



# Law Enforcement, Race, and Reconciliation

IN WASHINGTON STATE

*The Hope and Promise of One State's Efforts  
To Seek Justice and Promote Trust*



**National Crime Prevention Council**





## MISSION

## STATEMENT

To enable people to create safer and more caring communities by addressing the causes of crime and violence and reducing the opportunities for crime to occur.

The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) is a private, nonprofit tax-exempt [501(c)(3)] organization whose primary mission is to enable people to create safer and more caring communities by addressing the causes of crime and violence and reducing the opportunities for crime to occur. NCPC publishes books, kits of camera-ready program materials, posters, and informational and policy reports on a variety of crime prevention and community-building subjects. NCPC offers training, technical assistance, and a national focus for crime prevention: it acts as secretariat for the Crime Prevention Coalition of America, more than 4,000 national, federal, state, and local organizations committed to preventing crime. It hosts a number of websites that offer prevention tips to individuals, describe prevention practices for community building, and help anchor prevention policy into laws and budgets. It operates demonstration programs in schools, neighborhoods, and entire jurisdictions and takes a major leadership role in youth crime prevention and youth service; it also administers the Center for Faith and Service. NCPC manages the McGruff® “Take A Bite Out Of Crime®” public service advertising campaign. NCPC is funded through a variety of government agencies, corporate and private foundations, and donations from private individuals.

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## Introduction

Forty years after the passage of the Civil Rights Act, Americans still struggle with racism and equal access to justice. While major progress has been made in the creation of political and economic opportunity for people of color, highly publicized confrontations between minority groups and law enforcement often overshadow this progress. In the United States today, for example,

More than three-quarters of a million black men are now behind bars, and nearly 2 million are under some form of correctional supervision, including probation and parole. For black males ages twenty-five to thirty-four, at a time in life when they would otherwise be starting families and careers, one of every eight is in prison or jail on any given day.<sup>1</sup>

While these realities are part of the daily struggle, not just for African Americans but for many minorities, both law enforcement and minority groups are committed to addressing these issues.

In King County, Washington, there were nine officer-involved shootings of minorities in as many years. An investigation or inquest determined that each shooting was justified, and the officer was protecting himself or the community. Over the years, these results have continued to exacerbate an already tense and explosive situation. To a number of minority

leaders in the community, questions of bias, institutional racism, and a perceived culture of racial insensitivity within law enforcement compounded the problem. In this context, racism was not just a question of prejudice based on skin color or other historical definitions of “race”; it included bias and discrimination against any group based on a part of that group’s identity, such as religion, immigration status, language, or country of origin.

This concern was not unique to Seattle or King County; it was a problem throughout the state of Washington. King County Sheriff Dave Reichert, the president of the Washington State Sheriff’s Association, challenged his organization to take a fresh look at issues of diversity, officer recruitment and training, and communication with minority groups and new refugee populations. At the same time, the Rev. Donovan L. Rivers, the African American pastor of the Mt. Calvary of Faith Apostolic Church and founder of the Apostolic Clergy Advisory Council, was challenging his congregation and the leadership of the minority community to engage in a dialog with law enforcement about diversity and inclusiveness. “Confrontation may call attention to the problem,” said Rivers, “but dialog and action are the only road to reconciliation.”

In August 2002, Sheriff Reichert and Rev. Rivers met with leadership from the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) to plan a summit that would focus on specific strategies and actions to improve communication between law enforcement and the many diverse communities within Washington State. NCPC designed a two-day summit utilizing the facilitation model of Appreciative Inquiry. Appreciative Inquiry begins with the premise that certain actions and systems have enhanced communication and understanding and that problem-solving should focus on re-creating those approaches.

In preparation for the summit, the NCPC team met with approximately 180 individuals from 37 groups and organizations to identify common themes or problems. These interviews helped the team identify four areas of racial reconciliation—trust, reconciliation, justice, and leadership and service. The summit focused on these areas, and recommendations were developed for each.

These recommendations became the platform or bridge across the many differences between law enforcement and the diverse racial and ethnic groups in Washington State. Summit participants are now working toward the implementation of the recommendations.

This document describes the background, the process, and the outcomes of the summit experience. We hope it will provide you, the reader, with an understanding of the issues, challenges, and opportunities for addressing the racial and cultural divides that often result from inadequate training and communication skills.

## Background

Race matters! For the past decade this simple, declarative sentence has generated controversy in the United States. In 1993, Cornel

West, now professor of Afro-American studies and philosophy of religion at Harvard University, wrote that despite legislative achievements, economic and social gains, and the integration of basic institutions, race still matters in this country. West dedicated his book, *Race Matters*, to his son: “To my wonderful son Clifton Louis West who combats daily the hidden injuries of race with the most potent of weapons—love of self and others.”<sup>2</sup> In the decade since the publication of *Race Matters*, not much has improved, according to West and his students.

Race matters because, in 2003, African American males are more likely than white males to be pulled over for traffic violations, and, in the state of Maryland, they are more than twice as likely as white males to be given the death penalty.<sup>3</sup> Race matters because many people of color hailing cabs in New York City suffer the indignity of watching empty cabs pass them by to pick up fares from the white population. Race matters because in 2003 the United States Supreme Court is still sorting out the ramifications of affirmative action in admission policies at public universities. Race matters because in Washington State and other host states, refugees from Somalia or migrant farm workers from Mexico, who have yet to master English, are often ignored by local and state law enforcement officials at traffic accidents because there is no one to interpret or translate for them. And race matters because in Washington State, as in so many other states, a lack of financial resources has hampered the ability of law enforcement to train officers in how to deal with these complex, volatile, and sometimes deadly situations.

Whether it is racial profiling, a hot topic in policing, or the suspicion many Americans feel toward Arab Americans since September 11, 2001, the racial and ethnic divide in this country continues to weaken the fabric of



America. The divide is real for it is still a topic of conversation and concern in our schools, workplaces, houses of worship, and in the halls of Congress.

Because race matters, Cornel West suggests that we must confront these realities with “a new spirit and vision to meet the challenges” of a new century and a new millennium. While West’s remarks are primarily directed toward an African American audience, it is a message that all of us must examine, regardless of race, ethnicity, or culture. He suggests the following:

First we must admit that the most valuable sources for help, hope, and power consist of ourselves and our common history. As in the ages of Lincoln, Roosevelt, and King, we must look to new frameworks and languages to understand our multilayered crisis and overcome our deep malaise.

Second, we must focus our attention on the public square—the common good that undergirds our national and global destinies. The vitality of any public square ultimately depends on how much we *care* about the quality of our lives together. . . .

We must invigorate the common good with a mixture of government, business, and labor that does not follow any existing blueprint. . . .

Last, the major challenge is to meet the need to generate new leadership. The paucity of courageous leaders . . . requires that we look beyond the same elites and voices that recycle the older frameworks. We need leaders—neither saints nor sparkling television personalities—who can situate themselves within a larger historical narrative of this country and our world, who can grasp the complex dynamics of our peoplehood and imagine a future grounded in the best of our past, yet who are attuned to the frightening obstacles that now perplex us.<sup>4</sup>

West’s admonitions are a challenge for all of us. We must find a language that connects us to what is good in our past, yet relevant to our current crisis. We must engage these issues in the public square and not be trapped

by failed models or approaches; we must be willing to explore new ways of thinking in our efforts to achieve reconciliation, trust, justice, and service. New leadership embracing the new language of hope and reconciliation must replace entrenched approaches that are dehumanizing and destructive. It is in this context that the hidden injuries of race can be healed and a climate of reconciliation and hope can flourish.

### **The Situation in King County, Washington**

Sheriff Dave Reichert, the first elected sheriff of King County, Washington, in 30 years, has become a legend in the state. For years he was the lead investigator of the task force working to solve the notorious Green River Murders of 49 women in the Pacific Northwest whose bodies were found in and around the Green River. Reichert took on the challenge of the investigation, which led to the identification and arrest of Gary Leon Ridgway, who ultimately pleaded guilty to 48 murders. The feeling in the county was that there was nothing passive about Dave Reichert; he would face any challenge to the safety and well-being of the 1.6 million citizens of King County with commitment, resolve, and determination.

King County, which is named after Martin Luther King Jr., comprises 37 separate jurisdictions. It has a richly diverse population of African Americans, Latinos, Asian Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, Southeast Asians, Chinese, and new refugees from the Middle East and Africa. King County and Washington State have a tradition of racial diversity. Ron Sims, an African American, has served as county executive for nearly eight years. He has pushed to create access to county government. A Democrat, Sims is often seen as a future candidate for governor, as is Sheriff Reichert, a Republican. Now they were faced with a tense situation following

several shootings involving minorities and local law enforcement agencies.

On April 7, 2002, off-duty King County Sheriff's Deputy Melvin Miller fatally shot Robert Thomas Sr. The facts around the shooting are still in dispute, but as the *Seattle Times* reported:

The killing of a black man by a white policeman sparked protests that underscored the distrust and animosity of law enforcement in communities of color. Reichert and King County Prosecutor Norm Maleng were vilified by some African Americans for refusing to fire or prosecute Miller, who said he acted in self-defense. An inquest jury concluded the shooting was justified.<sup>5</sup>

Public statements from executive leadership in law enforcement sent mixed messages to the minority community and to rank-and-file cops. Although police executives sought to navigate the minefields of internal investigations and to appease the community's demand for more information, nobody seemed satisfied.

For several months, demonstrations were held at the county courthouse and throughout Washington State. King County's problems cast light on other counties in Washington State, and critics of local law enforcement pointed to a number of shootings and incidents that sparked concern about law enforcement's use of force in minority communities. There had been nine shootings in as many years. The Seattle Police Department, the King County Sheriff's Office, and other law enforcement agencies throughout the state became targets of investigation and criticism.

This animosity and distrust were not new. In 1999 the demonstrations surrounding the World Trade Organization conference—and the response of the Seattle Police Department—had badly eroded public confidence in law enforcement, and it had cost the chief of police his job.

Washington State also faced budget realities that compounded these concerns. In 2002, state and county government began making dramatic cuts in programs and services, allowing only for the basic essentials. By the time of the summit in November 2002, Washington State was approaching a \$2 billion deficit. Cuts were made in crime prevention programs, community liaison programs in law enforcement, and basic cultural awareness training for law enforcement officers. These efforts were significantly reduced or eliminated entirely throughout the state. Thus, at a time when more community interaction was desperately needed, budget cuts were further reducing law enforcement's neighborhood presence. Both law enforcement and community leaders were frustrated and unhappy with this situation.

Now, in response to community outrage following the death of Robert Thomas Sr. and the exoneration of Deputy Melvin Miller, law enforcement agencies within the state began to explore ways to restore public confidence and to defuse a potentially explosive situation. Budget cuts, accusations of racism in the culture of law enforcement, and growing media coverage of minority concerns about law enforcement demanded courageous and innovative leadership from police executives and community leaders. Old strategies were not working. Furthermore, the characterization that the issues were largely between blacks and whites hindered the development of a meaningful, comprehensive solution.

In the midst of the dissent and media coverage of the more vociferous critics, new leadership from the minority community suggested that transformation, reform, and cooperation could be achieved through conversation rather than confrontation. At the center of this effort was the Rev. Donovan L. Rivers, pastor of the Mt. Calvary of Faith





Apostolic Church and founder of the Apostolic Clergy Advisory Council.

Rev. Rivers was no stranger to conflict. He had grown up in a Detroit community that was ravaged by gang violence, and as a young man he had witnessed his father's violent death as well as those of other family members. Rivers had survived gang shootings, and his ministry was characterized by attempts to prevent what he had witnessed firsthand as a child. He began to facilitate meetings between Sheriff Reichert and leaders of faith-based groups and local coalitions in the Seattle/King County area. After meeting with some of these groups, Reichert understood that their anger was not only a response to the situation but also a symptom of an underlying problem—the failure of law enforcement to provide accurate information, to create channels of communication with community groups, and, most important, to establish relationships with the diverse minority groups of Washington State.

In August 2002, Reichert, Rivers, and Ralph Ibarra, a Hispanic business leader, met with representatives of the National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) at the second annual Methamphetamine Summit in Spokane, Washington. Reichert had a vision: what if the Washington State Sheriff's Association and the Apostolic Clergy Advisory Council worked together to sponsor a summit on law enforcement, race, and reconciliation? Perhaps, Reichert and Rivers hoped, a meaningful dialog could occur that would lead to concrete and specific solutions. Reichert wanted more than talk. He envisioned a summit that would produce meaningful change in the state. His goal was to move beyond the accusations of the citizen's groups and the defensiveness of law enforcement to find common ground and then work to change the situation of mistrust and misunderstanding.

Reichert and Rivers became allies in the effort to move both the state and the county toward a new era of racial collaboration. Reichert and Rivers and several of their staff met with the NCPC team—Jim Copple, then vice president for public policy and program development; Darryl Jones, vice president for coalition and law enforcement training services; Monica Palacio, director of Weed and Seed Initiatives; and Michael Wood, then director of training. The conversation focused on the need for a new language to achieve reconciliation and racial understanding and for core solutions that went beyond policy and program: citizens needed to understand the day-to-day culture of law enforcement, and law enforcement needed to understand the changing cultural environments of the community. Solutions needed to be more than cosmetic; they needed to address the underlying feelings of distrust and alienation. The search for forgiveness, healing, reconciliation, trust, and leadership and service became an essential part of the planning. “This is about the heart,” declared Rev. Rivers. And Sheriff Reichert agreed: “Any solution to our cultural differences that does not take into consideration the hearts and souls of our neighbors is doomed to fail.”

### **Appreciative Inquiry**

The Washington Summit would use Appreciative Inquiry (AI), a new and creative process that focuses on healing the divide. Rather than dwelling on problems, this facilitation process encourages participants to learn from what has “worked right” in the past. AI focuses on participants' positive experiences in their struggles to solve complex issues. The NCPC team determined that Appreciative Inquiry would help organizers develop an event that would move participants toward creative problem solving, rather than yet another event where debate and analysis dominated the conversation.



AI's eight key assumptions guided both the NCPC interviews that preceded the summit and the summit itself. These assumptions are

1. In every society, organization, or group, something works.
2. What we focus on becomes our reality.
3. Reality is created in the moment, and there are multiple realities.
4. The act of asking questions of an organization or group influences the group in some way.
5. People have more confidence and comfort to journey to the future (the unknown) when they carry forward parts of the past (the known).
6. If we carry parts of the past forward, they should be what is best about the past.
7. It is important to value differences.
8. The language we use creates our reality.<sup>8</sup>

Two of AI's architects, Joe Hall and Sue Hammond, describe Appreciative Inquiry as a "complex philosophy that engages the entire system in an inquiry about what works."<sup>6</sup>

In contrast to the traditional organizational development process, which focuses on what's wrong (define the problem and fix what's broken), AI searches for solutions that already exist, amplifies what works, and focuses on a positive approach. In other words, the traditional process asks, "What problems are you having?" AI asks, "What is working well?"<sup>7</sup>

Individuals, groups, and organizations have a micro-story around most issues. Regardless of race, gender, or ethnic background, most of the participants in Washington State's efforts to deal with racial tension and conflict had experienced some form of bias, prejudice, or abuse because of their beliefs, physical characteristics, religion, or country of origin. Although certainly many had experienced more intense degrees of bias

and prejudice, every individual could relate to some form of bias or prejudice. The goal of the interviews and eventually of the summit itself was to get participants to "dig deep" into their experiences in order to tell their own stories of bias or prejudice and of healing and reconciliation.

## Interviews and Model Development

In preparation for the summit, the NCPC team—Jim Copple, Darryl Jones, and Monica Palacio—made three trips to Washington State to interview community leaders about the racial and cultural divide. The team met with 37 organizations and groups and 180 individuals to discuss their concerns. Interview participants were identified and invited by Sheriff Reichert's office and the Apostolic Clergy Advisory Council. The diversity of the interviewers (Jones, a retired police officer, is African American; Palacio,

The structured interviews followed the AI process and included five questions:

1. What is your organizational background and interest in the issues facing Washington State?
2. What worked right in your relationship with law enforcement or community-based organizations?
3. What were the areas of frustration in your work with law enforcement or community-based organizations?
4. What elements of what was working right could be applied to the challenges or frustrations you experienced with law enforcement or community-based organizations?
5. What recommendations or themes should the summit address?



born in Bogotá, Colombia, is Latina; Copple is part Caucasian and part Kiowa) gave them credibility in their conversations with a broad range of individuals and organizations.

Some interview participants had strong feelings and considerable cynicism about the success of the summit. Most complained that they had seen these efforts before, and they were skeptical about the long-term impact. However, the one mitigating factor for this cynicism was the presence of an outside organization committed to helping facilitate the summit and providing leadership in the effort to implement summit recommendations.

### Interview Findings

The meetings held with community leaders and potential summit participants were some of the richest the NCPC team had ever experienced as community organizers. The conversations were filled with personal experiences and provided both an emotional and a political context for what needed to be accomplished. Clearly there was anger about numerous incidents that had polarized law enforcement and the community. Whether it was four officer-involved shootings of people of color in the past two years or the complex issue of racial profiling and the increasing awareness that often minority young people were being pulled over and questioned by police simply because they were DWB (“driving while black”), anger and even rage were just below the surface of many of the interviews. Yet each conversation generated hope that things could change if the community could begin getting their communication right and holding conversations beyond the TV cameras.

The ideas generated from these initial conversations covered the spectrum from the profoundly simple to the complicated. Washington State Senator Paull Shin (an Asian American and a historian) said, “Tell every-

one we should love each other and we will make great accomplishments.” In contrast, King County Superior Court Judge Steve Gonzalez (a Latino) felt that the criminal justice system needed to be reformed. The problems took years to create, he said, and the solutions would take years to implement. Given the disproportionate number of people of color in the criminal justice system, that is one area where a change in both heart and policy is needed.

Rev. Doug Wheeler, director of Zion Preparatory Academy, a private school in Seattle’s Rainier Valley, argued forcefully that law enforcement should recognize and acknowledge that the community is changing, that law enforcement lacks understanding of the immigrant groups and minorities in the bedroom communities of Seattle, and that what is needed is empathy. Wheeler said, “None of us really want to know the depth of the problem,” adding that it is often too easy to hide behind a badge or a clerical collar. But when asked by the NCPC team whether he thought reconciliation was possible, he responded, “Yes, yes, I have to believe that reconciliation is possible!”

The team interviewed Roberto Maestas of El Centro de la Raza, an elder Chicano statesman of both the civil rights movement and community economic development in the Pacific Northwest. Maestas was a contemporary of Cesar Chavez and one of the organizers of the United Farm Workers. In 1972 he and several colleagues took over a school that was scheduled for closing in their neighborhood in Seattle; they are still there. From this building, they developed a wide range of cultural and political activities that have made them a force for change in the community. But Maestas had seen so many failed attempts to convince law enforcement and community leaders to be more inclusive and to create a just and equitable environ-



ment for community change that he was not optimistic about the summit. No one from his organization attended the event. However, in the follow-up meetings to the summit, Maestas committed staff and energy to help guide the implementation of the recommendations.

The team's meeting with a diverse range of refugee groups from Somalia and Southeast Asia was possibly the most helpful. Approximately 30 individuals representing about 15 different organizations met with the team at a United Way career development center to discuss their relationships with law enforcement. The group reminded the organizers that this was not just a black/white issue; their communities had experienced police harassment and profiling as well. It was with this population that the misunderstandings in language and culture were the most pronounced. Meeting participants cited several examples of law enforcement officers arriving at the scene of an accident or domestic dispute and believing the story of the native English speaker rather than the non-English-speaking person. In many such incidents, no one was present who could translate for the immigrant, and consequently that person's story did not get told.

Issues of religious discrimination also surfaced with this group, especially with Muslims. Muslims in the room expressed strong fears about how they were treated by law enforcement because of their religion. They cited example after example of profiling. After September 11, hate crime incidents such as those described in the box<sup>9</sup> compounded their fears. For the most part, refugees felt isolated, and they worried about police protection in an environment that was hostile to Muslims.

The Asian and refugee community felt that their only option was silence. They believed that to speak up would only invite

## Hate Crime in Washington State

- On September 13, 2001, Patrick Cunningham, 53, drove 25 miles from his Snohomish home to Seattle's Sheikh Idriss Mosque. He attempted to set fire to two cars at the mosque and shot at worshippers. None was hit, and Cunningham later pleaded guilty to the assaults.
- In mid-October 2001, John Bethel entered a SeaTac motel and hit its Sikh owner with a metal cane, sending him to the hospital for ten stitches. Bethel later was sentenced to nearly two years for the assault.
- Masjid Omar al-Farooq Mosque in Mountlake Terrace was among six places of worship nationwide that were victims of arson or attempted arson. Two local teens were charged with harassment, and one of the teens was also charged with second-degree arson.

retaliation or further discrimination. The consensus was that trust and justice—the most important elements in the relationship with law enforcement—were lacking. Although members of this community were not optimistic about the outcomes of the summit, they expressed enthusiasm for the effort. One person seemed to act on behalf of the group when he extended his open hand as a symbol of his willingness to help. And one of the leaders promised, “We will be there to help make change happen.”

The law enforcement and criminal justice community brought an interesting perspective to the discussion. Participants' views were as



diverse and complicated as any the team had met in the community-based discussions. Rosa Melendez, regional director of the U.S. Department of Justice's Community Relations Service (CRS) in Seattle, said that "officer safety issues could be addressed if [they were] dealt with in an intercultural context . . . working toward building conflict resolution skills." CRS mediates many of the conflicts that emerge between diverse ethnic groups and law enforcement. CRS also provides skill training to raise cultural awareness among organizations and neighborhood groups working with law enforcement.

The initial team meeting with the King County Police Officers Guild offered little promise. Neighborhood groups, ethnic groups, and their respective associations referred to the Police Guild as "the elephant in the living-room" (the obvious subject no one wanted to discuss). Many of the community-based organizations were suspicious of the guild because of its defense of guild members in officer-involved shootings. Media images of the guild rallying to support members before an inquest or investigation had angered many in the community. One community health worker asked, "Who is running the [Seattle] police department—the chief or the guild?"

The tension between law enforcement and the minority communities had been heightened by the execution-style killing of Sheriff's Deputy Richard Herzog in June 2002, just two months after Robert Thomas Sr. was shot. Herzog was killed when he attempted to apprehend an African American man, Ronald Keith Matthews, who had been running naked in the street. It was later determined that Matthews had been using cocaine at the time of the murder and was also suffering from a mental disorder. Guild members felt that the minority communities had not responded to Herzog's death with the outcry

and support with which they had responded to the death of Thomas.

At the initial meeting, guild members showed a great deal of defensiveness. They felt that they had made significant progress in community policing and community outreach and were now being stereotyped by a small group of minority leaders. One guild member said that any efforts to make changes were met with criticism. "Why bother any more?" he asked. Yet among the guild leadership there was an effort to move beyond accusations and defensiveness and proceed to a resolution of the conflict. One Seattle police officer admitted, "We do not sell ourselves very well."

The guild called for more training, and guild members insisted that it should be more than just sensitivity training; it should include education about the language and cultural history of new refugee groups. It turned out that the guild would be a valuable and enthusiastic participant in the summit.

Participants from the law enforcement community acknowledged that they had not kept pace with the changing demographics of the state. In the past, there had been law enforcement appreciation dinners held in various ethnic neighborhoods and worship services that included recognition of law enforcement officers and firefighters. There was more dialog in the past. All of the participants pressed for the restoration of these kinds of simple, no- or low-cost solutions.

Law enforcement and community leaders agreed that whites in Washington State were inclined to give law enforcement a high rating while African Americans were more likely to express intense distrust of law enforcement. "This divide," said Larry Gossett, a member of the King County Council, "must be bridged if we are to make any progress."

Rev. Harriet Walden, executive director of Mothers for Police Accountability, spoke

at length about the challenges of working with law enforcement. But when she was asked the Appreciative Inquiry question, “Has there been any time when your relationship with law enforcement has worked right?” she responded enthusiastically, “Oh my word, yes!” And she described how it looked when it did work right. At the heart of her answer were the words “trust,” “justice,” and “leadership.” These words, with the addition of “reconciliation,” became the themes of the summit.

The team felt that this phase of summit preparation had produced wonderful comments, insights, and learnings. Participants expressed themselves with both humility and hope. Few wanted to seek revenge or to continue to live in anger. Most participants wanted to find some common ground in order to build a new future. All of them felt that this work was important and necessary and that, through it, they could begin to build a world for their children that included tolerance, safety, and understanding.

### Summit Design

Designing the summit required a balancing act. Many participants felt a strong need to affirm and defend their own interests, but they also recognized that it was more important for the community to move toward decisions and actions that would bring about racial, ethnic, and cultural reconciliation. At times these interests seemed to be in conflict. Participants who had been outside of the process for decades found it hard to develop trust, and those who had been on the inside found it hard to change the way they had traditionally done business. Individuals came to the summit for a variety of reasons, but not lost on the organizers was the fact that some participants came just in case something important did happen. And then there were a few who came to see if the process would be

Four themes emerged from the meetings and interviews:

- Reconciliation
- Trust
- Justice
- Leadership and service

sabotaged. The result was considerable tension and mistrust. Nevertheless, those in attendance came to the summit prepared to work.

Speakers from outside the community were invited; each was asked to focus on one of the themes and its ramifications for community restoration (see Appendix B for the conference agenda).

### The Summit, November 2002

The summit was opened with remarks by Jim Copple, Rev. Donovan L. Rivers, and Ron Sims, King County Executive. Copple established the context for the summit; he expressed the concerns of the community as revealed in the interviews, and he outlined the process that would guide the work of the next two days. He talked about the need for courage and cited the Old Testament story of the three young men who chose to enter a fiery furnace, rather than abandon their faith, and emerged unharmed. He said that confronting the problems in King County and Washington State would take courage; it would be like going through the fire, but the summit participants would come out on the other side and find healing and reconciliation.

Rev. Lewis Anthony, pastor of the Metropolitan Wesley AME Zion Church in Washington, DC, presented the keynote





speech. Rev. Anthony challenged participants to “turn our enemies into our friends.” He encouraged them to be “thermostats, not thermometers,” establishing the environment and the climate for hope. He asked participants to move beyond rhetoric and build the future around specific actions, and he emphasized the need to incorporate a youth voice into the process (which was noticeably lacking from this event).

Topic keynotes were given by Michael Walker of the Partnership for a Safer Cleveland; Rev. Warren Dolphus from the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice; Monica Palacio of NCPC; and Alfred Ramirez, president of the National Community for Latino Leadership.

Sheriff Reichert reminded the participants that the summit process was about leadership and that participants would be called to mobilize their neighbors to take specific action to improve racial understanding and tolerance. In his speech, NCPC President and CEO Jack Calhoun said that building community and creating climates of respect and trust would go a long way toward preventing the kind of conflict that currently existed in Washington State. The work would be hard, Calhoun said, but it might be the most important work participants would do. Calhoun congratulated summit participants for their effort to achieve reconciliation, and he compared it to the commitment of a marriage:

You have made a magnificent commitment by being here. You are not saying love it or leave it. You are saying love it and improve it, criticize it and stay. And isn't this what spouses do? They make their commitment concrete and positive. In the last analysis, you are in this room because you care, you care about your community and you want to make things better. You are standing in the breach between chaos and order, between disconnection and connection, between being a loner and being part of a community that cares for all its members.

After each keynote, participants met in 15 table groups. A facilitator at each table asked participants to share a “micro-story” around the theme of the keynote. The first theme was reconciliation. As each participant shared an experience of reconciliation, others offered words of affirmation and encouragement, and there were occasional tears. Barriers of race, ethnicity, and culture seemed to break down, and the tension and distrust began to dissipate.

Following the principles of AI, the facilitators in each group asked participants to say “what worked” in their experiences of reconciliation and what barriers or obstacles had to be overcome. That process generated a list that enabled participants to focus on what could be done to solve the problems. Each group was asked to identify recommendations—actions or strategies that had worked in their experience and that could remove a challenge or barrier to the building of reconciliation. The AI process was repeated for all themes. (See Appendix A for a list of the summit recommendations.)

As the participants went through the process of struggling with the problems and developing a plan that could produce real change, the energy level in the room increased. Each group prioritized their recommendations before reporting them to the entire group.

At the conclusion of the summit, the groups had produced recommendations that focused on specific actions to achieve reconciliation, trust, justice, and leadership and service. The newsprint or flip charts in the room were filled with practical and timely recommendations that would move the community to action. Some actions could begin immediately, and others would require months if not years of preparation and work. Yet each one presented an opportunity or a challenge.

## After the Summit

After the summit, the organizers listed the prioritized recommendations and mailed the lists to participants. Participants were asked to rank each recommendation for importance and feasibility on a Leikert scale from 1 to 5, with 5 being the most important or the most feasible and 1 being the least. Fifty-four recommendations received a combined score higher than 3.5 and were listed in the final report and distributed to the summit participants. Although each recommendation reflects the priorities of the participants, there is a wide variety in content.

In December 2002, NCPC team members Darryl Jones and Jim Copple returned to Seattle to present the survey results to Sheriff Reichert, Rev. Rivers, and a subgroup of about 25 summit participants. The highest ranked recommendation of the 54 summit recommendations was a clear call to action:

Identify and establish strategies that help develop meaningful relationships between law enforcement officers and indigenous community leaders and community-based organizations prior to the onset of a crisis.

In response to this recommendation, NCPC team member Monica Palacio facilitated the creation of the Washington State Working Group, a multidisciplinary and multicounty coalition tasked with leading change efforts. The Working Group would convene monthly between May and October 2003 to achieve the following outcomes:

- Review the recommendations of the summit and prioritize and manage work items throughout the implementation process
- Mobilize other leaders, constituency groups, institutional support, and financial resources from all sectors
- Emerge as a model team of leaders who, with ongoing training and supports, would deliver institutional change.

Members of the Working Group would undertake the task of assessing how to deconstruct the historical injustices, racial bias, and community distrust that were undermining collective leadership and progress.

The Working Group held its first meeting on May 2, 2003, at SeaTac City Hall. Faith-based leaders, chiefs of police, longtime community activists, leaders in the business community, and many others engaged in a series of team-building activities based on models developed by the National Coalition Building Institute. The activities were designed to challenge participants to become a community of leaders and a force for institutional change. Through these team-building activities, group dynamics were transformed, and this multicultural group agreed that the quality of their work together would be a direct function of the quality of their relationships in this coalition-based effort.

During the following months, the Working Group met in King County as well as Everett and Spokane counties. About 35 leaders representing these and other counties began working together and reporting on progress in their areas. The following changes took place:

- The City of Lakewood established the Lakewood African American Police Advisory Committee (LAAPAC).
- The King County Sheriff's Office expanded recruitment efforts through a new initiative, "Hiring in the Spirit of Service," with input from and involvement by various members of the Working Group.
- The Apostolic Clergy Advisory Council identified business and faith-based leaders and mobilized them for ongoing participation in the Working Group.
- The Spokane County Sheriff's Office convened a one-day meeting of NAACP leaders, Sikh community elders, and law enforce-



ment representatives to discuss systemic cross-cultural issues in their communities.

Working Group members continued their work through committees tasked to document current policies, practices, and norms within Washington State and to produce action plans for carrying out stated goals. The police recruitment and hiring committee generated 34 recommendations, which are currently being shared throughout the state.

Although significant progress is being made, it is essential that the summit participants—and those who have become involved since the summit—remain committed to the effort. They must continue to see themselves as bridges between the mistrust and fear of the past and the reconciliation and hope for the future. As Reichert, Rivers, and many other leaders said at the summit, the work of reconciliation is just beginning.

## Endnotes

1. Marc Mauer and Meda Chesney-Lind, "Introduction," in Mauer and Chesney-Lind (eds.), *Invisible Punishment: The Collateral Consequences of Mass Imprisonment* (New York: The New Press, 2002), 3.
2. Cornel West, *Race Matters* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), vii.
3. Raymond Paternoster et al., "An Empirical Analysis of Maryland's Death Sentencing System With Respect to the Influence of Race and Legal Jurisdiction: Final Report," January 2003, University of Maryland, at [www.urhome.umd.edu/newsdesk/pdf/finalrep.pdf](http://www.urhome.umd.edu/newsdesk/pdf/finalrep.pdf).
4. West, *Race Matters*, 11–13.
5. Florangela Davila, "'Cops and Culture' Event Aims for Trust," *Seattle Times*, November 14, 2002.
6. Joe Hall and Sue Hammond, "What Is Appreciative Inquiry?" *Inner Edge Newsletter* at [www.thinbook.com/chap11fromle.html](http://www.thinbook.com/chap11fromle.html), 2.
7. Ibid., 2.
8. Ibid., 2–3.
9. Florangela Davila, "Hate-crime Response Criticized," *Seattle Times*, November 14, 2002, reporting on Human Rights Watch Report, "'We Are Not the Enemy': Hate Crimes Against Arabs, Muslims, and Those Perceived to be Arab or Muslim after September 11," November 2002, at [www.hrw.org/reports/2002/usahate/](http://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/usahate/).
10. "A study circle is a group of 8 to 12 people from different backgrounds and viewpoints who meet several times to talk about an issue. In a study circle, everyone has an equal voice, and people try to understand each other's views. They do not have to agree. . . . The idea is to share concerns and look for ways to make things better. A facilitator helps the group focus...." Study Circles Resource Center at [www.study-circles.org/pages/what.html](http://www.study-circles.org/pages/what.html).









## Summit Recommendations

Summit participants agreed on 54 recommendations.

### Reconciliation

1. Acknowledge the need for reconciliation and for vehicles that promote trust.
2. Adopt agency policies that commit personnel and resources to ongoing cross-cultural training (e.g., study circles).<sup>10</sup>
3. Review, revise, and re-create a grievance procedure. Provide strict monitoring of the procedure.
4. Incorporate cultural competency training in monthly advisory council meetings, semi-annual Citizens' Police Academy instruction, and Police Academy instruction. Provide continuing education training for law enforcement that focuses on community outreach.
5. Establish a Community Policing Review Board comprising community advisory board members and law enforcement representatives.
6. Create monthly diversity forums (co-facilitated by community liaisons and law enforcement) that address specific issues identified by community needs assessment (see recommendation 8 below); provide information on existing community programs/strategies (e.g., Camp Connections).
7. Use the media to increase public awareness of local Citizens' Police Academies and increased opportunity for participation.
8. Conduct community needs assessments focusing on cultural understanding, and provide feedback for monthly diversity forums (see recommendation 6).
9. Develop performance measures and incorporate a feedback structure that will direct the implementation of ideas and strategies developed at community meetings, forums, and advisory councils convened to address the issue of reconciliation.
10. Increase connection to community advisory councils by creating a strategic vision that incorporates the shared values of the community, mentoring programs for families of people in prison or at risk of going to prison, increased support for reentry initiatives, and positive values related to working with law enforcement.
11. Establish community liaisons comprising faith leaders and community leaders who are responsible for communicating with advisory boards, building the bridge between law

- enforcement and community, and developing a professional and proactive plan for communicating with the public during crisis situations.
12. Develop a media strategy to promote positive progress of multicultural understanding.
  13. Communicate internal and external law enforcement policy changes to the community.
  14. Increase the recruitment, hiring, and retention of bicultural and bilingual law enforcement officers in underrepresented communities.
  15. Convene, at the request of police chiefs, those officers who are trained in and committed to the principles of Community Oriented Policing, and use them to promote and advocate the benefits of multicultural understanding.
  16. Identify and establish strategies that help develop meaningful relationships between law enforcement officers and indigenous community leaders and community-based organizations prior to the onset of a crisis.
  17. Create an effective communications mechanism to facilitate the dissemination of information by community leaders to the community at large.
  18. Create and/or increase support for community coalitions that reflect the community's ethnic and religious composition.

### Trust

19. Create a task force to establish success indicators and to measure the progress of strategies to increase trust in the relationship between law enforcement and the community.
20. Through partnerships with the media and clergy, conduct recognition events, at least quarterly, to promote positive news and to recognize individuals who have contributed to increased cultural understanding.
21. Use faith-based and nonprofit organizations to promote open and honest communication between law enforcement and the community (e.g., facilitated study circles).
22. Establish a mutual commitment among summit and community stakeholders to support implementation of summit recommendations by ensuring that the right people are at the table, that they are representative of the communities' diverse composition, and that they share the responsibility and power as decision makers.
23. To facilitate open communication, examine how easy it is for local community leaders to gain access to law enforcement leaders.
24. Build and support partnerships between law enforcement and youth through mentoring programs (e.g., Police Athletic Leagues).
25. Convene community-level summits with law enforcement, schools, the faith community, businesses, and youth to encourage dialog on important issues.
26. To increase the sense of community, create and disseminate a public calendar that advertises learning opportunities provided or sponsored by law enforcement.

### Justice

27. Create and fund incentives for officers to learn new languages.
28. Mandate that Community Action Councils be funded through the City Council, which will provide access to additional funding resources and act as an intermediary for community agencies.





29. Implement policing strategies that support and promote increased personal contact with the community.
30. Use asset forfeitures and seizures to provide increased support and funding/resources to ex-offender outreach and reentry programs in order to facilitate transition back into the community.
31. Incorporate effective, science-based prevention programs that provide youth with safe and healthy alternatives and that build resiliency.
32. To help law enforcement address major issues within the community, establish a standard of accountability that will enable the community to provide feedback regarding law enforcement policies and procedures.
33. Solicit various media outlets to support media strategies and promote the positive accomplishments resulting from community planning and partnerships.
34. Guarantee universal access to competent legal representation.
35. Assess the enforcement of criminal justice codes across ethnic, economic, and religious boundaries to ensure that they are applied fairly to all citizens.
36. Create community boards to assess and analyze disproportionate sentencing.
37. For community members who are interested in law enforcement careers, provide pre-employment training designed to increase the number of eligible applicants.
38. Establish Community Action Councils to address human rights and justice issues, and establish links to national organizations such as NAACP and the National Council of La Raza.
39. Mandate action plans from Community Action Council meetings as a condition of receiving funding.
40. Increase community awareness of existing avenues to access law enforcement (e.g., community forums).
41. Promote neighborhood revitalization projects designed to reduce crime, provide access to economic development reparations, and increase residents' connectedness to the community.

## Leadership and Service

42. Create a strategic outreach plan to develop and/or improve communication, and enlist support from national organizations established to protect the civil rights of ethnic minorities such as NAACP, the National Council of La Raza, and the National Urban League.
43. As part of the outreach plan, include participants from civil rights organizations in a review board that is responsible for monitoring the implementation of summit recommendations.
44. Incorporate community service and service-learning components into Police Academy training.
45. Provide information on community resources at kiosks in grocery stores and at bus stops.
46. Establish a position within law enforcement agencies to monitor the performance evaluations of law officers and ensure completion of strategies designed to address the recommendations that result from the evaluations.
47. Establish communication at multiple levels within law enforcement and community agencies to continue consistent, proactive, and positive outreach to the community.



48. Provide leadership development training classes or workshops for law enforcement officers and community agencies; the training should focus on relationship building, effective and culturally competent communication, and personal and professional accountability.
49. Encourage law enforcement leaders to get out of the office and into the community to increase relationships between law enforcement and the community.
50. Share leadership development resources across the community to prevent duplication of efforts.
51. Develop an active citizen initiative within each community to promote a sense of individual responsibility for the common good.
52. Increase participation in public safety programs that seek collaboration between the community and law enforcement.
53. Hire an outside consultant to conduct an annual performance evaluation and establish a formal training process to address assessment recommendations.
54. Encourage the development of relationships with people in different spheres of influence, and acknowledge both formal and informal community leaders.





## Washington State Summit on Law Enforcement and Culture Awareness

### Agenda

#### Day One: November 13, 2002

8:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m. **Continental Breakfast and Registration**

9:00 a.m.–9:15 a.m. **Native American Ceremonial Opening**  
*Allan Olney, Yakima Indian Nation*

9:15 a.m.–9:45 a.m. **Welcome and Introductions**  
*James E. Copple, Vice President, Public Policy and Program  
Development, National Crime Prevention Council*  
*Ron Sims, King County Executive*

**Special Introduction of Keynote Speaker**  
*Jorge Madrazo, Consul of Mexico*

9:45 a.m.–10:30 a.m. **Keynote Address**  
*Reverend Lewis Anthony, Metropolitan Wesley African Methodist  
Episcopal Zion Church, Washington, DC*

10:30 a.m.–10:45 a.m. **BREAK**

10:45 a.m.–11:00 a.m. **Explanation of Summit Process**  
*James E. Copple, Vice President, Public Policy and Program  
Development, National Crime Prevention Council*  
*Darryl A. Jones Sr., Vice President, Coalition and Law Enforcement  
Training Services, National Crime Prevention Council*  
*Monica Palacio, Director, Weed and Seed Initiatives, National  
Crime Prevention Council*



- 11:00 a.m.–11:20 a.m. **Community Reconciliation Keynote**  
This keynote will focus on Principles and Experiences of Community Reconciliation that can promote cross-cultural awareness and understanding.  
*Michael Walker, Partnership for a Safer Cleveland*
- 11:20 a.m.–12:45 p.m. **Small Group Process**  
The small group process will consist of 10 to 15 summit participants and will be facilitated by an outside facilitator to help identify elements that are working “right” in our communities and to identify strategies and solutions for moving forward on the theme of Community Reconciliation.
- 12:45 p.m.–2:00 p.m. **LUNCH**  
(Interactive Lunch: Integrating Law Enforcement with Cultural Groups)  
**Lunch Keynote:** “How We Sustain Ourselves When Living and Working Out of Our Comfort Zone”  
*John A. Calhoun, President and CEO, National Crime Prevention Council*
- 2:00 p.m.–2:20 p.m. **Community Trust Keynote**  
This keynote will focus on Principles and Experiences of Community Trust that can promote cross-cultural awareness and understanding.  
*Reverend Warren Dolphus, National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice*
- 2:20 p.m.–3:45 p.m. **Small Group Process**  
The small group process will consist of 10 to 15 summit participants and will be facilitated by an outside facilitator to help identify elements that are working “right” in our communities and to identify strategies and solutions for moving forward on the theme of Community Trust.
- 3:45 p.m.–4:00 p.m. **BREAK**
- 4:00 p.m.–4:45 p.m. **Report Outs on Small Group Process for Community Reconciliation and Trust**
- 4:45 p.m.–5:00 p.m. **Wrap-up and Adjournment**



## Day Two: November 14, 2002

- 8:00 a.m.–9:00 a.m.     **Continental Breakfast**
- 9:00 a.m.–9:15 a.m.     **Review of Day One Outcomes**
- 9:15 a.m.–9:35 a.m.     **Community Justice Keynote**  
This keynote will focus on Principles and Experiences of Community Justice that can promote cross-cultural awareness and understanding.  
*Monica Palacio, Director, Weed and Seed Initiatives, National Crime Prevention Council*
- 9:35 a.m.–11:00 a.m.     **Small Group Process**  
The small group process will consist of 10 to 15 summit participants and will be facilitated by an outside facilitator to help identify elements that are working “right” in our communities and to identify strategies and solutions for moving forward on the theme of Community Justice.
- 11:00 a.m.–11:15 a.m.     **BREAK**
- 11:15 a.m.–11:30 a.m.     **Building a Community of Practice Network To Promote Goal Implementation**
- 11:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.     **“Micro-story” Reports From Small Groups**  
Each group will identify one “micro-story” to be shared with the entire conference.
- 12:30 p.m.–1:40 p.m.     **LUNCH**
- 1:40 p.m.–2:00 p.m.     **Leadership and Service Keynote**  
This keynote will focus on Principles and Experiences of Leadership and Service that can promote cross-cultural awareness and understanding.  
*Alfred Ramirez, President, National Community for Latino Leadership*
- 2:00 p.m.–3:25 p.m.     **Small Group Process**  
The small group process will consist of 10 to 15 summit participants and will be facilitated by an outside facilitator to help identify elements that are working “right” in our communities and to identify strategies and solutions for moving forward on the theme of Leadership and Service.

3:25 p.m.–3:35 p.m.	<b>BREAK</b>
3:35 p.m.–4:20 p.m.	<b>Report Outs on Small Group Process for Community Justice and Leadership and Service</b>
4:20 p.m.–4:45 p.m.	<b>Discussion of Day Two Outcomes</b>
4:45 p.m.–5:00 p.m.	<b>Next Steps, Evaluation, Wrap-up, and Adjournment</b> <i>Reverend Donovan L. Rivers, Apostolic Clergy Advisory Council</i>  <i>Sheriff Dave Reichert, King County</i>  <i>James E. Copple, Vice President, Public Policy and Program Development, National Crime Prevention Council</i>









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