

THE URBAN SAFETY CORPS

The AmeriCorps Governor & Mayor Initiative

The Urban Safety Corps is a revolutionary AmeriCorps program working to improve public safety in the city of Detroit. Operated by Wayne State University, the program is a unique crime reduction model that has already been at work in the Midtown and East Jefferson communities and has demonstrated much success in its first three years.



PROGRAM MODEL:

The innovative program utilizes 36 AmeriCorps members as catalysts to mobilize and recruit community volunteers to join them in increasing public safety in targeted Detroit neighborhoods. Using the progressive COMPSTAT program, the Urban Safety Corps and key partners evaluate crime “hot-spots” and implement targeted strategies to reduce blight, assaults, break-ins, drug dealing, and vehicle-related crimes. Effective strategies incorporated in the program include :

- **Crime Mapping and Analysis.** Facilitated by the COMPSTAT software, crime maps and analyses are presented every two weeks during a collaborative partner meeting. These analyses are used to identify hotspots, create focused area patrols (both uniformed and plain clothes), and schedule absconder sweeps and home checks. This targeted policing allows for more intensive surveillance and traffic enforcement, checking for warrants, and Safe Routes patrols at the start and end of the school day in high crime areas.
- **Improving Neighborhood Guardianship.** With the leadership of AmeriCorps members, targeted communities are organized through the creation of block clubs, crime hot spot patrols, lot clean ups, vacant home board ups and neighborhood watches. This leads to neighbors knowing one another, trusting one another and taking ownership of their neighborhood space. Additionally, participation improves relationships between residents and police, improving the reporting of public safety issues that are actionable.
- **Reducing Victim Attractiveness and Susceptibility.** Commonly referred to as target hardening, AmeriCorps members conduct trainings on home safety, perform home safety assessment, install door locks, window locks and lights on homes, and more. These techniques decrease the chance of individuals being the target of crime, while improving home security and reducing victimization.



ABOUT THE PROGRAM:

The Urban Safety Corps is one of 23 Michigan's AmeriCorps programs in the state. AmeriCorps, often referred to as the domestic Peace Corps, is a competitive grant program for organizations to host teams of individuals (called members) who provide intensive, results-driven service to meet community needs. In return for their year of service, AmeriCorps members receive a modest living stipend and an education award to be used to pay for college, vocational training programs, or to repay student loans.



AmeriCorps programs like the Urban Safety Corps are a unique public-private partnership. In 2013, the Urban Safety Corps Program is being funded by a **\$378,871 AmeriCorps grant** from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS). Contingent on federal appropriations, this grant is renewable for two years for a total three year investment of **\$1,136,613**. CNCS will also make an estimated **\$505,200** in Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards available to AmeriCorps members who complete the program. These awards can be used to pay for college, vocational training or repay student loans. In addition to the federal dollars, a number of private sponsors will also contribute more than **\$722,000** over the three-year grant cycle. These include: Wayne State University, the Skillman Foundation, Kresge Foundation, Henry Ford Health Systems, Jefferson East, Inc. and the Detroit Medical Center.

PROGRAM SUCCESS:

As a result of its successful method of community building, the Urban Safety Corps Program has seen an overall decline in crime in their target neighborhoods by a remarkable **44 percent** in just three years. This reduction has decreased the cost of crime in the city of Detroit by an astonishing **\$62 million**. Contributing to the program's remarkable accomplishments is the joint collaboration between residents, neighborhood nonprofits, faith-based organizations, law-enforcement, existing neighborhood associations and block clubs. In total, more than **1,500 volunteers** have joined them in their efforts to improve public safety in the Motor City.

Now at the launch of the program's fourth year, Michigan Governor Rick Snyder and Detroit Mayor Dave Bing have partnered together to make the Urban Safety Corps a strategic priority for the State of Michigan. As a result of this investment, the program will make an exciting expansion in 2013-2014 to include **five new Detroit communities**. These five areas were strategically selected in neighborhoods surrounding local schools where other state and local improvement initiatives are already underway. The new targeted communities will include the areas around East English Village, Clark Elementary, Bates, Bagley Elementary, Bethune, Gompers Elementary, Cody, Harms Elementary, Neinas Elementary, and Osborn. Generous contributions from the Skillman and Kresge Foundations are making this important expansion possible.

