

ADVANCE PEACE

Transform Lives: A Model of Community Safety

OVERVIEW

Advance Peace (AP) interrupts gun violence in U.S. urban neighborhoods by providing transformational opportunities to young men involved in lethal firearm offenses and by placing them in a high-touch, personalized Fellowship.

MISSION

At its core, Advance Peace (AP) is a violence-reduction program that saves both lives and money. It expends positive resources on the small percentage of individuals who are most likely to commit or become victims of gun violence, but whom law enforcement is unable to build a case against. With closure rates of shooting cases under 30% in some cities, there is an immediate need to address the violence that traditional law enforcement practices have had difficulty curbing. AP's response provides customized proactive opportunities and services to change the mindset of the individuals perpetuating the violence. Unless and until police can remove them from the streets, those at the center of firearm hostilities should be pushed toward ending their violent behavior themselves.

In each of our partnering communities, AP supports community goals to reduce cyclical gun violence, save lives, and improve the health and well-being of impacted neighborhoods.

THE PROBLEM

Each year, more than 11,000 people are murdered with a firearm and more than 117,000 are assaulted with one.

In African American communities, the impact of gun violence has been particularly devastating. Though African Americans make up just 13 percent of the U.S. population, they account for 55 percent of all gun-murder victims. Gun violence is on pace to be the primary cause of death for all young people 25 and under. America's gun violence crisis is not normal, natural, or necessary.

Gun violence is also extremely expensive. Each time a bullet strikes someone, expenses can include emergency services, police investigations, long-term medical and

mental health care, and criminal court and prison costs.

According to the Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation, gun violence's direct costs are estimated at \$8.6 billion per year (including long-term prison costs for people who commit assault and homicide using guns, which is estimated at \$5.2 billion/year). Approximately 87 percent of these costs fall on tax payers. Indirect costs include loss of income, losses to employers, and impact on quality of life. The Pacific Institute further estimates that the annual cost of gun violence in the U.S. exceeded \$229 billion (\$221 billion in indirect costs) in 2012. Conservatively, the average cost to tax payers for a single gun homicide in the U.S. is \$1 million+. **We pay for 32 of them every single day.**

THE SOLUTION

■ OUR VALUES

AP builds community-driven infrastructure and institutions to help eliminate cyclical and retaliatory gun violence in cities. AP's work derives from its unique approach to fostering trusted and transformative relationships with the individuals most likely to commit or be harmed by firearm-related activity.

We believe that community safety is most effectively improved by direct engagement with the individuals most at-risk for either committing or suffering the harm we want to prevent.

AP offers this engagement through its Peacemaker Fellowship™, a personal- and leadership-development framework that acknowledges and is responsive to each Fellow's untreated trauma, and invests in his individual well-being.

While AP's work focuses on a specific group of individuals, the program's positive impact also reaches the families and communities who benefit from the corresponding reduction in harm and the psychological trauma that accompanies it.

■ THE PEACEMAKER FELLOWSHIP™

Rather than treating symptoms of gun violence, AP goes straight to its cause: suspected "firearm offenders." Other anti-violence programs offer some combination of services, community shaming, and threats of prosecution to a broader group of gang affiliates, few of whom are actual shooters and most of whom will not access the services provided. In contrast, AP pursues a much narrower focus (on firearm offenders) and more vigorously connects these individuals to healing-centered engage-

ments that offer a holistic approach that develops and strengthens the roots of their well-being.

Those selected for the Fellowship are not coerced or required to participate, but rather are offered the opportunity to become agents in restoring their own well-being and positively contributing to their communities.

The Peacemaker Fellowship™ provides each Fellow with intensive mentoring by a network of positive adult influences, including local Neighborhood Change Agents (NCAs) who are considered credible messengers. These change agents help each Fellow develop an individualized life plan and provide navigation support through a menu of responsive social service options, including educational, civic, and cultural exposures outside the Fellow's home city. After six months of demonstrated commitment, Fellows are afforded small monetary allowances in exchange for meeting a range of personal development, education, and employment-related goals. Although the monetary support has sparked controversy, it effectively provides incentive and celebration for positive program participation.

The Peacemaker Fellowship™ consists of several primary components, which are designed to provide Fellows with tools, skills, and resources to lead healthy, productive lives. These components are described below:

- ▶ **1. Multiple Daily Contacts & Life Coaching with Program Staff**
- ▶ **2. LifeMAP**
- ▶ **3. Social Services Navigation Support/Referrals**
- ▶ **4. Elders Circle - Intergenerational Mentoring**
- ▶ **5. Transformative Travel (Cultural, Civic, and Educational Excursions)**
- ▶ **6. Internship Opportunities**
- ▶ **7. LifeMAP Milestone Allowance**

► **1. Multiple Daily Contacts & Life Coaching with Program Staff**

NCA's check in with each individual Fellow on a daily basis, multiple times a day. In addition, daily interaction between staff members and Fellows provides Fellows with support, guidance, encouragement, and mentorship that are often absent in other parts of their lives.

Fellowship survey results indicate that the relationship building with AP staff members is one of the most valuable elements for ensuring continued participation and growth in the Fellowship.

► **2. LifeMAP**

Completed by an NCA and the incoming Fellow during intake, the LifeMAP (or management action plan) provides an individual comprehensive assessment of a Fellow's circumstances in key areas, including housing, education, employment, transportation, finances, safety, family/relationships, physical health, mental health, and spiritual, recreational, and social connections. For each of these areas, the LifeMAP outlines the Fellow's short-term and long-term goals and specific steps for achieving them. For example, short-term goals may include participating in substance abuse treatment or individual counseling, attending parenting classes, or paying outstanding vehicle violations. Long-term goals may focus on rebuilding family relationships or completing a GED program. Each

goal has a timeline associated with it, allowing for close monitoring and evaluation. The LifeMAP is updated every six months, taking into account the Fellow's accomplishments as well as areas of challenge.

► **3. Social Services Navigation Support/Referrals**

Based on documented needs in one's LifeMAP, Fellows will be referred to available and responsive community services, such as GED preparation or handling anger appropriately. Notably, a NCA does not simply give a Fellow the contact information for a service provider and instruct him to report to that provider organization. Instead, the NCA will attend the first few meetings of the class or services with the Fellow in order to provide onsite support, such as helping the Fellow complete enrollment paperwork and become comfortable in the setting. As importantly, the NCA will observe the class content, the instructor or facilitator's interaction with the Fellow, and the Fellow's participation in the programming. Prior to enrolling in the Fellowship, Fellows have not typically attended community-based services—other than school—on their own, and this navigation support helps increase their comfort level; it also allows the NCA and Fellow to mutually determine whether the programming and the provider are a good fit.

Some of the most common services that Fellows receive, both as a result of referrals and as provided by Advance Peace, include:

- **Development of LifeMAPs (100%)**
- **Life-skills training (83%)**
- **Anger-management services (77%)**
- **Financial management (77%)**
- **Employment services (61%)**
- **Healthcare services (46%)**

- Mental-health services (41%)
- Educational services (40%)
- Recreational services (34%)
- Transportation services (32%)
- Parenting services (31%)
- Substance-abuse counseling (16%)
- Housing services (14%)

► **4. Elders Circle—Intergenerational Mentoring**

The Elders Circle represents a powerful addition to the daily mentoring NCAs and program staff provide to Fellows. A group of elder male volunteers (“elders”) are recruited and trained to provide intergenerational mentorship to Fellows. Elders are respected in the community and bring a wide range of expertise including finance, psychology, and philanthropy to the Fellows network. Within the Fellowship structure, the elders meet with Fellows and local AP staff twice a month for a two-hour meeting called “The Elders Circle.” After developing trust with participants, elders provide Fellows with individualized job-search assistance and guidance on topics such as family dynamics and family relationships. Local program staff also benefit from this intergenerational mentorship opportunity. In new cities, Advance Peace will work with established organizations to identify a select group of elders to ensure an extraordinary intergenerational mentoring platform.

► **5. Transformative Travel (Cultural, Civic, and Educational Excursions)**

Transformative Travel provides an opportunity for Fellows to experience life outside of their city of origin and to safely interact with other Fellows from rival neighborhoods.

Since the Fellowship’s inception, there have been over 30 excursions to locations including: San Francisco, Washington, DC, New York City, and international destinations such as Mexico City, Cape Town, Dubai, London, and Paris, with an average of eight trips per year.

In order to qualify for an excursion, Fellows must be active participants in the program, have completed a LifeMAP, and have established healthy relationships with local AP staff. For out-of-state travel, Fellows must meet all of the above criteria and also be willing to travel with other Fellows from rival neighborhoods. On excursions, Fellows participate in one or more activities such as completing community service projects, taking college tours, attending or presenting at conferences, meeting with government officials and participating in virtual restorative justice dialogues. In addition to engaging Fellows in a range of eye-opening activities, excursions serve as a time for Fellows to bond with each other, especially with their rivals, an experience that is often transformative.

► **6. Internship Opportunities**

Some Fellows have the opportunity to gain job skills through a paid internship. Placement in an internship generally occurs after a Fellow has participated in the Fellowship for at least 18 months. This timing allows the local AP staff to stabilize Fellows and address their basic needs such as housing or substance-use treatment prior to intern placement. To guide placement, local staff work individually with a Fellow to determine the work that interests him and the skills he would like to gain or improve, then facilitate a match with an interested employer. Most intern positions are 20 hours a week for six months and are located in city departments or agencies and community-based organizations. Advance Peace will completely subsidize the Fellow's internship salary through private funding sources where necessary. Providing a wage subsidy encourages a potential employer

to take on a Fellow without incurring financial risk. NCAs regularly visit Fellows on the job to promote job retention.

► **7. LifeMAP Milestone Allowance**

The Milestone Allowance serves several purposes. First, it provides an incentive for young men who may otherwise resist engaging in programming, or be reluctant to be regular and active participants in Fellowship activities. Second, while the allowance is not large, it serves as an alternative to participating in a street-level economy. Finally, the allowance sends a powerful message to Fellows about their worth. Through the allowances, Fellows receive validation about changes they are making in their lives, acting as a form of positive reinforcement. Allowances are used not only as incentives, but also to let the Fellows know that they have value.

■ **OUR IMPACT**

After implementing AP's practices, the city of Richmond, CA, saw a 66 percent drop in gun violence within seven years (2010–2016). Advance Peace provides a viable complement to law enforcement—a less expensive and effective approach toward reducing firearm assaults. In 2017, the City of Richmond recorded its lowest number of cyclical and retaliatory firearm assaults and homicides in more than four decades. While some of the drop-off can be attributed to improved policing practices and the introduction of other anti-violence programs, no other city experienced a similar drop despite the existence of the same improved practices and programs.

By addressing violent actors who otherwise avoid law enforcement's reach, AP helps save lives and reduces the life-altering trauma experienced both by people living in these communities and by the service providers who support them (including law enforcement).

THE SOLUTION

As of January 2018, of the 84 Fellows who have participated in the Peacemaker Fellowship™ 2010–2016, 94% are alive, 83% have not sustained firearm related injuries or been hospitalized since becoming a Fellow, and 77% are not a suspect in new firearm crimes since becoming a Fellow.

The Peacemaker Fellowship™ was developed over several years of experimenting with what worked to reduce gun violence. Experience demonstrated that the most effective strategy included travel outside of the home neighborhoods to expand horizons and to build relationships with previously antagonistic rivals. Experience also showed that Fellows who stuck with their respective life plans for six months were much more likely to stay on the road towards restoring their well-being. Receiving a monthly allowance provided both encouragement to continue to follow their life plan and stability in what usually are extremely chaotic lives.

■ EVALUATION

The Institute of Urban and Regional Development (IURD) at the University of California, Berkeley and the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD) are partnering with Advance Peace and will develop and implement a comprehensive Learning and Evaluation Plan for AP's replication efforts.

The mission of IURD/UC-Berkeley is: through collaborative, interdisciplinary research and practice, support opportunities to critically investigate and help improve processes and outcomes that shape urban equity around the world. IURD works as a global leader in evaluation, research, and policy that aims to answer how 21st-century urbanization and cities can be the sites of innovation and opportunity, sustainability and democracy, health and social justice.

NCCD promotes just and equitable social systems for individuals, families, and communities through evaluation, research, public policy, and practice. NCCD conducts research and data analyses that help jurisdictions reform their policies and services. NCCD focuses on the fields of criminal justice, child welfare, adult protective services, and education. NCCD helps hundreds of social service agencies and organizations across the U.S. and internationally because they believe—and have the data to back it up!—that we all benefit when the most vulnerable among us receive services that are consistent, evidence-based, and empathetic.

This Learning and Evaluation (L&E) is essential to answer the challenging programmatic questions:

- ▶ **1. Is AP helping to reduce and eliminate gun violence?**
- ▶ **2. What is AP doing that is/is not contributing to this change?**
- ▶ **3. Who is benefiting from the integrated, multi-faceted interventions of AP?**
- ▶ **4. Is the investment in AP delivering positive social, health, and economic value to urban communities?**

MANAGEMENT

■ STAFF

DEVONE BOGGAN

Founder and CEO

Prior to founding Advance Peace in 2016, DeVone Boggan served as the founding Neighborhood Safety Director and Director of the Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS) established by the City of Richmond in October 2007.

In that capacity, DeVone guided the City's violence-prevention and intervention portfolio and was responsible for the development, implementation, and management of innovative and comprehensive approaches to reducing firearm assaults, preventing retaliation associated with firearm conflict, and transforming the lives of young men identified as the most lethal in the Richmond community.

Before that, DeVone served as Policy Director for Safe Passages in Oakland, California, where he was responsible for policy development in the areas of Early Childhood Development, After-school Programming, Middle School Violence Prevention Practices, and Chronic Violent Re-offender Strategies. Prior to joining Safe Passages, DeVone served as Chief Executive Officer at The Mentoring Center in Oakland. DeVone is a graduate of the University of California, Berkeley and is a current Draper Richards Kaplan Fellow.

SAM VAUGHN

Program Manager | Richmond, CA

Sam oversees Advance Peace's development and implementation in Richmond, CA. Sam spent 11 ½ years in state prison for an attempted murder charge. During his incarceration, he took full advantage of every opportunity to better himself. For example, he became a Victim Offender Education Group Facilitator (VOEG) for a Restorative Justice Program that brings victims and offenders

together to possibly reconcile the injustice against the victims. He also facilitated programs like Incarcerated Men Putting Away Childish Things (IMPACT), a male accountability and fatherhood enrichment course, and the REAL Choices program modeled after the highly profiled Scared Straight program.

Sam grew up in Richmond, CA and was exposed himself to the several negative ills that many young men of color in urban communities across the U.S. are negotiating every day. During his incarceration, Sam obtained an Associates of Arts degree from Patten University.

JULIUS THIBODEAUX

Program Manager | Sacramento, CA

Julius oversees Advance Peace's development and implementation in Sacramento, CA. Julius served a 23-year sentence in prison for a firearm-related charge. While in prison, he worked in a number of program leadership roles, including Program Coordinator, Life Skills Instructor, and Lead Facilitator for several personal-development opportunities in the areas of Anger Management, Emotional Maturity, and Effective Communication.

BRIAN MUHAMMAD

Program Manager | Stockton, CA

Brian oversees Advance Peace's development and implementation in Stockton, CA. As a Stockton native, Brian has over 18 years of experience advocating and serving the needs of at-risk populations in the Central Valley. He has a background in the mental health field and as a social justice organizer. He specializes in conflict resolution, mediation, and safety intervention. Brian also has taught and trained self-development and life skills course work for young men in the city of Stockton.

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