

Conciliating Compassion



**Community Relations Service
Annual Report FY 2005**

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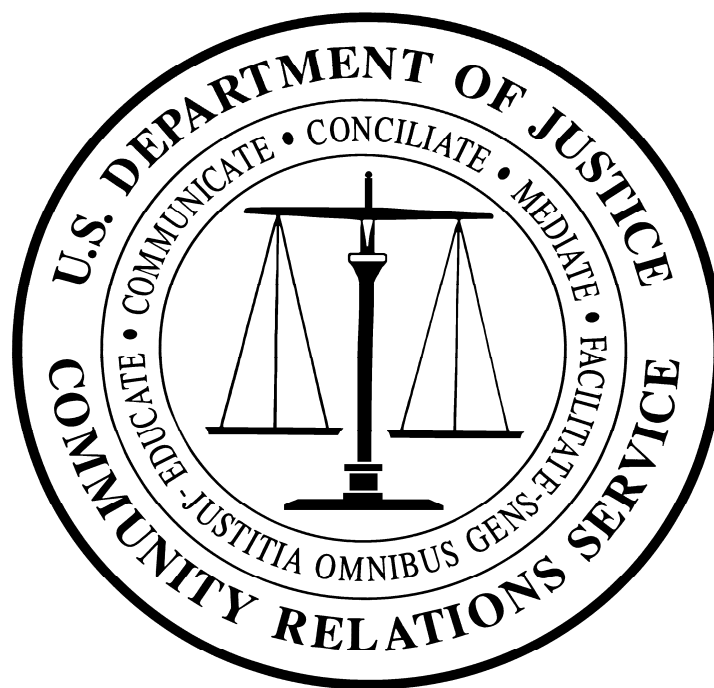
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The Community Relations Service was established by Title X of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as the only Federal agency with jurisdiction over community conflicts that arise due to issues of race, color or national origin.

CONCILIATING COMPASSION

COMMUNITY RELATIONS SERVICE
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE



ANNUAL REPORT FY 2005

Transmittal Letter to Congress

**To the Senate and House of Representatives
of the United States of America in Congress Assembled**

With this statement, I hereby transmit a report on the activities of the Community Relations Service (CRS) of the U.S. Department of Justice for Fiscal Year 2005. This report is required by Section 100 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352), and by Reorganization Plan No. 1 of 1966, as revised by 28 C.F.R. 0.30 (b).

This report describes CRS' conflict resolution activities, so that Members of Congress may assess its performance in executing its statutory mandate.

Respectfully submitted,



Sharee M. Freeman

Director

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CRS Mission Statement

About the Community Relations Service

The Community Relations Service (CRS), a unique component of the U.S. Department of Justice, works to resolve and prevent community conflicts and tensions arising from differences in race, color or national origin. CRS provides a wide range of race relations services, such as mediation, conciliation, technical programs and training to local communities. CRS also uses and distributes effective resources, which include training videos and publications, to assist local government, law enforcement and community leaders in resolving racial conflict and promoting peace.

CRS deploys highly-skilled, professional mediators with experience and cultural awareness to enable affected parties to develop and implement their own solutions. Its services are confidential, non-partisan, and free of charge and are designed to serve as a catalyst for peaceful resolution.

Functions of the Service

42 U.S.C. 2000g-1

“It shall be the function of the Service to provide assistance to communities and persons therein in resolving disputes, disagreements, or difficulties relating to the discriminatory practices based on race, color, or national origin which impair the rights of persons in such communities under the Constitution or laws of the United States or which affect or may affect interstate commerce. The Service may offer its services in cases of such disputes, disagreements, or difficulties whenever, in its judgment, peaceful relations among the citizens of the community involved are threatened thereby, and it may offer its services either upon its own motion or upon the request of an appropriate State or local official or other interested person.”

Director's Foreword

Hundreds of schools, police departments and local governments in rural towns and metropolitan cities across the nation requested assistance from CRS Conciliation Specialists. In response, this agency opened more than 600 cases in Fiscal Year 2005. CRS worked cooperatively with disputing parties to prevent racial and ethnic tensions, often times before they escalated into violence.



CRS facilitates the development of viable, mutually written understandings and agreements as alternatives to coercion, hostility or litigation. The traditional mediation approach originating from the inception of CRS has evolved with the changing demographics of our country. CRS has been able to identify emerging needs in the various communities that will require new approaches. These strategies include the City - Site Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together (City-SPIRIT) Program. This recently developed program resolves race-related conflicts within cities and communities in a collaborative effort. To this end, CRS assists local governments with existing racial conflicts in a community-wide problem-solving process that better understands and addresses racial tensions and conflicts which may exist in schools, businesses and neighborhoods. Examples of this work are evident in Pittsburg, Kansas and Monroe, Louisiana.

FY 2005 marks an achievement in CRS' efforts to conciliate compassion by celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Voting Rights March from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama. Today CRS collaborates with local government administrators, police and sheriff officials and civil rights leaders to ensure a safe and peaceful celebration of civil rights history.

A snapshot of CRS' contributions to local communities is presented in the following pages. I am enthusiastic that a review of this report will highlight CRS' valuable services, all available without charge, that have a proven record of assisting Americans by resolving conflict through peaceful and participatory means. I welcome you to communicate with us should you have questions regarding our services or require CRS' assistance. We are here to respond to your needs and hold this privilege in the highest regard.

Sharee M. Freeman
Sharee M. Freeman, Director
Community Relations Service

SUMMARY OF FISCAL YEAR 2005 HIGHLIGHTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Overview of CRS Activities

In FY 2005, the Community Relations Service (CRS) opened 616 new cases pertaining to racial and ethnic conflict throughout the United States. CRS services were requested to facilitate dialogue among community leaders, mediate agreements with law enforcement officials and assist school administrators and students in resolving racial conflict. CRS provided capacity building services to curb racial fallout in communities resulting from hate incidents, as well as perceptions of disparate treatment regarding access to public services. CRS' holistic approach to identify and address racial conflict required community-wide participation among diverse stakeholders who cooperated to overcome and prevent racial violence and racial tension.

Administration of Justice & Police-Community Relations

CRS responded to racial issues surrounding administration of justice and police-community relations in more than 40 percent of all CRS casework in FY 2005. The breadth of issues involved allegations of racial profiling/bias-based policing, citizens' requests for civilian oversight of police actions, police use of force issues, law enforcement administration and police-youth relations. CRS convened public forums to air community concerns on racial issues, established rumor control mechanisms, identified community leaders to participate in mediation with law enforcement officials and provided training programs to avoid racial incidents. CRS conciliation services were used across the country in such cities as Los Angeles, California and Wyandanch, New York. Each of these cases involved racial tensions between police departments and the racially diverse communities they patrol. CRS involvement allowed for the resolution of conflict through the collective participation of leadership from law enforcement and the community.

Hate Incidents

More than 20 percent of CRS cases in FY 2005



Alabama police officers gather in preparation to safeguard the participants in the 40th Anniversary of the Selma to Montgomery, Alabama March in March 2005. Photo by Wendell Rodgers

were devoted to hate crimes or incidents. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) *Crime in United States: 2004 Uniform Crime Report*, these bias-motivated offenses primarily involved race, ethnicity and religion. Among these offenses, 7,649 total incidents were identified by the FBI in 2004, of which race constituted in excess of 4,000 incidents. The largest racial group targeted by hate crimes, according to the FBI report, was African American victims who represented more than 67 percent of all reported bias-motivated offenses in the United States.

Minority communities requested CRS assistance to address reported racially-motivated acts of vandalism in Pueblo, Colorado, and white supremacist group activity in La Plata, Maryland. CRS facilitated dialogue and mediated agreements among government and community leaders which reduced the racial tensions following hate crimes and lessened the likelihood of violence. CRS mobilized participatory responses by communities subjected to white supremacist group activities and various racially-driven incidents and crimes.

Demonstrations, Protests & Special Events

CRS provided capacity building services to law

enforcement officials and demonstration organizers to ensure peaceful rallies throughout FY 2005. These services included CRS training of volunteer community members to be self-marshals, commonly referred to as Goodwill Ambassadors, and clergy members, named the God Squad, to assist with certain events, such as Memorial Day Black Beach Weekend in Miami Beach, Florida. The role of these volunteers is to engage event attendees through conversation, welcoming them to the local community. The volunteers are friendly, courteous and provide law enforcement officials with additional support to lessen possible racial conflict among large crowds of people. From Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, CRS provided technical assistance to law enforcement, local government and civic leaders that allowed for the 40th anniversary of the Voting Rights March to conclude without any major incident.

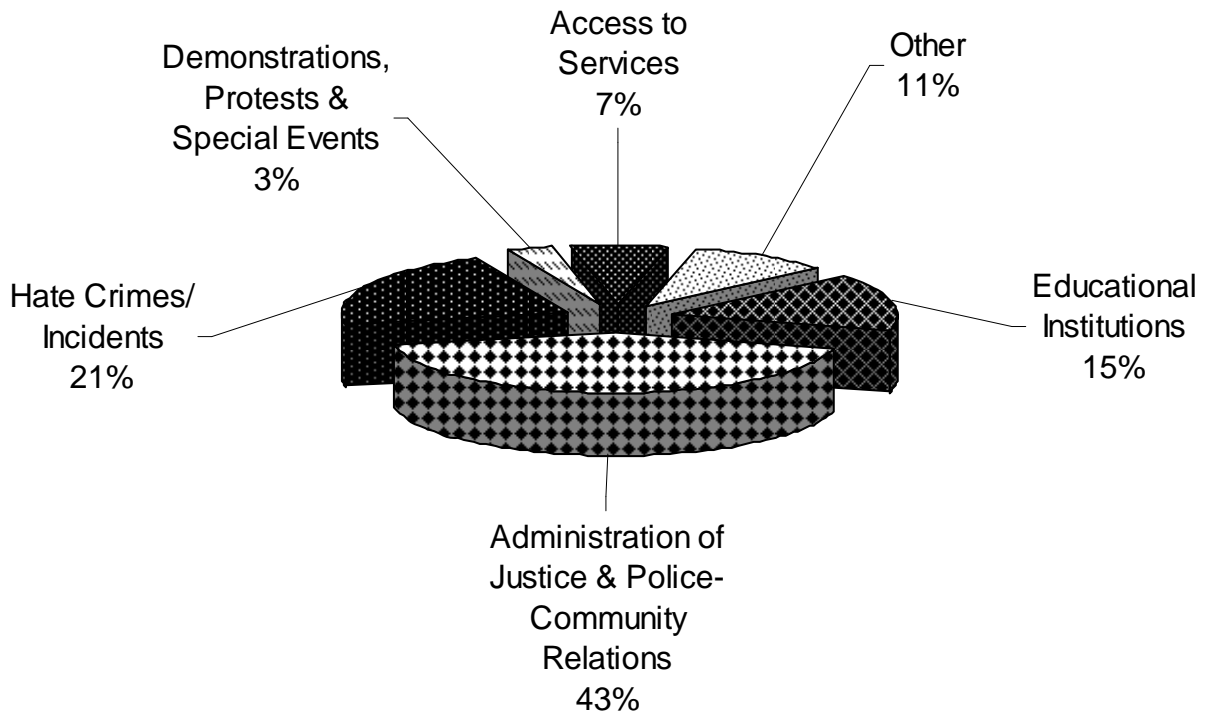
Educational Institutions

Racial conflict on college campuses, middle schools and high schools constituted more than 15 percent of all CRS cases for FY 2005. School administrators, teachers and parents invited CRS to provide mediation and conciliation services in schools around the country. Among the capacity building services provided by CRS is the Student Problem Identifying and Resolving Issues Together (SPIRIT) program. SPIRIT assisted schools to uncover issues that were perpetuating racial conflict and encouraged students to work cooperatively to design solutions for the conflict.

In Mexico, Missouri, CRS was requested to implement the SPIRIT program which motivated students and faculty to scrutinize the enforcement of an allegedly racially disparate disciplinary policy in school. Racially-motivated violence in a Los Angeles, California, high school prompted CRS' invitation to conduct dialogues that pinpointed issues of racial conflict. CRS also worked with school officials to disseminate factual information among students' social networks to counteract rumors that perpetuated violence.

In Fiscal Year 2005, the Community Relations Service (CRS) opened 616 new cases pertaining to racial and ethnic conflict throughout the United States.... CRS responded to racial issues surrounding administration of justice and police-community relations in more than 40 percent of all CRS casework.... More than 20 percent of all CRS cases were devoted to hate crimes or incidents.

MAJOR ISSUES IN CRS CASEWORK FISCAL YEAR 2005



REGIONAL REPORTS

REGION 1: NEW ENGLAND

Servicing CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT

New Bedford, Massachusetts

CRS learned in November 2004 that two African American youths were shot to death in New Bedford, Massachusetts. Minority residents expressed concerns about the increased violence and alleged that the needs of their community were being neglected by public officials, according to *The Standard-Times*, a local newspaper.

CRS assisted a newly-created neighborhood organization entitled “New Bedford: A Community Together Succeeds (ACTS)” by using public dialogues to develop a long-term capacity building initiative for community concerns. ACTS is composed of African American, Hispanic, Portuguese, Cape Verdean and other residents, public officials, and law enforcement authorities who seek to address issues of violence and safety in their community.

The dialogue process is an effective tool used by CRS to help community members define issues that heighten racial tensions and polarize their neighborhood. Dialogue also encourages concerned citizens to explore solutions and develop recommendations for city officials to consider. CRS worked with New Bedford ACTS to implement this process. CRS trained community facilitators for the dialogue, including local translators who would be available to address Spanish, Creole, and Portuguese-speaking residents.

A “kick off” event attracted more than 100 people to participate in three weekly community building sessions. Five “solutions committees” were asked to work pro-actively to address present and ongoing community concerns at the conclusion of the dialogues. CRS continues to assist New Bedford ACTS as needed.

Aroostook County, Maine

Representatives from law enforcement agencies in Aroostook County requested CRS assistance with elevated tension between themselves and

members of the Micmac Nation, a Native American tribe, including tribal police. County officials expressed that long-standing conflicts include claims of unfair treatment by local police when tribal members leave their reservation. The U.S. Attorney for Maine and the Community Policing Institute of the University of Maine at Augusta partnered with CRS to host dialogues in June 2005 in Houlton and Presque Isle, Maine. Participants included representatives from local, county and federal law enforcement, Maliseet, Micmac and Passamaquoddy tribes and spokespersons for migrant workers.

CRS coordinated with all parties to develop the format used in the dialogue sessions. CRS then presented a detailed session on cultural awareness issues and proceeded to facilitate discussions among the participants. The program opened lines of communication among the parties by allowing for an exchange of opinions that helped to establish better relationships. The participants discussed past conflict areas and searched for ways to reduce current sources of tension that could contribute to future conflicts if left unaddressed.

Medford, Massachusetts

On April 20, 2005, media reports described the alleged police response to resistance by five African American youth who were involved in

“This presentation shows clearly that compassion and dignity transcend language barriers and should serve as a blueprint for training in this area.”

-A program attendee, *Community Policing Across Maine*, Vol. 7, No. 2: pp. 11.

fighting with law enforcement officers. Two police officers, assisted by a firefighter, were treated at a hospital for injuries. *The Somerville News* reported in August 2005 that protestors outside the office of the Somerville Public Schools perceived race influenced the decision by school administrators not to allow the youth to return to classes. A Middlesex Grand Jury indicted three of the youth and the Cambridge Juvenile Courts is prosecuting the remaining two defendants. CRS learned of heightened police-community tensions following the incident as community organizations and the Massachusetts Association of Minority Police Officers held a press conference on June 5, 2005, requesting that all charges be dropped against the youth. CRS opened lines of communications between the Medford Human Rights Commission, Middlesex Police Department and community leaders to defuse tensions.

Communities involved in racial disputes often have a history of poor communication among parties, which leads to misperceptions of each other's actions. CRS provides conflict resolution services by listening to the issues and concerns of each party and learning from each party about the problem and the potential resolutions to the conflict. CRS will continue to monitor the situation as pretrial conferences are scheduled for the Spring 2006.

Boston, Massachusetts

CRS conducted two Arab, Muslim and Sikh cultural awareness programs for the U.S. Transportation and Safety Administration at Logan International Airport in Boston on August 31, 2005. The sessions involved personnel who come into daily contact with members of these communities. Approximately 120 employees at Logan International Airport and approximately 50 airport personnel from Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Rhode Island attended the program, which generated a significant dialogue between the presenters and participants concerning daily experiences with the public. Participants said that the program provided them with an effective means to reduce potential conflict when interacting with the Arab, Muslim and Sikh communities.

Manchester, New Hampshire

CRS facilitated two days of dialogues in September 2005 for the Manchester Police Department in an effort to improve relations between Manchester law enforcement officials and immigrant communities. The police department sought CRS assistance to assess the status of police-community relations and whether those relations had improved. This initiative followed a program in the summer of 2004 where CRS, the police department and members from the African, Arab, Asian and Hispanic communities discussed bias-based policing and other issues of concern to both law enforcement officials and other residents of Manchester. Community members together with law enforcement officers attended the session. The Manchester Police Department continues to work with the city's immigrant and refugee communities.

REGION 2: NORTHEAST

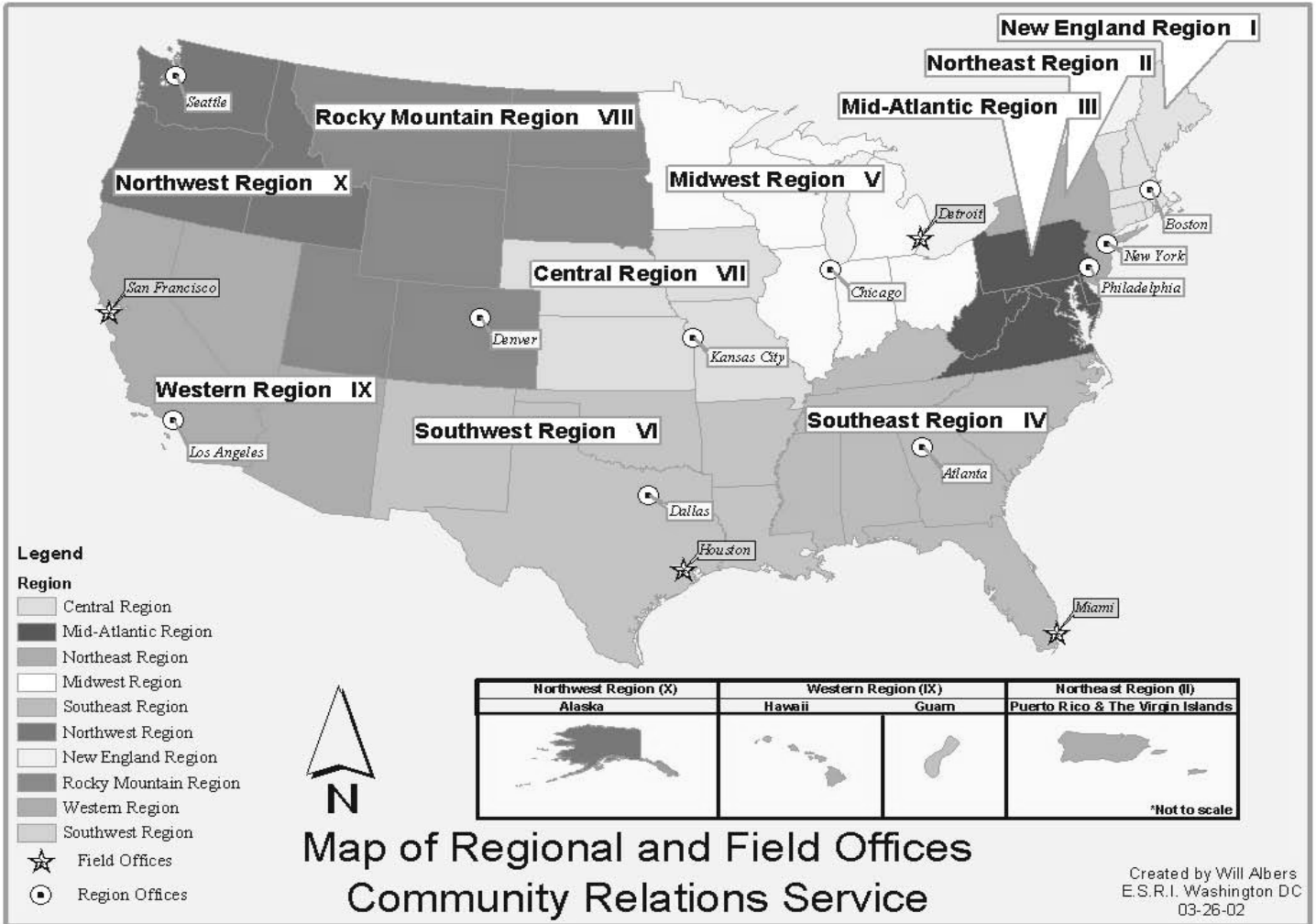
Servicing NJ, NY, Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands

Wyandanch, New York

A brawl erupted on December 6, 2004, in Wyandanch High School in Wyandanch, New York. Approximately 100 white and African American students were involved; 43 students were suspended; and 13 students were arrested. A loaded gun was also reported to have been found in the school. The African American community responded with deep concern that some of the students were allegedly mishandled by police officers and

CRS conducted a public forum allowing the community an opportunity to discuss their issues, define potential solutions and identify specific parties to implement the solutions.

MAP OF CRS' REGIONAL OFFICE AND SERVICE AREAS



expressed doubt in the school administrators' ability to control students. CRS facilitated a dialogue among the Suffolk County Police Department, community leaders, parents and school officials. CRS conducted a public forum allowing the community an opportunity to discuss their issues, define potential solutions and identify specific parties to implement the solutions. Through this endeavor, CRS provided Wyandanch with a capacity building model for public dialogue to address future conflicts. CRS assisted in the establishment of a committee for the purpose of convening meetings and discussing issues in the community which cause conflict. An ad-hoc committee was created for this purpose at the conclusion of CRS' efforts. No further violence has been reported.

Albany, New York

In August 2004, allegations of racial profiling

raised tensions in the Arab and Muslim American communities in Albany, New York. CRS worked in strengthening police community-relations by conducting five cultural awareness programs in coordination with other Federal agencies and the Albany Police Department. These programs trained every supervisory police officer in the city in December 2004. The high-level law enforcement officers were able to share this cultural competency program with other department staff through daily roll call sessions and other venues. CRS' efforts were well received by local law enforcement officials who were able to implement new approaches to conducting community outreach with Arab and Muslim Americans in Albany.

Wyandanch, New York

On May 22, 2005, a 75 year-old African American man died from gunshot wounds by the

local police on a narcotic search warrant in Wyandanch, New York. Media reports stated that the man allegedly pointed a gun at a uniformed police officer, who subsequently shot him. Community leaders expressed concern about this situation and requested law enforcement authorities to explain their actions. CRS reacted swiftly to address the rising tension in the city by working with the Police Commissioner to arrange a public forum and to invite African American leadership from the community.

Police officials explained the circumstances surrounding the shooting and pledged to investigate thoroughly the events involving the incident. Many questions arose at the forum regarding police procedures. CRS facilitated the discussion and provided the parties with an opportunity to have meaningful dialogue. As a result of this effort, community tension against law enforcement dissipated and police-community relations were improved. CRS provided the means and impetus for lines of communication to remain open.

Buffalo, New York

USA Today reported that in December 2004 groups of American Muslims were detained at the U.S.-Canada, Rainbow Bridge border crossing in Niagara Falls, New York. Many were questioned and fingerprinted after returning from a conference on Islam in Canada. CRS learned of the Rainbow Bridge border situation after receiving several complaints alleging poor treatment of citizens by border inspectors. Muslim leaders in the Buffalo region requested CRS' assistance to address the concerns of the community.

CRS coordinated an open forum with these parties, including representatives from various Federal agencies. By facilitating communication, CRS enabled participants at the forum to reach an understanding of the situation and created opportunities for law enforcement and the local Arab and Muslim American communities to engage in meaningful and productive dialogue. Ongoing discussions have continued since the forum aimed at building trust among community members.

A protestor blows a conch shell at a march against hate, where CRS provided self-marshal training that contributed to a safe event in St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands in October 2005. Photo: Courtesy of Susan Mann/ Caribbean Net News.



St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands

In the U.S. Virgin Islands, the *St. John Tradewinds* newspaper reported that on August 30, 2005, an African American woman was allegedly beaten, raped, and thrown into the Caribbean waters by white assailants. She and her husband had previously reported racial graffiti scrawled on their car. Also, prior to the incident, the alleged rape victim informed the police of intimidation by a white business owner. The same business owner's car and store were

"Our county has benefited over the years from the services provided by the Community Relations Service...It is refreshing to know that there is a federal agency that is addressing the systemic problems of race and discrimination successfully."

-Carl O. Snowden, Intergovernmental Relations Officer, Governmental Relations Office, Anne Arundel County, Maryland.

burned in what media reports claim was arson after the rape was made public.

CRS provided assistance on September 12, 2005 to reduce community tensions between African American and white residents in St. John. CRS learned of pervasive tension in the local community regarding the alleged hate incidents. CRS assisted the police in efforts to share a timetable and provide information to the public without jeopardizing the investigation. This initiative helped to assure the community that authorities were pursuing the matters seriously. Public concerns were reduced after the action was implemented.

CRS further worked to provide information on rumor control and forums for law enforcement to build coalitions and partnerships with the community by addressing concerns of racial tension. In October 2005, residents throughout the Virgin Islands arrived in St. John for a protest march against hate crimes. CRS provided police and organizers of the demonstration, who oversaw about 300 protestors, with self-mmarshaling training and technical assistance on how to defuse crowd tension. The march occurred without any reported incidents due in part to CRS' efforts. CRS continues to maintain communication with the parties of St. John.

REGION 3: MID-ATLANTIC

Servicing DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV

Pasadena, Maryland

The *Baltimore Sun* reported that a 17-year-old African American was beaten to death by a group of white youths on July 24, 2004. In the following months, an alleged series of racial incidents adversely impacted the African American community in Anne Arundel County, Maryland. When murder charges were brought and then dropped against the suspected youth, tensions heightened in the county. CRS became actively involved in working with the community to address the mounting racial concerns in October 2004 by facilitating a meeting of racially diverse clergy members and community residents.

The Anne Arundel County State Attorney's office

"I am grateful for your [CRS'] support and assistance in maintaining peace and harmony in our rural community."

**-Leo V. Sokoloski, Chief of Police,
Bloomsburg Police Department,
June 30, 2005.**

convened a grand jury to consider whether murder charges should be filed again. Indictments were rendered against five suspected youths. In May 2005, a jury acquitted one of the youths and then charges were dropped against the remaining four. CRS assisted diverse community leaders, the state's attorney office and law enforcement officials to continue an active dialogue throughout tense periods in the aftermath of the death. By maintaining open lines of communication, concerned parties were able to express their views in a constructive manner.

Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania

The *Press Enterprise* reported on June 28, 2005, of a Memorandum of Understanding among Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, town officials, the Task Force on Racial Equity and the Community Dispute Resolution group to address concerns about policing practices. This initiative included the creation of a Community-Police Response Team to strengthen the relationship between local law enforcement officials and residents of Columbia and Montour counties.

This agreement was a result of CRS' capacity building initiative where parties committed to improve cross-cultural education for both police



In June 2005, CRS witnessed in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement due to the efforts of the following: at left in the front row are Anthony Sylvester, Task Force on Racial Equality; Fred Kessler, Community Dispute Resolution Office; Jessica Kozloff, President of Bloomsburg University; and Leo Sokoloski, Bloomsburg Chief of Police. Back left are Charles Coffman, Mayor of Bloomsburg; Ben Lieu, CRS Conciliation Specialist; and Tom Evans, Task Force on Racial Equality. Photo courtesy of Ben Lieu/CRS.

and community members; to publish stringent policies and develop ramifications to combat alleged bias-based policing practices; and to develop a joint civilian-police effort to address community tension. CRS efforts assisted the Bloomsburg community leadership and law enforcement officials to establish a sustainable line of communication and to reach an agreement that enhanced cooperation and racial understanding.

La Plata, Maryland

Media reports in January 2005 described how the white supremacist group, National Alliance, distributed thousands of racist and anti-Semitic fliers in two Charles County, Maryland

“I wanted to take the time to formally commend CRS...for providing mediation and conflict resolution training to members of the Metropolitan Police Department.”

-Keith L. Williams, Captain, School Safety Division, Government of the District of Columbia, Metropolitan Police Department, February 17, 2005.

communities. The *Baltimore Sun* reported that this incident followed a December 2004 arson attack in the county, allegedly motivated in part by hate, on more than twenty homes of a largely African American housing development. CRS met with the local sheriff's office and leaders from faith-based organizations and other community groups to assess local residents' tension. The assembled leadership requested CRS assistance to lessen racial tensions caused by the events and sought guidance on establishing a community dialogue. CRS assisted with the creation of a planning committee to include both a diverse representation of the community and members of law enforcement.

The committee developed three community-wide dialogues in which local residents discussed the hate fliers and arson attacks. The participants suggested responses to these and other incidents that might occur. CRS intervention gave the community leadership a structured forum in which to meet, helped these leaders to develop a plan of action, facilitated community dialogues, and encouraged a follow-up meeting that provided a mechanism for the group to decide upon future courses of action to address hate incidents in the county.

Yorktown, Virginia

In February 2005, media reports publicized that a white supremacist group, called the National Socialist Movement, would hold a rally at Colonial National Park in Virginia, causing concern among city and state officials for potentially violent outbreaks between supremacist demonstrators and counter-demonstrators. The National Park Service

“The Community Relations Service (CRS) of the U.S. Department of Justice was one of the only federal agencies present during this important time in history. CRS leaders marched alongside the civil rights marchers, and were key in maintaining peaceful communications between civil rights groups and law enforcement. We remember Fred Miller, a CRS Senior Conciliator, who was beaten while offering assistance.”

-Comments on the 1965 Voting Rights March by the Honorable Charles Steele, Jr., President, Southern Christian Leadership Conference, February 19, 2005.

requested CRS services to collaborate with other government agencies in planning for a peaceful rally among the anticipated 300 people who would attend.

CRS responded quickly by coordinating and training volunteers how to self-marshal the event. The *Richmond Times-Dispatch* reported that on the day of the rally nearly 125 white supremacists attended, including members from the Ku Klux Klan, the Aryan Nations and skin head groups. The counter-demonstrators doubled them in numbers with many from churches and synagogues who were stationed approximately 300 yards away from the white supremacists. The demonstrations concluded peacefully due in part to CRS technical assistance before the event and on site conciliation services during the event.

REGION 4: SOUTHEAST

Servicing AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN

LaGrange, Georgia

In November 2004, the media reported that an African American male allegedly died after police officers used a Taser gun on him three times. The Georgia Medical Examiner's office later announced that the victim died because of "a rare heart condition," according to WRBL-TV CBS. Community leaders acknowledged a public response against local law enforcement officers

over the incident and requested CRS intervention. CRS facilitated discussions between community leaders and city officials to improve police-community relations. CRS also provided these parties with technical assistance to establish a Human Relations Commission that would strengthen interactions between law enforcement and the community. The parties met and agreed to review a study on Tasers.

Selma & Montgomery, Alabama

Jet magazine reported on March 28, 2005, that more than 10,000 people, including nearly 40 members of Congress, converged on Selma, Alabama, to walk across the Edmund Pettus Bridge to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the Voting Rights March. CRS provided technical assistance and contingency planning to law enforcement, local government and civic



Crowds swell in Selma, Alabama, during the 40th anniversary of the 1965 Voting Rights March in March 2005. Photo by Wendell Rodgers.



Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) participants remember the role that the SCLC played in organizing and participating in the 1965 Voting Rights March in March 2005. Photos by Wendell Rodgers.

African Americans. At that time, African Americans numbered greater than 50 percent of the population in Alabama but accounted for approximately 2 percent of registered voters in the state, according to the Library of Congress website. The Alabama Department of Archives and History website describes the obstacles to voter registration once faced by African Americans in Alabama: “Between August 1964 and July 1965 the state had 100 different [voter registration] tests and the applicant was to choose one at random from a binder. Generally each test had three parts - (1) copy or write from dictation an excerpt from the U.S. Constitution, (2) answer four questions based on the excerpt just copied, and (3) answer four ‘general knowledge’ questions about state and national citizenship...”

In spite of these obstacles to suffrage, a crowd of about 600 civil rights activists left the Brown Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Selma, Alabama for Montgomery, on March 7, 1965. They were met six blocks away at the Edmund Pettus Bridge by state and local law enforcement which used clubs and tear gas on the marchers in what became known as “Bloody Sunday.” The Library of Congress website

leaders. This historic event was held from March 3-12, 2005. Hundreds of people reenacted the march. This commemorative event began in Selma and concluded in the Alabama capital city of Montgomery, as marchers joined the procession in various sections along the route. CRS provided self-marshaling training for volunteers to aid with ensuring a peaceful event and offered on-site conflict resolution services. CRS also improved communication with event organizers through rumor control, including concerns regarding KKK countermarches, which did not occur.

The history of this 54-mile demonstration begins in 1965. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) and the Dallas County Voters League were striving towards suffrage for



Members of the United States Congress and other civil rights proponents link arms at the front of the 40th anniversary of the 1965 Voting Rights March, commemorating the crossing of the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama in March 2005. Photo by Wendell Rodgers.

further describes that day: “When ABC television interrupted a Nazi war crimes documentary, *Judgment in Nuremberg*, to show footage of violence in Selma a powerful metaphor was presented to the nation. Within forty-eight hours, demonstrations in support of the marchers were held in eighty cities and thousands of religious and civic leaders, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., flew to Selma.” Marchers returned to the Edmund Pettus Bridge on March 9 to kneel in prayer.

Soon after Bloody Sunday, Federal Judge Frank Johnson, Jr. granted permission to civil rights leaders who requested legal protection to march from Selma to Montgomery on March 21. Alabama Governor George Wallace issued an announcement following the court’s decision that the state lacked monetary resources to use National Guardsmen to safeguard the marchers along the route. President Lyndon Baines Johnson (LBJ) federalized the Alabama National Guard on March 20 in an attempt to provide safe passage for the marchers along their five-day

trip.

An estimated 3,200 demonstrators from around the country left Selma on March 21. The LBJ Library and Museum website describes that on March 22 “The weather was cold (28 degrees) with heavy frost...the column [of people] reached Highway 80 and started east, marching eight abreast.” The marchers slept in fields, endured rain, verbal insults and physical assaults along the way. They were reported to number 25,000 people upon arriving at the state capital on March 25 in Montgomery. Governor Wallace rebuffed two attempts by march leaders to meet before agreeing to a gathering on March 30. President Johnson signed into law the Voting Rights Act less than five months after the march on August 6, 1965.

At that time, Reverend James Orange of the SCLC was with former CRS Conciliation Specialist Fred Miller who were both knocked down and tear-gassed by state troopers during the march in 1965. In 1985, two CRS



CRS Conciliation Specialists (top left) and law enforcement officers (bottom) provided safety and security for participants, during the entire 54-mile journey from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, to commemorate the 1965 Voting Rights March in March 2005. Crowds gathered in Selma, Alabama, (top right) and placards were held in remembrance of those who perished during the civil rights movement. Photos by Wendell Rodgers.



CRS mediated between Milwaukee, Wisconsin officials and residents committed to improving police-community relations, who signed a mutually agreed upon Memorandum of Agreement in May 2005 after more than a year of mediation. From left are Othman Atta, Milwaukee Islamic Center Attorney; Nanette Haggerty, Milwaukee Chief of Police; Carole Sample, Spotted Eagle School Director; Tom Barrett, Mayor of Milwaukee; Kenith Bergeron, CRS Conciliation Specialist (background); and Rosa Domingez, Spanish Center Director (far right). Photo courtesy of Kenith Bergeron/CRS.

Conciliation Specialists notified law enforcement officials after one of them spotted a suspicious brown paper bag along the Selma to Montgomery route. Bomb squad authorities identified the package as an explosive device, removed it from the area and detonated it safely. CRS has provided support to the Selma to Montgomery march and its reenactment over the past 40 years.

Miami Beach, Florida

Memorial Day Black Beach Weekend in Miami Beach, Florida, drew more than 300,000 visitors from May 26-31, 2005. Media reports in prior years indicated that the event was tarnished by allegations of racial conflict between attendees and law enforcement and local business establishments. CRS responded to requests four years ago from the Miami Beach Police Department and the City of Miami that wanted to manage large crowds more effectively by engaging the community. CRS coordinated with local law enforcement officials to train volunteer self-marshals known as Goodwill Ambassadors and clergy members, named the God Squad, to assist with the event.

The role of these volunteers was to engage event attendees through conversation, making them feel welcome to the local community. The volunteers were friendly, courteous and confident to initiate positive and welcoming conversations. The volunteers did not have the authority to detain or arrest anyone. They were adorned in brightly colored clothing, worked in shifts and stayed in groups late into the night for the

duration of the event. In Miami Beach, Goodwill Ambassadors and the God Squad provided mediation and conciliation services when tensions mounted in the streets and offered an opportunity for revelers to express their concerns.

The success of these volunteers to improve police-community relations while reducing racial tensions at large gatherings served as a capacity building model. This model was replicated at other events throughout the country, including the Atlantic Beach Bike Festival in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. CRS trained more than 100 volunteers in human relations skills for the 2005 Memorial Day event and was available to provide on-site conflict resolution services. Police and city officials praised CRS and the self-marshals at Miami Beach who worked tirelessly to welcome and assist all visitors.



CRS staff and a Goodwill Ambassador in Miami Beach, Florida. Photo courtesy of Thomas Battles/CRS.

“I would again like to thank you [CRS] for facilitating an outstanding discussion and allowing our students to gain a better perspective of racial hatred and what harmony and reconciliation can actually look like.”

-William Washington, Senior Vice President for Student Affairs, Trinity International University.

REGION 5: MIDWEST

Servicing IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

On August 5, 2003, the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* reported that a Milwaukee, Wisconsin police officer shot an unarmed African American man after a traffic stop. Media reports later alleged that the car was driven by a convicted felon armed with a gun and that the accused police officer was exonerated of any wrongdoing. The questions surrounding this shooting incident were followed by further media reports alleging police use of force that ended in the shooting of unarmed persons. CRS conciliation services helped the community to address these incidents by assisting with the establishment of the Milwaukee Commission on Police Community Relations in December 2003.

The newly created commission composed of local community leaders of various races and religions were tasked with improving relations between law enforcement officials and Milwaukee's minority populations. CRS initiated mediation shortly thereafter between the Commission and the Milwaukee Police Department. This mediation continued for more than a year and resulted in a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that was signed on May 25, 2005.

The MOA encourages cultural awareness and customer service training for police officers, uniform policies for law enforcement's use of force continuum, formation of a committee on youth relations, and establishment of the

Milwaukee Commission on Police Community Relations that meets monthly with the Milwaukee Police Department to address and resolve mutual community policing issues.

Columbus, Ohio

In the fall of 2004, an immigrant Hispanic family of ten perished in a fire set by arson in a westside apartment complex in Columbus, Ohio. Media reports alleged that one of the factors which hindered the rescue was the inability to communicate between firefighters and the victims. CRS responded by requesting feedback from representatives of the Hispanic, Somali and other minority communities. They collectively expressed that the pervasiveness of inadequate language skills of their communities' residents limited the ability of minorities to use city services.

CRS previously worked with a multi-language telephone center in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and applied lessons learned from this experience to assist Columbus, Ohio, with establishing a similar system. A language line in Columbus would serve the needs of emerging immigrant populations and assist to decrease racial tensions arising from frustrations within the city. Firefighters have also been issued "contact cards" to assist them to communicate with Spanish language speakers in Columbus.

Deerfield, Illinois

CRS arrived on the campus of Trinity International University (TIU) in Deerfield, Illinois, on April 22, 2005 for an emergency deployment.



CRS mediation services assisted Mount Clemens authorities to address their racial concerns leading to a Memorandum of Agreement in October 2004.

Seated from left to right are Reverend D.L. Bradley, President of the Macomb County Ministerial Alliance; Ruthie Stevens, President of the Macomb County NAACP; Barb Dempsey, Mayor of the City of Mount Clemens; and Chacella Newton, a community representative.

Standing from left to right are Craig Pappas, Executive Director of The Resolution Center of Macomb County; Kenith Bergeron CRS Conciliation Specialist; Reverend Terrence Standofer, Member of the Macomb County Ministerial Alliance; Greg Murray, Member of the Macomb County Ministerial Alliance; Mark Hackel, Sheriff of Macomb County; and Doug Anderson, City Director of Transportation and former City Manager of Mount Clemens. Photo courtesy of Kenith Bergeron/CRS.

The Washington Times described how threatening statements in three letters were sent to minority students. TIU responded by evacuating 300 minority students from school grounds. CRS worked closely with university officials to conduct an assessment of racial conflict on the campus in response to the threatening letters. Less than a week after CRS arrived in Deerfield, an African American student at TIU admitted to sending the letters. According to media reports, the student attempted to portray TIU as a dangerous school for minority students so that her parents would allow her to transfer to another school.

The aftermath of this incident resulted in elevated tensions among a racially diverse student body, due to racial threats in the letters. CRS shared suggestions and best practices raised from its initial assessment with university officials. CRS then worked with student leaders and campus groups to identify the causes of racial tension and to develop methods that addressed these issues. CRS involvement was well-received as university officials requested follow-up sessions for future semesters.

Columbus, Ohio

Working previously with community leaders in Columbus, Ohio, CRS recognized through media reports in March 2005 that racial tensions were escalating between Hispanic, Somali and African American communities. There were allegations of race-related incidents among students in schools, discord over the shortage of

employment opportunities for local minorities, and conflicts between area merchants of different ethnicities. CRS assisted with the creation of a multi-ethnic, city-wide coalition composed of leaders from minority communities and local government. The gathering spawned enthusiasm for understanding the sources of racial tension in the community and developed goals to ameliorate these concerns. CRS successfully met its objective to facilitate a process among leaders to design an umbrella coalition that addresses racial and ethnic issues in the City of Columbus.

Mt. Clemens, Michigan

The *Macomb Daily* reported on December 20, 2005, the signing of a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) in Mount Clemens, Michigan, among the City of Mount Clemens, the Macomb County Ministerial Alliance, the Macomb County Branch of the National Association for the Advanced of Colored People and the Macomb County Sheriff's Office. The MOA was developed in response to elevated community racial tensions related to allegations in media reports in October 2004 of racially discriminatory city governing and policing practices directed at African American community members.

The MOA called for the re-establishment of the Human Relations and Youth Relations Commissions, increased diversity in city employment, encouragement of minority business opportunities, development of a community policing protocol with the Macomb

County Sheriff's Office, and cultural competency training for all Mount Clemens city employees. The mediation agreement will have a continued and growing impact on the City of Mount Clemens.

CRS mediation services assisted the parties in Mount Clemens to create resolutions that addressed some of their immediate racial concerns and issues. CRS provided technical assistance in the form of information to aid the parties in gaining consensus and to make informed decisions about their agreement. CRS assisted the parties in crafting the initial draft of their mediation agreement. CRS will provide ongoing support to Mount Clemens and offer mediation assistance to Macomb County to address existing racial concerns.

REGION 6: SOUTHWEST

Servicing AR, LA, NM, OK, TX

Houston, Texas

On October 16, 2004, community leaders requested CRS assistance in addressing racial concerns following the shooting death of a Hispanic teenager on school grounds by a Houston Independent School District (HISD) police officer in Houston, Texas. CRS coordinated with HISD and law enforcement officials to facilitate a discussion regarding recent police use of force responses to Hispanic youth and to determine what conciliation services CRS could provide. Media reports suggested that community-police tensions grew as the League of United Latin American Citizens was contacted by the victim's family to initiate an inquiry into the events surrounding the death.

Law enforcement officials suggested that a workgroup be created to involve area policing agencies, residents and organizations. The group formed with CRS assistance and called itself the Greater Houston Coalition for Justice. Collectively the parties worked for over a year, guided by CRS conciliation services to provide recommendations for the Houston Police Department, sheriff department, constable offices, University of Houston Criminal Justice Department and the HISD. CRS brought the

parties together to search for joint solutions and encouraged the development of professional rapport to ensure sustainable outcomes. CRS' efforts led the parties to develop a 27-page *Use-of-Force Recommendations* document based on their suggestions for appropriate police procedures.

Hale Center, Texas

In October 2004, CRS responded to requests for assistance from school officials and community leaders in Hale Center, Texas, regarding allegations of the mistreatment and harassment of Hispanic students in the Hale Center Independent School District (HCISD). A July 28, 2004, article in *The Hispano Weekly* described how 99 families filed complaints against the HCISD for malfeasance. The students alleged that they refrained from informing their parents of accusations against school administrators, teachers and police officers because of fear of reprisal. CRS opened lines of communication

"I would like to thank you [CRS] for your participation in the Hale Center ISD [Independent School District] Superintendent's Advisory Council... this council will give individuals the opportunity to come together to voice concerns and praise of our district. We can work together to make Hale Center schools the best they can be for our students – the leaders of tomorrow."

-Rick Teran, Superintendent of Schools, Hale Center Independent School District, February 24, 2005.



A group of students wanted to publicize the issue of illegal immigration at the University of North Texas (UNT) through a campus-wide game that caused concern among students and teachers in January 2005. CRS-led mediations created specific goals to promote stronger relations among all students on campus. The mediating parties agreed to the appointment of a task force by the UNT to study and improve diversity initiatives. Photo courtesy of David Minton/North Texas Daily.

between school district officials, community leaders and parents. Discussions between the parties led to a mutually created Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on March 24, 2005, according to the *Lubbock Avalanche-Journal*. The MOA promotes cultural awareness programs, recruitment of minority professionals and uniform enforcement of disciplinary policies in schools. CRS intervention improved cooperation in an ethnically diverse community and allowed for the creation of a concrete plan that Hale Center residents sustain through an advisory board that meets monthly to identify and address racial concerns and conflict.

Denton, Texas

The student newspaper of the University of North Texas (UNT), *North Texas Daily*, in Denton, Texas, described on January 27, 2005 that a campus group was playing a game entitled "Capture the Illegal Immigrant." The game involved wearing brightly colored shirts around campus with "Illegal Immigrant" written across the front and "Catch me if u can" on the back. Participants who caught an "illegal immigrant" were presented with a candy bar. Representatives from the group asserted in the article that they wanted to publicize the issue of illegal immigration at UNT. The game caused a backlash among students and teachers across the campus.

CRS facilitated communication between students and university officials, leading to formal mediations. CRS efforts encouraged perceptions of racial bias to be addressed by the mediation participants, allowing negotiations to continue in good faith because of a stronger rapport among the parties. CRS-led mediations created specific goals to promote stronger relations among all students on campus. The parties agreed to the appointment of a task force by the university to study and improve campus-wide diversity initiatives. Further outcomes included providing minority student groups with campus space to meet prior to the opening of a new multi-cultural center on campus scheduled for 2007. University officials also agreed to work with student organizations to review and update campus free speech policies and procedures.

New Orleans, Louisiana

Two African American students from Georgia Southern University were in the French Quarter of New Orleans, Louisiana, on December 31, 2004. They attempted to enter a bar when one of them was allegedly denied admittance by a bouncer because of his attire, according to the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* on May 7, 2005. An argument followed as one of the students claimed that white patrons of comparable dress were being admitted into the bar. A physical confrontation ensued that was caught on video

tape, showing one bouncer choking one of the students for 12 minutes while another sat on him and a third held his legs. The New Orleans coroner said the student died from suffocation. Four bouncers from the bar were indicted on manslaughter charges in June 2005.

The Times-Picayune reported on March 30, 2005, that New Orleans officials responded to allegations from community members regarding racial discriminatory practices by nightclubs in the French Quarter. City authorities dispatched “mystery shoppers” to investigate. The inconspicuous shoppers were divided into equal groups of white and African American males who frequented 28 nightclubs, ordering the same drinks and wearing similar clothing. The results were that African Americans received higher bar tabs, were informed more frequently of dress codes, such as to tuck-in their shirts, and were reminded more often of a minimum drink purchase. Local African American community leaders announced a protest to demonstrate against the alleged biased practices of nightclubs in the French Quarter.

CRS received a request in March 2005 to provide cultural diversity training for bar and club employees in New Orleans. CRS developed and implemented three cultural awareness programs for approximately 600 food and beverage employees in coordination with local government authorities. The New Orleans Human Relations Commission participated, a local attorney discussed state laws, and the New Orleans

Police Department provided a session on the role of law enforcement officers when interacting with patrons and workers in bars and clubs. CRS services were successfully implemented.

Monroe, Louisiana

Media reports described how police response to resistance led to the death of an African American male allegedly wielding a knife and chain in an alley on the south side of Monroe, Louisiana, on August 22, 2004. Five police officers were later exonerated of any wrongdoing in the incident by a grand jury. Monroe’s African American community alleged racial profiling by the local police department and disparate treatment in the school system. In June 2005, CRS offered its free services through a capacity building City-SPIRIT program that identifies and resolves perceptions about concerns based on race community-wide. Approximately 50 members of the clergy, local government, police department, University of Louisiana and other concerned citizenry participated in the CRS-led workshop. According to *The News Star* on July 1, 2005, one of the participants in the SPIRIT initiative described it as “...positive and a key to dealing with the sensitive issue of racism,” that came to the forefront of community concerns in Monroe.

Lake Charles, Louisiana

According to the *American Press* on February 4, 2005, ongoing support to strengthen race-relations in Lake Charles, Louisiana, prompted



CRS participated in an April 2005 town hall meeting at Dillard University prior to conducting diversity training for bar employees in the French Quarter of New Orleans, Louisiana, after bouncers at a local bar were indicted for manslaughter of an African American college student. From left to right are Colonel Terry Ebert, Homeland Security; Edward Compass, Police Superintendent Chief; Synthia Demons, CRS Conciliation Specialist; Dr. Michael Cowen, Chair of the New Orleans Humans Relations Commission (NOHRC); Dr. Jeanette Jennings, Co-Chair of the NOHRC; James Perry, Executive Director of Fair Housing; and Larry Bagneris, Executive Director of the NOHRC. Photo courtesy of Synthia Demons/CRS.

“The Human Relations Commission joins me in extending to you [CRS] our most sincere gratitude for the contributions ... made as we worked to resolve matters....”

-Larry Bagneris, Jr., Executive Director, City of New Orleans, Human Relations Commission, June 3, 2005.

CRS to respond to community concerns of racial tension in the summer of 2004. CRS encouraged community members who served on the city’s Race Relations Task Force and the Panel on Race Relations to combine their resources and energies into one group, which became known as the Leadership Team for Community and Race Relations. CRS assisted the newly formed group with capacity building services by modeling itself after other municipalities that successfully identify and address race-based issues in their communities.

In November 2004, CRS facilitated communication in Lake Charles through a dialogue with representatives from the mayor’s office, police department, clergy and Leadership Team. The dialogue involved alleged educational disparities between minority groups, community policing and respect for racial diversity. Dialogue participants formed committees to address various community issues, including higher education, business development and youth advancement. Each committee worked with a cross-section of the community to build stronger relationships and to

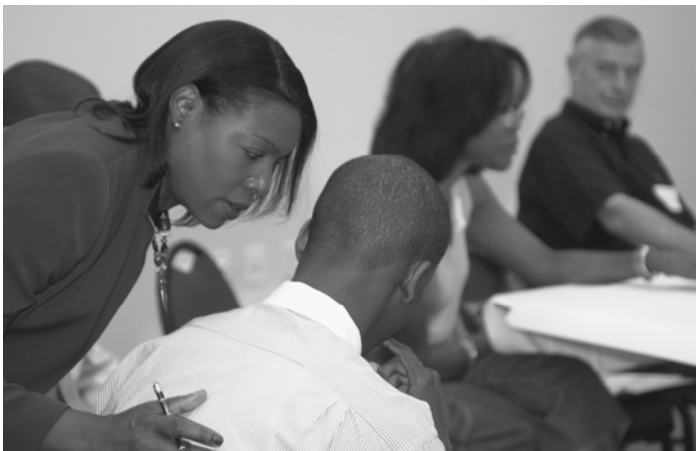
address public concerns.

Austin, Texas

Tension between members of the Hispanic community and the Austin Police Department rose in June 2005, as media reports described the shooting-death of a Hispanic teenager by a police officer in Austin, Texas. On November 2, 2005, KEYE CBS television reported on police videos reenacting the incident according to the two police officers who were involved. It was reported that these separate video reenactments of each officer’s recollection of the events did not correspond. The officer who shot and killed the teenager was acquitted by a Travis County grand jury of any misconduct and later released from duty by the Austin Police Department.

CRS worked with city officials to develop a contingency plan to strengthen community-police relations. CRS facilitated a town hall meeting which included leaders from the Hispanic American community, city government and the police department. City officials requested CRS to facilitate a capacity building model for local law enforcement agencies that identifies racial tensions between the police and community and effectively resolves these issues. CRS continues to assist a Hispanic coalition to address historical concerns and to enhance police-community relations.

In June 2005, CRS Conciliation Specialist Synthia Demons provided a City-SPIRIT program that identifies and resolves concerns based on race community-wide. This capacity building initiative followed allegations of bias-based policing in Monroe, Louisiana. Photo courtesy of Margaret Croft/The News-Star.



REGION 7: CENTRAL

Servicing IA, KS, MO, NE

Wichita, Kansas

On July 14, 2005, *The Wichita Eagle* reported that a new mosque was recently built in Wichita, Kansas. On July 22, 2005, the newspaper printed another story describing the hateful and threatening comments it received from readers against Arab and Muslims in reaction to the story. On August 31, 2005, CRS responded to a request from the Wichita Police Department to conduct an Arab, Muslim and Sikh cultural awareness program. This initiative provides information and understanding for law enforcement professionals and community members who interact with members and institutions in local communities. CRS coordinated a cadre of trainers consisting of Arab, Muslim and Sikh Americans who implemented the cultural competency program for the Wichita Police Department, area university public safety departments and other law enforcement jurisdictions in the surrounding area.

The program enabled more than 50 law

“...with the assistance of the Department of Justice, it is our hope that we can...address any potential volatile issues before they create irreparable dissension throughout the community.”

- Randy Roach, Mayor, City of Lake Charles, Louisiana, Friday, October 29, 2004.

enforcement officials to be better prepared when responding to cultural issues of the Arab, Muslim and Sikh communities. All participants completed program evaluations and overwhelmingly described CRS services as highly successful. The community participants expressed appreciation to CRS in helping them address incidences of September 11, 2001, backlash against Arab, Muslim and Sikh Americans.

Pittsburg, Kansas

The Hispanic population in Pittsburg, Kansas has been increasing. The most current U.S. Census data from 2000 showed that Hispanics in Pittsburg account for approximately 4 percent of a total population of 19,000. A *Morning Sun* article on April 30, 2005 described how a change in demographics prompted Pittsburg city officials to request CRS services to implement a City-SPIRIT program that identifies and resolves racial issues city-wide.

Approximately 100 people participated in the City-SPIRIT initiative that allowed for discussions on how a more racially diverse and expanding population was impacting fire and police departments, businesses, primary and secondary schools, medical facilities and social services. CRS conducted this capacity building program sponsored by the Pittsburg Area Community Outreach (PACO) organization, the City of Pittsburg and the Kansas Advisory Commission on Hispanic Affairs. Participants represented a cross-section of the community, including businesses, adult education centers, faith-based initiatives, schools, government services and the media. Two representatives from each group were selected to participate on the Pittsburg SPIRIT Advisory Council. CRS then trained 19 facilitators and all City-SPIRIT participants to identify racial or ethnic-origin problems in their respective groups and find solutions to these problems. CRS coordinated with PACO and City-SPIRIT representatives to finalize solutions agreed upon by all parties, which included a referral information service and bilingual counselors to assist newly emerging populations in Pittsburg.



CRS responded to a request from community leaders in Pittsburg, Kansas to provide a City-SPIRIT initiative in April 2005. Approximately 100 participants in the program represented a cross-section of the community, including businesses, adult education centers, faith-based organizations, schools, police departments and other government services and the media. Photo courtesy of Pascual Marquez/CRS.

Mexico, Missouri

According to the *Columbia Daily Tribune's* article on November 29, 2004, Mexico, Missouri, school district officials signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), following allegations of racial tensions in area schools that included "...complaints that a group of white students had tied a rope around the neck of a black student." CRS provided its mediation services to parents, community leaders and school district officials that led to an MOU mutually agreed upon by all the parties. CRS also implemented the Student Problem Identifying and Resolving Issues Together (SPIRIT) program in Mexico Missouri High School to confront race-based tension before it leads to violence. CRS trained eight facilitators of racially diverse backgrounds to facilitate the establishment of this program. CRS also worked with the students to identify areas that needed improvement within the schools, such as communication between ethnic minority and majority students and consistent enforcement of a student disciplinary policy. The Mexico School District is continuing to use the SPIRIT program and reported that it positively impacts all stakeholders, according to *The Mexico Ledger* on February 16, 2005. The student advisory council created under SPIRIT continues to meet with school officials on a regular basis.

Kansas City, Missouri

CRS provided contingency planning assistance to the Kansas City Police Department and local

African American leaders who requested its expertise with developing and implementing contingencies for reducing racial tensions at the St. Patrick's Day parade on March 17, 2005, in Kansas City, Missouri. During the 2004 parade, a brawl occurred between white and African American youths. Approximately 17 arrests were made for assault, disorderly conduct and other similar crimes.

CRS maintained close communication with the police department's command unit responsible

Approximately 100 people participated in the City-SPIRIT initiative that allowed for discussions on how a more racially diverse and expanding population was impacting fire and police departments, businesses, primary and secondary schools, medical facilities and social services.

for overarching law enforcement coordination of the parade. Volunteers from the local community and an anti-crime organization, received CRS training in self-marshaling and street ambassadorship. Self-marshals reduce tensions in crowds through overwhelming friendliness and persuasive kindness that encourages a peaceful atmosphere in which all celebrants can enjoy.

CRS was on-site the day of the event to lessen tensions. Conflicts involving event participants were drastically reduced from the previous year with no significant incidents reported. In discussions after the parade concluded, CRS worked with police-coordinating staff to identify best practices to insure peaceful parades in the future. Law enforcement and community officials expressed appreciation for CRS' involvement and the use of volunteer self-marshals.

Multi-Regional Collaboration

East St. Louis, Illinois / St. Louis, Missouri

On June 14, 2005, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reported that racial minority contractors planned a demonstration on an important highway between East St. Louis, Illinois and St. Louis, Missouri. The impending protest followed allegations from African American contractors who asserted they were not receiving major construction contracts from the Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT). CRS worked expeditiously to resolve the conflict between the parties, avoiding the demonstration which would have created a significant disturbance on the highway.

CRS facilitated discussions between the parties to develop and implement solutions collectively. CRS provided mediation services leading to the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which addressed several issues of concern for all parties. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reported on June 29, 2005

CRS mediation services in East St. Louis, led to the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding in June 2005, which addressed allegations of bias-based policies regarding the allocation of government contracts. Photo courtesy of IDOT.



that IDOT officials, the Metro East Black Contractors Organization and the Missouri Kansas Construction Contractors Assistance Center signed the MOU. The parties agreed to create a five-year working plan that will serve as a blueprint for this endeavor.

REGION 8: ROCKY MOUNTAIN

Servicing CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY

Bismarck, North Dakota

CRS learned of allegations of racial profiling by local law enforcement, involving members of the Native American community in Bismarck, North Dakota, in August 2004. Faculty and students from the United Tribes Technical College alleged that Native Americans were singled out by law enforcement for increased scrutiny, especially when Native American ceremonies and other gatherings were held on campus and in surrounding areas. CRS consulted with the Bismarck Police Department who acknowledged that CRS' Law Enforcement Mediation (LEM) program would assist local police officers to strengthen their communication, investigation and problem-solving skills in racially diverse communities. In June 2005, CRS conducted a LEM program for law enforcement officers in Bismarck and neighboring communities. Approximately 30 police officers participated and evaluations from the program were very positive.

Pueblo, Colorado

On April 27, 2005, *The Pueblo Chieftain* detailed the defacement of allegedly the only known statue of Emmitt Till, a historic civil rights figure, in Pueblo, Colorado. The vandalism occurred at

the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Cultural Center where a bronze statue of Till walking beside King nearly had one of its arms sawed off. This incident allegedly followed several other acts of vandalism, including racially disparaging language smeared on the statue. During that time, the Cultural Center was preparing for a ceremony to mark the final destination of a flame carried by torch around the country to raise awareness of Till's brutal death in 1955 in Money, Mississippi.

The planned May 13-14, 2005 ceremony coupled with the race-based vandalism of the statue and anticipation of counter-demonstrations at the ceremony led CRS to work with city officials, community leaders and law enforcement authorities to ensure that the expected crowds of people could attend without incident. CRS provided conciliation services, contingency planning, self-marshaling and on-site mediation services. CRS also coordinated with local law enforcement officials to monitor the event. The successful partnership insured a peaceful ceremony with no reported incidents.

Havre, Montana

In May 2005, University of Montana journalism students published a report for a school project on alleged acts of disparate treatment by businesses and law enforcement against Native Americans in the town of Havre, Montana, and surrounding communities situated next to reservations. Three Montana newspapers, the *Missoulian*, *Billings Gazette* and *Great Falls Tribune*, published approximately 100,000 copies of the report, according to the *Great Falls Tribune* on July 11, 2005.

CRS learned after the report was published of racial tensions in Havre and neighboring Native American reservations. CRS facilitated

Joe Big Knife from the Rocky Boy's Reservation of Montana was interviewed by a University of Montana journalism student about allegedly experiencing racial discrimination. Photo courtesy of Katie Hartley/University of Montana.



The statue of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Emmitt Till is located in Pueblo, Colorado. Photo courtesy of Chris McLean/Pueblo Chief-tain.



communication among officials from the Rocky Boy's and Fort Belknap Reservations and Havre and Hill Counties. CRS then led formal mediations among the parties, establishing an agreement between them to create a Human Relations Commission in Havre to improve communication through cooperative relationships and to strengthen race relations among the parties and residents of their respective communities. CRS continues to provide support as needed.

REGION 9: WESTERN

Servicing AZ, CA, Guam, HI, NV

San Francisco, California

The *San Francisco Chronicle* reported on March 11, 2005, that the Martin Luther King-Marcus Garvey Cooperative Apartments in San Francisco were facing foreclosure. CRS provided assistance in February 2005 to address reported racial tension at the housing complex among the ethnically diverse tenants who totaled more than 400, many of whom were African American, Korean and Russian. CRS met with tenants, staff, representatives from the San Francisco Human Rights Commission and other public officials to assess perceived racial tensions and to determine what services may be needed.

CRS mediated among the parties and instituted rumor control mechanisms, ensuring that misinformation and suspicion would not escalate community tensions, which permitted the parties to focus on the future of the housing complex. The parties developed a mutual understanding that safety and health needs of housing residents should be addressed and a plan was developed to avoid closure in June 2005. Further

conciliation sessions led by CRS were held and impacted a decision to keep the housing complex open for another year. CRS intervention has allowed the parties to work towards a long-term solution without race being a part of the equation.

Concord, California

In February 2005, CRS mediated between the Concord Police Department and Latino community leaders to address allegations that the concerns of Hispanic Americans were not taken seriously by local law enforcement. CRS was able to open lines of communication between the parties, providing the Concord Police Department with new opportunities to reinforce its commitment to the community. One of the outgrowths of the mediation process was a Latino Advisory Group to develop protocols and programs to address the particular needs identified by the community. The Concord Police Department identified other resources in the city to assist the community and to cultivate a positive relationship. CRS' participation in this process created new avenues of communication among the parties.

Los Angeles, California

NBC 4 TV reported on February 7, 2005, that after a vehicular pursuit of an African American male juvenile in a stolen vehicle by a Los Angeles police officer, the youth rammed his vehicle into the police cruiser. The officer responded by shooting at the stolen vehicle, killing the youth. In December 2005, the District Attorney for Los Angeles County acquitted the police officer of any wrongdoing.

Days before the juvenile's death, a highly publicized video-taped incident concluded in an acquittal of a Los Angeles police officer who used a metal flashlight to strike and subdue an African American male motorist after a car chase. CRS responded to concerns of increased racial tensions and community demonstrations following media reports of the juvenile's death. On February 26, 2005, CRS was onsite to provide conciliation services at a demonstration led by African American community leaders against the use of force by law enforcement. CRS also maintained communication links with the demonstration organizers and the Los

Angeles Police Department as the event proceeded between the Crenshaw as Leimert Park area of Los Angeles. The demonstration included an estimated 500 persons who marched on a major thoroughfare and concluded without a major incident.

Los Angeles, California

The *Los Angeles Times* reported on April 27, 2005, of two brawls in one week between African and Latino American students at Thomas Jefferson High School (TJHS) in Los Angeles, California. The first fight on April 14, 2005, involved nearly 100 students and three were reported injured. The second fight, on April 18, 2005, was allegedly tied to gang involvement; more than 100 students were involved; two were arrested and one broke a hip.

Student enrollment at TJHS during the fights was approximately 2,400 where 92 percent were Latinos and 6 percent were African Americans. The day after each fight more than 1,000 students were absent. Attendance levels continued to fluctuate thereafter, due in part to rumors of reprisals. Security presence increased significantly on campus and CRS responded to requests from school and law enforcement officials in the community for immediate action to

“The level of dedication that you [CRS] have provided not just me, but to the school and community of Jefferson High School will be forever influenced by you.”

-Holly Priebe-Diaz, Organization Facilitator, Los Angeles Unified School District, Local District 5. May 2005.

reduce racial tensions.

CRS conducted rumor control dialogues to identify pre- and post-incident issues concerning the students. This process involved CRS training 25 adult facilitators from the Los Angeles City and County Human Relations Commissions, school officials, leaders from community-based organizations and volunteers. These facilitators then went into classrooms to use the existing social networks of students to spread factual information that would counteract rumors of purported gang or racial violence in the school that may contribute towards immediate retaliation from students. These dialogues involved more than 900 high school students.

The neighboring George Washington Carver Middle School also witnessed violence with an alleged gang-related shooting and fight next to school grounds. CRS trained fifteen adult facilitators to conduct dialogues of rumor control with nearly 800 middle school students. CRS also facilitated the initial subcommittee meetings of the TJHS Safe Collaborative. CRS encouraged participants in this new collaborative to partner in dialogues with students at the Middle School.

REGION 10: NORTHWEST

Servicing AK, ID, OR, WA

Pasco, Washington

The *Seattle Times* reported on September 18, 2004, that two Hispanic teenage boys were suspected of killing a teacher at a Benton City middle school, located near Pasco, Washington. Media reports would later describe how the suspects were found guilty of the murder. In October 2004, CRS provided technical assistance and conciliation services to African American parents in the Pasco Public School District. The parents claimed that a Hispanic male student threatened to kill a female African American student. The African American community became concerned that the incident was racially motivated. There was a disagreement over the appropriate disciplinary action response by the administration with regards to the student who had made the threat.

“Our staff evaluations indicate this may have been the most successful [Arab, Muslim and Sikh] program of this type ever offered here in Eugene.”

-Robert M. Lehner, Chief of Police, Eugene, Oregon, May 23, 2005.

CRS provided conciliation services which averted a planned demonstration by community members. CRS then helped the concerned African American parents arrange a meeting with leadership from the school and the school district. All parties were able to come to an agreement regarding an appropriate disciplinary response and the school district’s disciplinary policy.

Monroe, Washington

The Daily Herald reported on November 2, 2004, that in less than two months three racial incidents were reported to authorities at Monroe High School in Monroe, Washington. One of the incidents included a white student who allegedly taunted an African American student with a noose. In October 2004, parent leaders at Monroe High School requested CRS assistance in addressing these racial concerns. CRS met with concerned parents, the Superintendent of Monroe Public Schools and representatives of the Monroe Police Department to assess community tensions and address these issues. CRS facilitated a meeting between the Monroe School District and the Parent Advisory Council in Monroe. The meeting led both groups to develop an anti-harassment policy committee to apply to future race-based concerns. CRS worked with the school district to develop

protocols for reporting incidents of hate and bias incidents to the Monroe Police Department.

Post Falls, Idaho

Allegations of racial harassment against Asian and African American students at River City Middle School in Post Falls, Idaho, precipitated CRS' involvement to address the heightened concerns in November 2004. Students claimed they experienced racial slurs, physical intimidation and an assault. CRS met with school district administrators, parents and community leaders who requested assistance in educating staff and the students about bias and hate incidents. CRS provided conciliation and technical assistance to approximately 64 middle school teachers and administrators in the Post Falls School District. CRS informed the group about common warning signs that may lead to hate and bias incidents; about how to address these issues and encouraged participants to be observant of known hate groups operating in the Pacific Northwest. Since CRS' intervention, racial tension in the school decreased significantly and no new racial incidents have been reported to CRS.

Eugene, Oregon

In February 2005, CRS facilitated an Arab, Muslim and Sikh cultural awareness program for Eugene, Oregon, law enforcement personnel, in partnership with the Eugene Police Department and Oregon's Department of Public Safety, Standards and Training. These seminars addressed conflict due to cultural misunderstandings and were aimed to improve relations between police officers and community residents. A number of reported incidents involving Arab, Muslim and Sikh community

In February 2005, CRS facilitated an Arab, Muslim and Sikh cultural awareness program for Eugene, Oregon, law enforcement personnel, in partnership with the Eugene Police Department and Oregon's Department of Public Safety, Standards and Training. CRS-trained cultural awareness instructors conducted the program. The instructors from left to right are Heminder Singh; P. Diane Schneider, CRS Senior Conciliation Specialist; Ibrahim Hamide; Krishna Singh Khalsa; and Sam Kamkar, Sergeant in the Eugene Police Department and the only Arab American police officer in Oregon at the time of this training. Photo courtesy of P. Diane Schneider/CRS.

members and the police added to the underlining tensions that existed in the wake of the September 11, 2001, attacks. For example, media reports in September 2004 described how an Oregon state police officer cited a Sikh driver during a traffic stop for carrying a concealed weapon, known as a kirpan. The kirpan is a small knife that carries an important religious significance to practicing members of the Sikh faith. The misdemeanor charge for carrying a concealed weapon was later dropped.

Approximately, 219 participants attended the training program offered over four days to allow officers working various shifts to participate. The feedback from the presentations was universally positive. In comments by participants, CRS learned that the presentations facilitated consideration for developing similarly structured presentations for other ethnic groups in the community to address the broader spectrum of police-community relations in a multi-cultural community. The Eugene Police Department Diversity Committee agreed to work with CRS to design additional community policing programs for 2006.



HURRICANE KATRINA

In FY 2005, CRS also provided assistance to communities affected by Hurricane Katrina by defusing and resolving racial conflicts. After Hurricane Katrina, CRS resolved race based conflicts in areas such as housing, education, employment and contracts. Allegations of racial disparities following disaster relief efforts were answered by CRS' rumor control measures in communities throughout Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi.

In September 2005, CRS received a mission assignment from the Federal Emergency Management Authority (FEMA) to work with the Equal Rights Office in FEMA in response to Hurricane Katrina in Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi. CRS also collaborated with the U.S. Attorney's Office in Mississippi to assess and lessen the tension associated with the victims from Hurricane Katrina in and around Biloxi, Mississippi. In the aftermath of this natural disaster, CRS facilitated and promoted cooperative interactions between disaster relief entities and minority communities by opening lines of communication through dialogue. CRS worked with school officials to identify and address sources of racial tensions in schools that were exacerbated because of an increase in the population of students from other areas afflicted by Hurricane Katrina. CRS collaborated with law enforcement and FEMA officials to implement rumor control measures surrounding

the rumored presence of hate groups in cities and towns affected by Hurricane Katrina.

CRS relied on its previous relationships with communities in the coastal areas impacted by Hurricane Katrina to provide conciliation, mediation and communication services to diverse racial neighborhoods, officials from FEMA, and to state, city and local authorities.

On September 9, 2005, at the request of FEMA, CRS assessed the needs and concerns of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians living in Philadelphia, Mississippi. CRS determined that more than 80 members of this Native American community were reported missing and approximately 200 families were in need of disaster relief services after Hurricane Katrina. CRS relied on previous relations with the leadership of the Choctaw Indians to open lines of communication with FEMA officials who worked to address their needs.

Vietnamese Americans in New Orleans, Louisiana, were in need of emergency services and FEMA requested CRS to assess their situation and to offer on-site conciliation services. Throughout September 2005, CRS visited community centers and houses of worship where Vietnamese Americans had congregated in search of emergency assistance. CRS learned from Vietnamese American community leaders that many of their community

“...‘the impact of many commercial and business conflicts will impact blacks, people of color, and poor people.’ Dealing with the Katrina-related matter requires ADR [Alternative Dispute Resolution] practitioners ‘to hone their skills on cultural competence’...The first neutrals on the scene acting in those roles likely were from the U.S. Justice Department’s Community Relations Service.”

-S.Y. Bowland, Conflict Resolution Consultant, interviewed in the article *Alternatives to the High Cost of Litigation*. International Institute for Conflict Prevention and Resolution, Vol. 23, No. 10: pp 175, November 2005.



CRS worked with FEMA to provide information about opportunities for small and minority disadvantaged business owners in hurricane response and disaster recovery activities in Montgomery, Alabama. Photo courtesy of Thomas Battles/CRS.

members could not read FEMA disaster relief information in English and welcomed FEMA literature in Vietnamese. CRS communicated this request to FEMA which responded by providing translated information, allowing approximately 15,000 Vietnamese Americans in New Orleans to be informed and able to apply for disaster relief services.

From September through October 2005, CRS provided disaster relief workers from around the country with cultural competency programs on how best to assist and relate to disaster relief minority victims in Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi. This program was part of a comprehensive workshop for more than 2,000 FEMA employees and first responders to Hurricane Katrina, including firefighters and search and rescue crews. CRS outlined the demographics of the major racial and ethnic communities in the gulf coast states and then trained program participants on the history of these communities' relations, specifically their encounters with authority, perceptions of discrimination, and allegations of unaddressed grievances by local, state and national government. Disaster relief workers who resided in different racial communities were better prepared after CRS' program to overcome potential barriers to cross-cultural communication.

CRS conciliated and defused tensions in crowded lines at several Disaster Recovery Centers where thousands of evacuees gathered to receive FEMA services. At times, CRS mediated disputes between service providers and evacuees regarding relocation alternatives, communications, and perceived unfair and inequitable treatment. For example, CRS mediated a dispute between evacuees and the

Red Cross to develop a protocol for keeping evacuees informed on when, where, and how evacuees would be relocated to alternative housing due to the mandatory closing of a shelter. The mediation greatly reduced tension and rumors among the evacuees.

CRS and the Equal Rights Office of FEMA participated in a meeting of bishops, pastors and other civic leaders in Memphis, Tennessee, in September 2005 to discuss the role of churches to assist damaged and destroyed churches and Hurricane Katrina victims throughout the states of Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. Other activities that involved CRS and the Equal Rights Office unit included successfully bringing together the General Services Administration (GSA), the Small Business Administration (SBA), the FEMA Procurement Office, prime contractors as well as small and minority businesses to provide information about opportunities in hurricane response and disaster recovery activities.

On September 17, 2005, in Jackson, Mississippi, CRS, the NAACP and a local Congressman collaborated to host a public educational forum to provide capacity building services for interested parties seeking to learn

CRS Conciliation Specialists with clergy at the Main Street Baptist Church in Biloxi, Mississippi, which distributed food and provided other disaster relief services for Hurricane Katrina survivors. Photo courtesy of Thomas Battles/CRS.





At the FEMA/State Disaster Recovery Center (DRC) #14 in Laurel, Mississippi, Whitney Dante Johnson is discussing with a potential applicant, how to file a claim for disaster unemployment. The employment of many residents in this area has been severely impacted by Hurricane Katrina. Photo and text courtesy of George Armstrong/FEMA.

the procedures and strategies for procurement opportunities from Hurricane Katrina. There were approximately 200 participants at the forum who overwhelmingly responded positively to the presented information. The success of this initial event led the Mississippi Development Authority and the Mississippi Procurement Technical Assistance Network to host a series of five free workshops around the state. CRS and the Equal Rights Office of FEMA replicated the educational forum model on October 16, 2005 in Montgomery, Alabama, that was attended by 700 contractors.

In December 2005, CRS worked with officials from FEMA, GSA and the SBA to conduct “Train the Trainer” workshops throughout Louisiana. Based on CRS capacity-building methodology, this educational approach enabled grassroots, community and faith-based organizations to assist better those affected by Hurricane Katrina. Louisiana residents encountered difficulties in completing and submitting forms for insurance claims, FEMA benefits and SBA loan applications. The free training workshops allowed disaster relief victims to rely on previously established community networks to assist them to complete the needed paperwork that facilitated access to important services.

CRS continues to work as requested with the leadership in schools and local law enforcement in Biloxi and other cities in Mississippi affected by Hurricane Katrina. Two programs CRS will provide are a Student Problem Identifying and Resolving Issues Together (SPIRIT) program, as well as a Law Enforcement Mediation program (LEM) in the Spring 2006. SPIRIT will assist Biloxi students, administrators, teachers, and parents to resolve racial conflict and work

cooperatively to design solutions. LEM will enhance the local police departments’ abilities to problem-solve in racially diverse communities.

“...thank you [CRS] for your concern and diligence in improving the quality of life for evacuees.”

-Alice Thomas-Tisdale, Associate Publisher, *Jackson Advocate*. December 2005.

Congressional Notification Requirement

The Commerce, Justice, State, Judiciary and Related Agencies Appropriations Conference Report for FY 1999 included Congressional notification requirements for CRS. The report stated:

Close coordination between the Administration and Congress could help stabilize racially motivated local incidents. As the people's body, Congress must be kept informed when the Administration responds to a domestic crisis. Therefore, the Attorney General is directed to notify the relevant committees whenever requests by local officials prompt the deployment of CRS personnel to mediate conflict.

Whenever CRS mediators conducted violence prevention and conflict resolution activities in FY 2005, CRS notified the two U.S. Senators of the state where the conflict occurred, the U.S. Representative of the affected Congressional district, and Senate and House Appropriations Committee staff members. CRS continues to meet this ongoing notification requirement.

MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

Comprehensive Review and Reorganization of the Department of Justice to Meet the Counter-Terrorism Mission

CRS is adapting to changes that impacted the United States from September 11, 2001, the war in Iraq and shifts in demographics nationwide. Multifaceted global events and threats associated with terrorism exerted on the American population have developed suspicion toward people who are Arab, Muslim and Sikh Americans. This distrust has led CRS to implement conflict resolution and violence prevention services nationwide to serve members of these communities, while striving to assist state and city governments, school districts, police departments and civic groups to defuse and manage community-wide racial and ethnic tensions and conflict.

Budget and Operations Requirements

In FY 2005, CRS facilitated dialogue and partnerships among diverse community members, leading to locally-driven solutions to racial tension and racial violence in neighborhoods throughout the Nation. CRS accomplished these aims through unique programs, such as the Student Problem Identifying and Resolving Issues Together (SPIRIT) initiative. Trust and cooperation between law enforcement officials and racially, ethnically and religiously diverse members of communities were strengthened through Law Enforcement Mediation and City-SPIRIT programs.

CRS facilitated the development of mutually written understandings and agreements in FY 2005. CRS identified and addressed perceptions of racial intolerance. By adapting to the transformations of race relations in the United States, CRS is able to assist communities in the development and implementation of proactive mechanisms to reduce racial and ethnic tension.

Management Goals

In 2005, CRS management embarked on the implementation of the CRS Performance Management Plan with new performance

standards and plans for each staff at every level of service. Collaboration with staff to make revisions and adapt the standards to more accurately and fairly measure the critical factors that contribute to the intervention of community conflicts was achieved.

CRS' performance standards were brought into compliance with the President's Management Agenda and ongoing efforts to build on strategies for managing fundamental conflict resolution skills of CRS mediators. Some major areas that were enhanced included: state certification in mediation, internal agency certified training procedures, merit promotion tracking and award systems, and revised protocols for evaluating intervention services and interregional assignments.

CRS participated in staff training on case work strategies and techniques, development of presentations, cross-cultural communication, and civil rights history and theory to enhance staff conflict resolution skills. Staff also began the certification process for two new programs. The first deals with law enforcement and racial profiling. The second includes the establishment of a Human Relations Commission with local governments and communities.

CRS Mission and Critical Functions Alignment with the Department's Strategic Goals

CRS' mission and critical functions align with the Department's Strategic Plan, Strategic Goal 3, which aims to prevent and reduce crime and violence by assisting state, tribal, local and community-based programs. Within this goal, CRS specifically addresses the Department's Strategic Objective 3.3 to uphold the rights and improve services to America's crime victims, and promote resolution of racial tension.

Conflict Resolution and Violence Prevention

CRS provides conflict resolution and violence prevention services to communities that are vulnerable to or experience tensions, conflict, and violence arising from issues of race, color, or national origin.

Development and Improvement of Local Law Enforcement and Minority Community Relations and Partnerships

CRS has a longstanding practice of continually working to improve communication and cooperation between minority communities and law enforcement agencies. This activity is highly successful and consistently results in improved police-community relations, enhanced community confidence in law enforcement, increased security, and a reduction in potential police-community violence and conflict.

Development and Improvement of Local Government Preparedness for Civil Disorders and Unrest

CRS conducts ongoing assessments of racial conflict factors throughout the nation in order to carry out its mandate. As a result of its assessment, CRS then offers appropriate technical programs in the form of model contingency planning, model training for civilian peace keepers at major events, and consultation on improving the readiness of state and local governments to respond to civil unrest and disorder, including potential violence and domestic terrorism associated with organized hate activity.

Development and Improvement of Local Conflict Resolution Capacity

CRS works to enhance existing conflict resolution and violence prevention capability in diverse venues and communities, including public schools, law enforcement, colleges and universities. The goal is to assist these institutions to develop necessary skills and tools to independently resolve racial conflicts, including youth violence. CRS helps create dispute resolution mechanisms and promotes the application of alternative dispute resolution methods to address racial conflict and violence.

In FY2005, CRS facilitated dialogue and partnerships among diverse community members, leading to locally-driven solutions to racial tension and racial violence in neighborhoods throughout the Nation. CRS accomplished these aims through unique programs, such as the Student Problem Identifying and Resolving Issues Together (SPIRIT) initiative. Trust and cooperation between law enforcement officials and racially, ethnically and religiously diverse members of communities were strengthened through Law Enforcement Mediation and City-SPIRIT programs.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

CRS uses the following terms in its publications to describe certain activities:

“Dialogue”

Dialogue is a form of conciliation where CRS facilitates discussions among a racially and ethnically diverse public which reflects various local agencies, institutions and community residents. Topics of a dialogue include race, police-community relations, and other issues. Problem solving activities develop work plans for promoting peace and resolving conflict in neighborhoods and schools.

“Facilitate Communication” or “Open Lines of Communication”

Communities involved in racial disputes, conflicts, disturbances, or violence often have a history of poor communication among parties, which leads to misperceptions of each other’s actions, lack of trust, and avoidance of face-to-face discussion. CRS provides conflict resolution services by listening to the issues and concerns of each party and learning from each party about the problem and the potential resolutions to the conflict.

As a “third ear,” CRS is able to serve as a liaison for promoting better communities. Through reframing and clarifying the issues, CRS can often move parties towards resolving their problems. When the parties hear and understand each other, they may develop resolutions together. These communications may be in person, by telephone, email, or fax, over a substantial period of time. The fundamental building block to building trust is communication, which reduces tensions and establishes important relationships for community stability.

“LEM”

LEM stands for Law Enforcement Mediation. LEM was developed by CRS in conjunction with the California Peace Officers Standards and Training Commission. It is a program designed for police officers engaged in community policing activities. LEM assists officers in racially diverse communities to strengthen their skills in cross-cultural communication, investigation, problem-

solving, anger management and mediation techniques. Benefits of LEM include a reduction of potential violence and improved community relations.

“Mediation”

Mediation consists of structured, formal, face-to-face negotiation. Participation is voluntary, and participants may include city officials, law enforcement officers and community groups. CRS facilitates discussion between willing parties in order to achieve a documented agreement. Occasionally, courts will request CRS to mediate a dispute, particularly if it involves community groups and public agencies.

“Monitor Racial Tensions”

CRS monitors racial tensions to ensure they do not escalate and lead to violence. In some circumstances, when parties are not ready to use CRS services, CRS will step back and monitor racial tensions in the community as the parties consider their next course of action. CRS may also monitor community racial tensions after services have been provided to ensure that an agreement or resolution is effective. CRS may monitor a resolution through face-to-face meetings, emails, telephone conversations, or faxes with community leaders, law enforcement and local officials.

“Provide Conciliation Assistance”

This is a comprehensive term to describe CRS’ conflict resolution and violence prevention services. Conciliation is a process by which CRS facilitates communications between the parties in conflict to reduce the likelihood of violence or disruption.

“Provide a Federal Presence”

CRS deploys staff to be available on location when conflict resolution services may be necessary to resolve or prevent conflict associated with a march, demonstration or community meeting. As a neutral Federal

agency, CRS provides a stabilizing Federal presence when parties are in conflict or in direct physical contact with one another. CRS staff wear distinctive official clothing and station themselves at critical locations. This allows parties to recognize CRS staff and call on CRS services. During contentious situations, the mere presence of CRS staff may be enough to prevent intense emotion from developing into violence.

“SPIRIT”

SPIRIT stands for Student Problem Identifying and Resolving Issues Together. It is an innovative program created by CRS that recognizes the value of student participation in solving racial conflict. SPIRIT brings together students, administrators, teachers, and parents to identify issues that are perpetuating conflict, and to develop solutions. As part of the program, school staff identifies student leaders to help guide the program. Since its inception, SPIRIT has been conducted in hundreds of schools across the country, and has been integral in preventing violence and conflict in areas with changing demographic populations.

City - Site Problem Identification and Resolution of Issues Together (City-SPIRIT) Program relies on the accomplishments of the SPIRIT initiative as a model. Instead of only focusing on educational institutions, City-SPIRIT involves civic leaders and local government officials who form a cadre of concerned citizens from all levels and backgrounds of society. It is an inclusive and participatory effort to improve race relations community-wide.

“Technical Assistance”

Because of CRS’ long history and experience in resolving racial conflict, it is often requested to provide expert materials, information, and experience to help communities resolve racial conflict and prevent violence. In some cases, CRS will provide expert technical advice to help overcome a major barrier to resolving a dispute. For example, CRS might provide technical insights on the structure and function of a Human Relations Commission. This kind of intervention can help address police, community or school conflicts.

“Training”

Training is provided by CRS in response to an existing conflict to help state, local, and tribal governments and communities create an immediate capacity to address racial conflict situations. Whenever necessary, CRS seeks to strengthen community capacity to address local racial disputes by providing on the spot training.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Community Relations Service?

The Community Relations Service (CRS) is a Federal agency mandated by Congress to help local communities resolve racial and ethnic conflicts. Its services are provided to local officials and community leaders by trained Federal mediators on a voluntary and cost-free basis. The types of assistance available from CRS include mediation of disputes and conflicts, training in cultural competence, conflict resolution skills, technical assistance, and facilitation in developing strategies to prevent and resolve conflicts.

What is the jurisdiction of CRS?

CRS provides its services to local communities when there are community-wide conflicts, tension or violence stemming from racial or ethnic issues. CRS services are provided on a voluntary and confidential basis, and are conducted according to provisions in Title X of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

Where does CRS work?

CRS works in all 50 states and territories, and in communities large and small: rural, suburban and urban. Most of CRS' work comes from requests by local law enforcement officials, school administrators, government officials, community leaders and other local and state authorities. They request CRS' assistance in cases where impartial mediators are needed to help calm tensions, prevent violence and facilitate communication.

Who provides CRS services?

Trained impartial CRS conflict resolution mediators, known as Conciliation Specialists, are stationed in ten regional and four field offices across the country and are available on a 24-hour basis. They follow established and standardized procedures in conducting their work. For each situation, CRS will first assess the situation, which includes meeting with the affected parties. After gaining an in-depth understanding of the situation, CRS will facilitate discussions among

affected parties to help resolve the conflict or prevent further violence.

What types of issues necessitate CRS' services?

The work involves situations where there is racial conflict or violence involving police-community relations; hate crimes; cultural awareness needs; and policies, practices and actions perceived to be discriminatory. The most intense casework tends to involve police use of force, the staging of major demonstrations and counter events, major school disruptions and hate crime activities.

Can a community refuse CRS services?

CRS provides its services when it is requested by local officials or community leaders. They may decline our services at any time.

Why are Federal CRS mediators a good choice for community racial conflict?

Since CRS mediators are not funded by sources other than Federal funds, they are able to ensure their neutrality in helping to resolve conflicts, especially those which involve local and state agencies. CRS is a component of the Justice Department's mission to help state and local governments prevent community violence and promote public safety.

Why is CRS located in the Justice Department?

CRS' areas of jurisdiction do not include law enforcement or legal work. The agency represents the Department of Justice in one of its most important missions - providing assistance and support to state and local authorities in their efforts to prevent violence and resolve destructive conflicts. As representatives of the Department of Justice, CRS mediators have the credibility and trust to work effectively with people on all sides of the conflict. CRS is not part of the Civil Rights Division.

How does CRS know if it has been successful?

CRS' success is best measured by the level of satisfaction among those who receive CRS services. Whenever possible, CRS will contact

local officials to review the status of agreements, programs and community-wide tension or conflict. An internal reporting system registers outcomes and accomplishments for each CRS case activity.

What are some of the recent changes in CRS conflict resolution work?

CRS is facing racial tensions involving ethnic communities who are impacted by the war on terrorism. A reaction to global events may lead to hate incidents against persons of a different race, ethnicity or national origin. These issues are impacted by changing demographic shifts that create cultural, language, and historical clashes throughout U.S. cities. As a result, CRS continues to implement new conflict resolution and violence prevention strategies, including the City-SPIRIT program.

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CRS Offices

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Washington, D.C. 20530
202/305-2935
202/305-3009 FAX
www.usdoj.gov/crs

CRS Regional and Field Offices

Region 1

(Servicing: CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT)
Community Relations Service
U.S. Department of Justice
408 Atlantic Avenue
Suite 222
Boston, MA 02110
617/424-5715
617/424-5727 FAX

Region 2

(Servicing: NJ, NY, Puerto Rico, US Virgin Islands)
Community Relations Service
U.S. Department of Justice
26 Federal Plaza
Suite 36-118
New York, NY 10278
212/264-0700
212/264-2143 FAX

Region 3

(Servicing: DC, DE, MD, PA, VA, WV)
Community Relations Service
U.S. Department of Justice
2nd and Chestnut Streets
Suite 208
Philadelphia, PA 19106
215/597-2344
215/597-9148 FAX

Region 4

(Servicing: AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, TN)
Community Relations Service
U.S. Department of Justice
75 Piedmont Avenue, N.E.
Suite 900
Atlanta, GA 30303
404/331-6883
404/331-4471 FAX

Region 4 Field Office

Community Relations Service
U.S. Department of Justice
51 S.W. First Avenue
Suite 624
Miami, FL 33130
305/536-5206
305/536-6778 FAX

Region 5

(Servicing: IL, IN, MI, MN, OH, WI)
Community Relations Service
U.S. Department of Justice
55 West Monroe Street
Suite 420
Chicago, IL 60603
312/353-4391
312/353-4390 FAX

Region 5 Field Office

Community Relations Service
U.S. Department of Justice
211 West Fort Street
Suite 1404
Detroit, MI 48226
313/226-4010
313/226-2568 FAX

Region 6

(Servicing: AR, LA, NM, OK, TX)
Community Relations Service
U.S. Department of Justice
1420 West Mockingbird Lane
Suite 250
Dallas, TX 75247
214/655-8175
214/655-8184 FAX

Region 6 Field Office

Community Relations Service
U.S. Department of Justice
515 Rusk Avenue
Suite 12605
Houston, TX 77002
713/718-4861
713/718-4862 FAX

Region 7

(Servicing: IA, KS, MO, NE)
Community Relations Service
U.S. Department of Justice
1100 Main Street
Suite 1320
Kansas City, MO 64105
816/426-7434
816/426-7441 FAX

Region 8

(Servicing: CO, MT, ND, SD, UT, WY)
Community Relations Service
U.S. Department of Justice
1244 Speer Blvd.
Suite 650
Denver, CO 80204
303/844-2973
303/844-2907 FAX

Region 9

(Servicing: AZ, CA, GU, HI, NV)
Community Relations Service
U.S. Department of Justice
888 South Figueroa Street
Suite 1880
Los Angeles, CA 90017
213/894-2941
213/894-2880 FAX

Region 9 Field Office

Community Relations Service
U.S. Department of Justice
120 Howard Street
Suite 790
San Francisco, CA 94105
415/744-6565
415/744-6590 FAX

Region 10

(Servicing: AK, ID, OR, WA)
Community Relations Service
U.S. Department of Justice
915 Second Avenue
Suite 1808
Seattle, WA 98174
206/220-6700
206/220-6706 FAX

Customer Service Standards

Our goal is to provide sensitive and effective conflict prevention and resolution services. You can expect us to meet the following standards when we work with you:

- We will clearly explain the process that CRS uses to address racial and ethnic conflicts and our role in that process.

- We will provide opportunities for all parties involved to contribute and work toward a solution to the racial and ethnic conflict.

- If you are a participant in a CRS training session or conference, you will receive timely and useful information and materials that will assist you in preventing or minimizing racial and ethnic tensions. If you would like more information, we will work with you to identify additional materials and resources to meet your needs within three weeks of learning your need.

- We will be prepared to respond to racial or ethnic crisis situations within 24 hours from the time when your community notifies CRS or CRS becomes aware of the crisis.

- In non-crisis situations, we will contact you within three days of when your community requests CRS services or when CRS becomes aware of your situation.

**Community Relations Service
U.S. Department of Justice**

Annual Report Fiscal Year 2005
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or for copies of previous reports, please contact:*

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