

## **COMMISSIONER'S CORRESPONDENCE – How our police officers engage with and support the community each day**

As I near the one-year anniversary of my appointment as your Police Commissioner, I have been reflecting on the work we have been able to accomplish together this year – and the progress we have been able to make as a department and as a city.

One of the core strategies that I shared earlier this year as part of our [comprehensive public safety strategy](#) is community policing, which is critical to our effectiveness in working with our residents and leaders to make our city safer. Part and parcel to community policing is our strategy of district integrity, which ensures that the same officers work in the same areas each shift.

In my time with the St. Louis Metropolitan Police Department, I have continued to be impressed with how much our police officers engage with the community. We have a number of initiatives as a department, including our Polar Cops ice cream truck and also our Mobile Police Station, which supports holding Community Roll Calls in neighborhoods throughout the city.

There have also been a number of wonderful programs that have brought together police officers and members of our community. Our Halloween Trunk or Treat program earlier this year was a great example: we had police officers from various ranks and assignments, come together to help provide some of our youngest city residents with a safe and enjoyable way to celebrate Halloween with their friends. Faith and Blue Weekend was another great initiative that helped strengthen the bond between our commissioned officers and the clergy and faith leaders who are so heavily engaged in our neighborhoods.

Impactful community engagement also comes through the dozens of informal interactions that an officer might have with the public in the course of each shift. It might be when an officer stops to let a young child turn on the lights and siren of their patrol vehicle, or when one of our members helps someone cross the street safely.

In each of the departments I have been honored to serve, community engagement has been one of the hallmarks of success. While our current vacancies – similar to what we are seeing across the country – can mean that our individual officers might be handling more calls each shift, I am proud that they continue to take time to build relationships with the residents we serve. I look forward to continuing to explore more ways to deepen this engagement in the months to come!