



Department of Justice

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Announcement of the Second Chance OR Else (SCORE) Drug Market Intervention Program

United States Attorney Kenyen R. Brown of the Southern District of Alabama, Mobile Police Department (MPD) Chief of Police James Barber, Health Officer for Mobile County, Bernard H. Eichold II, and community leaders from Mobile's Campground neighborhood announce the implementation of the Second Chance OR Else (SCORE) Program.

The SCORE Program is a collaborative Drug Market Intervention Program (DMIP) of the US Attorney's Office, MPD, Mobile County Health Department's Fatherhood Initiative and community leaders from Mobile's Campground community. Loosely based on the STAND program in North Charleston, South Carolina, the SCORE program was uniquely crafted to fit the needs of the Mobile community. As part of the SCORE Program the MPD used its "Hotspot Policing Strategy" to identify a crime beleaguered community that was home to an illegal open air drug market. An undercover investigation was initiated in the Campground neighborhood and evidence was gathered against numerous suspects for engaging in drug trafficking activity. From this information a decision was made to prosecute suspects with long criminal records and histories of violence. The dilapidated old residence that served as the nerve center for illegal drug trafficking in the Campground community, as well as law breakers' symbol of contempt for the law, was legally seized and razed to the ground by Chief Barber in May of this year.

A select few suspects who had been caught selling illegal drugs as part of the undercover Campground operation, but who had little or no criminal records and no history of violence, were selected to participate in an intensive mentorship program administered by the Fatherhood Initiative. Instead of being arrested, the SCORE participants were approached by law enforcement and provided a letter from Chief Barber stating that law enforcement was aware of their drug dealing activity and that it had to stop immediately. The letter also stated that but for the fact that community leaders had prevailed upon the Chief to give them a second chance they would have been arrested and charged with drug distribution. The letter concluded by advising the suspects that they had to show up at the police station in a few days for a meeting with community leaders where they would find out more about a special program designed to give them a second chance, and that a failure to appear would result in their immediate arrest.

A community panel of 12-15 people consisting of pastors and business owners from the Campground community were handpicked to serve on the community panel by Chief Barber and US Attorney Brown. In addition to following the progress of each of the program participants and determining whether a particular participant's progress, or lack thereof, merited their continuation in the SCORE program, the community panel also agreed to collectively meet face-to-face with the program participants once a month in order to discuss their progress and offer encouragement.

In early April of this year all six of the targeted SCORE Program participants voluntarily appeared for the first SCORE Program meeting with Campground community leaders, personnel from the Fatherhood Initiative, Chief Barber and US Attorney Brown. The SCORE Program participants were once again directed that all illegal drug distribution activities must cease immediately, that they were to meet with the community panel once a month, that they were to meet with personnel from the Fatherhood Initiative once a week, that they were to get their GED if a high school diploma had not already been obtained, and that they were to seek and maintain legitimate employment. SCORE Program participants also received the benefit of meeting with social service providers in the Mobile area. The SCORE Program participants range in age from 19-40 years of age. Lastly, the SCORE Program participants were not required to "snitch" on anyone else in order to participate in the program but rather they were given the opportunity to change their lives in a positive direction.

In coordination with MPD, the Fatherhood Initiative provides SCORE Program participants with drug and mental health counseling, drug testing, employment placement assistance, general life mentorship and specific fatherhood mentorship. In practice, SCORE Program participants are in contact with their Fatherhood Initiative mentors on a constant basis relaying their needs and struggles as they try to break free from a life of crime.

The SCORE Program has been in operation for nearly six months and as of the date of this press release all of the SCORE Program participants have refrained from additional criminal activity, are drug free and employed. The participating law enforcement authorities have also partnered with the Sociology Department of Spring Hill College to chronical the SCORE Program participants' journey.

US Attorney Brown stated, "I commend Chief James Barber for partnering with me on this very important prevention program. The United States has the highest prison population in the world, currently at 2.2 million people that are incarcerated in jails and federal prisons across our nation.¹ Annually, the American taxpayer pays \$74 billion in state and federal corrections expenses.² It's clear that alternative prevention strategies have to be employed to compliment traditional law enforcement practices in order to halt out of control prison expenses and slow the pace of prison over-crowding. Moreover, the positive societal impact upon the community and the SCORE Program participants cannot be understated. I also commend the SCORE Program participants for making an affirmative decision to change their lives for the better and would also encourage them to stay the course, not only for themselves, but also for their children, their families and the good of the greater community."

Chief Barber commented, "The SCORE Program is really about neighborhood leadership having a hand in taking their community back and equipping a few individuals with the life skills they need in order to lead successful lives free from drug addiction and criminal conduct that would

¹ U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2013.

² U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2012.

ultimately lead them to jail or death on the street. The police tactics that are employed in the community must be acceptable to the community and I applaud the Campground leadership for working closely with me in order to address criminal matters in our city. Moreover, the SCORE Program has had a direct and sustained impact on reducing drug crimes in the targeted area. Public safety can only be achieved through sustained partnerships with the community.”

Doctor Eichold stated, “The Mobile County Health Department is pleased and honored to work with law enforcement partners to make our community safer for everyone.”

US Attorney Brown and Chief Barber are available for interviews upon request. A copy of this press release may be found on the website of the United States Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of Alabama at <http://www.justice.gov/usao/als/>

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