



Alexandria Gang Prevention Community Task Force Newsletter

Spring 2014

COMMUNITY CORNER

- Meet Alvaro Alarcon, Gang Intervention Prevention Education (IPE) Counselor.

We are pleased to introduce you to Alvaro Alarcon, Gang Intervention Prevention Education (IPE) Counselor, with Northern Virginia Family Service. Mr. Alarcon comes to us with a wealth of experience and has been providing highly effective and helpful services for youth and families referred to the IPE program.

What is IPE?

Among the most important initiatives of the Gang Prevention Community Task Force is the Gang Intervention Prevention Education (IPE) program. This program is funded by the City of Alexandria and is overseen by the Gang Prevention Coordinator through a contract with Northern Virginia Family Service (NVFS). This highly specialized and unique service, which has been offered in conjunction with the Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force since 2007, is free to clients. The program is focused on providing culturally competent, trauma-informed case management, psycho-education, and mentoring services for young people and their families who are gang-involved or who may be at-risk for such affiliation. IPE Counselors focus on preventing and reducing gang participation, improving family functioning and school performance, and increasing access to and participation in pro-social activities. The program addresses the foundational issues that lead youth to join gangs - not only those that contribute to the prevention of gang motivated incidents within the community - but also those that result in youth who thrive in their families and communities.

In the six years since its inception, the IPE program has received over 600 referrals. The results are striking. Youth involved in the program perform better in school, at home, and in the community. In 2007, Alexandria experienced 20 gang-motivated incidents. In 2013, the City experienced 3 incidents; a statistic we attribute in large part to the existence of this crucial service.

Some actual testimonials:

What did you learn as result of being part of IPE?

- *"My goals, how to make them happen, and how to overcome obstacles."*
- *"Briefly, I learned the importance of being gang free and independent."*
- *"How to handle anger."*
- *"How to behave in school, stay away from gangs."*
- *"How dangerous gangs can be."*
- *"Teaching me about respect, because that helped me a lot."*
- *"I learned a lot, like how to stay away from bad friends."*

Anyone can refer a young person who is gang involved or at-risk of such involvement by contacting Gang Prevention Coordinator, [Mike Mackey](#), at 703.746.4144.



- **Alexandria Gang Prevention Community Task Force Holds Quarterly Meeting - March 19**

In addition to an update on crime, incidents, and a discussion on initiatives, special guest, Commonwealth Attorney, Bryan Porter, spoke on the need for raising awareness about human trafficking. To learn more about human trafficking, go to www.preventgangsnova.org. The next meeting of the Alexandria Gang Prevention Community Task Force is scheduled for Wednesday, May 21, 6 p.m., Room 1101, City Hall. Please check the [Boards & Commissions calendar](#) for updates.

To be added to the announcements listserve, please contact [Mike Mackey](#) at 703.746.4144.

City of Alexandria Commonwealth Attorney, Bryan Porter



- **KICK AWAY the Winter Blues with SOCCER!**

For the third year in a row, students from T.C. Williams High School will participate in an after-school soccer program through a partnership between Alexandria City Public Schools, the Court Service Unit, the Department of Recreation & Cultural Activities, and the Alexandria Soccer Association. About 50 to 100 students, many of whom are not connected to a formal team, enjoy fun, competition and exercise. Adult volunteers are needed from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday afternoons between April 15 and June 15 to supervise, cheer and have fun with the kids. Please let [Mike Mackey](#) know if you are interested.



T.C. Williams Social Worker David Wynne dons a cap and a whistle as he referees after-school soccer at the T.C. Williams Minnie Howard Campus last fall.

- [Spring for Alexandria](#) - Please join as a volunteer, or host volunteers at a work site on Friday, May 16! Spring for Alexandria's Community Service Day is on Friday, May 16, from 12:30 to 4:30 p.m., followed by a celebration. Enjoy an afternoon giving back to the community. Register today! Join or start a team or register as an individual. Click [here](#) for more information, or to register,
- **National Mentoring Month**
Alexandria joined communities across the country in the celebration of National Mentoring Month in January. Activities included an open house brown bag lunch for community organizations to learn more about joining AMP, participation in Fox 5's "Mentor Monday," a student essay contest on the value of mentoring, and an information session for community members to learn how to get involved!



Terrific student essay contest winners and their mentors (from the Charles Barrett Mentoring Matters and Space of Her Own Mentoring Programs) share the stage at the Mentoring Works celebration and information session!

RESEARCH & RESOURCES

- **The Big Lie**
Watch a [26-minute video](#) produced by the Virginia Attorney General's Office. This video provides great information on the realities of gang membership and the tools for avoiding it.
- [Alexandria Mentoring Partnership Video](#) - Watch this 5-minute video on the power of mentoring.

QUICK LINKS

- [Alexandria Gang Prevention Community Task Force](#)
- [Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force](#)

- [National Gang Crime Research Center](#)
- [Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention](#)

ALEXANDRIA GANG PREVENTION COMMUNITY TASK FORCE

Allison Silberberg, Vice Mayor, Alexandria City Council
John Taylor Chapman, Member, Alexandria City Council
Ronnie Campbell, Member, Alexandria School Board
Michele Evans, City Manager's Office
Michael Cohen, T.C. Williams High School
Patricia Williamson, Jefferson Houston Middle School
Susan Stickle, Alexandria City Public Schools (Elementary)
Erin O'Leary, Bishop Ireton High School
James Williams, Tenants & Workers United, African American Caucus
Noah Ray, T.C. Williams High School, Youth Representative
Thomas Walczkowski, Community Representative
Steven Jansen, Community Representative

To learn more about becoming a member of the Task Force, visit the City's Boards and Commissions page at alexandriava.gov/Boards

Current Vacancies:

One representative from the Alexandria Interfaith Council
One representative of a community-based organization with specific outreach to the Latino community
One representative of parents of Alexandria youth
One representative from the business community
One representative of Alexandria youth

Mike Mackey (City of Alexandria Gang Prevention Coordinator) - 703.746.4144 or email mike.mackey@alexandriava.gov