



University of Chicago Community Safety Leadership Academies Host First Cohort of Rising Police Leaders from Over 20 Departments Across America

Police leaders begin six-month leadership and management education program designed to improve community safety and reduce violence

First cohort of leaders serve cities comprising over 20% of homicides in America

CHICAGO, IL – Today, the University of Chicago Community Safety Leadership Academies welcomed its first cohort of police leaders from police departments from across America. The leaders will begin a six-month education program on data-driven management, violence reduction, and community trust as part of the newly launched Policing Leadership Academy (PLA). The impacts of this ambitious leadership and management educational program will be measured and evaluated in the most rigorous possible way, to ensure it's achieving its two interconnected goals: reducing violence and increasing policing fairness on the ground.

"Many of America's most economically disadvantaged and racially segregated neighborhoods are experiencing higher rates of gun violence than ever before, and research shows that if we want to save lives, fair and effective policing is essential," said **Roseanna Ander, Executive Director of the University of Chicago Crime Lab**, the research organization housing the initiative. "But in far too many communities, we are failing to deliver policing that truly serves and protects. The Policing Leadership Academy is trying to change that."

The PLA's first cohort consists of over 24 rising police leaders from 24 police departments across the country and world, including Baltimore, Dallas, and Philadelphia. These leaders are currently tasked with managing America's highest violence police districts every day. Collectively, the first cohort of leaders serve cities comprising over 20% of homicides in America. Police leaders from Manchester, United Kingdom are also joining the program.

"For too long, management and leadership development has focused exclusively on those at the top of police organizations," said **Shon Barnes, Chief of Police, Madison, Wisconsin Police Department**. "But as any police chief in America knows, police chiefs can't be successful in keeping our cities safe unless the commanders helping to manage our officers in the community are supported – that's why the Madison Police Department is excited to participate in the Policing Leadership Academy."

The PLA is part of the [University of Chicago Community Safety Leadership Academies](#), which also includes the Community Violence Intervention (CVI) Leadership Academy.

"It is critical that CVI and police managers – out on the front lines of American cities each day – be seen as complementary components of the public safety ecosystem and are trained with the same comprehensive focus on leadership and management to achieve their shared goals: community safety and trust," said **Chico Tillmon, Incoming Director of the CVI Leadership Academy**.

The PLA is not a one-off training exercise, it's an education. The PLA's six-month curriculum is hands-on and interactive, culminating in a community capstone project to turn lessons learned

into lives saved. Researchers from the world's leading universities will conduct a multi-city, randomized controlled trial to measure the PLA's impact on safety and fairness outcomes in the country's highest violence neighborhoods.

[Research](#) by the University of Chicago Crime Lab shows that changes in police department management can drive reductions in both violent crime rates and police use of force. For example, thirty years ago, the murder rates in Los Angeles and New York City were at their respective historic highs. But from then through the start of the pandemic, murders dropped by fully 80% in LA and 90% in NYC, as trust in police increased and incarceration declined. As cities across the country struggle with surging rates of gun violence, the PLA was designed with a simple question in mind: Why are LA and NYC outliers compared to other large American cities? Part of the answer is that LA and NYC were early adopters of data-driven management.

"The PLA is built on lessons learned from Los Angeles and New York City," **said Charlie Beck, former Police Commissioner of the Los Angeles Police Department and former Interim Superintendent of the Chicago Police Department.** "Put simply, improved police management and leadership is the key."

A team of policing experts from LA, NYC, and across the country are helping to lead the initiative: Former **Chief of Department Kenneth Corey**, a 34-year veteran of the New York City Police Department; **Tyeesha Dixon**, Chicago's lead advisor for implementation of the first comprehensive federally-enforced policing consent decree governing Chicago's police practices; Former **Assistant Chief Dr. Sandy Jo MacArthur**, a 35-year veteran of the Los Angeles Police Department; **Kristen Mahoney**, former Principal Deputy Director, U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance; and **Dr. Luann Pannell**, a former Police Psychologist with the Los Angeles Police Department and former Director of Police Training and Education.

Localities represented in the PLA's first cohort are:

- Arlington, Texas
- Aurora, Colorado
- Baltimore, Maryland
- Boston, Massachusetts
- Chicago, Illinois
- Cleveland, Ohio
- Dallas, Texas
- Detroit, Michigan
- Indianapolis, Indiana
- Knoxville, Tennessee
- Los Angeles, California
- Madison, Wisconsin
- Manchester, United Kingdom
- Miami, Florida
- Miami-Dade County, Florida
- New Orleans, Louisiana
- New York City, New York
- Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
- Phoenix, Arizona
- St. Louis, Missouri
- Waco, Texas

- Washington, D.C.
- Wichita, Kansas
- Yavapai Nation, Fort McDowell Police Department

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The University of Chicago Community Safety Leadership Academies is an initiative of the [University of Chicago Crime Lab](#). It includes the Policing Leadership Academy and the Community Violence Intervention (CVI) Leadership Academy, first-of-their kind programs to train the next generation of policing and community violence intervention leaders from across America.