



**NOT  
IN OUR  
TOWN**  
STOP HATE. TOGETHER.

**Gold Star Cities**  
*Working together for  
safe, inclusive communities*





## **WE ARE WORKING TOGETHER TO...**

**CREATE** cities where everyone feels welcome and respected.

**BUILD** empathy and inclusion in our schools.

**IMPROVE** the quality of life for all residents.

**ATTRACT** a diverse, talented workforce.

**LEAD THE WAY FOR SAFE,  
INCLUSIVE COMMUNITIES!**

**WE ARE  
GOLD STAR CITIES.**

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## ABOUT NOT IN OUR TOWN



**Not In Our Town (NIOT)** is a national movement to stop hate, address bullying, and build safe, inclusive communities for all. Not In Our Town films, new media, and organizing tools help local leaders build vibrant, diverse cities and towns, where everyone can participate.

 **LEARN MORE +  
WATCH FILMS**  
at [niot.org](http://niot.org)

The Not In Our Town approach is based on the premise that real change takes place at the local level. We focus on solutions to create a world where:

- All residents stand together to stop hate and promote safety and inclusion for everyone.
- Students and school leaders work to prevent bullying and intolerance, and promote kindness.
- Law enforcement and communities join forces to prevent hate crimes and violence.

Recognized as a national model for public media and community engagement, NIOT has produced a series of acclaimed PBS films, partnered with television stations and organizations across the country, held thousands of screenings, and inspired campaigns the world over.

### **Dialogue...**

One community's lessons can encourage, guide, and support another community in its decision to stand up for safety and inclusion.

### **Action...**

Across the country, the NIOT documentary team goes on location with citizens, teachers, and students who are inventing new ways to stand up to hate and build communities of acceptance and respect.

### **Hope...**

NIOT's underlying message is one of hope: Everyone makes a difference, and anyone can change.

### **How the NIOT Story Began**

There's a simple story at the core of the Not In Our Town project. It shows us that we all have a responsibility to fight bigotry, that standing together can send a powerful message, and that ordinary citizens can transform their communities.

Not In Our Town was launched in 1995 with the landmark PBS film about the residents of Billings, Montana who rose up against a rash of racist and anti-Semitic hate crimes. Townspeople of all races and religions swiftly moved into action, proclaiming, "Not In Our Town!" Many viewers saw their own communities mirrored in the film, and found a model of community response to intolerance that they could use.

What followed was a wave of anti-hate campaigns in schools, workplaces, town halls, and houses of worship that built on the model and opened new chapters in the Not In Our Town story. NIOT's follow-up PBS specials, including *Not In Our Town: Northern California*, *Not In Our Town: Light in the Darkness*, *Not In Our Town: Class Actions*, *Not In Our Town: Case Against Hate*, and *Not In Our Town: Marshalltown* continue to showcase ordinary people who are turning adversity into strength.

## HOW TO BECOME A GOLD STAR CITY

The Gold Star Cities campaign recognizes and certifies leading communities, small and large, whose residents are working together for a safe, inclusive future.

You can customize your Gold Star City campaign to meet your community's needs and achieve your local goals. Here are Gold Star Cities criteria. Meet 10, and you'll be on your way to becoming a certified Gold Star City.



### LEARN MORE

about the Gold Star Cities campaign and how you can get involved.

- Visit [NIOT.org](http://NIOT.org).
- Email [info@niot.org](mailto:info@niot.org).
- Call (510) 268-9675.

### ACTIVATE Your Community

- ☐ Form a Gold Star City Committee
- ☐ Hold Community Events in Diverse Settings
- ☐ Raise Funds to Support Your Work
- ☐ Secure Commitment from Your City

### DEVELOP Diverse Local Leadership

- ☐ Organize Multicultural Leadership Trainings
- ☐ Create an Interfaith Dialogue Group

### SUPPORT School Safety and Inclusion

- ☐ Start a NIOS, Bullying Prevention, or Positive School Climate Club
- ☐ Incorporate Social-Emotional Learning and Identity-Safe Practices in Your School
- ☐ Approve and Implement a Bullying Response Protocol

### BUILD a Partnership with Law Enforcement

- ☐ Develop Clear Hate and Bias Reporting Protocols
- ☐ Build a Community Response Team
- ☐ Create Police-Community Dialogue Programs
- ☐ Develop a Community Liaison Program

### MAKE Your Values Visible

- ☐ Partner with Local Media
- ☐ Pledge Your Commitment
- ☐ Share (or Wear) Your Message

### CREATE Your Own Goals Based on Local Issues

- ☐ Your Idea Here!
- ☐ Your Idea Here!

## ACTIVATE YOUR COMMUNITY

- ☐ Form a Gold Star City Committee
- ☐ Hold Community Events in Diverse Settings
- ☐ Get Your City to Sign On
- ☐ Raise Funds to Support Your Work

### Tools You Can Use

#### How to Bring Community Stakeholders Together

[www.niot.org/guide/communitystakeholders](http://www.niot.org/guide/communitystakeholders)

#### Not In Our Town Quick Start Guide

[www.niot.org/guide/quickstart](http://www.niot.org/guide/quickstart)

#### Ten Ideas for Sparking Action in Your Town

[www.niot.org/guide/10actionideas](http://www.niot.org/guide/10actionideas)

### Form a Gold Star City Committee

To make sustained impact with your Gold Star City campaign, it's important to engage key groups who have the power to effect lasting change in your community. Recruit school leaders, students, parents, law enforcement, artists, media makers, and civic and faith leaders to be part of your committee. Be sure to include diverse people who reflect your local population, and members of groups who may experience intolerance.

Gather with your Gold Star City committee at least three times a year to discuss and address the issues in your town. And don't forget to celebrate your accomplishments!

### Hold Community Events in Diverse Settings

Organize events to honor diversity and respect for all people in your town. You can coordinate a Not In Our Town week, stage a community photo, convene a forum on local issues, or host a spoken word poetry night. Hold your events in places that are welcoming and accessible to people of all backgrounds and cultures. Potential sites include cultural centers, ethnic grocery stores, churches and synagogues, government buildings, youth centers, or neighborhood associations.

Besides physical accessibility, also consider language accessibility. Use an interpreter if your facilitator(s) cannot speak the languages represented in your audience.



One year after a deadly hate attack, a thousand people gather in Oak Creek, WI for the Chardi Kala 6K run to honor the Sikh community.



NIOT leaders stand together at the 2006 NIOT National Gathering, held in Bloomington, IL.

## Films for Your Town

### Not In Our Town Videos

[www.niot.org/videos](http://www.niot.org/videos)

#### **Marshalltown** and **Bowling Green**

Two short films profiling Gold Star Cities.

[www.niot.org/goldstarcities](http://www.niot.org/goldstarcities)

#### **Waking in Oak Creek**

A suburban town unites after a hate crime shooting at a Sikh temple.

[www.niot.org/cops/wakinginoakcreek](http://www.niot.org/cops/wakinginoakcreek)

#### **Not In Our Town:** **Light in the Darkness**

A town responds to anti-immigrant violence.

[www.niot.org/lightinthedarkness](http://www.niot.org/lightinthedarkness)

#### **Not In Our Town:** **Class Actions**

Students create change in the wake of racism, anti-Semitism, and bullying.

[www.niot.org/classactions](http://www.niot.org/classactions)

#### **Not In Our Town Videos** **for Law Enforcement**

[www.niot.org/cops/media](http://www.niot.org/cops/media)

Film screenings are a powerful way to connect people on an emotional level and open the conversation about issues facing your community. NIOT.org is home to more than 100 short videos about people standing up for safe, inclusive communities. The site also features screening kits, discussion guides, evaluation forms, and tips for making your NIOT event a success.

## Get Your City to Sign On

Support from your city is a key ingredient in your Gold Star City campaign's success. Reach out to your mayor, city council members, Chamber of Commerce, and local government to support your Gold Star City campaign. Need a few ideas? Read sample proposals at [niot.org/goldstarcities](http://niot.org/goldstarcities).

## Raise Funds to Support Your Work

NIOT groups have developed creative and successful ways to raise funds for their campaigns. Some organize public events, film festivals, or Kickstarter campaigns to support their work. Others engage Rotary Clubs, Chambers of Commerce, local businesses, and community foundations. For fundraising and grant writing resources, visit [grantspace.org](http://grantspace.org).

## DEVELOP DIVERSE LOCAL LEADERSHIP

- ☐ Organize Multicultural Leadership Trainings
- ☐ Host Interfaith Dialogues

Does the leadership in your organization represent your town's population? Is your workplace providing diversity training to welcome diverse employees? Are local businesses welcoming diverse populations? When reaching out to local leaders, be sure to include people from different backgrounds, faiths, abilities, experiences, and cultures.

### Organize Multicultural Leadership Trainings

Training and recruiting multicultural leaders can help your town embody the values of diverse and inclusive participation. Here are two model programs:

The **Multicultural Leadership Program of Bloomington, IL** is a professional development program that cultivates diverse emerging leaders and prepares them for leadership roles.

Leaders at **Bowling Green State University** initiated a campaign to increase campus diversity, and worked with the City of Bowling Green, OH to build a more diverse leadership in government and law enforcement.

### Tools You Can Use

**Multicultural Leadership Program of Bloomington**  
[public.bn-mclp.org](http://public.bn-mclp.org)

**Amazing Faiths Dinner Dialogues**  
[interfaithconference.org](http://interfaithconference.org)

**Words of Compassion**  
[www.unityitc.org](http://www.unityitc.org)

**Not In Our Town Princeton**  
[www.niotprinceton.org](http://www.niotprinceton.org)

### Host Interfaith Dialogues

Do you know how your neighbors worship? Interfaith dialogues bring people from different spiritual traditions together to build trust, increase understanding, and help dissolve barriers. Reach out to faith leaders in your community, and open the conversation about shared values.

Oak Creek, WI community members hosted Amazing Faiths Dinner Dialogues, small gatherings where people of all faiths share meals and discuss faith and spirituality.

In Manassas, VA, Unity in the Community compiled "Words of Compassion," reflections on immigration written from diverse faith perspectives.

Not In Our Town Princeton, an interfaith group dedicated to racial justice, organizes "Continuing Conversations," a dialogue series on race and privilege.



## Gold Star Cities Benefits

**CREATE** a welcoming, safe community.

**ACHIEVE** national recognition as a city of social innovation.

**IMPROVE** your town's health and well-being.

**INCREASE** participation in social, cultural, and economic life.

**ATTRACT AND ENGAGE** a diverse, talented workforce.

**LEARN** from a network of civic leaders.

**GET TRAINING** and resources for reaching your goals.

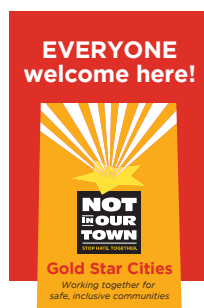
**Show the world your city is leading the way  
for safe, inclusive communities!**



Gold Star Cities  
Working together for  
safe, inclusive communities

## Gold Star Cities Receive:

Two city welcome signs\*



"Everyone  
Welcome Here"  
business signs\*

Gold Star Cities bumper stickers\*



One-page profile in the Gold Star Cities Book, distributed to U.S. Conference of Mayors, International Association of Chiefs of Police, National League of Cities, and Chambers of Commerce

Spotlight blog post on NIOT.org, reaching 500,000 unique visitors per year.

\* Sample design for reference only.

## SUPPORT SCHOOL SAFETY AND INCLUSION

- ☐ Start a NIOS, Bullying Prevention, or Positive School Climate Club
- ☐ Incorporate Social-Emotional Learning and Identity-Safe Practices in Your School
- ☐ Approve and Implement a Bullying Response Protocol

### Start a NIOS, Bullying Prevention, or Positive School Climate Club

Not In Our School (NIOS) campaigns empower students to create safe and inclusive environments that are free of bullying, bigotry, racism, anti-gay harassment, and all forms of intolerance. Every NIOS campaign takes on the characteristics of the school community and responds to local issues and needs. At the heart of each NIOS campaign are these five principles:

- Address bullying and all forms of intolerance.
- Encourage students to take the lead, identify issues, and determine solutions.
- Teach bystanders to be upstanders who speak up and stand up for themselves and others.
- Create identity-safe school environments where students of all backgrounds feel accepted and welcome.
- Involve teachers, administrators, and your whole community.

### Incorporate Social-Emotional Learning and Identity-Safe Practices in Your School

Building an environment of empathy helps all students thrive and learn. In identity-safe classrooms, students of all backgrounds feel welcome and valued, and that their social identities are an asset rather than a barrier to success in the classroom. Social and emotional learning (SEL) programs help youth manage their emotions, achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy, establish positive relationships, and make responsible decisions.



### Approve and Implement a Bullying Response Protocol

School policies that describe how students are expected to treat one another can help create respectful learning climates. Since every school is different, and laws vary from state to state, anti-bullying policies are not “one size fits all.”

Your school’s anti-bullying policy might include a school mission statement, a code of conduct setting a standard for student behavior, or a student bill of rights.

Enlist students and parents to help develop your school’s protocol. When students are part of the process, they can feel a deeper

## Tools You Can Use

### Not In Our School Quickstart Guide

[www.niot.org/nios/  
quickstart](http://www.niot.org/nios/quickstart)

### National School Climate Center

[www.schoolclimate.org](http://www.schoolclimate.org)

### Dr. Michele Borba's "6R's to Reduce Bullying and Create Respectful Climates"

[www.micheleborba.com](http://www.micheleborba.com)

### StopBullying.gov

U.S. Government  
information site on  
bullying.

### Coalition for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning

[www.CASEL.org](http://www.CASEL.org)

### Identity Safe Classrooms: Places to Belong and Learn

[www.IdentitySafe  
Classrooms.org](http://www.IdentitySafeClassrooms.org)



sense of responsibility and ownership in creating their school's culture. Getting parents involved can help reinforce core values of acceptance and inclusion at home.

Do parents, teachers, and students know what the bullying response protocols are in your town?

Having a protocol in place helps students and school officials address harassment and uphold a supportive school climate. Having a clear protocol also helps track bullying incidents over time and establishes clear consequences.

StopBullying.gov offers the following tips for creating a bullying response protocol:

- Make it easy to report bullying. People are more likely to come forward when the process is simple.
- Maintain your reports so that issues and patterns can be tracked over time.
- Keep all reports confidential. Let students and staff know they can report issues without fear of retaliation.

## BUILD A PARTNERSHIP WITH LAW ENFORCEMENT

- ☐ Develop Clear Hate and Bias Reporting Protocols
- ☐ Build a Community Response Team
- ☐ Create Police-Community Dialogue Programs
- ☐ Develop a Community Liaison Program



You don't need to have a reported hate crime in your town to engage law enforcement in your Gold Star City campaign. Opening the lines of communication between community members and law enforcement is a vital step towards making your town a place where all people feel safe.

For more resources for building law enforcement-community partnerships, visit [niot.org/COPS](http://niot.org/COPS).

### Develop Clear Hate and Bias Reporting Protocols

Only about 28% of hate incidents are ever reported to police. Making connections between vulnerable communities and law enforcement creates an environment where individuals feel safe to come forward and report hate and violence.

The Michigan Alliance Against Hate Crime convenes local law enforcement, civil rights organizations, community groups, educators, and anti-violence advocates in a coordinated statewide effort against hate crimes. Sponsored by the State of Michigan Civil Rights division, MIAAHC highlights information on creating hate and bias reporting protocols on their website, [miaahc.com](http://miaahc.com).

### Build a Community Response Team

A community response team brings police and residents together to assist victims, coordinate response, and build partnerships. As you create your response team, you can make connections between groups in your town, support individuals targeted by hate, and bring people together to heal.

In Fort Collins, CO, members of the local Not In Our Town Alliance set up a hotline for residents to report hateful incidents and receive support from a volunteer response team.

## Tools You Can Use

Tools films, and resources for law enforcement from NIOT and DOJ COPS

[NIOT.org/COPS](http://NIOT.org/COPS)

Michigan Alliance Against Hate Crimes

[www.miaahc.com](http://www.miaahc.com)

Michigan Department of Civil Rights Crisis Response Team

[miaahc.com/wp/crisis-response-team/](http://miaahc.com/wp/crisis-response-team/)

Coffee with a Cop

[www.coffeewithacop.com/](http://www.coffeewithacop.com/)

Shasta County Citizens Advocating Respect

<https://www.facebook.com/SCCAR1988>

To open lines of communication between youth and the police, Long Beach, CA Police Department Commander Josef Levy and Deputy Chief Robert Luna established the Barbershop Dialogues, a series of forums with neighborhood teens.

The San Diego Regional Hate Crimes Coalition brings together local law enforcement and community organizations to respond to hate crimes.

Detectives Ellen Vest and Deputy District Attorney Oscar Garcia developed training for law enforcement to recognize hate groups, identify gangs, and investigate hate crimes. The Not In Our Town/COPS film “Lessons from a Hate Crime Detective” profiles their efforts.



## Create Police-Community Dialogue Programs

Creating informal opportunities for police and community members to share their perspectives can build bridges and address tensions in your town. Work with your local law enforcement to develop programs that foster open police-community interactions, such as Coffee with a Cop or Barbershop Dialogues.

## Develop a Community Liaison Program

Victims of hate or other vulnerable individuals who may be fearful of law enforcement often turn to community organizations first for support. A community liaison program can serve as an interface and build bridges between victims, communities, and police.



Shasta County, CA deputized a civil rights advocate to serve as a direct liaison between the community and police department, helping hate crime victims through the reporting process.

## MAKE YOUR VALUES VISIBLE

- ☐ Partner with Local Media
- ☐ Pledge Your Commitment
- ☐ Share (or Wear) Your Message

### Partner with Local Media

Invite local media—including ethnic media and talk shows—to cover your positive community efforts. Ask them to join your community in resisting demeaning or exclusionary language.

Marshalltown, IA's local paper, the *Marshalltown Times-Republican* launched a Not In Our Town campaign, publishing a pledge that was circulated at many community meetings and events.

Billings, MT's efforts to stop hate were bolstered by a full page ad in their local newspaper, *The Billings Gazette*.

**One In Seven**  
Children are  
**Bullied or are a Bully**



That means we could have  
**714 kids**  
in Marshalltown affected by Bullying

NOT IN OUR TOWN

As a member of the Marshalltown Community,

I pledge to take a stand against any and ALL hateful actions. I feel that negative actions toward any person based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexuality, ability, or any other factor are unacceptable. In acts of hate and intolerance, I feel that my silence is acceptance, and in order to combat hateful actions, I will COMMIT TO CHANGE, speak up, and do what I can to remedy the situation. I will express that such actions are intolerable in our community.



Kansas City Public Television (KCPT) documented Kansas City's powerful response to the anti-Semitic killings in Overland Park, creating video of a youth-led vigil.

### Pledge Your Commitment

A pledge campaign brings your community together to make a unified commitment to safety, inclusion, and respect for everyone. By signing a pledge, each person in your town commits to becoming part of the solution, and create a town where each person is valued.

**NOT IN OUR TOWN**  
STOP HATE TOGETHER

**Our Pledge**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, as a member of the community of Bowling Green, Ohio and/or Bowling Green State University, commit to provide a safe and inclusive environment for our friends and neighbors. I commit to end hate and intolerance in our community and will not tolerate acts of discrimination based on race/ethnicity, gender, gender identity/ expression, sexuality, ability, religion/secularism, class, or any other factors. I pledge to lead and live through example by stopping bigotry before it starts. I understand that being silent in the face of acts of intolerance is unacceptable. I pledge to take a stand against any and ALL hateful actions in Bowling Green, Ohio: my town.

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

Bowling Green community members signed NIOT pledge cards and a banner showing their support for diversity and inclusion.



## Resources

### Sample NIOT Pledges

[www.niot.org/action-hub/kit/sample-pledges](http://www.niot.org/action-hub/kit/sample-pledges)

### Gunn High School's "Not In Our School" Week Activities

[www.niot.org/nios/lesson/activity-guide-sample-not-our-school-week-gunn-high-school](http://www.niot.org/nios/lesson/activity-guide-sample-not-our-school-week-gunn-high-school)

## Share (or Wear) Your Message

NIOT posters, signs, stickers, and shirts show off your town's support of inclusion, diversity, and equality—and send the message that everyone is welcome in your town!

Bowling Green, OH police officers posted magnetic Not In Our Town signs (pictured at right) on their police cars to show their support for a safe, diverse community.



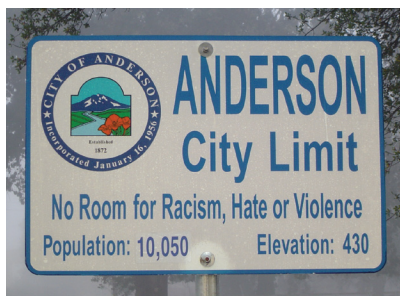
NIOT Marshalltown stages an "orange out" in their custom shirts at rallies and football games.



## DESIGN YOUR OWN LOCAL ACTIVITIES

Draw on your community's unique resources and talents, and customize your own Gold Star City activities to address your town's needs. Here's some inspiration:

- Partner with your local university to create a campus-community initiative.
- Engage local artists and residents in a public art project highlighting your city's diverse cultures.
- Develop art projects in local K-12 schools to spark conversation started about diversity and respect.



## WHY THIS MATTERS: WHAT WE BELIEVE

1. Opportunities for people to feel empathy and view multiple perspectives can lead to new, more inclusive behaviors.
2. Engaging diverse community members gives everyone a voice and leads to a greater sense of inclusion.
3. Bystanders can be transformed into upstanders—people who speak up against intolerance or when someone is being harmed.
4. Everyone needs to feel safe in their identity. Differences should be viewed as assets, as opposed to liabilities. A “colorblind” approach that seeks to ignore difference actually contributes to a lack of safety for people in non-dominant groups.
5. Small acts of bullying and bigotry can lead to larger acts of hate. Speaking out against everyday acts of intolerance makes a positive difference today, and can help reduce incidents of hate in the future.
6. Positive stories in the wake of bullying or bigotry offer solutions and are more likely to shift community norms.
7. One story of positive change can spark many more.
8. Institutional change requires a commitment from key stakeholders and diverse communities.
9. Sharing local innovation leads to a greater national impact.
10. Digital technology and social media fuel on-the-ground action.



**LEARN MORE + GET INVOLVED:**

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