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Mayor Brown Launches BPD21C

A new Police Academy Scholarship program designed to revolutionize community-based policing in the City of Buffalo in the 21st Century

Will offer an avenue for career opportunity, community engagement and a pathway for participation in our City's revival

October 19, 2015 -Today Mayor Byron Brown and Police Commissioner Dan Derenda, joined by Erie Community College President Jack Quinn, members of the Buffalo Common Council, local and state legislators, members of the Concerned Clergy Coalition of Western New York and other interfaith-based community leaders, Peacemakers, Buffalo Office of New Americans, Police Athletic League of Buffalo, Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority, Buffalo Employment and Training Center, National Federation for Just Communities, community-policing advocates and many other stakeholders, gathered at Mt. Olive Baptist Church today to unveil 'Buffalo Police Department: 21st Century' (BPD21C). BPD21C is an innovative, 'first of its kind' in the nation, police pre-employment scholarship program designed to provide scholarship opportunities for city residents who want to pursue a career in law enforcement. Up to 50 successful City of Buffalo residents may receive full scholarships to the Erie County-Erie Community College Central Police Services Law Enforcement Training Academy for the spring semester, beginning on January 18, 2016.

"BPD21C is a bold, creative and unique, first-of-its-kind program, that will foster an even stronger guardian mindset of our police in Buffalo," said Mayor Brown. "This value-driven program has the potential to become a national model for other municipalities to follow. We believe the results of BPD21C will revolutionize community-based policing and we intend to utilize all of our resources to recruit and educate a diverse and talented group of future police officers who reflect our City's demographics."

Buffalo Police Commissioner Dan Derenda stated, "We believe the BPD21C initiative will allow us to make the Buffalo Police Department more reflective of the community and look forward to the opportunity it will provide to our city residents."

"Policing is a tough job, and our officers do a great job protecting and serving city residents in the best manner possible," said Buffalo Common Council President Darius Pridgen. "Mayor Brown's innovative BPD21C program moves policing into the 21st century, strengthening the police force by adding more diversity but also fostering an even greater respect between the community and police."

Reverend William Gillison of Mount Olive Baptist Church, said, "We continue to work closely with Mayor Byron Brown and the Buffalo Police Department on community-police relations and this creative, non-traditional way to attract police recruits from our city is another great step in our continued effort to diversify the police force and further enhance community-police relations."

Erie Community College President Jack Quinn said, "Erie Community College enjoys an extremely good relationship with Mayor Brown and Buffalo Police Department. Dozens of our current instructors at the Police Academy are Buffalo Police Officers and, over the past eight years, 33% of our total graduates from the police academy are now on the Buffalo police force. The BPD21C program will only make our relationship stronger."

"Through the creation of the BPD21C Scholarship Program, we're opening up opportunities for individuals all across Buffalo who are interested in serving on our city's police force, with the goal of creating a more diverse department," said Senator Tim Kennedy. "I applaud the Mayor and city leaders for working together to help position these selected scholarship graduates ahead of the curve, and for continuing to invest in our community as a whole."

“There’s been a lot of national dialogue about building trust, improving police practices and addressing racial and economic disparities in the workforce and I applaud Mayor Brown for developing the BPD21C initiative,” said State Assembly Member Crystal Peoples-Stokes. “When it comes to role models, it would certainly be valuable if the police force could reflect our communities, not just in Buffalo or in cities across New York State but throughout our country.”

BPD21C is a culmination of many important Brown Administration achievements, which combined, will have an historic impact and continue Mayor Brown’s mission to produce a more diverse workforce and well-trained workforce in Buffalo, while fostering a mutual dynamic that every citizen should be treated with respect and that every citizen should treat police with respect.

Recent reforms include:

- A landmark Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Police Benevolent Association (PBA), requiring a **7-year residency requirement** for new hires – the first of its kind in any major city in the State of New York, changing the makeup of the BPD of the future by requiring new hires to be stakeholders in the Buffalo community
- In 2010, we re-established **community policing** to improve dialogue between the community and police officers
- We dedicated funding to the **Buffalo Peacemakers**
- We created the **Game Changers** program
- We collaborated with **Say Yes Buffalo**
- We ensured that students had the opportunity to become **Buffalo Police Explorers**
- We provided over 21,000 employment opportunities through our **Summer Youth Employment** program since 2016
- We accepted the challenge of President Obama’s **My Brother’s Keeper** Initiative
- We opened the City of Buffalo **Office of New Americans**
- We partnered with **NextDoor**
- We launched the **Buffalo Opportunity Pledge**
- And, we developed an ongoing, regular dialogue with the **Concerned Clergy Coalition** of WNY

Today’s announcement came less than a year after Mayor Brown and the City of Buffalo hosted an important forum on community-police relations at Mt. Olive Baptist Church. BPD21C incorporates recommendations from that discussion as well as recommendations for best practices from President Obama’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing, the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services and the United States Conference of Mayors.

Tom Cochran, CEO and Executive Director of The U.S. Conference of Mayors, said: “Earlier this year the Conference of Mayors Working Group of Mayors and Police Chiefs issued a set of recommendations for strengthening police-community relations in America’s cities. One of those recommendations calls on police departments “to use non-traditional means to attract recruits who are representative of the diversity in the community.” Mayor Brown’s Police Academy Scholarship Program, which emphasizes recruitment of minorities, women and new Americans, is just such an effort. We applaud Mayor Brown and the City of Buffalo for developing this initiative and look forward to being able to share information on it with other mayors and their cities.”

"NYCOM is proud to have one of its member cities introduce such a unique and innovative police department recruitment program," said Peter A. Baynes, New York Conference of Mayors (NYCOM) Executive Director. "The importance of diversity in law enforcement cannot be emphasized enough and clearly Mayor

Brown understands this. By introducing the BPD21C initiative, he is taking a bold step toward enhancing and improving police-community relations in the City of Buffalo. We hope that other local governments will be able to replicate what we believe will be an effective minority recruitment strategy."

"On behalf of the Executive Board, chapters, and members of the National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE), we applaud and support the efforts of the city of Buffalo to further strengthen its Police Department by launching its 21st Century Police Academy Scholarship Program," stated Gregory A. Thomas, NOBLE National President.

Clotilde-Perez-Bode-Dedecker, President/CEO, Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo, stated, "I thank Mayor Byron Brown for launching this initiative, reinforcing that every sector of our community must continue to work toward fostering an inclusive workforce."

Donna C. Ross of The National Black Police Association stated, "Diversity in a police force increases the department's credibility with its community. Creating the BPD21C initiative is a significant achievement. We applauded Mayor Brown and the Buffalo Police Department on introducing this important initiative."

Duane Diggs, President of Voice Buffalo, said, "We want to commend Mayor Brown for launching this police academy scholarship program, a pro-active step that will transform the tapestry of what local law enforcement looks like. We believe BPD21C is going to be a significant force that will lead to an even stronger relationship between the community and police."

Eva Hassett, International Institute of Buffalo Executive Director, said, "Providing access to the Police Academy for the immigrant and refugee communities in Buffalo is vital to helping them trust police and feel safe. We applaud Mayor Brown for launching this initiative and the International Institute looks forward to working with Mayor Brown on BPD21C by identifying potential candidates for the police academy."

Jessica Lazarin, Buffalo Office of New Americans Director, Director stated, "Members of Buffalo's growing immigrant and refugee communities see Mayor Brown's BPD21C initiative as an important step in opening doors for them to fully participate and integrate in the City of Buffalo."

Lana D. Benatovich, President of NFJC of WNY, said, "Having just returned from the 2015 NFJC National Conference in Little Rock, Arkansas where I sat on a community-police relations panel, I'm so proud to be able to report back to our affiliates across the country about Mayor Brown's BPD21C initiative that will diversify law enforcement and further enhance community-police relations in Buffalo."

APPLICATION PROCESS

To apply for a BPD21C scholarship, City of Buffalo residents **must complete and submit applications to the City's Department of Human Resources by November 13, 2015**. There are NO FEES for application or participation in this program. Complete application packets will be available at City Hall, at each District Police Station, at recruiting events throughout the City, and via the City's website (www.city-buffalo.com) by downloading and printing an application, or by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the Human Resources Department.

The WRITTEN ASSESSMENT will be administered on SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2015. Registrants will be assigned a city school location for the screening upon submission of their application. Preparation Guides for the Screening will be included in the application packet and PREPARATORY CLASSES will be offered to all registrants at the Buffalo Employment Training Center (BETC) and the Adult Learning Center.

BETC

- Friday mornings (TIME – To be determined)
- Four weeks - beginning 10/30 – 11/20

Adult Learning Center

- Four weeks - beginning 10/30 – 11/20
- DAYS OF WEEK – To be determined

Registrants must present a current NYS Driver's License to sit for the Assessment on Saturday, November 21. The screenings will be held at 8:30 AM and will take several hours to complete.

After the written assessment has been scored, the top candidates who pass the assessment will be scheduled for PHYSICAL AGILITY TESTS, which will be administered according to the standards set by the Municipal Police Training Council of NYS and scored according to their methodology. After meeting the physical requirements, candidates will be scheduled for ORAL INTERVIEWS.

Upon the successful completion of all three of these components, and the verification that all of the QUALIFICATIONS have been met, up to 50 CITY OF BUFFALO RESIDENTS will be selected for a full scholarship to the Erie County-Erie Community College Central Police Services Law Enforcement Training Academy, which will commence on January 18, 2016. This is a full-time, 20 week commitment that requires candidates to attend the training academy at ECC North Campus. Scholarships will include: full cost of tuition, uniforms and books.

Qualifications for applicants include:

- CITY OF BUFFALO RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT / PROOF OF U.S. CITIZENSHIP
- VALID AND CLEAN DRIVER'S LICENSE
- AGE REQUIREMENT
 - APPLICANTS MUST BE AT LEAST 19 YEARS OLD ON OR BEFORE THE DATE OF THE WRITTEN ASSESSMENT SCREENING
 - APPLICANTS WHO WILL BE 35 YEARS OLD ON OR BEFORE JUNE 18, 2016 ARE NOT QUALIFIED TO PARTICIPATE
- CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK
- EDUCATION (High School Diploma / GED / Equivalency)

Candidates who successfully complete the program will receive 30 College Credits and a Certificate that deems them eligible for appointment as an officer in any peace or police department in New York State within two years from the date of graduation. Additionally, graduates will have acquired invaluable leadership training, life skills and readiness for careers in public safety and public service.

BPD21C TIMELINE

- October 17 Application Period Begins
- November 13 Application Deadline
- November 21 Written Assessment Screening
- December 8-10 Scholarship Finalists Notified
- December 11-14 Physical Agility Tests for Finalists
- December 16-22 Oral Interviews
- January 4-6 Scholarship Winners Notified
- January 18 Police Academy Begins
- June 3 Police Academy Ends

For more information, call the Civil Service Office at: 851-9614