



MEDIA ALERT

Milwaukee Receives Two of Seven National Awards for Successful Community-Police Partnerships in Amani and Washington Park Neighborhoods

Federal DOJ Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation (BCJI) Grant awarded to advance crime reduction efforts In the Amani Neighborhood

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WHAT: Dominican Center, Habitat for Humanity and Milwaukee Police Department will accept national MetLife Foundation Community- Police Partnership Awards for Excellence in Civic Engagement and Excellence in Neighborhood Revitalization and Economic Vitality respectively. The Milwaukee Police Department will also announce a \$741,811 3-year Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation (BCJI) grant through the Department of Justice for crime reduction strategies in the Amani Neighborhood.

WHEN: Wednesday, December 21, from 9:15-9:45AM

WHERE: Moody Park Community Building, 2250 West Burleigh Street, Milwaukee

WHO: Speakers include Alderman Khalif Rainey, Alderman Russell Stamper Jr., District Attorney John Chisholm, MPD Chief Edward Flynn, Patricia Rogers, Dominican Center, and Brian Sonderman, Habitat for Humanity, and Donsia Strong Hill, LISC Milwaukee. Guests include partner agencies and city leaders.

WHY: This fall, the Amani neighborhood was also awarded a Department of Justice Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Grant (BCJI) to advance emerging successful crime reduction strategies in the neighborhood. The Milwaukee Police Department is the fiscal agent for the \$740,811 3-year grant. Partners include the Milwaukee County District Attorney's Office, Amani United, Dominican Center, LISC Milwaukee, and Safe & Sound.

Since 2002, the MetLife Foundation and LISC's National Community Safety Initiative have partnered to recognize innovative partnerships between community groups and police to promote neighborhood safety and revitalization across the nation. This year, 400 police departments and community organizations applied for the recognition, and Milwaukee was the only city to receive two awards. Other projects were named in Detroit, MI; Los Angeles, CA; Johnson City, TN, Melbourne, FL; and Chicago, IL.

SIGNIFICANCE: Crime undermines all aspects of a thriving community including education, housing, business, employment and recreation. Amani, Washington Park, and MPD are receiving local and national attention for their comprehensive and collaborative approach to safety and neighborhood improvement. Efforts bring major changes and hope to historic neighborhoods hit hard by divestment.

Photo/Interview Opportunities Available

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About the Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Grant: The Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation (BCJI) Program brings together diverse partners including local law enforcement, researchers and residents to analyze crime drivers and pursue strategies that reduce crime, spur revitalization and build community-police collaboration. More on Amani BCJI at <http://www.lisc.org/our-initiatives/safe-neighborhoods/bcji/what-bcji/>.

Administered by the Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance, BCJI is part of the “Smart Suite” of programs that support partnerships between researchers and practitioners to develop data-driven and evidence-informed strategies. It is also a signature program within the White House Promise Zones Initiative, which builds on federal partnerships to help neighborhoods of concentrated poverty remake themselves into places of choice and opportunity.

About the Habitat for Humanity Project: In April 2013, Milwaukee Habitat launched a neighborhood revitalization strategy in the Washington Park neighborhood on Milwaukee’s west side. The project is clustering Habitat families, new and rehabbed homes, and home repair projects in a single neighborhood, in an effort to increase property values, decrease crime, and build a strong network of homeowners. Currently, there are over 200 families that own Habitat houses in the neighborhood. When deciding where to build and rehab homes in the Washington Park neighborhood, Habitat consults with both the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) and Milwaukee District Attorney’s (DA) office. Habitat selects properties to build on or rehab, followed by a law enforcement review of the plans and parcel by parcel analysis. Law enforcement then removes negative influences through arrests and by alerting landlords of drug and other illegal activity. As a result, crime has declined. There has been a 27% reduction in violent crime in the neighborhood since 2013 and 30% reduction in violent crime on the blocks where Habitat implemented housing projects.

About the Dominican Center: For more than 20 years the Dominican Center has partnered with neighborhood residents of Amani, to increase access to quality education, housing and employment. The Dominican Center was designated the lead community anchor for the Building Neighborhood Capacity Program (BNCP) in Amani in 2012. BNCP is part of the federal initiative to address poverty and underlying critical and interlocking issues of education, employment, housing, health and safety in distressed neighborhoods; and design and implement a resident-led revitalization plan. Through this initiative, the Dominican Center facilitated a resident-led neighborhood revitalization effort resulting in the formation of a resident group, Amani United. Amani United created block advocate groups, conducted neighborhood cleanups, held anti-violence vigils, vacant lot events, beautification efforts, and the rebirth of Moody Park. 500 people celebrated the grand opening of Moody Park in August 2015 and over 700 Amani residents have participated in activities over the past year. The target area has had a 21.6% decrease in crime compared to a 13.2% decrease citywide for the period of 2012-2015.

About MetLife Foundation: MetLife Foundation was created in 1976 to continue MetLife’s long tradition of corporate contributions and community involvement. Since its founding through the end of 2013, MetLife Foundation has provided more than \$600 million in grants and \$70 million in program-related investments to organizations addressing issues that have a positive impact in their communities. Today, the Foundation is dedicated to advancing financial inclusion, committing \$200 million over the next five years to help build a secure future for individuals and communities around the world. (www.metlife.org)

About LISC: The Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) supports comprehensive, collaborative and community-driven efforts that transform neighborhoods into healthy and sustainable communities of choice and opportunity. Since 1995, Milwaukee LISC has been working towards this vision by providing more than \$130 million in funding, financing, and technical assistance to Community Development Corporations (CDCs), Non-Profit Developers, and Policy & Advocacy Organizations in Milwaukee. LISC’s national Community Safety Initiative has participated by supporting alliances between communities and law enforcement to reduce crime. LISC has administered the MetLife Foundation Community-Police Partnership Awards since 2002. (www.lisc.org)