
MUSCATINE POLICE DEPARTMENT PRESS RELEASE

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MUSCATINE POLICE JOINS NATIONAL “ABLE” PROJECT

Muscatine one of 30 select agencies selected to participate in national rollout

MUSCATINE, Iowa - The Muscatine Police Department has been accepted into the Active Bystandership for Law Enforcement (ABLE) Project. The project is Georgetown University Law Center’s national training and support initiative for U.S. law enforcement agencies committed to building a culture of peer intervention that prevents harm.



By demonstrating agency commitment to transformational reform with support from local community groups and elected leaders, the Muscatine Police Department joins a select group of 30 other law enforcement agencies along with statewide and



Innovative Policing Program
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regional training academies chosen to participate in the ABLE Project’s national rollout. To date, hundreds of agencies across the country have expressed interest in participating.

Backed by prominent civil rights and law enforcement leaders, the evidence-based, field-tested ABLE Project was developed by Georgetown Law’s Innovative Policing Program in collaboration with global law firm Sheppard Mullin LLP to provide practical active bystandership strategies

and tactics to law enforcement officers to prevent misconduct, reduce officer mistakes, and promote health and wellness.

ABLE gives officers the tools they need to overcome the innate and powerful inhibitors individuals face when called upon to intervene in actions taken by their peers.

“Seeking inclusion to join the ABLE Project reflects important priorities for the Muscatine Police Department,” Muscatine Police Chief Brett Talkington said.

“The concepts of active bystandership go hand in hand with ethical policing,” Talkington said. “As the agency leader, I will take every measurable step to ensure our agency members are engaged in these concepts.”

Those backing the Muscatine Police Department’s application to join the program included Muscatine Mayor Diana Broderson, Lindsey Phillips of Big Brothers Big Sisters, Pastors Bruce Martin and Yenner Wuanti of Calvary Church, and Lieutenant Greg Bock of the Salvation Army who all wrote letters of support.

“The Muscatine Police Department continually seeks opportunities to positively engage with those they are sworn to protect and serve,” Bock wrote. “In addition, the Muscatine Police Department also creatively interacts with our diverse populations on a daily basis. Their willingness to show up and be involved in not just our programs and services, but those of other organizations and non-profits has built rapport and trust between its officers and this community.”

“The ABLE Project seeks to ensure every police officer in the United States has the opportunity to receive meaningful, effective active bystandership training, and to help agencies transform their approach to policing by building a culture that supports and sustains successful peer intervention to prevent harm,” Professor Christy Lopez, co-director of Georgetown Law’s Innovative Policing Program, which runs ABLE, explained.

Chair of the ABLE Project Board of Advisors, Sheppard Mullin partner Jonathan Aronie, added that intervening is a skill we can all learn.

“Intervening in another’s action is harder than it looks after the fact, but it’s a skill we all can learn. And, frankly, it’s a skill we all need – police and non-police,” Aronie said. “ABLE teaches that skill.”

The ABLE Project is guided by a Board of Advisors comprised of civil rights, social justice, and law enforcement leaders, including Vanita Gupta, president of the Leadership Council on Civil and Human Rights, Commissioner Michael Harrison of the Baltimore Police Department, Commissioner Danielle Outlaw of the Philadelphia Police Department, Dr. Ervin Staub, professor emeritus at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and the founder of the Psychology of Peace and Justice Program, and an impressive collection of other police leaders, rank and file officers, and social justice leaders.

The ABLE Project Train-The-Trainer event begins later this month. Over the coming weeks, a Muscatine Police Officer instructor will be certified as an ABLE trainer, and, over the coming months, all officers will receive eight hours of evidence-based active bystandership training designed not only to prevent harm, but to change the culture of policing.

WANT TO KNOW MORE

For more information regarding the Muscatine Police Department’s involvement, contact Captain Steve Snider (563) 263-9922 x.636 or email at ssnider@muscatineiowa.gov.

For more information on the ABLE Project, contact Tanya Weinberg, Director of Media Relations at Georgetown Law at tanya.weinberg@georgetown.edu, 202-577-7827, or refer to today’s press release by Georgetown Law Project ABLE found at: <https://www.law.georgetown.edu/news/police-departments-across-country-embrace-active-bystandership-to-prevent-harm/>.