

Fort Wayne UNITED

Strategic Plan – PHASE # 1 (July 2016 - Dec 2017)

In recent years, the City of Fort Wayne has been impacted by an epidemic that now threatens to derail our positive momentum for change, and has the potential to stagnate desired economic and cultural growth for years to come. That epidemic is the violent deaths of men and boys of color that occur on a constant basis in the city streets. In 2013 the number of violent deaths reached a level that is disproportionately high compared to the total population as measured on a national scale. Those numbers are made worse by the fact that almost all of the record high numbers of homicides that occurred were black men ages 14-34. These acts of violence take a toll on the city by threatening our sense of safety and wellbeing, building divisive barriers between communities and deterring young professionals from seeking lasting success in the developing economy of the city.

Fort Wayne UNITED is a Mayoral initiative that places two national efforts, Cities United and My Brother's Keeper under one umbrella, and is designed to answer the call to enhance opportunities, advance youth advocacy, and help to create a safer city for all, but more specifically, black men and boys. By bringing together a group of passionate and committed leaders, the initiative will educate, inform, and engage the community in an effort to make positive change one neighborhood at a time.

Using a multi-tiered and collaborative outreach strategy, Fort Wayne UNITED will develop data informed metrics and goals to provide our city with the tools it needs to create a community that is diverse, welcoming and equitable to all constituents regardless of the audience. We seek to become a driving force for positive change, working to support grassroots efforts and advocate for legislative action in a way that is beneficial for all, but particularly to value and preserve the lives of boys and men of color. Our primary goal is to convene, collaborate, and coordinate efforts and services, which in turn will build a better Fort Wayne where every citizen feels safe, valued and supported, in his or her efforts to build a better life for their families.

Vision Every black male in Fort Wayne is respected and valued and has the opportunity to achieve his full potential.

Mission Advocate for and implement policies, practices and procedures to ensure equity and opportunity for black fathers, brothers and sons at home, work, school and in the community, through collaborative efforts.

Established Programs:

Fort Wayne UNITED L.I.V.E. Sessions –

Listening to Input and Voices through Engagement

These intimate bi-monthly meetings create a safe place for African American males to share their thoughts and concerns on a variety of subjects including education, employment, and family. Previous L.I.V.E. Sessions have been focused on FWPD practices – how they impact the African American community, perceptions, and also, how to create and foster healthy relationships between the FWPD and the African American community. Participants are allowed to vote via live polling, and their answers are collected and used as local data.

Fort Wayne UNITED L.I.V.E. Forums –

These quarterly gatherings bring FWPD and African Americans together to discuss perceptions, perspectives, and experiences, via panel discussion in front of a live audience. Highlighted are the voices of not only the African American community, but also many FWPD officers who also desire to foster healthy relationships. Audience members are allowed to vote via live polling, engage in round table discussions, and make recommendations on how to create healthy relationships between communities of color, and law enforcement.

Fort Wayne UNITED PSA Training –

In partnership with the FWPD, African American males are exposed to real life scenarios that allow them to experience training, experiences, and challenges that local law enforcement face daily. These experiences provide opportunities to change perspectives and attitudes, while using positive presentation as a tool to build relationships.

Fort Wayne UNITED Late-Night Basketball Program –

As we strive to keep the shooting on the court, and off the streets, the Fort Wayne UNITED late night basketball program aims to take young people who are most likely to commit or be victims of crime, off the streets of the most high-crime areas, during the time that crime is most likely to take place, after dark. Participants are invited to play basketball, engage with local leaders, and take advantage of opportunities like employment and record expungement. Program will start in August 2016.

Fort Wayne UNITED CSI –

The *Choose Success Initiative* allows African American males, ages 14-18, to be exposed to the positive outcomes of good decisions, and the negative consequences of poor decisions. Over a 2 day period, participants witness sentencing in the courtroom of Superior Court Judge Wendy Davis, spend a ½ day at Indiana Tech University and then have a hands on experience at the building trades with trainers and skilled instructors.

Committee Members:

The **Fort Wayne UNITED** committee consists of experts and leaders from the following sectors: education (pre-k – college), employment, mentoring, business, youth advocacy, health, criminal justice, law enforcement, parks and recreation, clergy, local government, and non-profit.

Fort Wayne UNITED Director – Iric Headley, City of Fort Wayne

Co-Chair andré douglas pond cummings – Associate Dean and Professor of Law, Indiana Tech Law School

Co-Chair Chris Cathcart – Vice Chancellor, Ivy Tech

Judge Daniel Heath- ACJC- Criminal Justice

Judge Wendy Davis-Allen Superior Court-Criminal Justice

Deputy Derrick Westfield – Deputy Chief Southeast quadrant

Josepter Mbuba – Criminal Justice Professor, IPFW

Dennis Rohrs – HR Director Ft Wayne Metals

Christopher Guerin - Sweetwater

David Nicole – President, United Way

Luther Whitfield – Pastor, New Covenant

Terry Anderson – Just Neighbors Interfaith

Tamyra Kelly – PIO, EACS

Faye Williams Robbins - FWCS

Mike Armstrong – Youth Representative

Orlando Smith – Youth Representative

Joe Jordan – CEO, Boys and Girls Club

Marlon Wardlow – Director of Operations, Parkview

Mitch Sheppard

Julie Sanchez

Goals to lead Fort Wayne to action

1. **Engage Black Men and Boys:** *Inspire* black men and boys to understand and achieve their full potential through education, restorative justice and leadership.
 - a. In partnership with black men and boys, develop effective programming to engage 5,000 black males between the ages of 10-25 by December 31, 2017.
2. **Engage Community:** *Illuminate* the challenges black men and boys face in our local community.
3. **Engage policy makers:** *Initiate* and promote advocacy and education at the state and local level for effective public policy to remove the systemic barriers facing young black males.
4. **Engage philanthropic community:** *Identify* and cultivate resources to propel black male achievement.
 - a. Engage 10 local churches, both black and white, to be Fort Wayne UNITED churches by December 31, 2016.
 - b. Collaborate with non-profit organizations providing assistance and programming to black families.
5. **Engage the data:** *Interrogate* empirically the root causes of the challenges that hinder black male achievement in Fort Wayne.

Fort Wayne UNITED on-going Assignments:

Through collaboration, and resources of the members of our steering committee, we will:

- Collect and disaggregate data to better understand the challenges facing Black Men and Boys in Fort Wayne.
- Consult with experts, service providers, non-profit organizations, philanthropists and educational institutions.
- Observe program models and survey organizations in Fort Wayne to better understand gaps in service, program needs and opportunities for expansion, or adjustment to more directly impact Black males.
- Create a local action plan document that will identify local partner agencies, coordinate efforts and measure progress, all pertaining to African American youth, by April 2017