Creating Safer Communities-A novel hate crimes training

The Rhode Island Commission on Prejudice and Bias in conjunction with the Rhode Island Chief’s of Police Association, Rhode Island Attorney General’s Office, with support from the Massachusetts Municipal Training Committee and numerous community partners presents the Matthew Shepard Foundation and the Lawyer’s Committee for Civil Rights Under Law- Creating Safer Communities-A novel hate crimes training.

September 25, 2019 from 8:00-5:00 at the Institute for the Study and Practice of Non-Violence

265 Oxford St. Providence, RI

Hate Crimes in Rhode Island -Identifying, Presenting and Reporting

Across the country, hate crimes—crimes that are motivated by the offender’s bias against a particular group are on the rise. The number of reported hate crime incidents in Rhode Island, while small, has risen in recent years (14 in 2018 versus 11 in 2017), but we also know that these crimes tend to be underreported. According to the National Crime Victimization Survey, over 60% of hate-related incidents were not reported to a law enforcement agency.

In recent years, Rhode Island law enforcement has responded to bias-motivated vandalism, assaults, and arson. In Pawtucket, a synagogue was defaced with a swastika; in East Providence, an African-American man’s home was graffitied and burned. White supremacist propaganda has been distributed across the state, including on our college campuses, and neo-Nazis have rallied at the State House steps.

To respond to hate crimes and those who would commit them, it is imperative that Rhode Island law enforcement and the community they serve take a firm stand against prejudice and intolerance.

The Ideal

The Solution

The Matthew Shepard Foundation and the Rhode Island Commission on Prejudice and Bias and their community partners understand that a safe community begins with a trusting relationship between law enforcement officers and the individuals they serve and protect. Once officers are adequately trained and demonstrate their commitment to hate crime enforcement, individuals will report bias crimes to them and accordingly, law enforcement agencies will have a greater understanding of the threats facing their community.
The Training-Creating Safe Communities

Creating Safer Communities, led by Matthew Shepard’s Foundation Programs and Operation Director, Cynthia M. Deitle, will stress the reasons for vigorous hate crimes enforcement in scenario based small group discussion and feedback sessions. Ms. Deitle oversees the Foundations hate crimes work, community outreach, and events. Prior to joining the Matthew Shepard Foundation in 2017, Cynthia was a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation for over 22 years specializing in the fields of civil rights, community outreach, and victims’ assistance. Special presenters shall include Amy Romero, Assistant United States Attorney for the District of Rhode Island, Special Agent Pepper Daigler of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and Keith Hoffmann, Special Assistant Attorney General and Civil Rights Advocate for the Rhode Island Office of Attorney General.

Program topics:

- The importance of developing strong ties between law enforcement and vulnerable communities
- The appropriate investigative measures that should be taken when a hate crime is reported
- The state and federal law pertaining to hate crimes
- Negative consequences for a prosecution absent such cooperation
- The key investigative steps necessary to obtain the critical motive evidence

Training takeaways

- Have a greater understanding of the need for effective and prompt hate crime enforcement as a means to strengthen trust between their officers and their targeted minority communities
- Be proficient in recognizing and identifying bias indicators when responding to a hate crime and enhancing the skills necessary to engage with the victim in a sensitive and respectful manner
- Possess an enhanced ability to determine what facts are necessary to substantiate the criminal charge and the bias motivation, how prosecutors and police can work together effectively to obtain a conviction, and how to accurately report data

Registration

Who should attend: All law enforcement personnel, including administrators, supervisors, detectives, patrol officers, SRO, community policing officers and dispatchers, state and local prosecutors, faith groups and community members.

How to register for Creating Safer Communities: https://donate.matthewshepard.org/ge/RhodeIsland

Registration Deadline September 8, 2019

Agenda Link: RI Commission on Prejudice and Bias-calloutprejudiceri.org

Supporting Partners Links:

Matthew Shepard Foundation-https://www.matthewshepard.org/    Center for Southeast Asians-www.cseari.org
Lawyer’s Committee for Civil Rights Under Law- https://lawyerscommittee.org/project/stop-hate-project/
Ma. Municipal Training Committee- www.mass.gov/orgs/municipal-police-training-committee
Roger Williams University and the Justice System Training & Research Institute- https://www.rwu.edu/academics/schools-and-colleges/sjs/jstri