



IMPACT

Law Enforcement Overview

Organizational Background

Volunteers of America Delaware Valley (VOADV), is a 501(c) 3 non-profit social service agency that has been providing essential services to vulnerable individuals and communities since 1896. Headquartered in the city of Camden, New Jersey, VOADV is characterized by its diversity of programming and assistance services and supported by a team of more than 400 qualified, mission-driven professionals that work tirelessly on behalf of their clients.

Each year, VOADV serves more than 13,000 individuals throughout the southern New Jersey and Philadelphia region and operates more than 40 high quality, outcome-driven assistance programs – from homelessness, reentry, veterans assistance, and affordable housing services to specialized programs for individuals with addiction, traumatic brain injury and/or intellectual disabilities. The VOADV mission, which governs all service and assistance provided to clients in need, is to provide community-based assistance to individuals in need so that they can lead to self-fulfilled, independent lives. As an organization, our mission to serve has not wavered and is upheld even in times of crisis.

VOADV is a local affiliate of the national, non-profit organization, Volunteers of America. Today, Volunteers of America is one of the largest and most comprehensive human service agencies in the nation. With affiliates across forty-six (46) states, Volunteers of America collectively serve more than one million people each year across the nation.

Program Overview

Volunteers of America Delaware Valley currently receives two state appropriations, both resulting in programming efforts strongly aligned with law enforcement and the courts. The first, Safe Return, funded in 2015 to serve Atlantic City and Trenton, is designed as the one stop for those maxing out of the criminal justice system in need of social services linkage. While commencing program efforts, the need to meet individuals where they were at, whether it be the streets, during law enforcement encounters or while incarcerated, the program formed law enforcement partnerships in a proactive effort to curb incarceration and provide immediate access to services. Realizing law enforcement partnerships were not enough, the program expanded efforts with county prosecutors and municipal and superior courts. Efforts ranged from hosting large scale warrant recall initiatives monthly in each Safe Return eligibility area (4 vicinages), to taking the lead on social services navigation for Administrative Office of the Courts approved pilot diversion initiative called Pathways to Change.

Since implementing the Safe Return Program in Atlantic City and Trenton, funding has allowed expansion into Atlantic, Burlington, Cape May, Camden, Cumberland, Gloucester, Mercer and Salem Counties, utilizing the same philosophy of partnering with law enforcement and the courts for an immediate services delivery targeted at serving the most vulnerable populations within the community. With this mindset, VOADV approached the state for additional funding through the Department of Human Services in 2017 to operate the Navigator Program. Program design was based on individualized needs of ineligible Safe Return participants, built into the structure of the navigational resource centers. Atlantic and Camden County Navigational Resource Centers also provided VOADV the unique opportunity to expand our law enforcement outreach capabilities. Outreach teams designated to work side by side on the streets with law enforcement, both planned and in a rapid response capacity, further



IMPACT

Law Enforcement Overview

strengthened our ability to serve individuals at any point in the system, and for some, prior to criminal justice involvement. This also allowed for unique targeted outreach to address increasing human trafficking concerns in both Atlantic City and Camden County.

With the new navigator program, a need for data tracking and real time communication systems with law enforcement became blatantly obvious. VOADV worked with Family Health Initiatives to create a data system with a law enforcement component to serve as a case management tool for staff, referral system for partners and a real time communication tool for law enforcement with VOADV staff. Departments utilizing the site can determine which individuals are linked with services, number of encounters prior to agreeing to services and can communicate with VOADV staff when an individual is hospitalized, screened at crisis, incarcerated or has a negative law enforcement encounter. The system increases communication, decreases social services response time and increases the effectiveness of services delivery. To date, VOADV is proud to have expanded Navigator into the additional 6 Safe Return Counties, now serving Atlantic, Burlington, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, Mercer and Salem Counties.

With all of the moving pieces and partnerships in place, VOADV enhanced Safe Return and Navigator Programs one step further in November of 2019. VOADV recognized the need to expand law enforcement partnerships to a new level to better serve the homeless and at-risk population and ensure a service delivery model was offered as efficiently as possible county wide.

Pine Hill Police Department, already partnered with VOADV's Safe Return Re Entry Program since 2018, had the mindset, mission and leadership to expand the services VOADV could offer in their community. Discussion began in mid 2019 as to the vision of the expansion, incorporating services into all aspects of the police department and how to effectively embed VOADV at headquarters. The result, creation of the VOADV IMPACT Initiative. IMPACT, or *Immediate Mobilization of Police Assisted Crisis Teams*, provides communities with social services assistance at any point of contact with law enforcement. This includes a friendly outreach encounter to calls for service, arrest, crisis hospitalization or incarceration. Pine Hill Police Department and VOADV staff work side by side, 40 hours a week at the department.

IMPACT staff assist walk in service requests at headquarters and respond jointly to meet the needs of the community wherever they may be. All referrals and services delivery efforts/linkages are tracked through the shared data system that allows officers and staff to communicate in real time. Additionally, Pine Hill's Municipal Court has partnered with VOADV to allow staff in court to assist defendants with underlying social services needs.



IMPACT

Law Enforcement Overview

With a soft opening on November 11, 2019, followed by a full-service delivery model implemented in December 2019, Pine Hill Police Department and VOADV have encountered **258** individuals in need of social services referral/linkage during the first year (November 2019 – November 2020). **One hundred and eighty (180)**, or **70%** of those encountered have been linked and engaged in services. Services include utilities assistance, housing (1st month rent/security/emergency placement), treatment placement, identification, linkage to the board of social services, and employment, just to name a few.

Pine Hill Satellite Office Data	# of Participants
Total number of people encountered	258
Total number of people linked and engaged to services	180
Utilities Assistance	24
Financial Assistance (1st month's rent, security deposit, back rent)	46
State ID, Birth Certificates and S.S. cards	12
Connection to the board of social services	54
Employment Placement	11
Provided Transportation (medical, legal, social services)	28
Emergency Housing Placement	27
Treatment Placement (Mental Health & Substance Use)	32

**Please note: Total number encountered and engaged are unduplicated. However, service numbers may be duplicated due to individuals receiving more than one service based on need.*

It is also important to highlight the vital efforts of the partnership during COVID-19. In March 2020, with the barriers the pandemic presented, Pine Hill Police Department and VOADV created a plan for service delivery to the most vulnerable in the community, ensuring the safety of the officers and staff. The partnership adapted to limit walk ins and street encounters, but transformed to provide meal delivery to those who could not self transport to food bank sites, assist with local food drives and provide items for children who were unable to leave the home. Officers and VOADV staff continued to work side by side to ensure all CDC guidelines were followed at headquarters and all vehicles assisting in the community were regularly sanitized. Despite a pandemic, IMPACT did not stop, did not resort to virtual work and did not miss a beat when serving the needs of the community.

Since the inception of IMPACT, additional police departments have joined the partnership, serving as either an IMPACT Satellite Office or through affiliation agreements with an existing department.

Current partnerships include;

- IMPACT Satellite Offices
 - Egg Harbor Twp. Police Department IMPACT Satellite Office
 - Burlington City Police Department IMPACT Satellite Office
 - Gloucester City Police Department IMPACT Satellite Office
 - Lawrence Twp. IMPACT Satellite Office
 - Maple Shade Police Department IMPACT Satellite Office
 - Paulsboro Police Department IMPACT Satellite Office opening Nov. 15, 2021



IMPACT

Law Enforcement Overview

- Pine Hill Police Department IMPACT Satellite Office
- Voorhees Twp. Police Department IMPACT Satellite Office
- Affiliation Agreements
 - Brooklawn Police Department – Gloucester City IMPACT Office
 - Clementon Police Department – Pine Hill IMPACT Office
 - Collingswood Police Department – Gloucester City IMPACT Office
 - Gibbsboro Police Department – Voorhees IMPACT Office
 - Lindenwold Police Department – Pine Hill IMPACT Office
 - Princeton Police Department – Lawrence Twp. IMPACT Office
 - Waterford Twp. Police Department – Pine Hill IMPACT Office
 - Winslow Twp. Police Department – Pine Hill IMPACT Office

IMPACT is not meant to train law enforcement to provide social services or to train outreach workers to better manage public safety crisis when dealing with the at-risk population. Quite the opposite, the partnership between VOADV and Pine Hill Police Department has created a unified culture within the community that provides social services linkage to those most in need, in the safest environment possible.

While the effort of the IMPACT Initiative has expanded geographically, the most recent addition to services delivery was the launch of the VOADV IMPACT Mobile Command Centers in March 2021. IMPACT Command Centers, serving all eight Safe Return and Navigator Counties, allow VOADV to provide immediate, direct services anywhere in the community, in a safe, comfortable atmosphere. Command Centers are equipped with computers and printers, assessment areas and client assistance products to ensure expedited service delivery in an ongoing effort to meet individuals where they are at. The mobile units are utilized for community outreach, participation in scheduled community events, as well as for emergency response. Each command center proudly displays the VOADV logo in addition to the police patches of the departments committed to IMPACT. Not only do they represent an enhancement of the immediate, direct services delivery model, but act as a representation of the commitment of law enforcement and VOADV to work together to meet the needs of the community.