



COMMON GROUND

SEPTEMBER 2021 ISSUE

SCSD'S 2021 RETURN OF THE SUMMER ENRICHMENT PROGRAM





SHERIFF'S MESSAGE

September 2021

Greetings,

In this issue of the Common Ground Newsletter, we bring you highlights from our recently concluded 2021 Summer Enrichment Program.

Envisioned as both a paid internship for young people interested in learning more about careers in law enforcement and criminal justice, and as a means of enhancing the relationships between youths and uniformed officers, I created the Summer Enrichment Program back in 2014 with the intention of bringing in juniors and seniors from around Suffolk County on an annual basis. Unfortunately, with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, we were forced to cancel the SEP in the Summer of 2020, delaying our 7th year of operation until this past July.

Thankfully, we were able to fully resume our SEP this year, albeit with the added protection of COVID-19-related health and safety protocols.

In addition to our focus on Summer Enrichment, we feature a story about our newly-augmented commitment to promoting civic engagement among our voting-eligible population with the placement of voting ballot drop boxes at both the Suffolk County Jail and Suffolk County House of Correction, thanks to a collaborative effort between our Department and the City of Boston. Now, not only will the process of filling out and dropping off electoral ballots be made easier and more efficient for our population, but members of the general public who reside in Boston will also be able to utilize these safe, secure and fully-monitored ballot drop boxes.

I hope that you'll enjoy reading about these and other topics in this edition, and I look forward to bringing you more insight and information about the form and functions of the Department in the issues to come.

-Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins

COMMON GROUND NEWSLETTER

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SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT BRINGS BALLOT BOXES TO HOC, JAIL

The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department recently partnered with the City of Boston for the siting of voting ballot drop boxes within the lobbies of the House of Correction and Jail.



SUMMER ENRICHMENT PROGRAM CONCLUDES 2021 RETURN

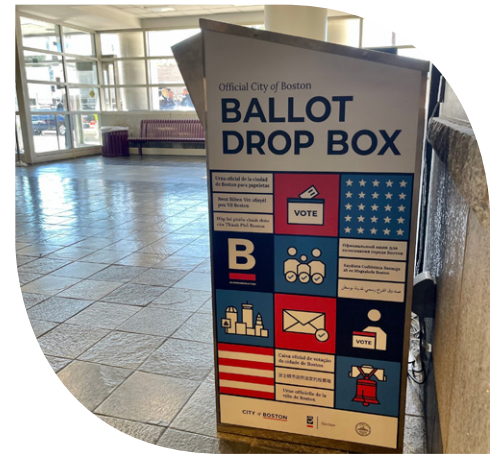
Read about the 2021 resumption and conclusion of the Department's Summer Enrichment Program, our summer internship program for teens, in this retrospective.



SCSD PARTNER OF THE MONTH: BENJAMIN FRANKLIN INSTITUTE

The Department's "Partner of the Month" feature resumes with a look at the Benjamin Franklin Technical Institute and its Associate Dean of Admissions and Recruitment Calvin Conyers.

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, CITY OF BOSTON COLLABORATE TO EXPAND VOTING ACCESS FOR INCARCERATED POPULATION, AREA RESIDENTS



Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins and Acting Boston Mayor Kim Janey have joined the forces of their respective agencies to help expand voting access for eligible members of the incarcerated population with the installation of election ballot drop boxes at both the Suffolk County House of Correction and Suffolk County Jail.

As an outspoken proponent of civic engagement and a dedicated facilitator of voter participation behind the walls with registration drives, candidate forums and informational material distributions for the incarcerated population, Sheriff Tompkins was grateful for this additional opportunity to expand on those efforts.

“We are very pleased to announce this collaboration between the Department and the City of Boston,” said Sheriff Tompkins. “These drop boxes will serve to enhance our mission to ensure that the voting-eligible men and women in our facilities are able to participate in this most sacred of our civic functions as easily and efficiently as possible.”

In Massachusetts, members of incarcerated populations who are eligible to vote include those who have been convicted of misdemeanor offenses and pretrial detainees, or those awaiting sentencing.

While these new drop boxes will be used primarily to expedite the process of securing the ballots cast by the people

remanded to Department custody, their location in the public lobbies of the Jail and House of Correction – which are open and staffed twenty-four hours a day/seven days a week, with full surveillance – make them accessible to use by any registered Boston voter.

“I applaud the decision of the Boston Election Department and the Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department to add ballot drop boxes in correctional facilities,” said Boston Mayor Kim Janey. “Voting is a fundamental right in our democracy and every eligible voter should have convenient and secure options to cast a ballot.”

In addition to the efforts undertaken by the Mayor’s Office to help establish these new sites, Boston City Councilor Julia Mejia was also a vocal advocate of their placement.

“Civil rights isn’t just about defending someone’s right to vote, it’s about meeting people where they are at and making sure they have access to everything they would need to exercise their right to vote,” said Councilor Mejia. “Placing a ballot box inside of our house of incarceration not only extends that right to our incarcerated loved ones, but it helps their families and the employees in these facilities as well. We would not be here had it not been for the advocacy of community leaders like Pastor Hobbs, who has single-handedly helped to enfranchise countless incarcerated loved ones.”

And, though the drop boxes are currently designated for Boston municipal elections only, State Representative Nika Elugardo is currently working with Sheriff Tompkins and the State Elections Department to expand their use to include statewide and national elections.

“There is no civil right more sacred or more fundamental to democracy than the right to vote,” said Representative Elugardo. “Incarcerated individuals who are legally able to vote have for far too long been disenfranchised from this right by structural obstacles. Given the disproportionate number of incarcerated people from BIPOC communities, this is structural racism at its worst. I’m so grateful to Suffolk County Sheriff Tompkins and his Office for their innovation and demonstrated commitment to do everything in their power to dismantle these inequities and provide meaningful access to voting by bringing ballot boxes on site, ensuring they get used properly, and ensuring every legal vote is counted. I look forward to passing House legislation to institutionalize the Suffolk County ballot box initiative as a matter of State law.”

For information about voting in Boston’s upcoming preliminary election on Tuesday, September 14th or for a listing of ballot drop boxes around the city, visit: boston.gov/election.



DEPARTMENT'S SUMMER ENRICHMENT PROGRAM CONCLUDES SUCCESSFUL 7TH YEAR

The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department's annual paid internship program for teens, the Summer Enrichment Program (SEP), recently concluded its seventh year of operation, following a brief pause in programming in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

With a reduced number of interns and enhanced protection protocols in place for all participants, the SEP picked up seamlessly from past years with a full resumption of all of the features that have become synonymous with the Department's signature program for high school juniors and seniors.

As in previous years, SEP members took part in a wide variety of field trips to, among other destinations, Boston City Hall; the Suffolk County District Attorney's Office; the U.S. Marshal's Office; the Massachusetts State Police Barracks; the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Police Headquarters; and the Greater Boston Food Bank. In their visits, SEP participants met with Acting Mayor Kim Janey in the Eagle Room; Suffolk County District Attorney Rachael Rollins; U.S. Marshall John Gibbons; MBTA Chief of Police Kenneth Green; members of the State Police; and learned about the mission of the Food Bank while volunteering to help fill food orders for distribution to residents in need. Participants also took

part in a Zoom conference with Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker as part of an electronic "field trip."

SEP participants also fulfilled the portion of the program in which interns engage with and work alongside members of the Department with the goal of learning more about some of the many important functions undertaken to ensure the safe care and custody of those remanded to the Suffolk County House of Correction (HOC) and the Suffolk County Jail (SCJ). In addition, the SEP sat down with Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins, several members of the Department's Executive Team including the Superintendents of both the SCJ and HOC, and leadership from a number of the Department's many divisions and programs, and their tours of each facility visited key locations that included the Booking area; medical units, inmate and detainee housing units, the Education Division, Vocational Education and more. SEP members also visited the Department's Correction Officer Training Academy where they received training and certification in CPR (Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation).

In one of the more popular events of the program, the SEP took part in a K9 Demonstration by members of the Department's K9 Division with SCSD K9 Unit Officer Deputy Zachary Miller and his partner,

“Jak,” showcasing Jak’s skills with some agility drills and his search-and-recovery abilities.

Members of the SEP concluded the seven-week program with a “wrap session” that included a presentation of certificates of completion and light refreshments.

“We are always so proud of all of the young people who take part in our Summer Enrichment Program, said Sandy Zamor Calixte, Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department Chief of External Affairs and Communications. “But this year, we’re especially impressed by the resiliency and determination of this class with their participation under the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic.”

“Despite the smaller number of participants than in years past,” Chief Zamor Calixte continued, “we were able to resume all essential functions of the program, thanks to our enhanced safety protocols and some creative planning around some of our visits. We’re already looking forward to next year’s class.”

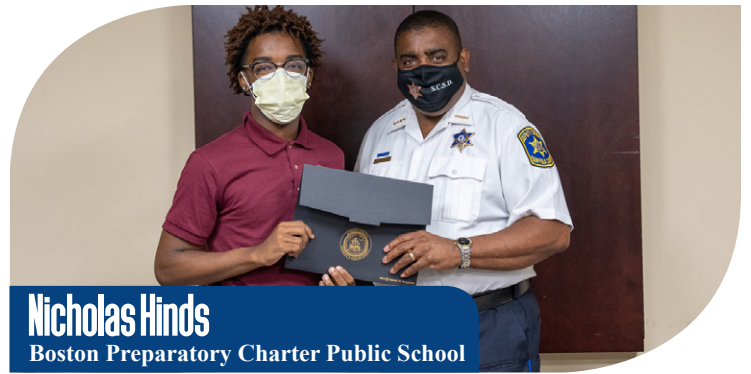
Started in 2014 by Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins, the Summer Enrichment Program was designed to provide interested Suffolk County juniors and seniors with the opportunity to learn about the vast and varied world of law enforcement and criminal justice operating in and around Suffolk County with the purpose of bolstering their knowledge of the industry while honing their focus on future employment and building relationships with professionals within the field. The program was also envisioned as an opportunity to bring together uniformed officers and young people for the purpose of fostering positive relationships between them.

For more information about the Summer Enrichment Program, visit: www.scsdma.org.





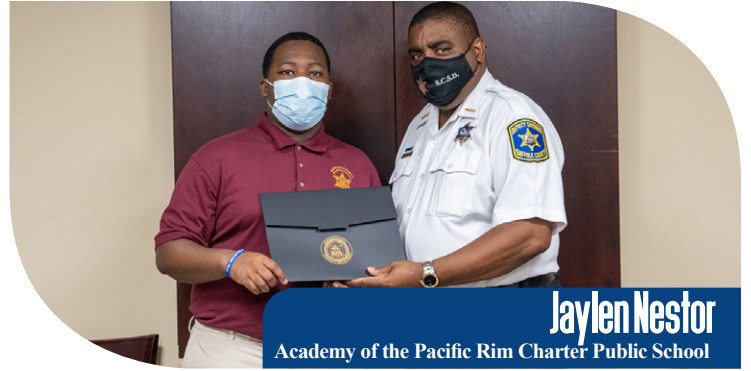
Marwa Fetheddine
Revere High School



Nicholas Hinds
Boston Preparatory Charter Public School



Dania Myers
Wellesley High School



Jaylen Nestor
Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter Public School



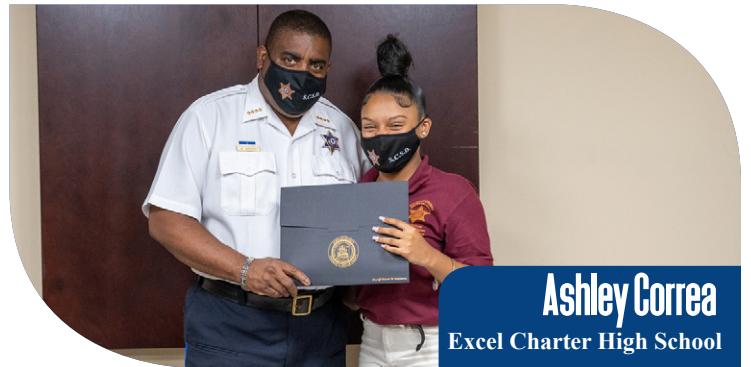
Marc-Nathan Pierre
Cathedral High School



Luis Rodriguez
The English High School



Bradley Coriolan
Roxbury Prep High School



Ashley Correa
Excel Charter High School



Jaciah Alfred
Boston Collegiate Charter School

NOT PICTURED ON THIS PAGE ARE

Sarai Marks
The Newman School

Bailey Taylor-Black
Beaver Country Day School

PARTNER OF THE MONTH



CALVIN CONYERS

**ASSOCIATE DEAN OF ADMISSIONS AND RECRUITMENT,
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY**

The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department's "Partner of the Month" series highlights the outside agencies and organizations that are working with us to help improve the lives and increase opportunities for the men and women remanded to our care and custody by the courts. Each month, we will highlight these collaborations between our organizations and shed some light on some of the ways in which we are readying people to reenter their communities better prepared to provide for themselves and their families.

In this issue's installment of our "Partner of the Month" series, we feature Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology's Calvin Conyers, who is the Associate Dean of Admissions and Recruitment.

Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology (BFIT) is an affordable urban college serving the Boston region that is committed to student success and career readiness in technology fields. Through personalized support, hands-on learning, and industry-informed curricula, BFIT prepares graduates for work, life-long learning, and citizenship. It was established in 1908 with funds bequeathed in Benjamin Franklin's will. Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology has been partnered with the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department since 2019.

When asked what makes Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology stand out from other technology schools, Calvin stated, "BFIT offers technical and trade programs with hands on learning, which prepares graduates for the jobs of today and the future. We also have industry partners, which allow us to place our graduates in their field of study at a rate that exceeds 83% every year. Also, technical training is the training that keeps the world going. When you think about computers, electronics, cars, air conditions and heating devices, electricity, and so many other common things we use on a daily basis, all need technical support in order to keep running. BFIT

prepares graduates for that, and more!"

Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology holds an informational session with the men and women at the Suffolk County House of Correction on a monthly basis in addition to attending the Discharge & Recovery Panels that also happen monthly for both the House of Correction and Suffolk County Jail. When asked what barriers he sees when working with returning citizens and how he tries to help overcome them, Calvin stated, "Some barriers returning citizens have are trying to decide whether to work full time and earn immediate money to support their families or to attend college where they will not be earning money initially, but rather, setting up the blueprint for a better future. Another barrier we see often is returning citizens not wanting to take out the federal loan that's a part of their financial aid. Typically we talk to them about the outcomes and benefits of the future they will have if they attend."

The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department and Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology's partnership has continued to blossom over the years, and we strive for our men and women to want to pursue higher education.

"I truly appreciate the partnership that we've established with the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department, from the Discharge & Recovery Panels to updates on returning citizens," said Calvin. "The monthly meetings also bring the partners together to better understand the support that's being provided to the returning citizens. Some good news to look forward to is that we are positioning ourselves to be the leaders in clean energy technology! We will be expanding our programs of study each year to meet the job market demand, and, in 2023, BFIT will be located in Roxbury's Nubian Square."

For more information on Benjamin Institute of Technology please visit: <https://www.bfit.edu>



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Steven W. Tompkins, Sheriff



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