



Overcoming Hate and Violence Begins with Community Action

The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) Civil Rights Committee is partnering with *Not In Our Town*, an organization whose mission is to stop hate and bullying and build safe, inclusive communities for all, to bridge the gap in communities created by racism and hate crimes. Making a difference starts with dialogue but has to quickly turn toward the implementation of an actionable plan.

“In recent months, there has been much debate around the country on how racism and intolerance can manifest itself in our local communities,” according to Chief Will Johnson, chair of the IACP Civil Rights Committee and Chief of the Arlington, Texas Police Department. Whether the discussion centers around the deaths of nine African American church members in Charleston, South Carolina at the hands of a white supremacist, or a controversial police use of force encounter that challenges race relations, an open dialogue has to occur.

“Hatred can build barriers between communities, making individuals hesitant to work together to solve community problems or achieve goals,” Johnson said. “When people are fearful and don’t feel protected, they can be hesitant to participate in society, which tears at the very foundation of our democratic republic.”

The *Not In Our Town* initiative sets the stage for those conversations to begin with the help of community and law enforcement leaders. *Not In Our Town* has partnered with the U.S. Department of Justice - COPS Office to create resources for hate crime prevention in local communities and engagement tools for law enforcement agencies.

“The solution to hate violence lies with all of us. We’ve seen that together, communities can create an atmosphere where hate and bigotry are made unacceptable, and where young people learn to respect differences - not fear them. No hate, no fear, no violence; Not In Our Town,” said Patrice O’Neill, CEO and co-founder of *Not In Our Town*.

The entire community needs to know that their local law enforcement agency cares about protecting all residents, and will stand with them to prevent hate violence. The IACP Civil Rights Committee and *Not In Our Town* suggests the following community actions for law enforcement agencies:

- 1) Relationships need to be in place in your community before an event happens. By already having established positive community relations, residents are better able to deal with and mitigate the incident by working collaboratively together. The healing process also flourishes based upon the networking and relationships that already exist with your organization.
- 2) Co-sponsor a meeting or a *Not In Our Town* film screening with diverse community members, faith based groups and civic and government leaders and other law enforcement agencies. Begin a dialogue of inclusiveness, share the resources offered by *Not In Our Town* with your community by going to www.NIOT.org/COPS, or schedule a screening of one of our films to begin engagement;
- 3) Commit to ongoing action to stop hate and bigotry by helping to form a local “[Not In Our Town](#)” group that works to build a safe, inclusive community for everyone. Learn more about how to start this process: <https://www.niot.org/guide/quickstart>
- 4) When a public safety incident occurs, connect with community and faith-based groups to demonstrate how community members and law enforcement can work together to provide security and make sure people feel that hate incidents will be taken seriously. A vital way to achieve this is to make sure your department is present and engaged at events to honor those who were harmed or killed through vigils, church services, civic events;

Trailers of our films and the ability to order them for free from the COPS Office and *Not In Our Town* can be found at the following links: *Waking in Oak Creek* <https://www.niot.org/cops/wakinginoakcreek>; *A Prosecutor’s Stand* <https://www.niot.org/cops/aprosecutorsstand>; *A Bowling Green Legacy* <https://www.niot.org/cops/bowlinggreenlegacy>; *Lessons from a Hate Crime Detective* <https://www.niot.org/cops/hatecrimedetective>. For further information about *Not In Our Town* resources or assistance in organizing a screening of one of our films, please contact **Paul A. Di Lella, Director of Law Enforcement Relations at 510-268-9675 x313** or pdilella@theworkinggroup.org. For further information about the IACP, Civil Rights Committee, please contact the **Chairman, Chief Will Johnson at 817-459-5717**.