

U.S. Department of Justice  
Community Relations Service



# 2016 Annual Report

# CRS COMMUNITY RELATIONS SERVICE

## *America's Peacemaker*

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# America's Peacemaker

Community Relations Service

U.S. Department of Justice



Annual Report Fiscal Year 2016

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## **Transmittal Letter to Congress**

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress Assembled:

With this statement, I hereby transmit a report on the activities of the Community Relations Service of the United States Department of Justice for Fiscal Year 2016. This report is required by Section 100 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) and by Reorganization Plan No. 1 of 1966, as revised by 28 C.F.R. 0.30(b).

This report describes the Community Relations Service's conflict resolution activities so that Members of Congress may assess its performance in executing its statutory mandate.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "D. Paul Monteiro".

D. Paul Monteiro  
Acting Director

Contents	
<b><u>Foreword</u></b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b><u>Congressional Mandate</u></b> .....	<b>8</b>
<i>Excerpt from the Civil Rights Act of 1964</i> .....	<i>8</i>
<i>Excerpt from the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act</i> .....	<i>9</i>
<b><u>About CRS</u></b> .....	<b>10</b>
<i>Who We Are</i> .....	<i>10</i>
<i>What We Do</i> .....	<i>11</i>
<b><u>CRS Regional Map Page</u></b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b><u>CRS Programs</u></b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b><u>Summary of CRS Activities and Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2016</u></b> .....	<b>16</b>
<i>Administration of Justice Cases</i> .....	<i>17</i>
<i>Education Cases</i> .....	<i>18</i>
<i>General Community Relations</i> .....	<i>19</i>
<b><u>CRS in Action – High Impact Cases with National Significance</u></b> .....	<b>20</b>
<i>The Police Shooting of Philando Castile in Falcon Heights, Minnesota</i> .....	<i>20</i>
<i>The Police Shooting of Alton Sterling in Baton Rouge, Louisiana</i> .....	<i>21</i>
<i>The Mass Shooting in Orlando, Florida</i> .....	<i>23</i>
<b><u>Video Initiative: Highlighting the Work of the Community Relations Service</u></b> .....	<b>26</b>
<i>A Community Comes Together in Sanford, Florida</i> .....	<i>26</i>
<i>Addressing Race-Based Cyberbullying in Duluth, Minnesota</i> .....	<i>26</i>
<i>Building Police-Community Relations in Jackson, Mississippi</i> .....	<i>27</i>
<b><u>Regional Case Highlights</u></b> .....	<b>28</b>
<i>New England Region</i> .....	<i>28</i>
<i>Northeastern Region</i> .....	<i>29</i>
<i>Mid-Atlantic Region</i> .....	<i>31</i>
<i>Southeastern Region</i> .....	<i>33</i>
<i>Midwestern Region</i> .....	<i>34</i>
<i>Southwestern Region</i> .....	<i>37</i>
<i>Central Region</i> .....	<i>38</i>
<i>Rocky Mountain Region</i> .....	<i>40</i>
<i>Western Region</i> .....	<i>41</i>

*Northwestern Region*..... 42  
**CRS Contact Information** .....45

## **Foreword**

As the Community Relations Service (CRS) closes its 53rd year, its mission of reconciliation is as critical now as at any point in our history. 2016 has seen a steady stream of community conflicts around the country due to tensions rooted in one or more of our jurisdictional areas.



### ***Notable Conflicts***

In fiscal year 2016, CRS was stretched to the limit in responding to community requests for help mediating conflicts or providing dispute resolution services following violent or traumatic incidents. In a single week, CRS received more than 1,000 emails and hundreds of phone calls requesting its services in mediating a community conflict that had gained national and international attention. The beginning of 2016 saw a continuation of tensions in Minneapolis, Minnesota and Chicago, Illinois stemming from fatal law enforcement-involved incidents. Similar events continued to galvanize the nation's attention over the course of 2016 with high-profile incidents in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Charlotte, North Carolina; Dearborn, Michigan; El Cajon, California; Los Angeles, California; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Syracuse, New York; Tupelo, Mississippi; St. Anthony, Minnesota; and many other communities.

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) 2015 Hate Crime Statistics report, released in November 2016, the country continues to suffer from a rising number of bias incidents against individuals because of their race, religion, sexual orientation, or other identities. Increasing acts of vandalism targeting houses of worship – and the fear and anxiety among congregations that result – are a troubling trend to closely monitor and address. Incidents of bullying and harassment of students in secondary schools also continue to increase at an alarming rate. CRS continues to refine the materials used by our Conciliation Specialists to train school systems and law enforcement agencies, equipping them with increased conflict resolution skills and cultural competency concerning Arab, Muslim, and Sikh-American communities.

In June, an armed attacker perpetrated a mass shooting at the Pulse Nightclub in Orlando, Florida, resulting in the massacre of 49 people and the wounding of many more. It was reported that most of the victims were part of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer and/or questioning (LGBTQ) community. CRS deployed immediately to facilitate the process for the community to access much needed services and resources. All CRS Regional

Offices also increased efforts to build relationships between local law enforcement agencies and their respective LGBTQ stakeholders given heightened anxieties regarding imminent PRIDE Month gatherings and the potential for future attacks. In response to the Orlando attacker identifying himself as Muslim, CRS prepared for potential backlash to the larger community by increasing outreach to grassroots leaders and national organizations representing Muslim Americans as the attack fell during the holy month of Ramadan.

In a single week the following month, three high profile shootings (located in Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Dallas, Texas; and St. Anthony, Minnesota) were recorded on smart phones and quickly disseminated via social media, further heightening tensions across the country. In response, Attorney General Loretta Lynch convened a series of roundtable sessions – called *Justice Forums* – to draw stakeholders together and share best practices to reinforce bonds of trust between local law enforcement and the communities they serve.

CRS facilitated the first of these difficult conversations in Baton Rouge at the end of July, and subsequent dialogues were held over the next six weeks. These roundtable discussions were led by Attorney General Loretta Lynch; Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates; and the respective U.S. Attorneys in Atlanta, Denver, Detroit, and Newark. CRS leadership, as well as Assistant Attorney General Karol Mason of the Office of Justice Programs, Director Ronald Davis of the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS), and Vanita Gupta of the Civil Rights Division, also participated in the *Justice Forums*.

Vice President Joseph Biden and Deputy Attorney General Sally Yates also convened separate conference calls with thousands of stakeholders around the country that allowed CRS to inform communities about the vital services offered by our component.

In August, CRS participated in the Attorney General's trip to Detroit, Michigan, as part of "National Night Out" to highlight ways local law enforcement successfully builds trust with the communities they serve.

CRS has prioritized outreach efforts to a range of community-based stakeholders to ensure awareness of and access to CRS services.

Our work in support of the transgender community was featured in the spring 2016 issue of the Harvard Kennedy School's LGBTQ Policy Journal authored by CRS Training Coordinator Christopher "Kit" Chalberg and Hate Crimes Prevention Act Program Specialist Kelly Collins-McMurry. In August, CRS launched a scenario-based roll call video for law enforcement agencies working to ensure respectful and professional interactions with the transgender and gender non-conforming communities.

Over the summer, CRS Senior Policy Advisor Jasjit Singh completed a series of “Know Your Rights” forums in California and Texas aimed at educating Sikh Americans on resources available to them in the classroom and workplace and within the local community. These were often convened at Gurdwaras – Sikh houses of worship – to maximize attendance and create opportunities for other federal partners, including U.S. Attorneys, to begin building relationships with their local stakeholders. As noted before, a steady rise in bias incidents targeting this community also informed the creation of CRS’ first-ever National Program Manager for Muslim, Arab, Sikh, and South Asian (MASSA) communities. On December 12, 2016, as she delivered remarks on the Department’s efforts to combat hate crimes, the Attorney General announced the selection of Harpreet Singh Mokha to serve in this critical role.

At the end of the year, we launched a series of three videos that illustrate some of the ways CRS has supported communities in crisis. One video covers Sanford, Florida, and CRS’ role during the aftermath of the Trayvon Martin shooting. Another video highlights a CRS training in Jackson, Mississippi, for law enforcement to better understand the transgender community. A third vignette shows a high school in Duluth, Minnesota, grappling with the fallout from the image of a noose circulating among students via social media.

Attorney General Lynch has made it clear: the health of a community’s relationship with its local law enforcement agency is the issue of our moment. CRS Conciliation Specialists have served admirably, impartially, and without publicity to defuse a range of community tensions and create mechanisms for local communities to address conflicts themselves in a fair and procedurally just manner. Where conflicts have spilled into public view, CRS staff has acquitted themselves admirably. CRS Conciliation Specialists work to create, not only space for citizens to engage in lawful expressions of First Amendment activity, but also pathways for the nonviolent substantive redress of grievances with the agencies that serve and protect them.

Respectfully submitted,



D. Paul Monteiro  
Acting Director

## Congressional Mandate



*Pictured above: President Lyndon Baines Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1964, surrounded by Civil Rights leaders.*

### ***Excerpt from the Civil Rights Act of 1964:***

“It shall be the function of the Service to provide assistance to communities and persons therein resolving disputes, disagreements, or difficulties relating to the discriminatory practices based on race, color, or national origin which impair the rights of persons in such communities under the Constitution or laws of the United States or which affect or may affect interstate commerce. The Service may offer its services in cases of such disputes, disagreements, or difficulties whenever, in its judgment, peaceful relations among the citizens of the community involved are threatened thereby, and it may offer its services either upon its own motion or upon the request of an appropriate State or local official or other interested person.”

—42 U.S.C. 2000g-1



*Pictured above: President Barack Obama stands on-stage with Dennis and Judy Shepard (left), parents of Matthew Shepard, and Louvon Harris and Betty Byrd Boatner (right), sisters of James Byrd, Jr., during his remarks marking the enactment of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, in the East Room of the White House, October 28, 2009. (Credit: Official White House photograph/Chuck Kennedy)*

***Excerpt from the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act:***

“There are authorized to be appropriated to the Department of Justice, including the Community Relations Service, for fiscal years 2010, 2011, and 2012, such sums as are necessary to increase the number of personnel to prevent and respond to alleged violations of section 249 of title 18, United States Code ... Whoever, whether or not acting under color of law, willfully causes bodily injury to any person or, through the use of fire, a firearm, a dangerous weapon, or an explosive or incendiary device, attempts to cause bodily injury to any person, because of the actual or perceived race, color, religion, or national origin of any person— ... Whoever, whether or not acting under color of law, in any circumstance described in subparagraph (B) or paragraph (3), willfully causes bodily injury to any person or, through the use of a fire, a firearm, a dangerous weapon or an explosive or incendiary device, attempts to cause bodily injury to any person, because of the actual or perceived religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability of any person—(i) shall be imprisoned not more than 10 years, fined in accordance with this title, or both; and (ii) shall be imprisoned for any term of years or for life, fined in accordance with this title, or both, if—(I) death results from the offense; or (II) the offense includes kidnapping or an attempt to kidnap, aggravated sexual abuse or an attempt to commit aggravated abuse or an attempt to kill.”

—P.L. 111-84, §4707

## **About CRS**

The United States Department of Justice Community Relations Service is *America's Peacemaker*, created in 1964 to resolve community conflicts and tensions arising from discriminatory practices based on race, color, and national origin.

With the passage of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009, CRS's mandate expanded to include assisting communities in preventing and responding to alleged violent hate crimes committed on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, and disability.

CRS is the only federal agency dedicated to assisting state and local units of government, private and public organizations, law enforcement, and community groups to resolve identity-based conflicts.

CRS helps facilitate the development of viable, mutual understandings and agreements, as alternatives to coercion, violence, or litigation. Additionally, CRS conducts trainings and helps develop locally-based, long-term mechanisms that communities may use to prevent tension and violent hate crimes. CRS Conciliation Specialists are impartial and do not take sides among disputing parties. Rather, CRS aids parties in developing their own mutually agreeable solutions.

## **Who We Are**

CRS' alternative dispute resolution services are facilitated by highly-skilled, impartial, Conciliation Specialists, who provide mediation, facilitated dialogue, training, and consultation services to communities experiencing conflict across the United States and in the U.S. territories. Conciliation Specialists bring together community leaders; education representatives; private and public organizations; civil rights groups; law enforcement; and Federal, State and local officials to facilitate open discussions that lead to collaborative solutions to conflicts arising from the identity-based disputes enumerated in CRS' dual mandates.

CRS staff travel to local cities and towns to work directly with all community conflict stakeholders and assist them in developing strategies to respond to conflicts and reduce tensions. CRS Conciliation Specialists are trained professional mediators, facilitators, trainers, and consultants, who are experienced in bringing community members together to help them enhance their ability to prevent and resolve existing and future conflicts.

## **What We Do**

To accomplish its mandate, CRS provides four services: facilitated dialogues, mediation, training, and consultation. These services help communities enhance their ability to alleviate tension, resolve disputes, and prevent future conflicts more effectively. Below is a description of each of CRS' four services:

*Facilitated Dialogues:* Conciliation Specialists provide facilitated dialogue services to help communities open lines of communication by listening to the issues of each stakeholder group and learning from each party about the problem and underlying issues of the conflict. These dialogues often include various local agencies, institutions, and community residents, and may be conducted in person or by telephone. Topics of discussion frequently include race, police-community relations, perceived hate crimes, tribal conflicts, and protests and demonstrations. The dialogues help communities develop action plans for promoting peace and resolving conflicts in neighborhoods and schools.

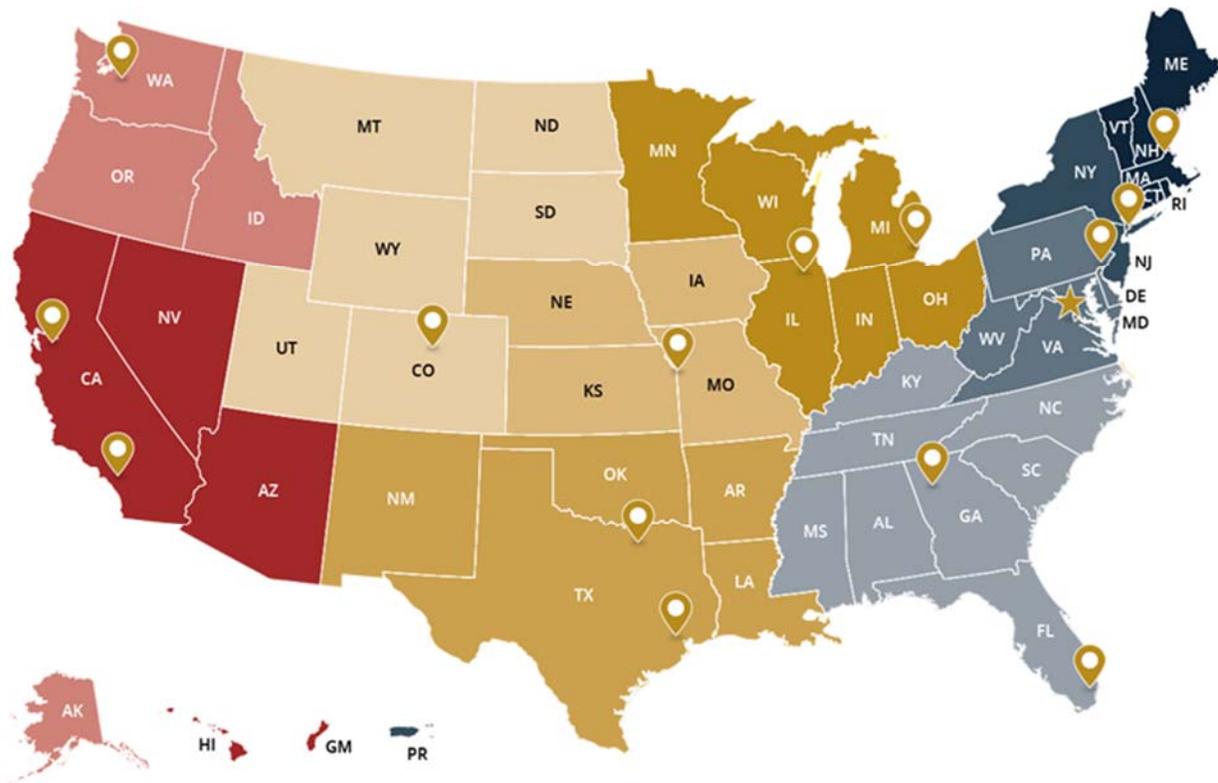
*Mediation:* Conciliation Specialists serve as mediators to help diverse stakeholders resolve community level disputes. As mediators, Conciliation Specialists assume the role of neutral third parties who facilitate problem-solving discussions with parties in conflict. These mediation sessions are confidential, allowing for candid discussion of issues, interests, values, and, ultimately, sustainable solutions. Mediation provides a framework that helps communities resolve misunderstandings, establish mutual trust, and independently prevent and resolve future conflicts. Mediation is not used to determine fault. Frequently, the results of a community's mediation will be memorialized in a document, such as a Memorandum of Understanding, Mediation Agreement, Resolution, Proclamation, Collaborative Agreement, Community Pact, or Ordinance.

*Training:* Conciliation Specialists provide an array of training programs to communities experiencing tension, as a tool for cultivating understanding resolving disputes, and preventing future disagreements. These programs bring together representatives from local government agencies, faith-based organizations, law enforcement, advocacy groups, and businesses, in order to develop collaborative approaches for reducing conflicts and addressing the factors that have contributed to community-wide disagreements.

*Consultation:* Conciliation Specialists offer consultation services to help educate and empower communities, as well as to refine conflict resolution strategies and improve their ability to address underlying issues. Through consultation, CRS provides technical assistance, as well as information on best practices. This service also includes giving advice, sharing insight, and referring communities to available resources.

## CRS Regional Map Page

CRS has ten Regional Offices across the country. The Regional Offices are located in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Chicago, Dallas, Kansas City, Denver, Los Angeles and Seattle. Additionally, CRS has four Field Offices, which support the activities of the Regional Offices. The Field Offices are located in Miami, Detroit, Houston and San Francisco. All CRS offices are strategically located to increase the availability of CRS services to the communities they serve and to allow for rapid deployment to communities in crisis. Contact information for the Regional and Field Offices can be found on page 46, as well as on the CRS website.



### LEGEND

- |                       |                         |                       |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| ● New England Region  | ● Midwest Region        | ● Western Region      |
| ● Northeast Region    | ● Southwest Region      | ● Northwestern Region |
| ● Mid-Atlantic Region | ● Central Region        | ☆ Field Offices       |
| ● Southeast Region    | ● Rocky Mountain Region | ○ Regional Offices    |

## **CRS Programs**

CRS has developed numerous programs that assist communities in solving conflicts and building the skills and capacity necessary to prevent and respond to future issues and tension. The programs convene representatives from local government agencies, community and faith-based organizations, law enforcement agencies, advocacy groups, and businesses, in order to develop collaborative approaches for reducing tensions and addressing the factors that have contributed to the conflict. CRS programs include:

*Law Enforcement Mediation Program (LEM):* The CRS Law Enforcement Mediation Program is a two-day course that strengthens the problem-solving and mediation skills of law enforcement officers who serve diverse communities. CRS works with officers to identify opportunities to enhance the level of mutual trust and respect between their department and the community, and to eliminate barriers to trust building and the delivery of more effective police services.

*Responding to Allegations of Racial Profiling (RARP):* CRS's eight-hour course brings together law enforcement and community members to address perceived racial profiling and biased-based policing practices. This course offers various benefits, and can be tailored to the specific needs of a given community. It is helpful in reducing tensions and creating a shared understanding of factors that contribute to mistrust. The program encourages collaborative police-community relations and is an effective way to begin a police-community relations initiative or problem-solving process.

*School-Student Problem Identification & Resolution of Issues Together (School-SPIRIT):* The SPIRIT program is an eight-hour student-focused, problem-solving program that engages student leaders in identifying issues impacting their school and developing solutions that resolve these issues. The SPIRIT program engages school administrators, teachers, school resource officers, local officials, community leaders and parents in the process of identifying and responding to these conflicts, and creating welcoming and safe learning environments.

*City-Problem Identification & Resolution of Issues Together (City-SPIRIT):* City-SPIRIT is an eight-hour problem-solving and resolution program that brings together representatives from local government agencies, communities, faith-based organizations, law enforcement, and businesses to develop collaborative approaches for reducing tension and addressing the factors that contribute to conflicts. The parties may also develop approaches for preventing and responding to alleged violent hate crimes on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability. This program helps communities establish a lasting capacity to prevent and respond to conflicts.

*Human Relations Commission Training:* CRS provides customized training and technical assistance to local Human Relations Commissions. If a local government is interested in starting a Human Relations Commission, or if an existing Human Relations Commission would like best practices for responding to discrimination complaints, CRS can provide assistance. CRS will work with local officials to develop trainings or consultative programs that support a Commission's efforts to better serve the needs of the community.

*Arab, Muslim, & Sikh (AMS) Cultural Awareness Program:* CRS offers AMS Cultural Awareness Programs intended to familiarize law enforcement and government officials with some of the customs and cultural aspects of Arab, Muslim, and Sikh communities. The programs are an effective tool for helping law enforcement avoid behavior and actions that may be perceived as offensive to Arab, Muslim, and Sikh community members. The training also may be given as part of a broader initiative to strengthen the relationship between local officials and the Arab, Muslim, and Sikh communities that they serve.

Additionally, CRS also offers a Train-the-Trainer program that prepares Arab, Muslim, and Sikh community leaders to provide local law enforcement officials and first responders with a fundamental understanding of Arab, Muslim, and Sikh cultures.

*Bias Incidents and Hate Crimes Forum:* The Bias Incidents and Hate Crimes Forum is a half-day program that provides community members and law enforcement with knowledge and information related to the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act (HCPA). Additionally, the program engages local law enforcement and district attorneys, along with federal law enforcement, in facilitated discussions and information sharing related to local laws and agency procedures to combat and respond to bias incidents and hate crimes.

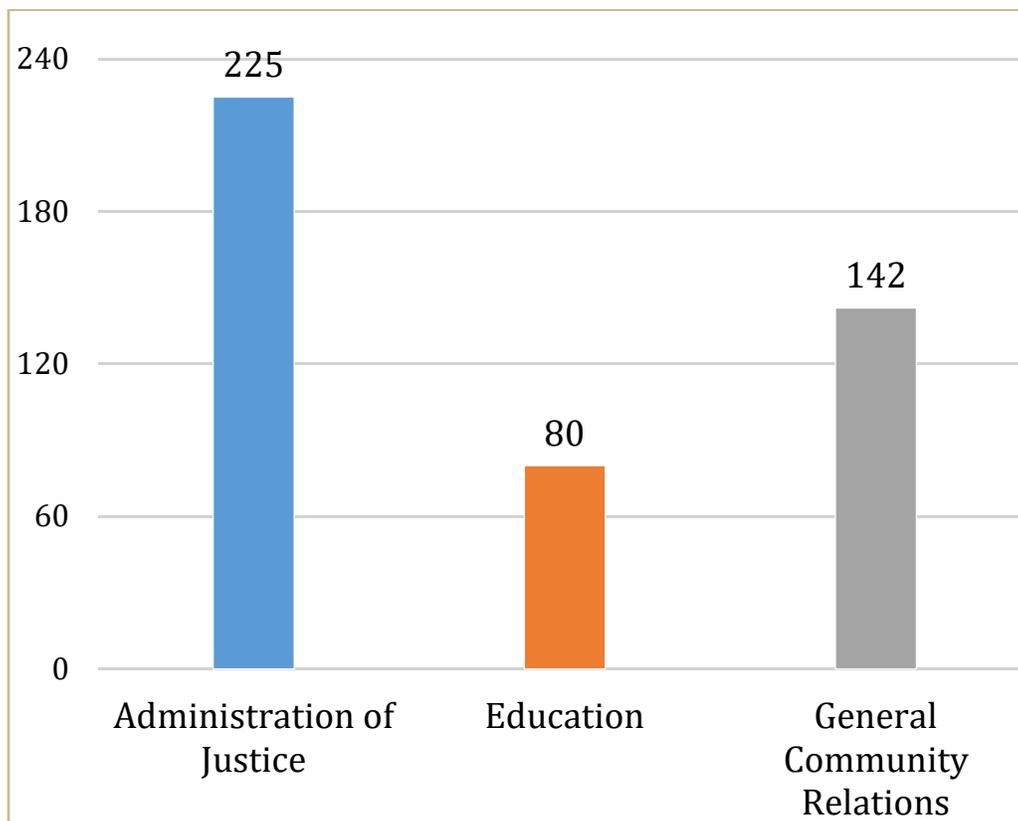
*Self-Marshaling Assistance & Training:* CRS assists local law enforcement, city officials and demonstration organizers with planning and managing safe marches and demonstrations. CRS facilitates meetings between the parties involved and serves as an impartial facilitator to ensure that logistics are effectively coordinated, information is shared effectively, and marches and demonstrations are as safe as possible. CRS also provides self-marshaling training for organizers of protests and demonstrations. The training covers topics such as permits, route selection, logistical management, contingency planning, and effective communication with law enforcement and decision-making procedures during the event.

*Rumor Control:* As part of CRS's consultation services, the agency assists local leadership in establishing rumor control measures following critical incidents that contribute to the elevation of community tension and conflict. CRS offers technical assistance on how to control inflammatory rumors with accurate and credible information by employing a proactive and coordinated approach to publicity, formalized community-notification processes, and other appropriate information-dissemination measures.

*Law Enforcement and Transgender Community Training:* The training is a four-hour program that provides law enforcement and other public safety personnel with definitions related to the Transgender community; the impacts of hate crimes; and best practices for engagement, communication and problem solving. The program serves as a tool for law enforcement to successfully engage with the Transgender community, and can be used as part of a broader initiative to strengthen the relationship between local officials and the Transgender communities that they serve. The training's intent is to support law enforcement's role in protecting and serving all community members.

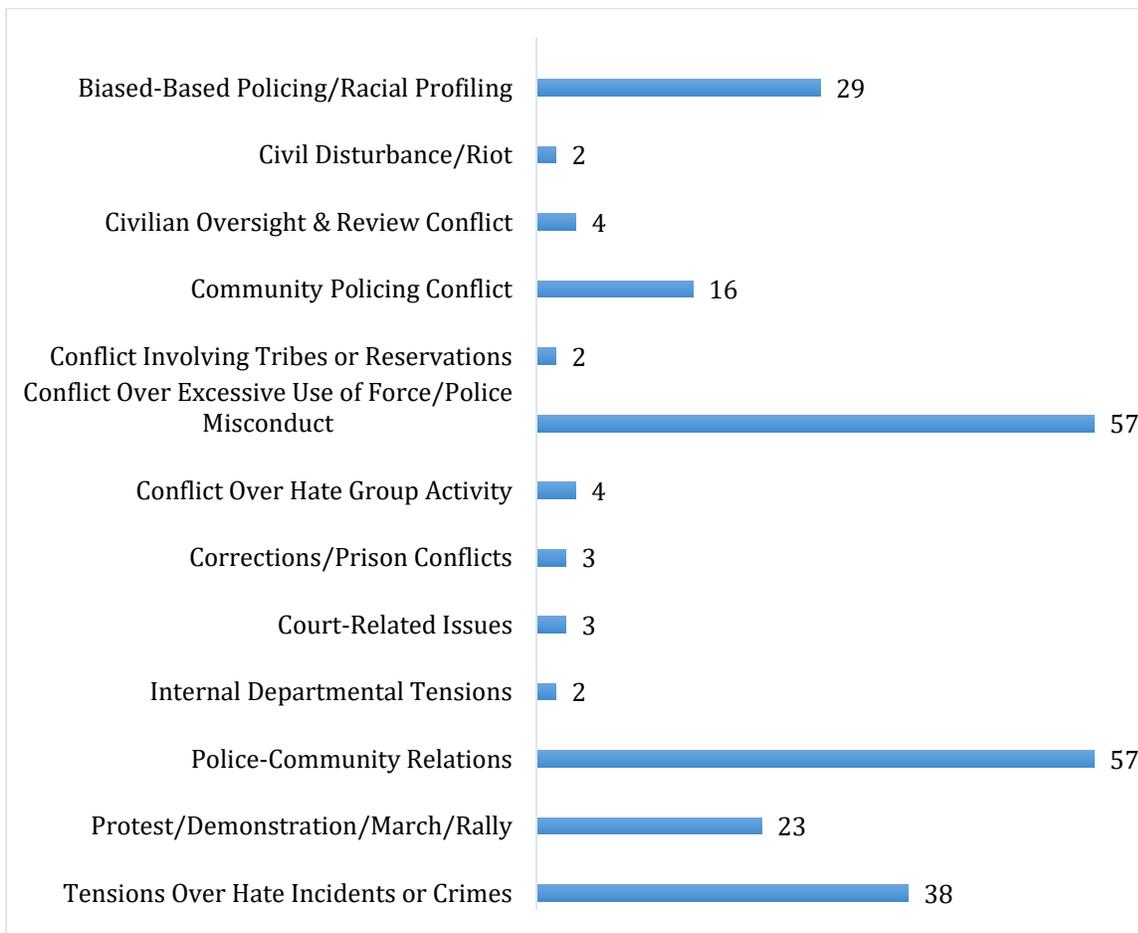
## **Summary of CRS Activities and Accomplishments in Fiscal Year 2016**

In fiscal year 2016, the Community Relations Service was called upon by federal, state, and local government officials; law enforcement agencies; school administrators; community leaders; and civil rights organizations to address conflicts based on race, color, and national origin. In addition, CRS responded to community requests for help in preventing and responding to alleged violent hate crimes committed on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, or disability. These conflicts ranged from allegations of disparate treatment in school systems to targeted and violent acts of hate committed against many communities, including: African Americans; Caucasian Americans; Hispanic Americans; Asian Americans; Muslim Americans; Sikh Americans; American Indians; Americans with disabilities; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender Americans. CRS facilitated dialogues between aggrieved parties, conducted mediations, and provided training, all in support of resolution efforts by law enforcement agencies, U.S. and district attorneys, school administrators, civil rights organizations, and community leaders across the country. The primary categorizations in which CRS offered its conciliation services were: Administration of Justice, Education, and General Community Relations. In total, during Fiscal Year 2016, CRS completed 447 cases throughout the United States and its territories.



## Administration of Justice Cases

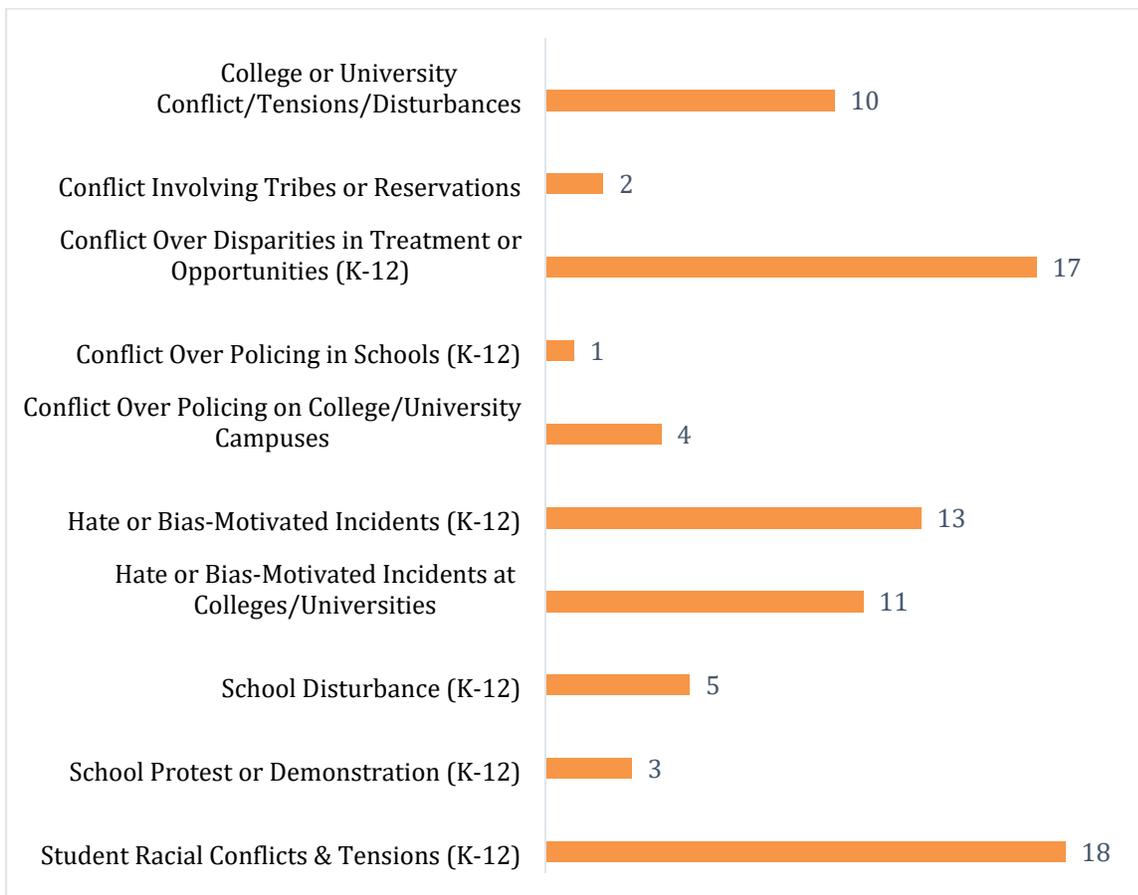
Administration of Justice cases are defined as those that derive from the actions of law enforcement and fuel community tension. In fiscal year 2016, CRS completed 225 Administration of Justice cases. The largest number of these cases resulted from tension related to allegations of excessive use of force by law enforcement, poor police-community relations, and allegations of bias-based policing and racial-profiling by law enforcement. Other subcategories of such cases were those resulting from tension related to hate crimes or incidents; community policing conflicts; and protests and demonstrations, including marches and rallies. In many cases, CRS was invited by local government officials and law enforcement to provide conflict resolution and mediation services, conduct cultural professionalism training, and furnish technical assistance in resolving conflicts. In other instances, CRS was asked by community and civil rights organizations to help them engage in dialogues with law enforcement, local government agencies, and other entities within their community.



\*Please note that CRS cases may fall into more than one of the above categories. Category totals may not reflect agency case totals.

## Education Cases

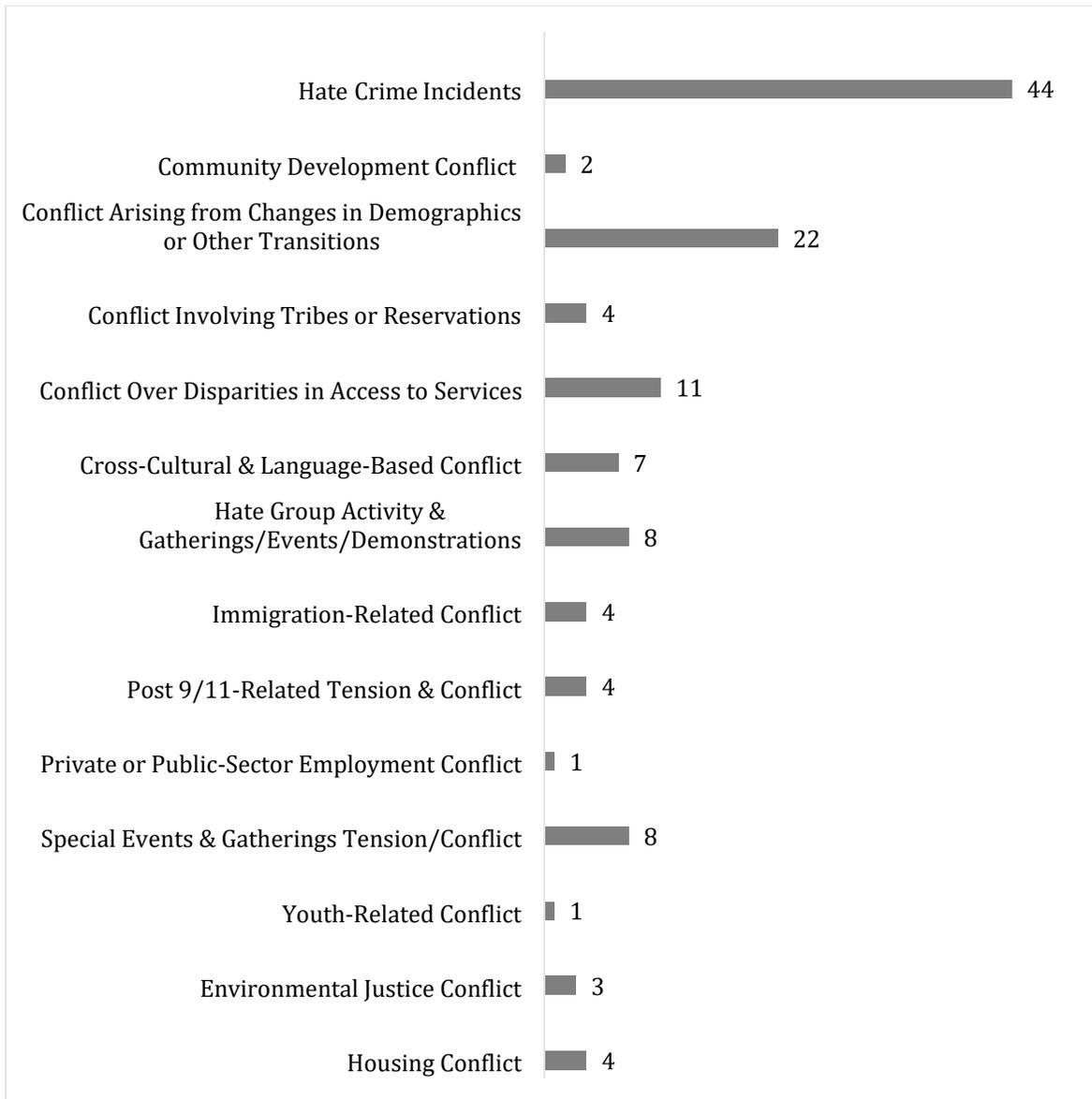
Education cases are those that derive from school-related actions or incidents and drive community tension. In fiscal year 2016, CRS completed a total of 80 Education cases. The highest number of Education cases resulted from racial conflicts and tensions between students in secondary schools, as well as hate or bias-motivated incidents in elementary, middle, and high schools. There were also a significant number of cases arising from conflict, tension, and disturbances at colleges and universities. Some of these incidents received media attention and raised community-wide tension, but in many instances, these cases caused conflicts that were known only to local communities or the school's direct stakeholders.



\*Please note that CRS cases may fall into more than one of the above categories. Category totals may not reflect agency case totals.

## General Community Relations

General Community Relations cases are cases that derive from events that raise tension in the community, not related to educational institutions and law enforcement action. In fiscal year 2016, CRS completed a total of 142 General Community Relations cases. The largest number of General Community Relations cases resulted from hate crime incidents. Cases involving tensions related to disparate access to resources, changing community demographics, and community development.



\*Please note that CRS cases may fall into more than one of the above categories. Category totals may not reflect agency case totals.

## **CRS in Action – High Impact Cases with National Significance**

### ***The Police Shooting of Philando Castile in Falcon Heights, Minnesota***

On July 6, 2016, a St. Anthony, Minnesota, police officer fatally shot Philando Castile, a 36-year-old African American male, during a traffic stop in the St. Paul suburb of Falcon Heights. The victim's girlfriend live-streamed the incident on social media.

The shooting and video exacerbated community tensions and led to numerous protests. Multiple community groups led street marches in St. Paul, Falcon Heights, Minneapolis, and St. Anthony. A vigil was held for several days in the front of the home of the Minnesota governor. Community members were angry and demanded that law enforcement be held accountable for the shooting. Tensions in the Twin Cities were already heightened following the closing of a federal civil rights investigation without prosecution in the case of Jamar Clark. Throughout the following days and weeks of protests, members from CRS' Midwestern Regional Office met with officials from various state and local law enforcement and government agencies, as well as local community leaders, to prevent further escalation of tensions, civil unrest, and violence. CRS staff helped develop contingency and operational plans including minimal show of force, bike escort for protesters, and de-escalation strategies for law enforcement. CRS also helped establish a community command center for protest group leaders as a self-marshaling strategy for safe marches and demonstrations.

CRS staff provided contingency planning assistance for planned demonstrations to community members protesting both the shooting death of Philando Castile and perceived bias-based policing nationwide. Additionally, CRS rendered on-site conciliation assistance to diverse stakeholders during protest marches involving hundreds of protesters in St. Paul, Falcon Heights, Minneapolis and St. Anthony. This included on-site mediation at a related protest at an annual church gathering in Minneapolis and shuttle diplomacy between law enforcement and protesters during a six-hour protest occupation on Interstate 94 in St. Paul, a major traffic artery.

Moreover, CRS convened and facilitated numerous community dialogues with elected officials, ministerial alliances, and protest leaders over the shooting incident to allow redress of grievances and dialogue. CRS staff provided current best practices to improve communications, increase understanding, and reduce tensions in affected communities. These dialogues allowed the parties an opportunity to express their differences, clarify misconceptions, and dispel rumors. The conversations also supported the development of viable working relationships moving forward.

In the days leading up to Philando Castile's funeral service, CRS worked with local leadership and law enforcement officials to provide contingency planning to prevent conflict between them during and after the funeral. CRS also conducted shuttle diplomacy between protestors and law enforcement to facilitate a peaceful outcome at the gathering, which drew an estimated 2,000 attendees.

In November, the Ramsey County Attorney charged the St. Anthony police officer with second-degree manslaughter and two felony counts of dangerous discharge of a firearm. At the time of this Report's printing, CRS conciliators continue to serve the Falcon Heights community. Across the nation, CRS continues to help government officials, community leaders, and law enforcement understand the underlying issues of the conflict and develop viable and self-sustaining measures, to increase the level of mutual trust and respect. CRS will continue to provide services to communities experiencing tension related to the shooting death of Philando Castile until they are no longer needed or requested.

### ***The Police Shooting of Alton Sterling in Baton Rouge, Louisiana***

On July 5, 2016, the Baton Rouge Police Department reportedly responded to an anonymous tip that Alton Sterling, a 37-year-old African American male, was allegedly brandishing a handgun outside a local convenience store. It was reported that an altercation ensued and officers shot Sterling, who later died of his injuries.

On July 7, 2016, CRS arrived in Baton Rouge and participated in joint meetings between the United States Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Louisiana (MDLA), the Baton Rouge satellite office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), and the City Constable's Office.

To prevent further escalation of tensions, civil unrest, and violence, CRS met jointly with the East Baton Rouge District Attorney and representatives from the Baton Rouge Area Violence Elimination team (BRAVE). BRAVE is a community outreach program aimed at reducing and eliminating violent crimes committed by youthful offenders in high-crime areas of East Baton Rouge.

Soon after, CRS convened and facilitated meetings with the Governor; the Mayor-President of Baton Rouge; state representatives; and civil rights leaders, including leadership from the local branch of the NAACP. CRS provided best practices for developing collaborative relationships with communities and creating a Police-Community Advisory Board. In response, the parties committed to establishing an advisory board once the initial stages of the conflict ended.

Additionally, CRS facilitated numerous dialogues with state representatives. They called for unity and expressed a desire to bring together various community organizations and leaders in order to develop a list of mutual concerns to share with the Mayor-President, police chief, and city officials. CRS also participated in a community outreach meeting to quell tension that could have potentially resulted in violence in the aftermath of the shooting.

During the meeting, organizers were notified that police were aggressively engaging protestors. The meeting was stopped, and many of the participants traveled to the protest site to attempt to reduce tensions and prevent violence by working with law enforcement to disperse the youthful protestors.

In July, CRS facilitated a community forum between the State Police Superintendent, the Baton Rouge Police Chief, Sheriff, state representatives, and a cross-section of community members. CRS then joined the State Police Superintendent, the Baton Rouge Police Chief, Sheriff, and select members of their command staff on a peer-to-peer conference call with other law enforcement executives in order to gain insights on how they had previously handled similar incidents.

On July 19, a Missouri man ambushed and killed three police officers and wounded three others in Baton Rouge. It was reported that the motivation behind the shootings was frustration surrounding the death of Alton Sterling and continued perceptions of bias-based policing. CRS continued to provide conflict resolution services, monitor rallies, and provide consulting services. CRS also facilitated planning meetings with community leaders; the Governor's staff; and city, county, and state officials, including law enforcement executives. CRS worked with the parties to implement services to reduce tension and create opportunities to develop sustainable partnerships moving forward.

On July 29, CRS facilitated a roundtable community meeting. Participants included Attorney General Loretta Lynch, CRS Acting Director D. Paul Monteiro, Acting Assistant Attorney of the Civil Rights Division Vanita Gupta, Director of the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Ron Davis, and the U.S. Attorney for the Middle District of Louisiana J. Walter Green. The goal of this meeting was to hear from community leaders and discuss recommendations to address concerns.

In October, CRS facilitated a community dialogue forum in conjunction with the Baton Rouge Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation (BCJI) team. The goal of the session was to brainstorm ideas that could lead to recommendations to address identified issues. BCJI sites target neighborhoods with hot spots of violent and serious crime and the BCJI team employs data-driven, cross-sector strategies to reduce crime and violence.

In November, CRS facilitated community dialogues to address concerns related to police-community relations. These sessions generated a list of recommendations for review by city council members. At the time of this Report's printing, CRS staff continues to serve the Baton Rouge community. Additionally, across the nation, CRS continues to help community leaders, government officials, and law enforcement understand the underlying issues of the conflict and develop viable and self-sustaining measures to increase the level of mutual trust and respect. CRS will continue to provide services to communities experiencing tension related to the shooting death of Alton Sterling until they are no longer needed or requested.

### ***The Mass Shooting in Orlando, Florida***

On June 12, 2016, CRS responded to the mass shooting at the Pulse Nightclub in Orlando. The crime has been described as the deadliest mass shooting incident by a lone gunman in U.S. history and the deadliest attack on U.S. soil since the events of September 11, 2001.

More than 300 people were at Pulse NightClub when a shooter—later identified as 29-year-old Omar Mateen, a Muslim American—killed 49 people and wounded 53 others. Police killed Mateen in a shootout.

Within hours of the shooting, members from CRS' Southeastern Regional Office and Miami Field Office initiated a critical incident response notification to the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Florida (USAO-MDFL) and the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Office of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL), among others.

CRS staff began working collaboratively with the USAO-MDFL's Civil Rights Hate Crimes Working Group and the DHS' Community Engagement Roundtable representatives to conduct a needs assessment and establish a coalition of local and government agency officials; community leaders; law enforcement executives; faith leaders; and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) organizations.

Within 24 hours of the shooting, CRS was on-site and met with elected city and state officials, law enforcement, faith leaders, and LGBT and Muslim community members.

Muslims communities reportedly feared backlash, and the LGBT communities feared additional hate crimes based on their sexual orientation and gender identity.

Community members asked CRS to provide consulting services at a meeting, which led to the creation of Orlando United and Somos Orlando. Orlando United and Somos Orlando are an alliance, comprised of city and state officials, LGBT community members, merchants,

and service providers, designed to assist victims and their families and work toward a more unified and inclusive Orlando in the long term.

As law enforcement investigated the crime scene, CRS worked to help strengthen community relations.

When local mosques received hate communications, CRS collaborated with the USAO-MDFL's Civil Rights Hate Crimes Working Group and the Public Safety and Peace and Justice Institute of Valencia College to convene and facilitate an inter-faith and law enforcement community dialogue. That dialogue led to the creation of a notification and response mechanism to prevent and respond to acts of violence against places of worship. CRS also identified gaps in service delivery and explored ways to strengthen trust in order to work collaboratively and in concert.

As a result, a representative of the DHS' U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) began working with special agents in the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Victim Assistance Program. In addition, CRS opened lines of communication between Consulate representatives from Mexico and Colombia to help expedite aid and logistical resources to families and victims without regard to their national origin or citizenship status.

CRS also coordinated with law enforcement at the Emergency Operations Center to identify and augment available police liaison officers for pre-planned peaceful community counter-protests against anti-LGBT and anti-Muslim groups that had received permits to protest during vigils and funeral services.

Later, Orlando United asked CRS to facilitate a Hate Crimes Prevention Forum and address a stated community need: openly discussing the Pulse shooting as a hate crime. CRS convened key personnel from the USAO-MDFL; FBI; DOJ Civil Rights Division; Orlando Police Department; Orange County Sheriff's office; the Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG National); and the University of Central Florida. The forum enhanced understanding and interest in the reporting, investigation, and prosecution of hate crimes.

In the fall, CRS facilitated dialogues and assisted the Inter-Faith Council of Central Florida; PFLAG National; the Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Education Network (GLSEN); and local schools in forming a working group to reduce conflict in schools. The working group is designed to equip educators, students, and parents to respond to and report acts of discrimination, whether actual or perceived.

At the time of this printing, CRS staff continues to work with community leaders, government officials, law enforcement, and educators in greater Orlando, Kissimmee, and Ft. Pierce, where many of the victims' families live. CRS will continue to provide services to communities impacted by the Pulse shooting until they are no longer needed or requested.

## **Video Initiative: Highlighting the Work of the Community Relations Service**

In Fiscal Year 2016, CRS launched three videos highlighting impactful work in Sanford, Florida; Duluth, Minnesota; and Jackson, Mississippi. The videos were developed to help communities learn more about the successful services the agency provides and the lasting impact made on communities nationwide.

### ***A Community Comes Together in Sanford, Florida***

During the 2013 trial of George Zimmerman in the shooting of Trayvon Martin, CRS convened local clergy and law enforcement in a working group designed to extinguish misinformation and maintain peace in the community. During the trial, these leaders met regularly. They constantly monitored developments in the trial—including sitting in the courtroom each day—in order to quash false rumors and promote nonviolence.

In the video, Sanford’s City Manager stresses that CRS was there to assist, but remained neutral while working to strengthen trust and facilitate discussions between law enforcement and the community.

The video can be accessed at: <https://www.justice.gov/crs/video/godsquad-keeping-peace-sanford-fl>.

### ***Addressing Race-Based Cyberbullying in Duluth, Minnesota***

At the request of the Principal of Denfeld High School, CRS deployed to Duluth as a result of increased racial tension after a group of students at a local high school circulated an image on social media of an African American student with a noose drawn around his neck and the caption: “Gotta hang ‘em all.” The image spread rapidly and sparked significant community tensions in a city with a troubled racial history stemming from a notorious lynching of three black men in 1920.

CRS was asked to conduct a Student Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together (SPIRIT) program for the student body. The SPIRIT program brought together more than 100 students, faculty, administrators, and community leaders to discuss the inflammatory image, as well as larger issues of race and class.

In the video, the principal of the high school describes CRS as a “catalyst for real change,” and encourages other communities to reach out to CRS during times of crisis to ease tensions and build lasting trust.

The video can be accessed at: <https://www.justice.gov/crs/video/hashtag-hate-crs-responds-noose-incident-denfeld-high-school>.

### ***Building Police-Community Relations in Jackson, Mississippi***

Unlike in Sanford or Duluth, CRS’ involvement in Jackson was not prompted by a particular incident. Rather, community leaders raised concerns about the relationship between law enforcement and the transgender community, and proactively requested the training to improve mutual understanding and avoid future issues.

CRS worked with the Jackson Police Department and members of the transgender community to deliver cultural professionalism training for law enforcement officers. CRS facilitated the training alongside local transgender community partners, who are shown in the video leading certain portions of the session.

In the video, the local transgender trainers discuss the importance of their inclusion in the training. They highlight the value of speaking for themselves and visually demonstrating that proactive partnerships between the transgender community and law enforcement are indeed possible and mutually beneficial. This training format gives law enforcement officers the opportunity to engage in open dialogue with transgender community members and learn best practices for successful collaboration.

The video can be accessed at: <https://www.justice.gov/crs/video/respecting-identity-law-enforcement-training-and-transgender-community>.

## **Regional Case Highlights**

### ***New England Region***

#### ***Kingston, Rhode Island***

CRS provided consultation services in the creation of a working group between Muslim community members and local law enforcement. CRS services were provided in response to increased community tensions following reports that on July 14, 2016, a local mosque was vandalized with graffiti and broken windows. A working group was established between leaders at the mosque, the Municipal Police Academy at the Rhode Island Department of Public Safety, the Kingston Police Department, and local community leaders with the intention to meet on a regular basis, discuss issues and problems of mutual concern, and facilitate ongoing cultural awareness training. This incident occurred shortly after the reported terrorist attack in Nice, France, which heightened tension within the Kingston Muslim community.

#### ***Medford, Massachusetts***

CRS services were requested in response to community tension following the cancellation of a student demonstration supporting the rights of Muslim women. The Arab Muslim Club of a local high school planned a student demonstration in support of Muslim women who choose to wear the hijab as a part of their religious identity and expression. Although the event was originally supported by school administrators, it was later canceled due to numerous disapproving emails that reportedly incited fear that the event could attract a violent response. On May 11, 2016, the city sponsored a CRS-led community dialogue with approximately 100 attendees, including the Mayor of Medford, the Medford Chief of Police, the Director of the Medford Human Rights & Disabilities Commission, local school officials, and several high school students. The dialogue resulted in a six-point resolution that included the establishment of a working group consisting of the Mayor, the Arab Muslim Club, the Superintendent of Schools, the Chief of Police, local clergy, the Director of the Human Rights & Disabilities Commission, and parents. The resolution also included the facilitation of a CRS Arab Muslim Cultural Awareness Presentation and agreement that Arab Muslim Club students would lead planning efforts for a future occasion to recognize the significance of the hijab in early 2017.

### *Concord, New Hampshire*

At the request of community leaders, CRS conducted a series of community dialogues including a local University and area activists. Their request was in response to reports of perceived violent incidents, including minor personal injuries and property damage directed towards resettled Hindu and African immigrants. The dialogue participants included the local housing authority residents, elected officials, and recently resettled African and Hindu community members. Attendees concluded that the tension stemmed from resentment fueled by the misperception that some of the more than 2,000 refugee immigrants were wrongly accessing public benefits. The tension began when public housing residents reportedly recognized a demographic shift in the number of refugees moving into their development which, in order to make the units habitable, required the housing authority to install new appliances and utility upgrades. These improvements were perceived by some to be evidence of a strategy to provide help to refugees at the expense of local residents. The local residents felt that every refugee hired was taking a job from a local in addition to gaining improved housing accommodations. CRS provided consultation services to frame the problem and identify the questions that needed to be answered in an attempt to find a solution. The New Hampshire Task Force against Racism and Intolerance later published an online report regarding the community dialogues.

### ***Northeastern Region***

#### *Syracuse, New York*

In June 2016, CRS was contacted by the president of the National Action Network and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of New York (USAO-NDNY) following reports that an African American man was shot by a white police officer in Syracuse, New York. CRS met with Syracuse mayor, the Onondaga County District Attorney, officials from the Syracuse Police Department, and African American community leaders from the National Action Network to assess community racial tensions. CRS also worked with community leaders to establish a local working group that coordinated a contingency plan to address community tensions following the No Bill grand jury announcement in the police officer's case. No further incidents were reported following the grand jury announcement.

### *New York, New York*

CRS provided consultation and facilitated dialogue services to officials from the Association for Conflict Resolution of Greater New York and leaders from the African American, Latino, and hearing-impaired communities during a police-community dialogue in Harlem, New York. CRS services were requested to address growing tensions between law enforcement and community members in response to reports of fatal police interactions with unarmed African American men in New York City and across the country. CRS coordinated with the Deputy Commissioner for Collaborative Policing for the New York Police Department (NYPD) as well as the inspector of the 32<sup>nd</sup> precinct to bring line officers and community affairs officers to the dialogue.

### *Pleasantville, New Jersey*

CRS was contacted by a FBI Community Engagement Specialist in Newark, New Jersey, to provide consultation services to local community members organizing an event to bring African American youth together to discuss police-involved shootings around the country. The FBI expressed concern surrounding reports of growing youth violence in the community and asked CRS to facilitate the event. Through CRS' guidance, organizers included local law enforcement officials from the Pleasantville Police Department and the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office in an effort to build relationships with the youth and provide information on possible law enforcement careers.

### *New Paltz, New York*

CRS was contacted by the New Paltz school district about growing racial tensions among local high school students following a series of texts which revealed violence and racial epithets exchanged between African American and white students. CRS met with the school district and a local parent's advocacy group and scheduled a two-day Student Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together (SPIRIT) process at the high school with facilitators from the New Paltz and surrounding communities. More than 40 students were involved in the program and identified issues to take up with school administrators.

### *HUD Runaway and Homeless Youth Conference*

During a listening session with LGBTQ youth advocates, CRS learned that some New York Police Department (NYPD) officers were allegedly improperly targeting LGBTQ homeless and runaway youth. The advocates alleged that they were being unfairly cited with misdemeanor crimes and tickets. CRS contacted police officers from the NYPD LGBTQ liaison unit and invited them to participate in a forum with youth and other federal agency partners, including the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), HHS' Administration for Children and Families and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and other components within HUD and HHS. CRS conducted extensive outreach to organizations working with homeless youth including The DOOR, FIERCE, The Salvation Army, Covenant House, and the Ali Forney House. CRS provided consultation services on the structure for three community dialogues covering the areas of behavioral and mental health, employment and education, and youth-police community relations. CRS served as a facilitator for the youth-police community relations group. Over 100 attendees – including many LGBTQ youth – participated in the sessions; further dialogues are planned.

### ***Mid-Atlantic Region***

#### *Annapolis, Maryland*

In an effort to address increasing racial tension in the community and improve police and community relations, the Annapolis Police Department's (APD's) Chief of Police reached out to CRS requesting a City Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together (City SPIRIT). CRS worked with APD to develop a City SPIRIT Planning Group consisting of leaders from the city's civil rights organizations, local clergy, APD senior officers, and other civic leaders. About 50 community members participated in the program. During the sessions, participants identified the barriers to improving police and community relations and developed solutions for improvement to implement. The process also provided for the development of a working group that continues to work with the APD Chief of Police.

### *Baltimore, Maryland*

In the aftermath of Baltimore's civil unrest following the death of Freddie Gray, CRS worked with Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) to implement the School SPIRIT Program in areas of need. BCPS identified a local high school for the program. CRS conducted the process in cooperation with the Maryland Commission on Civil Rights and a local law school. Because a student had been fatally stabbed the week before the process, students were particularly emotional, and school administration staff were understandably stressed. Still, the students appreciated the opportunity to speak and share with facilitators and CRS staff their issues and potential solutions.

### *West Chester, Pennsylvania*

In the spring of 2016, CRS was contacted by leadership from the state NAACP to assist African American community members and leaders in West Chester in coming to an agreement on how to move forward after several racist incidents increased community tension. In a two-month period, two noose depictions drawn on milk cartons were shared over social media at two different area schools. Around the same period, racist notes were posted repeatedly in a public park. Starting with a series of facilitated dialogues, CRS assisted community members in crafting an action plan that both addressed community concerns and worked to expand the conversation to include the area's most diverse community leaders. Working with the same group over a period of two months, the community created an Action Plan Agreement which resulted in a public signing ceremony; the development of a Resolution and Pledge; and the establishment of a Diversity in Action committee dedicated to rumor control, conflict prevention, and being first responders when community tension arises.

### *Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

CRS led a facilitated dialogue that provided a forum for Arab, Muslim, and Sikh communities to discuss allegations of racial profiling and disparate treatment by Transportation Security Administration (TSA) officials. A community member shared an incident which reportedly occurred during an airport secondary screenings procedure which resulted in the individual being detained upon reentry into the country. Others shared their collective concern regarding the rise of reported hate crimes against their communities. CRS shared Department of Homeland Security resources regarding travel issues and provided links and resources to report incidents of improper profiling in TSA screenings.

## ***Southeastern Region***

### *Stone Mountain, Georgia*

In April 2016, CRS met with the law enforcement coordinator for Stone Mountain Park regarding the “Rock the Mountain” event. Organizers advertised the event as a white heritage event; however, many other community members viewed the gathering as an anti-black rally. The Ku Klux Klan and organizations supporting the Confederate flag separately planned a rally in the same area. In opposition to these events, a local group planned a simultaneous counter-demonstration in the same location. CRS deployed to Stone Mountain Park to assess and provide both technical assistance and facilitated dialogue services for the “Rock the Mountain” event. CRS provided a federal presence and consultation services to law enforcement during the events. In an effort to prevent violence, law enforcement prevented the two groups from directly contacting each other. CRS was able to establish relationships with all sides to the conflict and served as shuttle diplomats between the groups to ensure all actions remained peaceful.

### *Brevard, North Carolina*

At the request of the FBI, CRS deployed to Transylvania County, to address increasing community racial tension following a suspected hate incident. In October, CRS provided a school SPIRIT program to a local high school after a confrontation between white and black students, resulting in the launch of an FBI hate crime investigation and media attention. Reportedly, white students allegedly threatened a black student with a stick, knife, and rope. While providing services at the school, it was revealed that these school tensions reflected growing racial frictions in the broader community. CRS worked with the local branch of the NAACP, law enforcement, school officials, and municipal leadership to facilitate a dialogue session with city leaders, clergy, community stakeholders, and business owners. The dialogue aided in breaking long-standing barriers as participants agreed to take steps toward building better community relations.

### *Jackson and Gulfport, Mississippi*

CRS services were requested by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Mississippi and the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) to facilitate a “Law Enforcement and the Transgender Community” program for local law enforcement. According to the two organizations, the requests stemmed from increased concerns to educate law enforcement on the issues facing the transgender community, including increased reports of violent crimes directed towards members of the transgender community. CRS reached out to the U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of Mississippi (USAO-SDMS) to receive support and assistance. CRS facilitated a meeting with all the key stakeholders, including representatives from the USAO, FBI, SPLC, ACLU, and the local police department. Two seminars were conducted- one in Jackson, Mississippi, and the other in the Gulfport, Mississippi, area. CRS presented the program, along with the USAO and a transgender police officer, a transgender first responder, the director of a transgender civil rights advocacy organization, and a mother of a transgender student. Approximately, 75 law enforcement officers were in attendance. The event was also filmed by the Executive Office of U.S. Attorneys and developed into a video (described on page 27).

### ***Midwestern Region***

#### *Pontiac, Michigan*

CRS conciliation services were requested after a man with cerebral palsy was brutally beaten by two men who also used the victim’s cell phone to record the assault and post it on social media. CRS worked with local government, law enforcement, and disability advocates to identify key issues through a facilitated dialogue. CRS then provided consultation services by sharing best practices and models to prevent and respond to hate crimes against individuals with disabilities. In addition, CRS provided mediation services to the parties, resulting in the creation and signing of an Americans with Disabilities Act Resolution, “Against the Abuse and Exploitation of Individuals with Developmental Disabilities.” A second Resolution declared the month of May as “Mental Health Month” in Oakland County, Michigan, which was a recommendation by the county’s mental health board and approved by the City Council.

### *Dearborn, Michigan*

CRS provided mediation services and witnessed the signing of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between twelve community leaders and law enforcement representatives in Dearborn, Michigan. CRS services were requested following increased community tension, anger, and fear of police following the fatal shooting of an unarmed African American man with a cognitive disability by a white police officer. The parties included the police chief, representatives from the National Action Network's Michigan chapter, the mayor, community leaders from Change Agent Consortium, the Detroit Coalition Against Police Brutality, and local disability advocacy organizations. CRS' mediation services helped to establish the "Bi-City Concerned Citizens Advisory Council," a working group and task force that was finalized with the MOU and is tasked with supporting and building the community's capacity for conflict resolution.

### *Detroit, Michigan*

CRS assistance was requested following reports of an incident on a flight in which an Arab American Muslim woman wearing a hijab was allegedly bullied and harassed by a white passenger and an African American flight attendant. The incident increased community tensions, as well as safety and security fears, for many Arab Muslim communities in the Detroit area. CRS met with Arab and Muslim community leaders, Dearborn imams, airline officials, representatives from the Arab Community Center for Economic & Social Services (ACCESS), Building Respect in Diverse Groups to Enhance Sensitivity (BRIDGES), the American Arab Chamber of Commerce (AACC), and officials from the Transportation Security Administration. CRS assisted the parties in developing an Action Plan as part of an MOU with the intent to improve relationships for the benefit of American Arab and Muslim Community members who utilize the airline industry for travel. The MOU notes that the parties agree to work collaboratively for the benefit of the community in a spirit of mutual cooperation and community reconciliation. The agreement was made in an effort to create opportunities to engage the parties to improve Arab Muslim cultural understanding and awareness; reduce community tension in the Arab Muslim community of Dearborn, Michigan; and provide training opportunities to improve Arab Muslim cultural awareness with the airlines and community stakeholders.

### *Inkster, Michigan*

CRS was contacted by community leaders following increased community tensions surrounding allegations of excessive use of force directed toward an unarmed African American man who was reportedly beaten by police during a traffic stop. Several protests and demonstrations took place as a result of this incident. CRS convened the parties in mediation sessions, and they agreed to sign a Mediation Agreement (MA). The parties now have a task force that includes five community leaders, the mayor, city manager, and the police chief. The MA includes proposals which recommend strategies to build trusting and collaborative relationships among Inkster community leaders, local residents, city officials, and the police department in an effort to improve overall community relations. During the mediation timeframe, the city of Inkster elected a new mayor and city council and appointed a permanent full time chief of police. While the new city officials did not sign the document, they agreed to fully support the intent of the MA and work together with the task force to implement it.

### *Hammond, Indiana*

CRS' assistance was requested in response to increased community tensions following several allegations of excessive use of force by law enforcement and a specific tasing incident involving an African American man. The incidents drew protests and national media attention. At the request of the U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Indiana, CRS provided mediation assistance for the parties in negotiations and drafted an MOU. On December 17, 2015, CRS witnessed the signing of the MOU between the city, the police department, the Fraternal Order of Police chapter, the local Ministerial Alliance, and the state and local branch of the NAACP. The agreement included the formation of a Hammond Police and Citizens Police Advisory Commission as a legal entity through a city ordinance. In addition, excessive-use-of-force policy changes and procedural justice training for officers were deemed important achievements by the parties.

### *Zion, Illinois*

In June 2016, CRS offered consulting assistance to the Mayors of Zion and Waukegan, Illinois, over residual community tensions and strained police-community relations in their cities. CRS responded to increased community tension following reports of an officer-involved shooting of a 17-year-old African American male in Zion. Community leaders requested CRS's assistance to improve police-community relations in response to the shootings and strained relations with local officials. Several community protest meetings

and marches were held before and after the verdict announcement, which acquitted the officer involved in the shooting. CRS assisted the parties in drafting their citizen's advisory commission proposal. The proposed model created a resident-led city-wide advisory commission encompassing 13 precincts. Issues to be addressed by the commission will include crime, housing, employment, economic development, education, and planning. In September 2016, the Zion City Council approved and passed a resolution creating the Citizens United for a Better Zion Advisory Commission.

### ***Southwestern Region***

#### *Oklahoma City, Oklahoma*

In March 2016, local law enforcement met with Oklahoma citizens to hear their concerns, and many citizens expressed degrees of distrust of law enforcement. The parties agreed to plan a summit to develop strategies to address identified issues. The coalition completed several phases of pre-summit preparation work spanning nine months to develop potential ideas to improve police-community relations. CRS facilitated the Police and Community Trust (PACT) Summit which resulted in 20 agreed upon action items. The goal was to have a good faith and measureable effort to implement each action item within one year. All six police chiefs and community leaders signed a proclamation pledging to implement the 20 recommendations. Recommendations included: develop and implement law enforcement engagement with the community through regular contact at schools, places of worship, and throughout the city; increase communication between law enforcement and community members; and implement implicit bias training for all officers.

#### *Midwest City, Oklahoma*

In Midwest City, Oklahoma, CRS responded to strained police-community relations as result of tensions stemming from deadly use of force by law enforcement nationwide. CRS provided consultation services to assist the city in developing a police-community relations board with the goal of increasing communication between law enforcement and community members. In addition, the community expressed the need to voice quality of life concerns and recommendations. On July 7, 2016, CRS conducted training for the newly established Midwest City Police-Community Advisory Board. CRS facilitated the training in partnership with the Midwest City Mayor's Office and the Midwest City Police Department. This session served as the initial stand-up meeting for the board and was focused on creating mechanisms and strategies for the board to strengthen police-community

relations. The points of agreement included training the parties on conducting community meetings, submitting recommendations and complaints to the Midwest City Police Department, and implementing action plans. In addition, CRS also assisted in developing a clear understanding of the Board's role, determining the type of cases it will hear, and setting a bi-monthly schedule of meetings.

### *Houston, Texas*

During fiscal year 2016, a media report alleged that a local police department mocked a transgender man and failed to arrest his attacker. LGBTQ community leaders reported increased community concerns related to disparate treatment following the incident. CRS organized and led a facilitated dialogue between LGBTQ community leaders, the local police chief, and cabinet staff. As a direct result of CRS' work, the chief agreed to meet with LGBTQ community leaders on a quarterly basis to address issues and concerns that directly affect interactions between the LGBTQ community and law enforcement. Additionally, CRS organized and led facilitated dialogues between LGBTQ community leaders, city officials, and diverse stakeholders. A direct outcome of CRS' work was the creation of the Mayor's LGBT Advisory Board.

### ***Central Region***

#### *St. Charles County, Missouri*

CRS assistance was requested in response to heightened community tension following allegations of disparate treatment of African Americans by local law enforcement and government officials. The St. Charles County, Missouri Chapter of the NAACP contended that the St. Charles County Police Department routinely harassed African American and LGBT community members with the goal of prompting them to leave the county. The alleged intimidation and harassment consisted of law enforcement disparately enforcing minor ordinances and code violations, pulling over African American drivers without reason, and failing to respond to African American calls for service. In addition, African American and LGBT families claimed bias incidents and vandalism that occurred on their properties were not seriously investigated by law enforcement. CRS began mediation between the local branch of the NAACP, police department, and local government executives. The police department agreed to serve as the primary liaison between the other municipal police agencies in the county. This action resulted in enhanced collaboration and community reconciliation by increasing communication, establishing

quarterly meetings, conducting cultural competency training for law enforcement, hosting community forums, and educating community members on the citizen complaint process.

### *Portageville, Missouri*

CRS received a request for service from the Portageville branch president of the NAACP following concerns of disparate treatment and excessive use of force by correctional officers against African American males jailed in two county jails in the Bootheel region of Missouri. CRS met separately with law enforcement, concerned community members, and the local branch of the NAACP, to mediate issues and concerns. CRS later brought the parties together in a facilitated dialogue to discuss the conflict and ways to develop efforts to seek resolution. During this joint meeting with the parties, CRS provided mediation services to assist in the development of solutions regarding the allegations against law enforcement by community members. The mediation resulted in an MOU that included strategies to strengthen relationships and improve mutual trust by developing a working group to meet regularly and collaborate on trainings, community outreach, and staff recruitment efforts.

### *Blue Springs, Missouri*

CRS met with the Human Relations Commission Chair and the Chief of Police in Blue Springs, Missouri, at the request of the local branch of the NAACP following increased allegations of disparate treatment by police directed towards African American residents. The police chief recommended that the residents make a presentation to the Blue Springs Human Rights Commission; however, residents were fearful of retaliation by the officers involved if they spoke out during the public commissioners' meeting. Through training and facilitated dialogue, CRS helped address perceived discrimination complaints and diversity issues, and assisted in community problem solving in Blue Springs.

### *Derby, Kansas*

In May 2016, CRS received a call from the local branch of the NAACP in Wichita, Kansas, regarding allegations of mistreatment of African American students who reside on a local military base. It was reported that parents withdrew their child from school because of perceived racism directed towards the student. It was further reported that the student was ridiculed in class and called names by the teacher. The parents believed that this was not the first time this had occurred, and they wanted action to ensure that it did not happen

again. CRS worked with the NAACP, the school district, representatives from the military base, and a local community advocacy group to address this issue. Through facilitated dialogue and mediation, an agreement was signed to resolve communication issues between the district and African American families residing on the base and form a working group to continue additional efforts of inclusion.

### ***Rocky Mountain Region***

#### *Fremont County, Wyoming*

From June 8-10, 2016, CRS provided continuing consultation and technical assistance to members of the Wind River Health Disparities Roundtable in Fremont County, Wyoming, and area health services providers in convening the 2016 Native American Health Equity Conference. The conference was intended to address tribal community perceptions of difference in access and health services based on race. Approximately 120 Wind River Indian Reservation residents and statewide participants attended the three-day conference, in addition to members of the national media. The conference provided an overview of access to tribal community health services, service delivery barriers, and cultural competency. In addition, presentations and discussions included the development of solutions and identification of areas for collaboration of health services.

#### *Riverton, Wyoming*

CRS responded to the alleged hate-based shooting of two Native American community members in Riverton, Wyoming, by providing conflict resolution services. CRS held four community dialogues with assistance from the City of Riverton, the City of Lander and the Northern Arapaho Tribe. Following the dialogues, CRS assisted the parties in developing recommendations to improve community quality of life. Points of agreement included strategies to develop community consensus, creation of community and youth programs, methods to address systemic barriers, and identification of economic resources. These solutions are being implemented in collaboration with the local government, tribal governments, and community-based organizations.

### *West Valley City, Utah*

On September 21, 2016, CRS' conciliation services were requested by the Utah Women in Law Enforcement Association, a group that focuses on strengthening law enforcement and community problem solving. CRS provided the requested training, "Law Enforcement and the Transgender Community," to local law enforcement in West Valley City, Utah. More than 30 officers from various areas of the state attended.

### ***Western Region***

#### *Los Angeles, California*

On December 2, 2015, 14 people were killed and 22 injured in an incident at the Inland Regional Center in San Bernardino, California. Subsequent to the attack, the Muslim community in Southern California reported increasing community tensions and likelihood of anti-Muslim backlash. To allay these concerns, CRS brought together hate crime victim service providers at the Islamic Center of Southern California. This forum included participation from the U.S. Attorney's Office of the Central District of California (USAO-CDCA), the FBI, the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, the state Attorney General, the Los Angeles District Attorney, the Los Angeles City Attorney, the Los Angeles Police Department, the Los Angeles Sheriff's Department, the California Sikh Council, the County of Los Angeles Commission on Human Relations, the Muslim Public Affairs Council, and the Hate Violence Prevention Partnership. The forum provided information and resources to assist impacted communities on hate crimes and support services.

#### *Winslow, Arizona*

The May 27, 2016, shooting death of a Navajo woman by Winslow police raised protests from the Navajo government. As a result of the community tension, CRS participated in a listening session involving the Navajo chapters associated with the victim as well as other Navajo residents in Winslow. The death was not unlike other border town incidents involving the Navajo community. An investigation by the state attorney general did not find behavior that was outside policy bounds. Tensions remain heightened within the Navajo community regarding border towns and the rate of officer-involved shootings in Native American communities.

## *CRS Regional Academies, California*

In the past fiscal year, CRS facilitated dialogues among various stakeholders in order to explore best practices in community-based problem solving. These were day-long events covering multiple locations and topics, including an overview of the core elements and practices of CRS. Participants were able to learn about the three CRS service areas including general community relations, administration of justice, and conflict resolution tools for schools.

## ***Northwestern Region***

### *Boise, Idaho*

In July 2015, CRS received a request for services from a local housing advocacy organization. Tensions reportedly stemmed from an influx of immigrants and refugees into the community. Local residents grew concerned that this influx impacted access to housing accommodations, job placements, and police-community interactions. The tensions continued to rise as white supremacy groups criticized the presence of immigrants, refugees, and people of color. In November 2015, CRS facilitated a dialogue on issues related to bias-based incidents and hate crimes. The event was attended by approximately 40 individuals, which included city and state officials, representatives from local housing providers, local community organizations, other stakeholders, and refugees. In addition, CRS provided consultation services by providing information on developing hate crimes forums specifically for limited English proficient communities.

### *Seattle, Washington*

The Seattle Police Department requested CRS' conciliation services following reports of a swastika and a hate message spray-painted on a house of worship frequented by the members of the LGBTQ community. This incident sparked a rise in community tension with concerns of safety of the congregants, the local LGBTQ community, and the merchant community. CRS conducted a CRS101 training session (an overview of the core elements and practices of CRS) and facilitated a dialogue which was attended by the U.S. Attorney's Office of the Western District of Washington (USAO-WDWA), public safety officials, members of the merchant community, the faith-based community, local law enforcement, and the Asian-Pacific-Islander community. This dialogue led to a plan for a larger Hate

Crimes Conference. CRS then conducted a brief training on self-marshaling for a planned march near the site of the vandalism incident. With the assistance of CRS, the event remained peaceful.

### *Hillsboro, Oregon*

On January 6, 2016, CRS received a request for service from the representatives of a local high school in Portland, Oregon. The school reported that racial tensions existed between the white and Latino student populations. The following month, CRS facilitated a dialogue on race and implemented CRS' Student Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together (SPIRIT) process. The students and staff worked together to identify issues. The top concern was identified as the existence of racist sentiment on campus. A number of solutions were proposed, including inviting diverse guest speakers to present at the school, holding discussions on race relations, increasing accountability for bias-based actions, and planning diversity programs to address respect and tolerance. CRS trained facilitators to conduct the SPIRIT program, which included representatives from the U.S. Attorney's Office of the District of Oregon (USAO-OR), U.S. Food & Drug Administration, Portland Police Bureau, Somali American Council of Oregon, and local chapter of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC). The representation of these organizations was intended to provide information on local resources.

### *Anchorage, Alaska*

In February 2016, CRS received a request for service from a local non-profit organization that provides social services to the Alaskan community. Community leaders alleged that many tense police stops had collectively affected police-community relations, particularly with minority groups. CRS conducted a workshop in an effort to strengthen police-community relations and curb further tension. CRS then facilitated a dialogue with the goal of creating a working group that would run the "Police Stop" workshops. CRS also provided consultation on several police-stop models and best practices. Approximately 40 people attended the trainings in both April and September 2016. The event allowed the Anchorage Police Department to expand its engagement with minority communities.

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**Online Report Availability**

*Community Relations Service Annual Reports and other publications are available through  
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*For additional printed copies of this report, contact us at:*

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