



# COMMON GROUND

MAY 2017 ISSUE

**LIEUTENANT SEAN ROSS**  
OFFICER IN CHARGE OF THE GIU



# THE GANG INTELLIGENCE UNIT

PROMOTING SAFETY BEHIND THE WALLS & IN SUFFOLK COUNTY

# Sheriff's Statement



As part of the “care” component of our “care and custody” mandate at the Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department, we take extensive measures to insure the safety of not only the men and women remanded to our custody, but also the safety of those who work within and visit our facilities.

In this month’s issue of the *Common Ground* newsletter, we provide a look into our Gang Intelligence Unit (GIU) and the work that they do, both inside and outside of our facilities, to keep them secure, and we shed light on some of the collaborations that we have with other branches of law enforcement that also help to provide greater safety and security out in the neighborhoods of Suffolk County.

In addition, we profile the Officer in Charge of the GIU and feature stories about our Boston Reentry Initiative, our newest group of correction officer candidates making their way through Correction Officer Training Academy Class 17-01, and highlight some of the activities attended and efforts given by members of our Department to help make Suffolk County a more vibrant place to live.

-Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins



# Index

## Department Helps To Kick Off JFK Touch Football Competition

Read about our employees’ participation in the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum’s JFK100 Touch Football Competition.

## Lt. Ross Profile

Meet the Department’s Officer in Charge of the Gang Intelligence Unit, Lieutenant Sean Ross.

## Gang Intelligence Unit

An overview of the Gang Intelligence Unit of the Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department.



## Boston Reentry Initiative

Learn about the SCSD’s efforts to successfully reintegrate gang-affiliated offenders into their communities.



## The SCSD Welcomes Latest Officer Academy Class

Join members of the Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department in welcoming the current group of officer candidates to our Correction Officer Training Academy.



# Department Takes Part in “JFK 100” Touch Football Competition

Under a sun-filled sky and against a cool April wind, two teams representing the Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department -- one from the House of Correction (HOC) and the other from the Suffolk County Jail (SCJ) -- took the field at Almont Park in Mattapan as participants in the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum’s JFK100 Touch Football Competition. The games, played throughout Massachusetts and in several other states over the weekend of April 9th, were part of the JFK Library’s yearlong commemoration of President Kennedy’s 100th birthday and served as a reminder of his commitment to the health and physical fitness of all Americans. Over two intensely-played 20-minute halves, it was the HOC team that emerged victorious with a score of 16 over the SCJ’s 7. Congratulations to the HOC team and kudos to everyone who came out to help make the day such a rousing success.







## Lieutenant Sean Ross Employee Profile

Lieutenant Sean Ross, the Officer in Charge of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Gang Intelligence Unit (GIU), has served with the Department for the past 29 years. Joining the Department in 1988, Lt. Ross joined the Gang Intelligence Unit in 2004.

"My uncle had been a Homicide Detective with the Boston Police Department and he encouraged me to apply for a job at the Sheriff's Department to gain experience," Lt. Ross said, discussing his motivation to come to work for the Department. Over the course of nearly three decades, Lt. Ross has worked many posts within the Department including his time as a unit officer, member of the Sheriff's Emergency Response Team, and others.

Lt. Ross describes his day as one that varies on a constant basis, with certain duties fulfilled regularly.

"Typically the first thing that I do is to check in on my emails and distrib-

ute reports for the Boston Regional Intelligence Center," said Lt. Ross. "These reports include intelligence gathered about shootings and gang violence, as well as the identification of major players and ex-offenders returning to the community. This information is then distributed to the Boston Police Department and other law enforcement, intelligence, first responder, and private sector partners, as well as to the Federal Government."

"From there," Lt. Ross continued, "I usually review any incidents at both the House of Correction and Suffolk County Jail to see whether there have been any gang-related fights, or materials recovered during searches."

Lt. Ross also works closely with the Classification Division at both facilities to assist in the housing of gang affiliated inmates and detainees to minimize potential incidents.

"There is a lot of intelligence gathering that I do with my team, which is often spread out among the units,

out on the streets or partnering with different agencies at any given time."

The rest of his day is spent conducting various internal and external gang-related investigations which include inmate interviews, the monitoring of possible internal gang related security threats, inspection of recovered gang-related materials, evaluating the quality of incoming information regarding external incidents, and more.

"What is really unique about my position is that I get the opportunity to learn a lot about gangs for an extended amount of time," Lt. Ross said. "I focus on the city, but I also work across the entire county which includes Chelsea, Winthrop and Revere. The efforts of the Gang Intelligence Unit also occasionally spans the Commonwealth, and we come into contact with many different agencies along the way. Our job here in the GIU is to provide a safer living environment for our inmates, our employees and the communities our inmates return to. That is my goal every day, and that's what we do here."

# Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Gang Intelligence Unit



For officers working in the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department's Gang Intelligence Unit (GIU), every day offers different challenges. With more than 150 known gangs of varying sizes and criminal activity operating within neighborhoods across the county, the Department's team of experienced officers carry out a multitude of responsibilities behind the walls and out on the streets in an effort to increase safety for those in our care and custody, our staff, and the residents of Suffolk County.

"We work behind the scenes to covertly make the facility safer," said Lieutenant Sean Ross, who oversees the GIU.

The gang unit works closely with a host of other law enforcement officials across the State of Massachusetts, including the Boston Police Department and the Department of Correction, to exchange information and identify potential gang members and the threats that they may pose.

"We pay attention to all gang-related activity in our facilities and in our community," said Lt. Ross. "It's a job where you really need to use your head."

Within the facility, the main duties charged to Lt. Ross and the GIU are to monitor all gang-related activity within the Jail and the House of Correction and to work with the Classification Division to help insure that the men and women from rival gangs are safely and separately housed. This is done through background checks, anonymous tips and interviews with concerned men and women in the facility.

Though a sizable part of the job takes place in Suffolk County, because of the reach and mobility that some of the gangs possess, the work can extend deeper into the Commonwealth.

"While we meet frequently with officers and organizations

in Suffolk County, our work stretches across the state," Lt. Ross said.

Along with Lt. Ross, who is committed to the GIU on a full-time basis, there are nine other officers who work within the gang unit, in addition to performing their regular duties as correction officers. Members of the Gang Intelligence Unit all frequently work out in the community alongside other law enforcement officers in their efforts to combat gang violence.

Seen in the photo above is Lt. Keith Medeiros with the North Metro S.W.A.T. and Suffolk County Sheriff's Department (SCSD) Tactical Response Team; Lt. Melvin Reed who was formerly attached to the Boston Police Department (BPD) City Wide Drug Control Unit, and currently works with the BPD Human Trafficking Unit and SCSD Tactical Response Team; Lt. Dana Johnson who serves as the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department House of Correction Disciplinary Board Supervisor; Sgt. Angel Lopez who serves with the Boston Police Department Youth Violence Strike Force and SCSD Tactical Response Team; Sgt. James Melberg, a member of the SCSD Tactical Response Team; Sgt. Jarrod Trovato who works with Revere PD Gang Task Force and Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Tactical Response Team; Deputy Leylana Higgins of the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Field Supervision Unit (pictured below); Deputy Steven Boyce; and Deputy Joseph Lee.

"It's truly a team effort," said Lt. Ross. "We work together to stay on top of developments and lower gang-related activity here in Department facilities and out on the street."





# Boston Reentry Initiative Prepares Inmates for Release, Future Success

“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure – if you invest in the individual now, you can help them to achieve success while preventing them from being a liability to the Commonwealth in the future,” said True-See Allah, Assistant Deputy Superintendent (ADS) and Director of Re-Integration for the Suffolk County House of Correction.

At the Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department, one of our central missions is to provide the kinds of programming and opportunities that can help currently incarcerated men and women to reenter our communities in better standing as contributing citizens. A common refrain often heard spoken by Suffolk County Sheriff Steven W. Tompkins is emblematic of the Department’s modern focus on corrections: “How do we want people in our care and custody to return to their communities? Do we want them to return home the same as they were when they came in, worse than when they came in, or better than they were when they came in?”

With the Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department releasing more than 3,000 inmates from the House of Correction and more than 13,000 detainees from the Suffolk County Jail annually, the Department’s coordinated continuum of treatment and reentry programming has the potential to greatly increase public safety. Launched in 2001, the Boston Reentry Initiative (BRI) currently consists of the Suffolk County Sheriff’s Department, the Boston Mayor’s Office, the Boston Police Department, the Office of the Commissioner of Probation, the Massachusetts Parole Board, the Department of Correction, the Suffolk County District Attorney’s Office and the U.S. Attorney’s Office.

The re-integration of individuals into their communities presents its share



of challenges and the Department works diligently to return incarcerated individuals to their neighborhoods ready for success through the Boston Reentry Initiative. The BRI is a multi-faceted community partnership that focuses on an offender population that has prior histories with gang violence and/or who are gang identified and affiliated. Through the identification of impact players who negatively affect their communities, the Boston Reentry Initiative provides reentry services to those people who pose the greatest risk to public safety in an effort to reduce violence throughout the Greater Boston area.

“We at the Department really believe that if we focus on programming and provide impact players with an extra level of advocacy, we can lower the chances that they will come back once they are released,” said ADS Allah.

The BRI achieves this goal with a focus on mentoring, information sharing, treating addiction and providing employment opportunities for inmates after release. While offenders are still incarcerated at the House of Correction,

a panel comprised of the various partner agencies comes together to meet with them to discuss issues that may affect a successful transition back to their communities.

“We are working to help put individuals on first base,” said ADS Allah. “Whether it be finding someone a half-way house placement, their first job, or first hospital appointment, we want to help connect the dots for what it is that most people need to succeed when coming out.”

Recent research relating to incarcerated individuals who are returning to their communities demonstrates that the first 24-hours post-release are crucial in terms of determining whether or not they will re-offend. From 2013-2014, 146 individuals participated in the BRI panel and more than 54% of the men selected who were deemed to be 100% likely to reoffend have remained arrest free or have arrests on minor charges.

For more information on the Boston Reentry Initiative visit our website at: [www.scsdma.org](http://www.scsdma.org).

# Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Welcomes Officer Candidates For New Training Class



The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department recently launched its latest thirteen-week training academy for correction officers. The new class of officer cadets is now in-session at the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Correction Officer Training Academy (COTA) in Chelsea. The COTA is a critical component of the Department because it provides cadets with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to be successful Correctional Officers.

The COTA training staff is currently engaged in the process of helping this group of twenty-five officer candidates to acquire the skills, knowledge and discipline required to become correction officers for the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department. The current class is made up of twenty-two men and three women who, upon successful completion of Class 17-01, will graduate and begin their service as officers at the Suffolk County Jail. Eleven of the candidates hail from communities located within Suffolk County, while the other fourteen candidates come from neighborhoods across the Commonwealth and as far away as Windham, New Hampshire. Two candidates list countries of origin outside of the United States, with one claiming Haiti and the

other citing El Salvador as their birthplaces. Nineteen of the twenty-five candidates are under thirty, ranging in age from nineteen to twenty-nine. Though the graduation ceremony for Class 17-01 is slated to take place this summer, the road to the finish line will be fraught with numerous challenges for class participants.

Officer candidates will receive instruction in a variety of topics including: the use of force continuum, firearm safety and handling, suicide prevention, courtroom testimony, ethics and professionalism, inmate education, CORI and inmate rights and responsibilities, fire safety, evacuation plans, and general professional subjects which include clear and concise report writing, sexual harassment, general conduct, CPR, interpersonal communications, and more.

In addition to the trainings that they are receiving at the Chelsea Training Facility, officer candidates recently traveled to Clean Harbors in Norwell Massachusetts to receive instruction in fire safety and rescue techniques. Cadets ended the day with an obstacle course and emergency fire/smoke simulations to get hands-on experience to draw from in the event of an emergency situation.

## Sheriff Tompkins Participates on Panel About Race and Criminal Justice in Massachusetts



Sheriff Steven Tompkins participated as a panelist for the Justice George Lewis Ruffin Society Convocation on Race and Criminal Justice in Massachusetts. The panel was moderated by the Honorable Roderick Ireland, former Chief Justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court and featured Superintendent In-Chief of the Boston Police Department William Gross; Director of Northeastern University's School of Criminology and Criminal Justice Anthony Braga; Associate Professor in Northeastern's School of Criminology Amy Farrell; Former Secretary of Public Safety & Security for the Commonwealth of MA Andrea Cabral; Chief Justice of the Boston Municipal Court Roberto Ronquillo, Jr.; and Community Representative J. Larry Mayes.





SUFFOLK COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT  
2017 SUMMER ENRICHMENT PROGRAM



## NOW HIRING

This program will invite twenty participants to the Suffolk County Sheriff's Department to learn more about careers in law enforcement. Participants will work 21 hours a week on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, from 8am-4pm and will be compensated at a rate of \$11 an hour.

## SUMMER ENRICHMENT

The Suffolk County Sheriff's Department Summer Enrichment Program targets incoming 11th and 12th graders with the opportunity to intern at Suffolk County Jail, the House of Correction, Chelsea Training Facility and Civil Process.

## REQUIREMENTS

- Must be entering either the 11th or 12th grade
- Must be resident of Boston, Chelsea, Winthrop or Revere
- Interest in Law Enforcement or Criminal Justice
- Proper form of Identification (Student ID, Passport, Mass ID or Driver's License)
- Active Checking or Savings Account
- Updated Physical Form

APPLICATION DEADLINE:  
FRIDAY, MAY 26, 2017  
APPLY TODAY: [WWW.SCSDMA.ORG](http://WWW.SCSDMA.ORG)

☎ 617-704-6656

✉ [NLOVINSKY@SCSDMA.ORG](mailto:NLOVINSKY@SCSDMA.ORG)



[WWW.SCSDMA.ORG](http://WWW.SCSDMA.ORG)



200 NASHUA ST, BOSTON, MA 02114



## COMMON GROUND NEWSLETTER

SANDY ZAMOR CALIXTE - CHIEF  
COLLEEN FONSECA - EDITOR  
DAVID HILL - PHOTOGRAPHER  
VONEL LAMOUR - DESIGNER

## SHERIFF STEVEN W. TOMPKINS

OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

PHONE. 617-704-6688

FAX. 617-704-6750

VISIT OUR NEW WEBSITE  
[WWW.SCSDMA.ORG](http://WWW.SCSDMA.ORG)