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The Official Newsletter of **Operation Blue Shield**

# THE SHIELD



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# ENLISTED: THE KIDS OF CAMP DEFY 2018

At 0600, thirty 9-12 year olds awoke and began their rigorous week-long leadership training process part of the Drug Education for Youth (DEFY) program. A joint venture between Operation Blue Shield, the USDOJ and the US Navy, Camp DEFY is a unique and comprehensive preemptive prevention program that seeks to build character, leadership skills and self-confidence in American youth who are exposed to the high-risk behaviors common to middle school students (i.e., guns, gangs, drug abuse, academic failure, delinquency and violence).

Upon completing the one-week residential leadership training camp at Fort Worth's Naval Air Station/Joint Reserve Base (NAS/JRB), these young men and women are paired with a mentor team consisting of active duty first responders and Naval personnel from NAS/JRB. The program is followed by a 10-month mentoring schedule designed to track their development and reinforce the skills, techniques and procedures that they initially learned in the training camp. The 10-month program is followed by a graduation ceremony.



Each camper comes from a high-crime neighborhood in and around the DFW metroplex. Camp DEFY is uniquely positioned to equip each of these young participants with the skills necessary to change, not only their own futures, but the futures of their respective communities as well.

OBS is a proud partner of the USDOJ and the US Navy and is honored to sponsor Camp DEFY with the goal of providing valuable life skills training to every youth participating in the program.

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**CAMP DEFY IS A UNIQUE, COMPREHENSIVE PROGRAM THAT STRENGTHENS THE PROTECTIVE FACTORS AND REDUCES THE RISK FACTORS DIRECTLY LINKED TO GUNS, GANGS, DRUG ABUSE, SCHOOL FAILURE, DELINQUENCY, AND VIOLENCE. DEFY INCREASES THE LIKELIHOOD THAT YOUTH WILL LEAD HEALTHY, DRUG-FREE LIVES.**

*Mr. Kerry Goodwin, OBS  
Community Outreach Manager,  
DEFY Coordinator*



## CEO'S CORNER

*The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.*

**Gandhi**

As an advocate for independence and freedom across the world, Gandhi led international campaigns for social causes. At Operation Blue Shield (OBS), our programs connect, educate and empower first responders and community stakeholders in common goals of progressive change, trust and UNITY. When we unite, strangers become neighbors and communities grow strong.

Beginning 10 September and continuing thru 20 September 2018, we will participate in North Texas Giving Day. It is an opportunity for supporters to DONATE to a non-profit of their choice.

Operation Blue Shield comprehensive community outreach programs aligned with the pillars necessary to build strong healthy neighborhoods: Public Safety | Health | Employment | Civic Engagement | Education | Income & Asset Building and Advocacy.

We are excited to announce that an anonymous donor will match all donations up to \$75,000 so every dollar donated counts. We are hopeful you will help us as we work hard to build safe, healthy vibrant neighborhoods and a stronger America.

Together, #WereAllIn  
Toni Brinker

# PSN COMMUNITY UNITY FESTIVAL 2018

In a joint venture with the Department of Justice, Operation Blue Shield seeks to bring a new initiative to northeast Dallas that focuses on reducing gun and gang related violence. Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) is an intense, nationwide collaboration between local, state and federal resources aimed at reducing crime rates in target communities involving drugs and firearms.

On 25 August 2018, over 1,000 Dallas citizens met at Sam Tasby Middle School and participated in the PSN Community UNITY Festival, a part of the PSN initiative to build better and safer communities for everyone. Local law enforcement officers as well as federal agents from the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) also participated. Everyone involved made a determined effort to strengthen the relationship between communities and first responders.

Citizens living in the community experienced unique opportunities to chat with law enforcement officers over a meal, see a DEA helicopter land on school grounds, snap a few pictures in the photo booth and take part in the Dunk-a-Cop booth activity (a crowd favorite).

OBS partners including Dallas Police Chief Renee Hall, Dallas City Councilperson Jennifer Gates, ISD District Trustee Dan Micciche, U. S. Attorney for the Northern District of Texas Erin Nealy Cox, East Patrol Division Commander Deputy Chief Avery Moore, Dallas Assistant City Manager Jon Fortune and President of the Dallas Black Police Association Terrance "T.Hop" Hopkins. Everyone turned out to show their support of PSN and the initiative to curb gun and gang related violence.



*OBS Founder/CEO Toni Brinker, and U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Texas, Erin Nealy Cox greet and welcome East Patrol Division Commander Deputy Chief Avery Moore and Terrance "T.Hop" Hopkins.*

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**COLLABORATION IS THE ESSENTIAL KEY TO UNITED SAFETY. WE NEED EACH OTHER TO MAKE COMMUNITIES SAFE AND VIBRANT!**

*Deputy Chief Avery Moore, East Patrol Bureau Commander*



*OBS Founder & CEO Toni Brinker, former Dallas Police Chief David Brown and Dallas ISD District Trustee Dan Micciche greet a special unit of the FBI.*

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**THE PROJECT SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS PROGRAM, THROUGH COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH, IS HELPING TO CREATE SAFER NEIGHBORHOODS AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS FOR OUR STUDENTS. A HUGE THANK YOU TO OPERATION BLUE SHIELD, THE DALLAS POLICE DEPARTMENT AND OTHER LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES FOR MAKING STUDENT SAFETY A PRIORITY.**

*Mr. Dan Micciche, ISD District Trustee*



Next month is the tenth anniversary of the North Texas Giving Day event sponsored by the Communities Foundation of Texas!

All funds donated to Operation Blue Shield will go to our community-engagement programs to build better, safer neighborhoods for all us.

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### Upcoming Events:

**September 15:** San Angelo, TX - Run with the Heroes

**September 22:** Oak Cliff 115 Birthday Celebration & Parade, Red Bird Mall (3662 W. Camp Wisdom Road, Dallas, TX)

**October 30:** San Angelo, TX - Trunk & Treat with First Responders

**November 10:** Lake Highlands High School (9449 Church Rd., Dallas, TX) - Annual Kids Health & Safety Fair