

The Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) News

The BHU hopes you are enjoying the change of season, and everything that comes with the great fall weather.

2016 NW REGIONAL CIT CONFERENCE

The NW Regional CIT Conference was held September 2016 in Tacoma, Washington.

During the conference, Program Manager Emily Rochon and Officer Sean Christian presented “Breaking the Cycle of Addiction and Criminality” highlighting the Portland Police Bureau Service Coordination Team (SCT) to an audience of law enforcement and community service providers.

Emily and Sean were joined by SCT alumni and Central City Concern employees, Delando Vance and Joel Hunter, who shared their personal stories and emphasized the importance of peer support in the SCT program. The SCT program continues to be recognized as a unique, successful partnership that reduces criminality while improving the lives of the graduates.



Joel Hunter, SCT Program director Emily Rochon, Delando Vance and Officer Sean Christian

For more information relating to the BHU, please go to (<http://www.portlandoregon.gov/police/bhu>).

CAMP ROSENBAUM



Each year the Portland Police Bureau partners with Home Forward and the Oregon National Guard to provide a life enhancing opportunity for low-income young people at Camp Rosenbaum. In July 2016, BHU members travelled to the Oregon Coast to be staff at the overnight camp, providing campers from around Oregon and SW Washington with unique experiences while focusing on mentoring campers on how to be good citizens. Camp Rosenbaum provides an opportunity for young people to build relationships with police officers in an informal setting resulting in life changing experiences for both the campers and the officers.

SUICIDE PREVENTION DESPITE CONFLICTING INFORMATION

On July 3rd, 2016 Officers from East Precinct responded to NE Glisan St and NE 90th Ave regarding a person with suicidal ideations. Initial information obtained by the call taker and relayed to the officers suggested the person in mental health crisis was unarmed and simply awaited police contact for assistance. The caller stated he would wait for officers on the front porch of his house.

However, the call changed as the person with suicidal thoughts provided the call taker with differing and conflicting information. As officers proceeded to the location the caller stated he had moved from his front porch and positioned himself inside a blue pickup truck. Furthermore, the caller stated he was now armed with a .22 caliber handgun which was in the seat next to him.

Officers Kris Barber, Susan Billard, Joshua Letter, John Edwards, and Brad Jett with Sergeants Rich Steinbronn and Rob Slyter developed a plan which included an ECIT officer, less lethal alternatives, containment, and a contact/ custody plan.

Once all officers on scene were advised of the plan, Sergeant Rich Steinbronn contacted the caller via phone. After a short conversation on the phone the person with suicidal ideations agreed to talk to the police in person. The individual exited his residence and not the blue pick-up truck. Once in custody Officer Kris Barber spoke with the person about his statements and the man cried when asked about the handgun and his reasoning for mention of a firearm. Officer Kris Barber obtained consent to search the man's apartment for guns. Officer Susan Billard performed a search of the residence and located no firearms.

The man was placed on a Police Officer Hold and transported to Good Samaritan Hospital.

SPECIAL OLYMPICS OREGON SUMMER STATE GAMES



Thousands of Special Olympics athletes, coaches and volunteers representing programs across Oregon gathered in Newberg, Oregon in July 2016 for the Summer State Games. BHU members joined other law enforcement agencies in supporting the athletes by awarding medals during competitive events and participating in the opening ceremonies. The BHU continues to provide support to Special Olympics through fundraising and awareness events sponsored by Oregon Law Enforcement Torch Run.

VISTA BRIDGE SUICIDE PREVENTED

On September 17th, 2016 ECIT Officer Kyle Hefley was on patrol in the area of the Vista Bridge when he observed a man running on the roadway. Officer Hefley noted the weather was rather cool and the man was shirtless. The man ran to the temporary fence on the bridge and climbed the fence. Officer Hefley proceeded towards the man to make contact with him.

Officer Hefley approached as the extremely upset man scaled the fence and positioned himself on the outside railing of the bridge. Officer Hefley asked the man to speak with him and after several requests for the man to not jump the two engaged in conversation. Officer Hefley notified dispatch of the situation and requested additional resources.

As Officer Hefley built rapport and listened to the man's story. Officer Hefley learned the man had been homeless for several years, had no family and had not informed anyone of his intention to jump from the bridge. Officer Hefley convinced the man to climb to the street side of the fence where Officer Hefley was able to take him to the hospital to get the help he needed.



NEW BHU MEMBER



Todd Tackett

BHU Sergeant

Sergeant Todd Tackett began his work in the Portland Police Bureau in April 2004. He spent 8 years working at Central Precinct, spending part of this time working as the district officer in Old Town and also being assigned to the Entertainment Detail. He was in the first group of officers to receive ECIT training and is a volunteer member of the Rapid Response Team. He was promoted to Sergeant and transferred to North Precinct where he has worked night, afternoon, and day shifts.

Sergeant Tackett will be taking over the responsibility of supervising the three Behavioral Health Response Teams (BHRTs). These teams strive to coordinate the response of the police and the behavioral health system to aid members of the community who are experiencing mental health crisis.

Sergeant Tackett is dedicated to providing service to those in our community living with mental illness. Sergeant Tackett said that through his own personal experiences growing up and his work in Old Town, he understands the challenges facing both community members experiencing mental illness and their families. This is what inspired him to volunteer for the ECIT program when it was first created.

Sergeant Tackett has continued to be passionate about the work the Police Bureau is doing and is excited at the opportunity to make a difference as a sergeant in the Behavioral Health Unit. Sergeant Tackett expressed, "The BHU can set an example for the rest of the country on how law enforcement can be part of the compassionate response to members of our community struggling with mental illness. It is a privilege to be part of the team."