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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

“Not In Our Town: Manhattan Beach” presents a portrait of a community grappling with a suspected hate crime after an African American family’s home was set on fire in Manhattan Beach, CA.

Oakland, Calif. — Today the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) and Not In Our Town (NIOT) released Not In Our Town :*Manhattan Beach*, as part of the series of films focused on helping law enforcement and communities work together on hate crime prevention.

As reports of hate incidents are on the rise across the country, Not In Our Town: Manhattan Beach presents a portrait of a community grappling with a suspected hate crime after an African American family’s home was set on fire in southern California. Ronald and Malissia Clinton share the story about the night of the attack, their fear that the attack was racially motivated, and their reaction to the overwhelming community response of support. A few days after the arson at their home, 700 community members gathered in the town square to stand with the Clintons and hundreds donated to a reward fund for information about the case. While the case is still under investigation, local law enforcement, school leaders and community members are working to build a safe and inclusive community for all.

COPS Office Director Ron Davis said, “Community policing concentrates on preventing crime and eliminating the atmosphere of fear it creates. *Manhattan Beach* 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.”

“This story of an attack on a Black family in an affluent Southern California city show that the danger of hate is everywhere. But the people of Manhattan Beach remind us of the overwhelming power of communities standing together when one of their neighbors is harmed by hate,” said Not In Our Town Executive Producer Patrice O’Neill. After a preview screening of the film in Manhattan Beach, a diverse group of residents, school and civic leaders formed an ongoing social inclusion program.

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/manhattanbeach 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.