at drug use, and cultural issues aside, now, if we look at this generation, to continue to ask that question to disqualify candidates for trying marijuana when they were 17. The question, is that reasonable anymore? Is it a moral issue? Is it an integrity issue? Or are we looking at the issue right. And I'm not offering one side or the other.

And I would say that many times our process is so unrealistic that you are encouraging candidates to lie, and then we have got to do – we then in polygraph to catch them in that lie, and then wonder why they hide, versus understanding that our candidate is a human, and that they are going to make some mistake that we all made at 16 or 17, but was it an ethical mistake? Was it an immoral mistake? Did they learn from it, and are they going to be the kind of candidates you want. So I'm not saying you lower your standards, but if we are really going to get new blood here from the new generation, we may have to change our standards.

MR. : You know, Les, I think it is important for us to realize that it is important now – just as the chief said. You know, before it was about screening people out – marijuana, polygraph, how can we get rid of this person. I think now if we go into it, and we look at the philosophy we take into recruiting, and we look to screen people into our organization, that in itself can be the most effective tool for an agency. It's to reevaluate that.

The days of people coming to us and walking through the doors, and the applications coming so – I remember when I applied, they told me the applications, there were dozens of them, and they would get back to me when they have a chance. Well, those days just don't exist for a lot of agencies anymore. So we really need to screen people into our organizations. We need to develop a culture and a mission for our organization, and then we need to screen people in accordingly.

MR. WITMER: Let me ask you this, and the city manager at Daley hit on, a generation gap, we are talking about – Chief Najera in the first segment talked about the automation and the people, new recruits of the day. Who are they? Are they thrill-

seekers? Are they looking for community service, and how are you marketing towards that pool that is out there?

MR. : Well, I think we are looking at a pool that is somewhat non-traditional to what we are accustomed to in law enforcement. Obviously we don't have the military pool of candidates, those that are exiting the military in mass numbers, as they have in years past, coming to our law enforcement agency. The military is stepping up to ensure that they retain more employees to deal with the national, international conflicts that we are exposed to.

But we have to make our community aware, and all of the members of our community aware that these are opportunities for them to serve within the community, not only as police officers but other positions as well, whether it be CSI-type position, whether it be as information technology or other positions of the sort. And we have to not only think about the young people, but we have to also be open to folks that are seeking a second career maybe they are looking for, another opportunity to start all over in law enforcement.

MR. : I am going to throw out a different perspective with regards to the military. The military has produced very good candidates. I came from the military throughout the years. But because – they are all tied up right now, and even we're losing people that are on duty that are being called up. I think we have to look into a whole new market. And it gets to the issue of thrill seekers or service-oriented people. If you're going to adopt a philosophy of hiring in the spirit of service, then you have to stay true to their philosophy, which means you recruit in that manner, you advertise in that manner, which means you don't screen people out through your advertisement.

So if you all you have is on your commercials people repelling from helicopters with machine guns, then you'll get people with a sense of adventure, and they have a place in the organization. But you may screen out the person who is there for service.

And I'll just give you an example, you have four, for example, just laid off – I think it was 14,000 employees. That is a recruitment opportunity, and there could be some people there that may want a change of direction to do some service-oriented work and I think we have to target them, but we don't want to screen them out because what if they are 30, 35 years old when they are looking at this commercial where someone has got to leap buildings in a single bound, and they might go, that is not for me, versus another part that shows them working in the schools, working with the community, working to solve problems.

MR. : You know, the chief mentioned this before, and we talk about the military. And I think the law enforcement has been reluctant to learn from the successes of other entities such as private industry and the military when it comes to recruiting. You know, the military has adapted their recruiting over the years. I mean, the ads and the print ads that I saw coming out of high school as an 18-year-old, they have evolved into some pretty savvy advertising campaigns targeted at specific audiences. They have

done studies to determine what they are looking for in a soldier, just as private entities have. And, you know, it's time for law enforcement to really take a look at it. We have to constantly evaluate our recruiting methods, and we have to change them adjust them accordingly.

MR. : Recruiting is individual. We're not looking with a person with particular characteristics, we are looking for a variety of people. We don't go to the universities and just recruit out of the criminal justice classes. We recruit out of the marketing classes, out of the communication schools, out of schools of business, IT folks, certainly forensics people. We need to have a wide variety of people in our organization because our community is a wide variety of people. So we need a lot of different skills, and we need people with the ability to deal with those various cultures that we have out there. So I need a big tool box, lots of different kind of tools, not just hammers.

MR. : You know what they say, if all you have is a hammer, everything looks like a nail, right. (Laughter.)

MR. WITMER: Let's go to recruiting itself and maybe focus a little bit of time looking at large agencies. What goes into the role of the recruiter? How do you pick recruiters? If you have a recruiter on hand, or whether – in a smaller force, how do you handle those things?

MR. HANK: Well, I think Chief Davis hit the hammer on the head – on the nail with the hammer there. I think it's important that you establish a brand. One of the things Las Vegas did, we just recently had a sales tax initiative where we are going to hire anywhere from 400 to 500 officers per year over the next several years.

MR. : Same with California.

MR. HANK: Well, we will see.

One of the things we decided to do was partner with one of the ad agencies in the Las Vegas community. Many people have heard the ad, what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas. We decided to seek those folks out and seek assistance from them, where we did some research on the type of person that we are looking for, gave a little background about them, talked about what the expectations are of our agency.

We came up with the slogan, protect the city, join the force. It doesn't have the traditional cops jumping out of helicopters or the swat officer standing out there with a firearm in their hand. It talks about the heroic side of the law enforcement that was bestowed upon us in the 1930s and '40s, that people see it as an area where you could serve and truly reach out to the whole community in a community-oriented policing type fashion.

So we went with them, they came back with that, and now we put tools in the recruiters hands, getting to your point where you said what type of person that recruiter

has to be. The recruiter has to be one of your best people in your agency. You pick the most tactful person who – better tactically to go to your swat teams. These people have to have good communications skills. They have to be a people person. They have to believe in the agency. You have to understand the values of the agency. And you also have to look beyond what is assigned directly to your recruiting team, but also every member of your agency.

One of the things we did with that is we created an employee referral program. Right now our referral program gives us about 20 percent of those that graduate from our police academy – are referred by other employees. And now we went a step beyond that, and we now reward them by giving them an incentive when they reach out and recruit someone, and they subsequently attend the police academy.

You know, the bottom line is small agency, large agency, your best recruiter is your satisfied employee. It's that person that is working for you right now that takes pride in the uniform they wear, and they tell people about it, whether it's through their community policing, when they are out there in contact with people in the neighborhoods, or if it's just talking to their friends, or talking to people that they may encounter on the street.

But like Las Vegas, we are right now going through one of our largest hiring initiatives ever. We have gone out – we have reached out to the advertising firm that was successful with the Outback Steakhouses, and they developed a campaign for us, and it was could you answer the call.

And what we did, Les, is we sat down with the mid-level supervisors in our agency between a sergeant rank and the captain rank, and we looked at some of our employees who we felt best exemplified the mission of the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, and we looked at their evaluations, and we went and we tried to pull and grab at the traits and the qualities that made them the employee we want, and we took those, and that is what we went ahead and formulated our campaign on.

Those were kind of the qualifiers that we were looking for in our employees, and they were centered more around service. You know, the sense of adventure, like the chief said, you want that in every officer, but I think that that community service, which we put a strong emphasis on in our agency is important. And I think small agency or large agency, when you – (audio break, tape change).

MR. DAVIS: (In progress) – the finances to pay for a marketing firm, so we used the firm of East Palo Alto, P.D. – (laughter) – come up with our own brand.

MR. : But a successful brand.

MR. DAVIS: And we looked at it as what do we have to offer, and we came up with the idea that we are the biggest little police department in the nation, and it's the play on the Reno, biggest little city in the world. And the idea is that we're not as



competitive as we would like to be with our benefits, but you can get experience. There are some challenges. We are very progressive with our policing styles. We are fully implemented; we are committed to community policing. So you can get that kind of experience, but you have the benefit of a small packet.

And so for us, all of our recruiters, if I can, all of my officers are recruiters, and so I have to invest in all of them. But there is a challenge because I need to make sure. I don't know if we are 100 percent there yet, that every single one of them knows what we are offering, every program we're offering, and that they need to be the biggest cheerleaders for the organization, which goes into the issues we talked about earlier, understanding that they are part of something special, understanding the mission, that they have to basically wear that uniform, or even a T-shirt off duty with pride, that I am the East Palo Alto Police Department, and that I think you might have what it takes to work with me.

MR. : But, you know, that resonates down from your attitude, and I have seen that in my contact with you over the last two days, and that is important. We talk about the mayors and the chiefs and what they can do, and that is the thing, is when I talk to the chief and when I talk to Najera, the attitude that they have and the enthusiasm they have for their agency, I can see how it resonates down in a small agency, and that is important.

The people at the throttle that, you know, right now the sheriff in Hillsborough County has empowered his agency to be good recruiters because they are doing the right things to make people proud of their jobs.

MR. : Oftentimes, you need to specialize your recruiting. For instance, in my organization, we have made a concerted effort to recruit women into the Sacramento Police Department. So we have gone out with large media campaigns and done community events, one of which is our female fitness challenge. We are building around – the main obstacle for a lot of women joining the police department is the physical agility exam that is required in California.

So around that examination, we have developed the challenge working with local fitness clubs and with local vendors where we got prizes that included a cruise, by the way to the Caribbean for the winner – we put on this event. And we bring people in, we show them how to do the obstacle course, and then we structure a physical performance program for three months, and at the end of the three months, the person that shows – or the persons that show the greatest improvement get prizes. But the whole thing is not about the prizes; it's about the interaction between the women in the community and our female police officers that run the program, and we have gotten a lot of female recruits that way.

Something else that we are planning in April is an all-women's marathon along the river in Sacramento, and we are hoping to get three or four hundred women running that marathon, and it's not just about running the marathon; again, it's the interaction between ourselves and our women's community in the city of Sacramento.

MR. : Les, if I could just add one small point here. I think we have to keep in mind what recruiting is really all about. It's just another extension of true community policing. We just can't look internally at our agencies, like what Chief Davis is talking about. He doesn't have a recruitment staff as I do. So what we have to do is seek other alternatives such as – some of the ideas that we may utilize, for example, are sheriff's requirement councils, whether they be of the various diverse groups, the women's groups and so forth that we assist them and we empower them to also be our ambassadors, to also go out and recruit – again, another extension of community policing in just a different fashion, not so much going out there solving crime, but helping us solve this challenge to find and locate the best recruits that we went after, the best cops to hire for our agency.

MR. : It's a force multiplier, I mean, if you think about it. We didn't talk about it – we were starting at the infancy stage of community recruiter program. So not only are all my officers recruiters at the community. They come in contact with hundreds of thousands of people a day, and if they have a confidence in their department, then they will know who they are looking for with characteristics think is good, and the police officer they want to serve, and we have some initial interest.

Now, we have to put that meat on the bone to make that work, but I think there is the interests, there are the stakeholders, and more probably they have some very good input, and I think they have a good eye for people. And so I think to the point that you can tap not only into – as I agree with Charles, not only into inside the organization, but outside it is very significant.

With regard to – if I can just open this open this up with regard to women and minorities, I think that is one of the areas, specialized areas that Chief Najera was talking about, and maybe that will start a discussion about retention because I think the greatest way to recruit minorities is the way you retain them.

They have to have opportunities within the organization, they have to look at the organization, see people that look like them, and they have to feel like I have a chance to progress in the organization, and we have to know that that department that you are wanting them to join actually serves the minority community with distinction. And if you don't have those things there, you can go to every historical black college you want, people are not coming to your agency because you asking them to come in spite of, not because of – and I think that is the difference.

MR. : Well, I think what – oh, sorry, go ahead.

MR. : I just wanted to make the point that – secondarily to that, you need to make sure that your training programs, your internal programs are – I hate to use this term because it's a cliché, but they have to be culturally competent in terms of your training programs and your field-training officers need to be competent in dealing with people of different cultures, of different ethnicities.

We have a large Southeast Asian population in Sacramento, for instance, and hiring and retaining Southeast Asian officers is difficult. There is language issues, there is cultural issues; there is a myriad of issues there that we have to deal with, and it starts with the recruiters and really focuses on their field training officers to make sure that they know how to communicate, that they know how to deal with people of different cultures when they are training them.

MR. : Just to add to what Chief Davis was talking about, I think we have to also keep in mind that there is a variety of different programs that any agency can establish to assist their agency. For example, my internship programs have been very successful for us in our community. In the last two semesters, we have had over 20 interns participate in a process, and we have actually hired five of those interns who have completed that internship.

We have also just established – he talked about retention, a HIRE program; it's called the household inclusion and recruitment and employment. And through that program, we don't just recruit the individual officer; right now when a new officer comes and starts the academy, the immediately have 90 to 100 new friends, but oftentimes, they have a spouse or a significant other at home that doesn't really know anyone within our community, doesn't really know that much about the community.

What we are doing is not only recruiting that individual officer, but we are partnering with other private companies within our community, we are partnering with the teachers, the nurses, and so forth, and also reaching out to the churches, so that now we call these people and say, hey, we understand that your spouse has just moved into this community; what are you interested in, what are your children interested in, what are their types of hobbies? Do you need any assistance? Are you looking for employment as well? And maybe not with our agency, but referring to some other opportunity that exists within our community.

MR. : The welcome wagon.

MR. : Yes.

MR. WITMER: Let me just also add for our viewers out there, many of the material that talked about is on our resource page, [dojconnect.com](http://dojconnect.com). But we also have links I think to your department where they can get more information on that. Lieutenant Hank.

MR. HANK: And let me just add too. I know that we talked about having the budgets and the funds to do some of these things. The HIRE program we initiated, which we have a recruitment support person, that is funded through a grant. The additional advertising from that agency that what happens in Vegas stays in Vegas, they are providing that pro bono. We come in and we only have to pay for the printing, but they

are providing the services and the brainstorming and so forth to help us develop that strategy.

So small communities or even large communities that don't have the funds that exist that they see within their own budgets to go out and initiate these things, be resourceful, reach out to the community, and there is a lot of folks out there just willing to help; they are just waiting for the opportunity and look forward to those of us asking.

MR. WITMER: Okay, here is a question that has come in.

“What is the opinion of the board on the entry-level requirements of some level of college to be considered for employment?”

MR. : I think it is very important. And, again, it goes back to what I said earlier. People will meet our expectations if we assist them. We have determined long ago that college was necessary for the advancement of police as a profession. If police department and cities – and, again, perhaps – maybe it's something that the federal government can do, is come in and provide tuition assistance to people that want to be police officers – I think it is a two-edged sword. Even if the person doesn't become a police officer, they are a better educated citizen at that point. So we are not losing anything. That is my perspective.

MR. : Yeah, and I think we have pretty sufficient research now that shows that officers with higher education are less likely to engage in excessive force and misconduct. So we know that. We have statistical empirical data to show that. However, I would say you need to balance that, and going to the idea of bringing people and helping them reach that standard. So I think you can come up with educational standards or some alternatives. There is some life experiences that may be equal to college.

But I think once they get into the organization then, more important than what they walk in the door with, is are you promoting lifelong learning inside the organization. So if you come in with an associate's degree, or do you have tuition payment, repayment, reimbursement; are you setting standards that say, look, to be a sergeant, you may need the 60 units now; to be a lieutenant; you need a bachelor's, and so forth and so on. Or are you just simply saying, walk in with the paper, and then I'll never ask you about it again in 30 years.

So on one hand, I think a better-educated force is a better force, but instead of just cutting people off at the knees right now, I think we can transition in a manner that can get some people into the organization that may turn out to be very outstanding candidates with very little college, put them through the system to get them to higher education, especially if they have other life experiences, and then set the standard from inside out, starting with the inside with your management levels, to where then you set the standard like Sacramento has, 60 units or a bachelor's degree.

MR. : Well, you know, I think that if we as a profession are going to ask to be paid better, be compensated better, and to be, as was discussed earlier, looked at differently than the other municipal employees, then I think good educational standards are important. I think that coming in the door it is important to say, hey, we are requiring these people up front to come in with a level of education that sets them apart, and the standards that we have set, set us apart from the other employees, and this is why we should be compensated better, in addition to the danger factor, which is always one of the strongest arguments.

MR. WITMER: Here is another question from a viewer. "What experience do you any of you have in paying incentives to prospective recruits?"

MR. : What we have done, as I have indicated already, but I'll reemphasize, is we offer tuition reimbursement and books, and actually, I'm looking at expanding that program at this point in time. We think that is important.

MR. HANK: One of the approaches that we taken in turn – it's not a direct incentive that we pay to new recruits. However, right now in Las Vegas, approximately 50 percent of those coming to our agency, the applicants that apply and then subsequently are hired by our agency come from out of state. One of the things we started doing is we track where they are coming from, and we are starting to market and recruit – take our recruitment efforts on the road. We now start taking our testing on the road, and administer the first part of the test that they would have to complete in the Las Vegas community.

Currently, that runs a candidate an average of approximately a thousand dollars for that first trip to come out to Las Vegas. That doesn't include the gambling that they may do while they are there. But it costs approximately a thousand dollars to come out for their trip. So if we go on the road – and we recently did – we came east and recruited in a major city, and we had approximately – I won't tell you in which city, but I think we were very successful. We had approximately 250 candidates come out and test with us. And as you could see, if you multiply that, that is \$250,000 that would have been expended by those candidates just to come to our community to test with us.

So we have to be innovative in law enforcement, think of more customer-service really approaches to reach out to our customers the potential candidates that we would like to hire.

MR. DAVIS: I don't know – maybe the person who sent the message might also be thinking of things like signing bonuses, which is becoming very common, where there is not a potential savings, but necessarily a direct cash influx. And I think – I'm looking at that, and I'm still trying to evaluate. I don't know if the jury – I think the jury may be out whether it's there. I have seen in California signing bonuses – I'm sure you have seen it, Al, as high as ten thousand dollars to sign up, and then even the thing with second-housing loans. And I think there is probably some benefit to the signing bonus.

The only thing I would recommend – and my command staff and I are talking about it – is to make sure you spread it out over a couple of years so that you can get some return on your investment before people hopping around agency to agency. So if you want to offer 10,000, maybe it's a thousand signing bonus, and then maybe it's 2,000 after probation, and then 5,000 after, or 3,000 at the year two, and 5,000 at the year three, something that will maybe give them a commitment.

There was a movement in California to try to get people to pay back for their training if they left the agency before a certain time, but that was struck down by the courts. So I have to go back to what I think we are suggesting, monetary incentives are good for the recruits, but I think it's really the entire packet. I mean, we have seen all kinds of packets from a thousand to ten thousand to all kinds of things, and I think you have to work with the resources you have, and try to put together the best deal you can.

MR. : Yeah, we compensate out-of-state hires when they move into the area, in our detention department right now because we are in such critical need in that area of the agency. We give them a fee towards their relocation. But, you know, as far as signing bonuses, I have mixed feelings about that. I guess one side of me says if we are hiring in the spirit of service that we may not have to – if we find the right people that might not be necessary, but then I also realize that the times have change and we are in a competitive job market right now. We are competing with private sector entities that we never competed with before.

MR. : I think Chief Najera said it best, is you are going after one candidate at a time. And, like you were the pro-athlete, I think going to them saying, hey, I want you; here is a signing bonus; I want you to sign with us, and that you're a part of this – I want to treat you as part of the family. It could be positive. The other, you could have it where they are now comparing. Well, he is offering eight; you have 10. But like you said, they are relatively new from my experience. I think we need to evaluate what effectiveness they really are offering.

MR. WITMER: A couple of questions have come have come in from our viewers. Let's see if we can work these in. What have any of your or your organizations done to increase the retention of senior officers?

MR. : That is absolutely critical. A lot of experience walks out the door with a 30-year vet. And I think what is really important, and what we have done in Sacramento is to establish a program. And it has to be structured to meet your needs of your organization, your community and your laws, but some sort of a program where we bring back our veterans of a half-time basis to work in various programs throughout the department. They are highly sought after; they are very valuable to us, and frankly, I wish we had more.

MR. : One of the things we have done, we have initiated – reinitiated our reserve officer program so that you have an officer that is retired. We can bring them back, and they could either go on a voluntary basis or go to specialized assignments.

Sometimes they go work on cold cases, for example, in the homicide unit. These are officers that have 20, 30 years of experience that they now have a lot of free time. I mean, at some point – we all love golfing and things of that nature, but after a while, you're looking for something else to do, and many times they come back looking for opportunities back in our agency where, either as a reserve officer, or they may come back as a volunteer. And I think it's important that each agency be open to that.

MR. : And I think you have to really look at what is a senior officer. Are you talking about retirement? Are you talking about after 15 years, because one of the things you want to ensure, is I don't know if you want to keep your senior officers around beyond the time that they should leave. And I think if you're going to start recruiting, we're talking about now enticing a new generation, then they need to see successes; they need to see people that are young retire, enjoy their post-PD life. And so, in one sense to be able to see them retire, come back on a part-time basis is success. They know they have got their retirement; they can work one or two days a month.

And when people do retire, that attrition, it may create an opportunity to take your next layer with 15 or 20 years, and give them the kind of assignments, the lateral movement, the promotional movement. So even as you are going through an attrition rate, there is some benefit you can get out of it for the organization. But I would say be careful about trying to keep them in the organization too long because I think part of those new generations are looking at retirement benefits, which means they want to see people at 50, 52 retire, be successful, healthy, and enjoy their lives, and not be sticking around 35, 40, 45 years because we keep throwing another thousand dollars their way.

MR. : You know, when you get senior officers that move up through the ranks, and they begin to lose that sense of belonging, that sense of mission, I think that is when the greatest challenge comes into play. And I think as administrators and as command staff members, the best thing we can do is to continue to challenge those people, whether – being a larger agency it's a little easier for us because we have criminal investigations bureaus, we have opportunities for them to move around.

But also, you know, I think we have to recognize their experience when it comes to – when we look at promotions. You know, when we look at a guy that maybe did some time in homicide or did some time in swat when he was younger, and now he has moved, and he is eventually back on the road, we can't forget what he did for our agency in the past. And we have to not get so narrow-sighted that we lose perspective of this person, what they bring to the table. And when somebody feels like they still have that possibility to move up through the ranks or to expand their horizons and move into another assignment, they continue to be a productive employee, and that is important.

MR. WITMER: What about lateral hiring? What are the benefits and drawbacks to lateral hiring? (Laughter.)

MR. DAVIS: For me, as a small agency, we have limited options. We have academy graduates and laterals. And we are looking now – we are opening – for

example, in East Palo Alto, we're opening up to entry level, but we get some laterals, and there is some pros and cons, one, because you have to ask why they are coming to you, and we're traditional in a sense is we wonder where the sense of loyalty in many cases.

Two, I'm often concern when people have no sense of loyalty, not just to the individual agency but to the community that brought them into the door, and are they just basically starting to leap from agency to agency, and sometimes you need to make sure they aren't running for something. But then quite often, it's some people are looking for a better opportunity; they have gone as far as they can, and it's reasonable to move on.

So I thin the best advice I give for lateral is case by case. I don't think you can make a general statement.

MR. : For a small agency that has to incur the cost of training a new recruit, as it is in many states still, where the department has to pay for that cost in that initial training in that certification, I can see where a lateral is an extremely attractive candidate because you eliminate that cost right off the bat and you have somebody who has some experience who you know bring into the fold of your organization. So we have to acknowledge that there is a financial savings to these smaller agencies, although I know the –

MR. : Well, you know, I have got a little bit different perspective. We have hired a lot of laterals in our agency, and we have gotten some excellent, excellent candidates that have been promoted and have done very, very well in organization, but from a policy perspective, when you're hiring laterals, you have got to be very, very, very – and there is not too many very's there – careful in the background process, because laterals are very good at completing that very important probationary process. They cannot be very good employees – complete that probationary process and then turn into a problem very easy. And in internally, our field training officers, our first-line supervisors have a difficult time releasing laterals from probation.

Even though they are not performing to the standards that we would like, they see them more as peers, and they tend to give them more of the benefit of the doubt and keeping people perhaps that you wouldn't keep at entry level. And so we are very careful and very nervous about hiring laterals. You are buying a used car; you're not sure.

MR. : You know – (inaudible) – talked about earlier by hiring that new recruit versus that lateral – you have the ability to mold and to really shape them. And I think that is something that we're beginning to realize, is that we can really foster that as free décor and that call to service by molding someone versus bringing a lateral in.

MR. WITMER: We have got a couple of minutes left, and I have got another question I am going to work in – give each of you a shot at it because I think we can maybe use this as a summary question. “The new generation coming into law enforcement are differently different than what we have seen before. What are some of



the practices you have seen to help recruit these people in the law-enforcement profession?”

I'm not sure we have touched totally on testing and anything in that area, so maybe one of you can hit testing as far as a best practice.

MR. : I think what is critical as you talk about the new generation coming into law enforcement is that we have to go where they are at. Right now, if an agency does not have an Internet present, they are not there. You have to put your agency out there on the Internet and reach out to the candidates in that fashion. That is what they prefer to use. Now, recruiters go out to job fairs quite often, and what we are finding is applicants don't want to fill out an application at the job fair as they did in year's past. They would rather go back to their home, or what have you, and fill out their application there online.

So you have to use that median to reach out to them. And they want to be entertained; they want to see what is in it for them; they have to understand and see the opportunities like the chief, Chief Davis talked about, where they have got to be able to spend, have free time, not be assigned an eight-hour shift and work 10 or 12 hours a day, but when can they have their time off, and when will they be able to go out and have time as well.

MR. WITMER: Very quickly.

MR. : In terms of just the process, I think we have to revolutionize the process. This is a generation that is used to instant results. We have to speed that process up for them, without compromising the integrity of the process.

CHIEF NAJERA: Yeah, I would say that, very quickly, that accept that their different networks are better. All of this – it's a bad generation, they are different, and respond to it, be flexible. And for the chief executive, just realize the decisions you make today will affect your organization for the next 10, 20, 30 years. And people want to be part of something special. You have to make your organization special, and you have to look at a person and say what is it going to take to get you to work for us.

MR. WITMER: Thank you, Chief Najera. And thanks to all our presenters and members of the panel. And that is all of the time we have for this broadcast. I would like to thank all of our guests who appeared on the program today, as well as I would like to thank you who tuned into do this broadcast, and especially the U.S. Attorney's office and other locations around the country that hosted town hall gatherings. For all of these efforts and your commitment to sharing this vital information, we thank you.

Please check in with us at [dojconnect.com](http://dojconnect.com) for information about upcoming webcasts, and remember to check out the resources section of [dojconnect.com](http://dojconnect.com) for more useful information and web links.

And we will leave you with this quote from Charles Horsky, advisor to the president for national capital affairs: “Without community support, the work of police becomes intolerable, less effective, more dangerous, and so thankless that desirable men and women cannot be recruited.”

-- Remarks of Charles Horsky,  
Advisor to the President for National Capital Affairs,  
Panel on Community Police Relations, Oct. 5, 1965,  
IACP, Miami, Florida

I am Les Witmer. Again, thank you for joining us.

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