

# Report on the Role of UPD in the SUNY System

## University Faculty Senate Joint Committee

### Abstract

Following the death of George Floyd in police custody and the subsequent Black Lives Matter Protests in the Summer of 2020, President of the University Faculty Senate, Dr. Gwen Kay, formed a committee composed of members of several UFS standing committees charged to look at the role of the University Police on campus. The committee chair met with Police Commissioner Frank Lawrence, committee members met with police chiefs on their campuses, and a survey of various stakeholders was conducted, based on issues raised during previous conversations. This report contains the findings of those interactions. Although our task was not to study inequities in University Policing, we did find there were significant differences in attitudes of various stakeholders in regard to the role of police on campus, the types of policing occurring, and the unequal treatment of faculty and students of color.

### Background

#### State University of New York – The Evolution of University Police

- Beginning in 1948, “SUNY law enforcement consisted of campus safety departments that worked with local police departments to deal with criminal matters.”
- 1958: The Board of Trustees created the title of Institutional Patrolmen for those with the legal title of “Special Policemen;” they were designated as peace officers under NYS Law.
  - Limited geographic jurisdiction.
  - No firearms unless approved by campus president.
  - Arrest for felony and misdemeanor offenses.
  - Issue traffic summonses.
- 1968: NYS Joint Legislative Committee on Crime:
  - The university has a responsibility to supervise its own affairs, cooperating in appropriate ways with local enforcement agencies.
  - Law enforcement on campus, under university control, must be professional and supportive of educational activities.
- Based on this report the Board of Trustees created a central office for security.
- 1971: First civil service entrance exam for campus security along with various job descriptions and educational requirements.
- 1980: Legislation to change the status of campus officers listing them as peace officers under both the Criminal Procedure Law and the Education Law clarifying their powers to file and execute arrest and search warrants on campus but continuing to limit their jurisdiction to campus property and adjoining roadways.
- 1983: Issuance of appearance tickets.

- 1989: Ability to allow peace officers to receive, hold and dispose of lost and abandoned property.
- 1986: Centralized training of campus officers – 400 hours over a 10-week program which continued until 1999 after the legal status of campus officers was changed to police.
- 1990: Federal adoption of the Clery Act requires the reporting of certain college crime statistics and security policies.
- 1992: SUNY Task Force on Public Safety to review jurisdiction limits, court appearances, officer titles, and use of the term “police.”
- Final report of the 1992 Task Force: Change the status of university officers from peace officers to police officers under NYS law; arming to remain a campus decision and review judication (judicial?) limitations.
- 1998: Governor Pataki signed into law Chapter 424 creating University Police Officers.
- Beginning in 2001, SUNY began to explore further police-related benefits including retirement parity with municipal police officers throughout NYS.
- The issue of arming took over 30 years to be resolved and following the 2007 Virginia Tech tragedy, all campus officers were armed.
- In 2015 Governor Cuomo signed into law Chapter 561 allowing SUNY police officers to transfer and join the police and firefighters’ retirement system.

(Compiled by Jim Campbell from McBride, Bruce, Steven Dangler and Malcolm “Bud” Harris. *A History of the New York State University Police 1968 – 2018*. Morrisville: Lulu Press, 2018.)

## Data

### New Hires UPOs

Suny Full Fiscal Year	Headcount													Headcount
	Asian	Asian	Black	Black	Hispanic	Hispanic	Multi-Racial	Multi-Racial	Native American	Unknown	Unknown	White	White	
	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Male	Male	Unknown	Female	Male	
20192020		2		4	2							15	43	66
20182019				3	1	7		1				8	45	65
20172018			1	1	1	6						11	51	71
20162017				2	2	5		1				15	59	84
20152016	1	1		4							1	6	31	44
20142015				1	1	3	1		1			6	45	58

20132 014				3		1					3	30	37	
20122 013		2	1	4		1			2		1	3	25	39
20112 012			1	2		1		1			10	3	26	44
20102 011		1	2	1						1	1	10	51	67
Grand Total	1	6	5	25	7	24	1	3	3	1	13	80	406	575

System Wide  
UPOs  
Pay Period:  
2020202115

Headcount										
Asian	Black	Black	Hispanic	Hispanic	Multi-Racial	Native American	White	White	Total	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Male	Male	Female	Male		
	2	5	29	6	20	1	1	70	380	514

### Analysis of Data

- 1) The data suggest a high turnover of UPOs.
- 2) Currently the ratio of male to female officers is 82% male, 18% female.
- 3) Currently the ratio of minority to white UPOs is 18% minority, 82% white.

### Methodology

The committee chair held two meetings with Police Commissioner Frank Lawrence; one meeting was in advance of beginning any interviews, and the second was to review the qualitative assessment before distribution.

The committee decided in the first instance to interview campus police chiefs at the following campuses: Farmingdale, Oswego, Cortland, Stony Brook, SUNY Poly, and Brockport. This information was then used to develop and conducted a qualitative assessment survey for those campus' stakeholders: administrators, students, faculty and staff. Response rates from stakeholders included some but not all campuses approached.

### Response by Police Commissioner Frank Lawrence

### ACCREDITATION

The New York State Law Enforcement Agency Accreditation Program was established as a voluntary program that would provide law enforcement agencies with a mechanism to evaluate and improve the overall effectiveness of their agency and the performance of their staff. Accreditation is formal recognition that an agency's policies and practices meet or exceed the standards established by the Division of Criminal Justice Services Accreditation Council in the areas of administration, training, and operations.

- At the present time 15 of the 29 State Operated Police Departments are accredited, just over 50%, in comparison to just over 25% of all other law enforcement agencies in the State being so accredited. There are presently 111 Standards that departments need to meet to achieve accreditation, 20 of which are considered "critical standards." Those campuses that have not yet achieved accreditation, due to various reasons such as facility deficiencies, funding or lack of staffing to be able to dedicate someone to perform the strenuous task, have all been encouraged to meet those 20 critical standards.

#### FAIR AND IMPARTIAL POLICING

Fair and Impartial Policing is a science-based perspective training curriculum that applies the modern science of bias to law enforcement; it trains officers on the effect of implicit bias and gives them the information and skills they need to reduce and manage their biases. The curricula address not just racial/ethnic bias, but biases based on other factors, such as gender, sexual orientation, religion, socioeconomic status and so forth. The curricula also address the various ways in which biases manifest, including implicit associations, attentional bias, confirmation bias, and outgroup bias. This science-based perspective is wholly consistent with the law enforcement professions' commitment to evidence-based practice. Both law enforcement professionals and concerned community stakeholders can come together around this common perspective and its associated plans of action.

- This training was first implemented by University Police in 2017. University Police is the only New York State Police Agency that has trained 100% of their officers in this principle. At the present time the University Police Departments are doing refresher training to reinforce the principles of this training.

#### COMMUNITY POLICING/CAMPUS INVOLVEMENT

Community policing is the backbone of how the University Police Departments protect and serve their respective campuses. The basic principles of community policing are knowing, being involved with and listening to your campus community, thus allowing for a collaborative working relationship to identify and solve problems. This is accomplished by officer involvement with campus committees and residence life; some even serve as club advisors, and most importantly by their daily involvement with the campus. Officers do class presentations, dine in the dining halls, patrol the campus by way of vehicles, walk, bike and even patrol on horseback. Officers also visit and provide regular presentations in the residence halls and to

campus clubs and organizations.

#### REVIEW OF USE OF FORCE POLICIES

All University Police Departments continuously review their respective Use of Force Policies to insure that their policies meet the latest procedures and recommendations that have been established by State and Federal guidelines and are in compliance with recently enacted New York State Legislative changes regarding law enforcement activities.

- Penal Law 121.13-a: use of chokeholds
- Executive Law 837-v: firearm discharge reporting and reporting arrest related deaths
- Civil Rights Law 28: medical attention for persons under arrest
- Civil Rights Law 50-a: disciplinary records of police officers
- Civil Rights Law 79-n: reporting a non-emergency incident involving a member of a protected class
- Civil Rights Law 79-p: recording law enforcement activities

#### INSTITUTING/RE-INSTITUTING COMMUNITY REVIEW BOARDS

Some campuses already have community review boards in place, others have them but their membership has not been updated and they are reconstituting them, others are in the process of forming them. Some campuses also meet regularly (weekly) with their Residence Life and Student Conduct counterparts. All campuses have a Personal Safety Committee, as required by SUNY Policy, which consists of faculty, staff and students and are intended to serve as another forum for concerns to be aired and safety/security policy and procedures to be discussed.

#### TRAINING

University Police continually review training programs and institute them to stay in tune and up to date with ever changing guidelines, trends, and topics. Although each officer receives training in de-escalation tactics, the Training Committee of the University Police Chiefs Association is pursuing additional training programs to re-enforce that topic. Effective 09/01/2020, we entered into an agreement with the Daigle Learning Network for an on-line training program that will provide 25 hours of annual training to all University Police Officers. The training represents the latest trends, policies and procedures in law enforcement and it is tailored so that we can pick training modules that will be consistent with relevance to campus law enforcement. To date the following topics have been presented:

- October 2020 – Use of Force: Words Matter (3 hrs.)
- November 2020 – Use of Force: De-Escalation – What every officer should know (3 hrs.)

#### BODY CAMERAS

At the present time we have 10 campuses that are deploying body cameras and about six or seven others that are exploring their use. One of the major issues that is facing the campuses

that wish to deploy body-worn cameras is the cost that is associated with the purchase of the camera equipment, even more so to have adequate storage capacity (cloud or server based) necessary to maintain the recordings.

## Response by Campus Police Chiefs

Committee members met with police chiefs on their campuses. Interviews ranged from one to two hours, asking 11 questions about their perceptions of their relationship with community, their role on campus, COVID, Black Lives Matter concerns, and concerns they have about their role or relationships on campus.

- What do they think is working well about the relationship between University Police and the rest of campus?
- How can we make it better?
- What are the unique challenges that COVID has caused them?
- What do you and the officers think about the roles that you've had to play with that?
- Do you think there are any issues that need to be addressed overall?
- Many campuses are having BLM initiatives – what do you think of relationships on campus and how that applies on our campus? Has it made any impact on your office?
- Are there training or discussions on how students perceive the university police, and does that affect how your officers approach situations?
- Are UPD interested in or do they already do any community-building activities?
- Are there any activities that your UPD does now that you think shouldn't be on your plate?
- Is there anything you want this committee to know about and look into?
- Do you have any concerns about us doing this kind of research?

All but one interview included small town or rural campuses which many noted within the interviews as shaping their departments and approaches to policing. Some of the campuses have gone through changes during the chiefs' tenure that include a growing number of diverse students from areas where relationships between the community and police are often tense. There was very little difference between the one urban and more rural campuses in terms of the themes discussed below. Most seemed very happy with their commitment to their communities.

## Themes from Interviews

### 1) Commitment to Community Policing

All chiefs interviewed stressed their department's commitment to community policing, most using the word directly. They defined this by defining various ways they engaged in the campus community including: volunteer work with various charities and student group activities, working with many student and faculty committees related to policing, engaging with a diversity of student organizations including those for minority students, face-to-face activities with individual students including "Coffee with a Cop," student ride along, and very recent activities such as "Park, Walk, Talk," where officers walk a beat around campus to normalize their presence and get to know people. One campus had action committees around both safety and community policing to engage with campus communities. There was a lot of pride in the efforts made by departments to engage with students and staff.

Many of the chiefs described what they perceived as a distance between faculty/staff and police, and that COVID has really impacted these relationships in the last year. Many discussed how COVID brought about new challenges in precautions, safety measures, and dealings with off-campus parties. However, most noted that there was less work due to far fewer people on campus, and several noted that COVID was leading to much more isolation that was not allowing for community policing. Although virtual meetings were replacing traditional community activities, most of the chiefs believed that COVID was decreasing the efficacy of community policing as it limits face-to-face interaction in daily activities, social gatherings and many of the community engagement one-on-one activities.

## 2) Their role on campus: more than just about parking tickets

Several chiefs noted that faculty and students generally associate police with enforcement of parking tickets. This not only overlooks the fact that these are fully equipped police departments but actually makes community policing more difficult. As one put it, "Being the lead on issuing parking tickets potentially weakens rapport with the campus community."

Additionally, several chiefs pointed out that faculty and staff often are not sure of policies and procedures on when and where to call the police. On some campuses, chiefs expressed their perceptions that faculty and staff assumed they were responsible for opening locked buildings when, in fact, they were actually the intermediaries and were not responsible for how quickly this and other tasks took place.

Others noted that in terms of safety and discipline, faculty often hesitate to involve police right away and instead reach out to department heads or administration and thus police presence when needed doesn't occur.

All three of these issues were attributed to the changing nature of University Police Departments on campuses and a lack of knowledge and miscommunication between faculty, staff, and students. Several chiefs noted that parking enforcement and

unlocking doors takes away the ability of departments to engage in community building and does little to increase positive interactions.

Chiefs also expressed that miscommunication and lack of knowledge about their police departments went beyond individual face-to-face interactions and related to structural levels of organization. First, as many have noted, our community has little knowledge about how UPD differs from local sheriff and police departments. While several did discuss their positive relationship with local police departments in dealing with students off campus, they acknowledged that local police departments do not necessarily subscribe to community policing and that the role of UPD is very different from local departments in how they define and implement policies for campus safety and protection. Second, as almost all the police chiefs noted, UPD departments are more likely to be accredited than their local counterparts. This includes a variety of training that does address issues of diversity and community policing which shapes how power issues between police and the community are dealt with (see next theme). Finally, almost all of the chiefs noted that often police officers, especially in rural areas, are dealing with students and faculty who come from places where their interactions and perceptions of the police are very different than what happens on their campuses. Thus, they believed that training, empathy, and face-to-face interactions of all kinds were needed to address this divide. Most were very committed to attracting a diverse police force across urban/rural, race/ethnic, and class divides. This was stated by most to be a priority but a significant challenge (see final theme).

COVID did little, according to the interviews, to change how the chiefs viewed their roles as enforcement. Two noted that they did not see the role of the police to enforce mask wearing on campus.

### 3) Dealing with Diversity and Understanding the Black Lives Matter Movement.

Most of the chiefs throughout the interviews discussed their commitment to diversity, anti-bias trainings across a variety of issues, and how power is central to their role as police within the community. Many of the chiefs described how their departments dealt with diversity through training on a broad range of issues including racial bias, fair policing, understanding ableism, diversity, equity and inclusion, and mental health trainings. Some campuses went further in addressing the killings of unarmed African Americans in interactions in Resident Life trainings and with student groups. Almost all the chiefs acknowledged that the larger climate in the US was reshaping how people within the community perceive the police, and the need to address power differences between police and their communities. In regards to the demands made during the Summer of 2020 by Black Lives Matter, many noted that the protests occurred during the COVID crisis, which made interactions more challenging to address particular issues. Some chiefs referred to the above activities on how they plan to address concerns by the movement. Many stressed that their departments--through volunteering, community outreach and trainings--are committed not only to student safety and well-

being but to addressing inequities inherent in their relationships with community stakeholders including reaching out to minority student populations and addressing inherent biases.

The concern over racism within the American Criminal Justice system and the reaction to individual police actions led many of the chiefs to express concerns about possible solutions including defunding the police and anti-police officer sentiment. As noted, most of the chiefs on campus distinguish their roles very differently from other law enforcement agencies including local police and sheriff departments. They had two major concerns: first, that providing UPD with less resources would not allow them to complete the changing nature of their roles as safety officers including dealing with mental illness and Title IX concerns. Second, and more importantly, many argued that the anti-police sentiment would make finding competent new replacements even more difficult as the backlash against police officers continues to grow in recent times (see next theme).

### Qualitative Summary of Campus Stakeholders

The committee interviewed contacted stakeholders from students, faculty, administration and staff to create a snowball sample of survey respondents. We created an 11-question survey asking respondents about their relationships and interactions with university police, their perceptions of the role of UPD, problems they have experienced or perceive with UPD as well as their perceptions of what the role of UPD should be on campus. Surveys were open for two months.

Questions for faculty, staff, and students based on the following themes:

- What interactions have you had with UPD personally?
- Do you know any of the police officers on campus?
- What non law enforcement interactions have you had with UPD officers?
- How do you perceive the role of UPD on campus?
- What do you think the role of police should be on campus?
- What do you think community policing means?
- Have you seen examples of that on campus?
- What role, if any, do you see for UPD in regards to COVID?
- Do you think UPD acts fairly toward everyone?
- Do you think that the actions of UPD on campus mirror other law enforcement agencies?
- What would you like UPD to address in terms of diversity?

We received 59 total surveys with two resubmits. The breakdown of the 57 unique surveys were:

- 16 faculty from Brockport, Cortland, Farmingdale, Oswego

- 25 staff from Brockport, Buffalo, Cortland, Farmingdale, Oswego, Polytechnic, Stony Brook
- Seven Administrators from Brockport, Cortland, Polytechnic, Stony Brook
- Nine Students (five Residential, three Commuter, one Grad) from Brockport, Cortland, Oswego, Stony Brook, Unknown

On the whole the responses were similar across campuses,; the most diverse answers crossed individual roles on campus and experience in dealing with UPD in that role.

### Themes from Interviews:

#### 1) Large Range of Brief Interactions with Campus Police

Overall, our respondents reported a large variety of both official and non-official interactions with the police ranging from passing on campus (both in cars and on foot), to serving with police representatives on committees, attending UPD sponsored events, and student conduct hearings or interactions. However, depending on the group stakeholders, the types of interactions and the closeness of relationships varied significantly. On the whole some stakeholders were more likely to work with police officers and representatives as part of their daily duties; this led to more familiarity but only one group really went beyond these official interactions.

Faculty for the most part reported that the interactions they had with police were either nonexistent or were for official capacities. Over half (9 out of the 16) reported that they did not know any police officers personally. Most interactions were related to parking, unlocking building or offices, receiving help with student or faculty issues or working with officers during student conduct hearings. Only one faculty member reported being pulled over on campus. Non-official interactions remained very brief and casual. Only one faculty reported taking advantage of Coffee with a Cop and a few had served on search or *ad hoc* committees with police officers or representatives.

Staff respondents were much more likely to know a police officer (21 out of the 25) with only two respondents describing their interactions with police as limited. Most staff worked directly with police officers and representatives for security and student service needs, many reporting that their daily duties of their position required cooperation with UPD. This group reported more casual interactions with police on campus, including small talk, waving and interacting with K9 officers. A couple reported having personal connections outside of campus including softball leagues.

Administrators were also more likely to have contact for daily tasks with police officers and representatives, with only one claiming to have little or no contact. Only one respondent reported not knowing a police officer personally. Most interactions were related to safety, trainings, and seminars. A few had served on committees with police officers or

representatives, but this group, like the faculty, were much more likely to report casual or friendly non-work-related interactions with police officers.

Our students had a range of interactions ranging from none (commuter and graduate student) to those students who have participated in trainings or dorm programs, had sought help for safety concerns, or observed police officers helping students on campus. Only four out of the nine students reported knowing a police officer personally. This group, like faculty, were much less likely to report casual interactions with police, although several of the residential students did meet police officers for training or programming.

In our interviews with the chiefs, many described what they perceived as a distance between faculty/staff and police, and that COVID has really impacted these relationships in the last year. This also seems to be the perception of the faculty and especially students. A couple of the survey respondents did mention COVID directly, one student was told to put on a mask, one administrator had worked on COVID safety measures, but it was clear that there had been fewer face-to-face interactions with all our groups in this period.

## 2) Perceptions of UPD not based on personal interactions. Not a real sense of Community Policing

We asked all respondents a series of questions to gauge how they perceived UPD, their role on campus, what their role should be, as well as perceptions on community policing on campus. The results of the survey are very telling. Most of the faculty, staff and administrators portrayed UPDs as providing security and law and order, with only two mentioning community policing or seeing their role beyond protecting property and personal safety. Most in all three groups felt that their UPD were doing this in a professional manner and, based on their personal interactions, were acting in positive ways. However, faculty were much more likely in these questions to refer to inappropriate interactions with faculty or students of color. Thus, “in my experience their role has been helpful but I have heard that my students of color have had negative interactions” was mentioned several times, see theme three. Again, only two within these groups mentioned the role of community policing before asked. When asked what community policing is and if they had seen examples of it, only one or two faculty and staff members really were able to define what this means, where most respondents associated this with keeping campus safe. In examples, very few referred to the programs that the chiefs had included, like “Coffee with a Cop” and their community outreach programs. Thus, while there were a few who defined community policing as trust between stakeholders and working together with UPD across campus, our respondents were pretty unaware of the actual programs being implemented on campus. At the same time, they did believe that the police were making positive efforts to keep campus safe. When asked what they would like to see campus police doing in outreach efforts, a couple of faculty members and a good portion of staff and administration either couldn’t come up with more activities or believed that their UPD was doing well. However, other respondents expressed a desire for police to do more community outreach and suggested programs and activities that in our interviews with UPD

chiefs were already engaged in! This points to a lack of communication and a divide between stakeholders.

The responses from students were even more dramatic. Almost half of the students perceived the role of UPD on campus negatively. They described them as authoritarian figures, one even going as far as describing them as racist, armed and non-helpful. It is important to note that the students who had interacted with police were much more likely to describe them as helpful and doing a lot to protect the campus. They were also more likely to be aware and acknowledge the campus outreach attempts by police in programming, training, etc. When asked what the role of community police should be many of the students associated it with safety and only half mentioned the community outreach programs they had seen. One did note that COVID had decreased visibility. The good news was that residential students and staff seemed more aware of what community policing means and the attempts made by UPD to engage in it. Thus, it appears for the future, that community policing is happening and those who are the recipients seem to like and respect it. The bad news is that it is not reaching faculty and students living off campus who are much more likely to associate campus police with negative interactions.

### 3) Dealing with Diversity, Perceptions of Implicit Bias, and Inequality

When asked directly if they believed that UPD on their campus treated everyone equally and if they mirrored or were different from other law enforcement agencies the distinction between personal interactions and perception became stark across all groups. Most faculty, some staff and administrators, and half of the student respondents either responded they did not think UPD treated everyone fairly or expressed concerns for treatment of diverse students and faculty or implicit bias. Others who had more interaction with police argued they had good experiences and either couldn't comment on the treatment of others or that they believed that UPD treated everyone fairly. Many stakeholders are very worried about the possibility of the abuse of power of police officers for staff and students of color either expressed by, "I have students who have complained," or "I know someone who had different experiences than me," etc. When comparing to other forms of law enforcement the perception of UPD did improve, although several did mention they have no experience in comparison. Most of the stakeholders believed that there were fewer problems of excessive force or were more engaged with students, and had a different type of role enforcing safety. When asked how UPD should address diversity issues, many across the stakeholders pushed for more diverse hires of police officers, although many acknowledged that this is a challenge. Second, there were many staff, administration and student suggestions to engage in more diversity training and community outreach in programming and town hall participation. More interactions and transparency were also encouraged, one describing it as "more friendly interactions with students."

We did ask the stakeholders about COVID and its role on campus with UPD. All stakeholders believed that UPD had a role in enforcing laws and policies including mask wearing and social distancing whereas our Chief of Police did not. Some had reported that police were helpful whereas most talked about it as a hypothetical role.

## Police Escorts from Campus

A concern was expressed to the UFS that faculty and staff were being escorted from campuses by university police upon termination of employment. The committee chair met with UFS President Dr. Gwen Kay, UFS Operations Chair Dr. Lori Hoepner, Police Commissioner Frank Lawrence, SUNY Associate Vice Chancellor for Human Resources Julie Petti, and Liesl Zwicklbauer, Associate Vice Chancellor for Employee Relations. The UFS participants were satisfied that such escorts happen rarely, are at the request of local campuses, and involve issues of personnel safety or property.

## Limitations of the Study

The methodology of this report is qualitative research based on interviews and a brief survey across a small number of campuses. In other words, it is not based on a thorough scientific study using random sampling across all SUNY campuses and for all stakeholders in the university. Nonetheless, the consistency of responses from both UPD and the various campus stakeholders suggest that, even given its limitations, the study highlights a number of issues that require more careful analysis and action.

At the conclusion of this study we were made aware of a study underway by SUNY Delhi where they have been conducting extensive surveys of students to gauge perceptions and success of programs. While that is not included in our analysis, that study is likely to be something useful for understanding these larger issues.

## Findings

- 1) Most of the police chiefs interviewed believe that their communities, for a variety of reasons, are unaware of the substantial changes going on in community policing. As one chief noted, “we are the first on the scene when something goes wrong.” This requires police in a multitude of roles including pest control, firefighting, traffic directing after accidents and all aspects of campus life. These officers are increasingly dealing with issues of public safety that they never had before, including mental health of the students—they are not always best equipped to do any of this. As noted by a couple of chiefs, police officers in UPD are underpaid compared to other local law enforcement agencies, they have been denied raises for over the last five years and the relationships between the community and police officers in general are at an all-time low. Many questioned whether or not their departments should be the ones dealing with mental health as they were unsure they had the ability to do so. Several noted that the divisions between students and police were not as significant as the divisions of faculty, staff and police. Thus, most stressed that community policing was more important than ever but

required more from the community in terms of engagement. Such requires more recruitment of a trained, diverse police force which was significantly difficult if not impossible. While many discussed their commitment to getting their officers to be more empathetic to the community they serve, they were unsure if many of the stakeholders in the community were being empathetic to their officers.

- 2) Despite real commitment to community policing and increasing diversity within UPD departments, there are significant challenges to getting new recruits that will meet the challenges of community policing. Many of the obstacles relate to bureaucratic roadblocks to recruitment and hiring. State exams are held only every few years and yield a small number of candidates, especially officers from diverse socioeconomic and minority backgrounds. Many chiefs noted they would like more support and policy changes that would better prepare students interested in becoming police officers so they can complete the test and credential requirements. UPD will also require a larger pool of recruitments by allowing SUNY police lateral transfers. This could be accomplished by NY State Policies but would require individual departments to give up some local control.
- 3) As to relationships with police and faculty and staff, despite efforts to get to know the community in a variety of ways, there was still concern that faculty and staff do not know police officers personally, do not understand their role on campus, and that communication and engagement was something that is a two-way street, some actually calling for more engagement from faculty and staff.
- 4) Most chiefs believe that their communities, for a variety of reasons, are unaware of the substantial changes going on in community policing. It is clear from our limited number of responses across several campuses that this fear is warranted. Those staff, administrators and students who have engaged in outreach programs with UPD have favorable perceptions of the role of UPD. They recognize community police efforts and, on the whole, believe that UPD can represent a more diverse community. Those who had limited or no contact with UPD tended to emphasize concerns of authority overreach, were not able to identify or define community policing, and were much more skeptical of the role of UPD in general. This is particularly worrisome as the campuses we interviewed had many examples of programs that are clearly not reaching some of their intended stakeholders. COVID has only exacerbated this problem. Future outreach programs for UPD must include new stakeholders, mainly commuter and faculty if they want to bridge these gaps. Many of the faculty and commuter students did not know police officers. Those who did used much more positive ways of describing their role on campus (friendly) versus those who did not know them. Those who had interacted in community events believed that the role of police could and should be more about building trust and helping with the mission of campus as opposed to a hindrance or better served by other groups on campus.

- 5) Despite real commitment to community policing and increasing diversity within UPD departments, there are significant challenges to getting new recruits that will meet the challenges of community policing. Many of the stakeholders believed that this is a problem as well to a more equitable and diverse campus. Although most recognized that bringing in more diverse officers is a real challenge, they believed this and diversity training are keys to better relationships.

## Recommendations

We recommend that SUNY creates a Commission to further study the following target areas for policy recommendation.

- 1) Recruitment and retention of UPOs. SUNY needs to find a way to pay UPOs competitively with other police departments.
- 2) Broaden requirement practices to create more proactive hiring of female UPOs and minority UPOs.
- 3) Despite real efforts across our campuses on community policing, these efforts were only engaging some of the stakeholders on campus while others were unaware of community policing and these efforts. For example, individual campuses should consider including a UPD presentation in every new student/ faculty/ staff orientation series or open house events where UPD discuss community policing, their outreach programs and stakeholders can voice any concerns.
- 4) More target efforts to better understand the appropriate role of UPD in dealing with mental health issues on campus.
- 5) More study on the resources necessary to allow more campus UPDs to become accredited.

UFS UPD Sub-Committee

Dr. Andrew Fitz-Gibbon (Chair), UFS Ethics Committee (Chair), Cortland  
Ms. Sarah Battaglia, UFS Communications Committee, Stony Brook  
Dr. Evelyn A Clark Benavides, UFS, Student Life Committee, Oswego  
Dr. Mary McGuire, UFS Student Life Committee, Cortland  
Dr. Sylvia Navarro Nicosia, UFS, Equity, Inclusion and Diversity, Farmingdale  
Dr. Carlie Phipps, UFS Ethics Committee, Poly  
Dr. Trang Thai, UFS Equity, Inclusion and Diversity, Committee, Brockport

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