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ANNUAL REPORT

Central West End

Neighborhood Security Initiative



Letter from our Director

Greetings,

Since its founding in 2008, the mission of the Neighborhood Security Initiative has been to enhance safety and security in the neighborhoods and districts it serves. Over time, the NSI staff and programs have increased along with the areas served and the neighborhood partnerships we have developed.

Our latest endeavor is the NSI Outreach Program, which delivers social services to those in our community who are most at risk, whether due to housing loss, mental illness, addiction, or unemployment.

The better job we can do in responding to the needs of those most at risk, the less likely they will become ensnared in the legal system. I believe this type of community engagement will ultimately contribute to a safer neighborhood, and will also help to improve individual lives.

The success of the NSI is attributable in large part to the vision and contributions of our Board members. Their guidance and leadership direct the NSI staff toward new opportunities and initiatives that further the pursuit of our objectives. I am so grateful to be working with such a committed Board and dedicated staff. We are convinced the programs we have in place, such as Neighborhood Advocacy, Camera Projects, and Outreach Services will improve the quality of life for our community. Working together we can also help to make significant change in the lives of others.

James Whyte
Executive Director
CWE NSI



135

Camera Reviews in 2020

Quick Stats

In 2021 the Camera Project Manager conducted 137 camera reviews in response to reported crimes. These reviews led to 30 arrests. Those numbers are comparatively low compared to previous years. This is largely due to external factors in the local criminal justice system.

46 Sites

The NSI Camera Project Manager oversees 46 camera sites that cover portions of the Central West End, Forest Park Southeast, and DeBaliviere Place neighborhoods.

312 Cameras

Each camera site has an array of cameras used to capture information for review when a crime has occurred.

Success Story

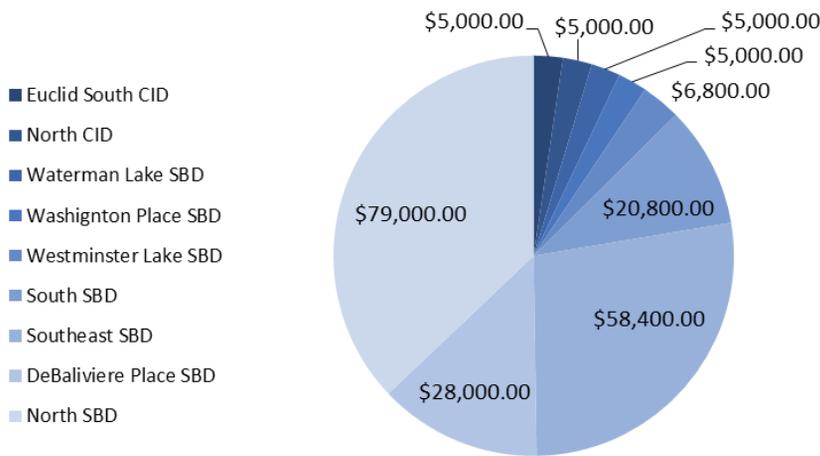
On September 21, 2021, the NSI was informed of a carjacking that occurred in the 4500 block of Pershing. The victim, an elderly woman, was in the driveway of her residence opening the gate to exit when the suspect approached her from the street. Upon approaching the victim, the suspect produced a handgun and told the victim to leave her purse in the car and keys in the ignition. The suspect entered the vehicle and fled west on Pershing then north on Euclid. NSI cameras captured this incident and provided evidence to the police. An image was also captured which helped the police identify the suspect. The suspect was later arrested after committing four additional carjackings.



Financial Review

In 2021 our operational budget was \$398,000. This included general office operations, staff salaries, various insurance policies, vehicle maintenance, accounting services, and a reserve fund for emergency secondary patrol services. The Central West End camera maintenance budget is a separate account and the 2021 budget was \$80,000.

\$398K BUDGET

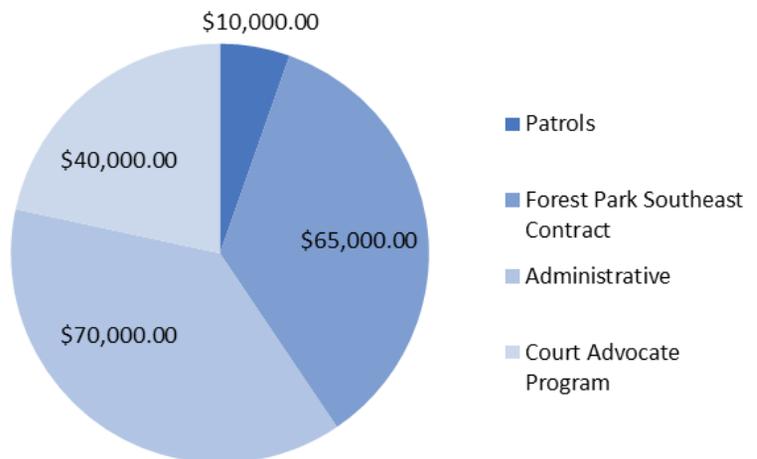


61% Public

61% of our 2021 annual revenue was provided by local Special Business Districts (SBDs) and Community Improvement Districts (CIDs). These contributions cover both our services and camera maintenance for the Central West End and DeBaliviere Place neighborhoods.

39% WUMC

The remaining 39% of our 2021 revenue was contributed by the Washington University Medical Center (WUMC). Their donations help fund services for the Forest Park Southeast Neighborhood, our court advocacy program, and office administration.



**20
HOURS**

Outreach

Over the past few years, the NSI attempted to formalize partnerships with various outreach organizations in St. Louis, none of which came to fruition until Alvin Ferguson, our main contact at St. Patrick Center, decided to retire.

Fortunately for us, Alvin did not enjoy retirement. Over several months, discussions between Alvin, the NSI, and local taxing districts sparked a new initiative - Neighborhood Outreach. Starting in September 2021, Alvin Ferguson became our main neighborhood outreach provider. He works part time, about 20 hours per week, engaging with the unhoused and housing-unstable people in our community. After a few weeks piloting the program, Alvin realized he needed some assistance. Melissa Brown now joins him 4 hours per week.

Alvin, a retired veteran, worked for St. Patrick Center, providing outreach to veterans and conducting mobile outreach, for over 20 years before retiring. Melissa Brown previously worked with Alvin at St. Patrick Center and has over 10 years of intensive case management and street outreach experience. She attended Missouri Baptist University and received a degree in Human Services.



Outreach Success

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**3
STORIES**

In this section, three cases are discussed. Due to privacy concerns, their real names have been changed and identifying characteristics have been removed.

Robert

Robert was one of the first people Alvin engaged with. Robert was living on the street in one of the NSI coverage areas, outside an abandoned business. A young and fit Black man in his 30s, he suffers from severe delusions, which prevent him from taking care of himself in even the most basic ways. His clothing was severely soiled and he was sleeping in an unhygienic location. Alvin noted that he would often witness Robert talking to street signs, unknowingly walk into traffic while speaking to the street lights, and screaming at nothing in particular. On Christmas Eve Robert was shot in the hand and the wound went untreated for some time. Another frigid day, Alvin and Melissa had to call EMS to help Robert, as he was shivering and breathing but unresponsive due to the cold weather. Robert had refused to go to a warming shelter, and instead opted to do push ups and pacing to try to prevent himself from freezing to death. After more than 10 separate engagements, Alvin, Melissa, and Eli from Places for People were finally able to get an Affidavit to have Robert involuntarily committed for 96 hours, as he was "unable to make right choices for his own safety and wellbeing," according to Alvin. They were worried he would freeze to death on the street.

Since then, the hospital Robert was transferred to has gotten him on medication. Although his journey is not over, this medication has provided him enough mental clarity that he was able to fill out paperwork to receive consistent services from organizations in St. Louis and be placed on a permanent housing waiting list. Until then, he is staying at a men's shelter.

Melissa noted, "He's actually very sweet. I've never felt uncomfortable around him. He's just extremely symptomatic and it scares people."



Outreach Success

Emma

Alvin first engaged with Emma in October 2021. Emma is a 50-year-old Black woman with salt and pepper hair. She had been sleeping in an alley behind a local laundromat. During her second engagement with Alvin, Emma informed him that she was tired of using drugs and wanted to go to a hospital for treatment. Emma originally became familiar with Alvin when he worked for St. Patrick Center. His renewed engagements with her had a serious impact. She credited her conversation with Alvin about addiction a few days prior as her inspiration to reach out to the hospital about treatment options. She asked Alvin for a bus ticket to the hospital and promised, "I'm not coming back here. You won't see me again." Emma was right. Alvin routinely goes out and checks her old spots. Alvin has not seen her again and we hope she is thriving wherever she may be.

John

John, an older white man with gray facial hair who enjoys wearing stylish clothes, can be spotted around town in public spaces. Alvin and Melissa first interacted with John when the library called Alvin and asked for his help getting a man to leave the property. Alvin and Melissa arrived at the scene and diffused the situation with help from local law enforcement. John was belligerent and drunk. A few weeks later, Alvin and Melissa found him at a local coffee shop, drunkenly harassing a barista. Together, Melissa and Alvin were able to convince John to go to the new sobering center in south city. An officer working secondary for the CWE NSI transported him to the center. The barista thanked Alvin and Melissa for "getting him out of the coffee shop but doing it in a compassionate way."

Outreach Success

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**3
STORIES**

John, continued

While voluntarily at the sobering center, John had a medical emergency, requiring transport to a nearby hospital. While there, doctors found a serious heart murmur. John's decision to accept help from Alvin and Melissa likely saved his life - he is now on heart medication. Although he was offered a temporary bed in a shelter, he decided he would rather wait for a permanent bed elsewhere and ended up sleeping on the streets again.

Melissa and Alvin were later able to convince him to stay at a shelter, and he now has a permanent bed at a homeless shelter. He updated Melissa and Alvin that he is on a waiting list for a comprehensive residential treatment center and is making plans for the future.

Alvin and Melissa still check in on him whenever they see him, to provide some type of consistent accountability to other agencies. Melissa noted, "He consistently tries to utilize services and will accept help when offered." They hope that their consistent engagement with John encourages him to continue to receive services from organizations he is already engaged with and work on his long-term goals.



2 OUTREACH WORKERS

The New Initiative

The new Outreach Initiative started in September 2021. After four months, Madeline, NSI Neighborhood Court Advocate, sat down with Melissa and Alvin to discuss their views on the new initiative and how they operate under the CWE NSI umbrella.

Under a normal social work organization, the outreach workers tend to spend much of their time on documentation. Many of these organizations must follow strict state and federal regulations, and additional restrictions when grant funding is used. Conversely, the NSI's program relies on providing immediate connections, reducing the amount of bureaucracy required. Alvin and Melissa use a "catch-and-release approach," according to Alvin. When engaging with a person, Alvin and Melissa attempt to gently gather as much information as possible from the individual: Are they engaged in services? Are there organizations they are more comfortable with? Any organizations they refuse to talk to? Do they have a caseworker?

If the person has a caseworker they are comfortable with, or a preferred organization, Alvin and Melissa reach out to that person or place directly. Their goal is to keep local organizations accountable to their clients, the unhoused individuals accountable to their service providers, and create genuine relationships with the unhoused members of the community.

Alvin thinks this approach is better, stating, "We're not bogged down with paperwork or pressure to have numbers or systems." Melissa added, "We have the ability to genuinely engage and respond in the best way per person without being preoccupied with bureaucracy."

Although the NSI provides a car to Alvin and Melissa to get around our neighborhoods quickly, they prefer not to use it for transporting unhoused individuals and instead rely on train and bus tickets purchased by the organization. "We don't want people to think we're a taxi," explained Alvin. He would rather the people identify Alvin and Melissa as a friendly and compassionate resource.

Working with the NSI, which provides secondary patrol oversight, has benefits as well. The new Saint Louis Sobering Center requires patients to be dropped off by police officers. The center was started as a place for police officers to bring intoxicated individuals as an alternative to jail, changing the intervention to a public health approach. Working in conjunction with secondary officers, Alvin and Melissa are able to connect with an officer to transport an individual to the sobering center without calling 911 or the non-emergency police line.

Court Advocate

2021

In a normal year, Madeline Oberman, the CWE NSI Court Advocate, manages a caseload of criminal cases involving crimes that took place inside the CWE NSI's coverage areas. As the criminal justice system can be a cold and confusing place for victims, one of the advocate's main jobs is to accompany victims to court and help them feel supported through the process.

Since 2014, the NSI's Court Advocate has attended over 475 court hearings, tracked more than 415 criminal cases, and written more than 400 impact statements.

In July 2021, Madeline joined the G.A.P. (Gateway Assault Prevention) Initiative, a grassroots response to allegations of misconduct at businesses within the Grove District. This organization was initiated by Good for the Grove and Park Central Development as a way for local businesses and organizations to receive assault prevention and bystander awareness trainings in an effort to prevent sexual assault at the local bars and clubs. Since its establishment, the G.A.P. Initiative has hosted multiple trainings, handed out free drink test coasters at Grovest, and has planned a comprehensive roundtable event to showcase city services that will take place in June 2022.

Major Case

In 2019, Aaron Riley met his victim in the DeBaliviere Place neighborhood. The victim had brought his dog with him to the meeting. After a brief exchange, the victim and his dog took off running down the street. The victim tried multiple business doors down the block, but all were locked. As Mr. Riley ran after him, the victim finally found a place to hide, but his dog was confused and stood out in the open. Not wanting to leave his dog behind, the victim ran back out to grab his dog and was shot in the head by Mr. Riley. Riley took off running as a crowd of dance students called 911 and attempted to help the victim, whose dog stayed by his side the entire time. Miraculously, the victim survived the gunshot wound to the head. The entire event, from the argument down to the gunshot, was caught on NSI cameras. This footage not only helped authorities identify Riley, but also pressured him into pleading guilty. Mr. Riley changed his plea to guilty in 2022 and was sentenced to 15 years at the Department of Corrections. The Court Advocate tracked this case from start to finish, attended bond hearings, and submitted statements to the court.

CWE

Coverage Area: **Central West End**

Within the Central West End Neighborhood boundaries, the Central West End Neighborhood Security Initiative coverage areas include the North Special Business District (SBD), South SBD, Southeast SBD, Washington Place SBD,

Westminster-Lake SBD, Waterman Lake SBD, Euclid South Community Improvement District (CID), and the North CID. The CWE NSI provides our four main services: camera management, secondary patrol management, court advocacy, and homeless outreach.

Camera Success

Between the months of April 2021 through September 2021, numerous burglaries were being committed throughout the CWE. The NSI conducted video reviews on each incident and located the suspect. The suspect was involved in over 20 burglary incidents. Images and video evidence of this suspect were provided to the police, following which he was arrested and later charged.



Coverage Area: Forest Park Southeast

FPSE

The Central West End Neighborhood Security Initiative is contracted through WUMC to manage the camera network, secondary patrols, court advocacy, and homeless outreach for the Forest Park Southeast neighborhood, as well as the camera network in the Grove District.

Camera Success

Saint Louis Metropolitan Police Department (SLMPD) detectives, furthering an investigation into carjackings, vehicle thefts, and thefts from motor vehicles in the Central West End, DeBaliviere and Grove neighborhoods, obtained information relative to a known subject and his involvement in the crime wave plaguing the neighborhoods. Video footage, latent prints, and victim identification were all obtained linking the suspect to the above listed crimes.



DBP

Coverage Area: **DeBaliviere Place**

The DeBaliviere Place Special Business District was formed in 2016 and joined the CWE NSI two years ago. The CWE NSI is contracted to manage cameras, secondary patrols, court advocacy, and homeless outreach for the neighborhood.

Camera Success

On July 6, 2021, a woman working a shift for Instacart was delivering groceries in the DeBaliviere Place neighborhood when she was approached by a stranger on the street. He had a gun and demanded her keys. The victim complied and the suspect fled the scene on foot. Our camera project manager Lyndon Cornell reviewed the video footage and found images of the suspect. These images were used to identify the man responsible, a Mr. Darriell Dixon. Mr. Dixon was found a few days later at a hotel in north St. Louis City with the car still on the hotel property. He was serving a seven-year probation for tampering with a motor vehicle and is being held without bond for the carjacking in the DeBaliviere Place neighborhood.



Coverage Area: East Loop CID

The East Loop CID joined the NSI in 2021. The East Loop CID covers the city-side of the Delmar Loop, "from Laurel to the city limits." The NSI provides the East Loop CID with secondary patrol oversight, court advocacy, and homeless outreach.

ELC

Oversight

Twice per month, the NSI reviews the GPS tracking devices on the secondary patrols, reviews business checks, and vets secondary patrol invoices. Additionally, the NSI advises on safety and security plans, acts as a liaison with the police department, and sends our neighborhood outreach workers to engage with unhoused members of the East Loop CID community.





Commissioners

The Central West End Neighborhood Security Initiative is mainly funded through local special taxing districts in the form of Special Business Districts (SBDs) and Community Improvement Districts (CIDs), as well as Washington University Medical Center (WUMC). Entities that contribute to the CWE NSI are represented on our board of directors.

Our 2021 Board of Directors was represented by the following board members:

President **Bobbie Butterly**, representing the DeBaliviere Place SBD

Vice President **Yusef Scoggin**, representing the Southeast SBD

Vice President of Finance **Jim Dwyer**, representing the North SBD

Henry Edmonds, representing the North SBD

Gina Heagney, representing the Westminster Lake SBD

Bill Latz, representing the Washington Place SBD

Pete Rothschild, representing the South SBD

Brian Philips, representing the WUMC

Eric Weber, representing the Waterman Lake SBD

Kate Haher, representing the North CID

Ashley Johnson, representing the South CID



Starting from the top left: Pete Rothschild, Yusef Scoggin, Brian Philips, Henry Edmonds, Bobbie Butterly, Jim Dwyer, Gina Heagney, Ashley Johnson, Kate Haher Bill Latz (left) and Eric Weber (right)

The CWE NSI is located at 447 N. Euclid Ave, St. Louis, MO 63108. Our phone number is 314.454.5808 and our website is www.cwensi.com. You can find us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, and check out our About Us video on our website homepage!