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COPS Office and Not in Our Town (NIOT) Release Film To Help Law Enforcement and Communities Work Together on Hate Crime Prevention

New Documentary “Waking in Oak Creek” Tells the Story of a Town’s Transformation and Healing After Deadly Hate Attack

Oakland, Calif. — Today the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) and Not In Our Town (NIOT) released *Waking in Oak Creek*, the first in a series of films focused on helping law enforcement and communities work together on hate crime prevention.

Not In Our Town’s new film *Waking in Oak Creek* documents the powerful law enforcement and community response to the hate crime killings at the Sikh Temple of Wisconsin on August 5, 2012. After six Sikh worshippers were killed and Oak Creek Police Lieutenant Brian Murphy was shot 15 times by a white supremacist, Oak Creek Police Chief John Edwards and Mayor Steve Scaffidi worked together to cultivate new bonds with the Sikh community and guide the community forward toward healing. Their efforts embody sound community policing practices.

COPS Office Director Ron Davis said, “Community policing concentrates on preventing crime and eliminating the atmosphere of fear it creates. *Waking in Oak Creek* explores the unique aspects of addressing the needs of the victims and healing of communities in the aftermath of hate violence. The film will serve as a road map for discussions about best practices in community engagement to prevent hate crimes, support victims, and encourage proper hate crime enforcement.”

Not In Our Town CEO and the film’s Executive Producer Patrice O’Neill said, “*Waking in Oak Creek* presents not just the tragedy, but the courageous response of police officers, and the inspiring leadership and response of the Sikh community, city leaders and community members. Their stories show us what’s possible when people join forces to face the danger of hate and intolerance, and commit to making their town safe for everyone.”

Through the *Working Together for Safe, Inclusive Communities* project, DVDs of the film are available free of charge to law enforcement agencies, civic leaders, community groups, schools, national organizations, and others for public screenings and discussions, town hall meetings, internal trainings, conference workshops, and other activities. The DVD can be ordered online at www.NIOT.org/cops/wakinginoakcreek or through the COPS Resource Center.

The COPS Office is a federal agency responsible for advancing public safety through community policing. Since 1995, it has awarded over \$14 billion to advance community policing, including grants awarded to more than 13,000 state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies to fund the hiring and redeployment of approximately 125,000 officers and provide a variety of knowledge resource products including publications, training, and technical assistance.

Developed in 1995 by The Working Group, an Oakland, California-based nonprofit strategic media company, Not In Our Town is a movement to stop hate, address bullying, and build safe, inclusive communities for all. NIOT films, new media, and organizing tools help local leaders build vibrant, diverse cities and towns, where everyone can participate. Learn more at www.NIOT.org.

For a press kit, film trailer, high-resolution images, lesson guide for educators, and resources for screening *Waking in Oak Creek* in your community, visit: www.NIOT.org/cops/wakinginoakcreek.

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