



Media Alert

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SHERIFF BENNY NAPOLEON LAUNCHES S.C.O.U.T.

Plan partners WCS officers with organized neighborhood patrols to reduce crime.

Detroit (**October 9, 2010**) – Wayne County Sheriff Benny Napoleon announced he has launched an innovative initiative that partners concerned citizens with members of law enforcement in an effort to reduce crime in their community. **S.C.O.U.T —*Sheriff's Community Organized Urban Team***—teams up sheriff's deputies with pro-active residents watching and patrolling their neighborhoods for suspicious activity that could be an indicator of **assault, burglary, vehicle break-in, arson and other crimes**. SCOUT officers are embedded which means they hear what is happening in their areas of responsibility from the citizens firsthand and respond rapidly. It was launched Monday in the 48205 zip code known as the Osborn Community, and not a moment too soon. That small bit of geography had 544 reported crimes in September alone!

“I developed the model really out of frustration. I can't tell you what it feels like when citizens throughout Wayne County approach me and ask 'can you do something to help us',” said Sheriff Benny Napoleon. **“I knew that I had to do something to attempt to transform the community's feelings of helplessness and criminal victimization into a call to collaborative action.”**

Once the formal plan was in place, the MAN Network—Maintaining a Neighborhood—stepped up. This group of more than 50 organized patrollers canvass the Osborn area. Bishop Anthony Russell, MAN's founder, believes having WCS Deputies embedded in their headquarters and activities moves their community patrols to the next level of security.

“This will help our people who are out on the streets and committed to the process really know they are supported,” said Russell. **“SCOUT is ingenious** because I think eventually the word will get around to certain individuals that Osborn is not a place where crime will profit.”

SCOUT is already yielding results. **On day one, SCOUT team members arrested a suspected purse thief they'd spotted selling gas for cash to motorists with a stolen credit card.** While SCOUT is considered a pilot effort, Sheriff Napoleon believes public safety is his highest priority. It is hoped additional funding resources—particularly from concerned business partners—will support expanding SCOUT throughout Wayne County in an effort to reduce crime. Two other metro Detroit communities are already being considered pending adequate funding. Helping neighborhood groups to set up watch groups and patrols is another facet of the SCOUT mission. Anyone who wants more information on being trained to form a neighborhood patrol is encouraged to call the Wayne County Sheriff's Office at 313-224-2233.

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