



Department of Justice

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JUSTICE DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES NATIONAL EFFORT TO BUILD TRUST BETWEEN LAW ENFORCEMENT AND THE COMMUNITIES THEY SERVE

WASHINGTON—Attorney General Eric Holder announced today the launch of the Justice Department’s National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice. Funded through a \$4.75 million grant, the initiative will create a substantial investment in training, evidence-based strategies, policy development and research to combat distrust and hostility between law enforcement and the communities they serve. Recent protests in Ferguson, Missouri, following an officer-involved shooting have brought national attention to the importance of strong police-community relationships, which has been a priority for the Justice Department under Attorney General Holder.

“The events in Ferguson reminded us that we cannot allow tensions, which are present in so many neighborhoods across America, to go unresolved,” said Attorney General Holder. “As law enforcement leaders, each of us has an essential obligation – and a unique opportunity – to ensure fairness, eliminate bias, and build community engagement. The National Initiative for Building Community Trust and Justice represents a major step forward in resolving long standing tensions in many of America’s communities and it will allow us to build on the pioneering work that the Justice Department and our law enforcement partners across the country are already doing to strengthen some of our nation’s most challenged areas.”

The initiative, which will be an ongoing partnership with the Justice Department, will provide training to law enforcement and communities on bias reduction and procedural fairness and will apply evidence-based strategies in five pilot sites around the country. It will also establish a clearinghouse where information, research, and technical assistance are readily accessible for law enforcement, criminal justice practitioners and community leaders.

The three year grant has been awarded to a consortium of national law enforcement experts led by John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Yale Law School, the Center for Policing Equity at UCLA and the Urban institute make up the rest of the consortium. The initiative will be guided by a board of advisors which will include national leaders from law enforcement, academia and faith-based groups, as well as community stakeholders and civil rights advocates.

In a holistic approach, the initiative will simultaneously address the tenets of procedural justice, reducing implicit bias and facilitating racial reconciliation. The initiative will complement and be advised by other Justice Department components such as the Office of

Justice Programs, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, the Civil Rights Division and the Community Relations Service.

This Initiative addresses a recommendation in the My Brother's Keeper Task Force report released in May. The Task Force recommended the Department of Justice establish a vehicle to build capacity in communities and build the evidence base around enhancing procedural justice, reducing bias and supporting reconciliation in communities where trust has been harmed.

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