



www.monmouthsheriff.org

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 29, 2015

CONTACT: CYNTHIA SCOTT, PIO
PHONE: 732-431-6400 ext. 1113

SHERIFF'S PROGRAM STRESSES GANG PREVENTION AND AWARENESS TO AT RISK JUVENILES

Ocean Township: Monmouth County Sheriff Shaun Golden wants at risk youths to be aware of the dangers and negative impacts that come along with joining a gang. The Monmouth County Correctional Institution's Gang Intelligence Unit travels throughout Monmouth County to provide students, faculty and parents with a realistic look into a gang member's life and why becoming a part of a gang is a bad decision. On January 28, the program was conducted specifically for at risk youths and their parents at the Ocean Township Probation Office.

"Joining a gang is an enormous error in judgment, and quite often it's at risk youths who are most susceptible," said Sheriff Shaun Golden. "Becoming a gang member can lead to jail time, injury or even death. That's why gang prevention and awareness needs to start at an early age and continue to be reinforced throughout the years in an effort to reduce the impact street gangs have in our neighborhoods."

Each gang presentation is tailored and modified for the juveniles at which the program will be conducted.

Because members of MCCI's Gang Intelligence Unit deal with incarcerated gang members daily, the information they gain inside the jail is applied to the programs, since it reveals which gangs are prevalent in various areas throughout Monmouth County.

(con't)

SHERIFF'S PROGRAM STRESSES GANG PREVENTION AND AWARENESS TO AT RISK JUVENILES

During the presentation, which was conducted by Corrections Officers Dennis Cleary and Kent Muller, the different types of gangs were discussed and how a large percentage of all violent crimes are connected to gangs. The Gang Intelligence Unit displayed the clothes that correctional inmates wear, the food they eat and newspaper clippings of gang members who were sentenced to life in prison. The juveniles were provided with pictures of gang members who were slashed, or otherwise harmed showing the grim consequences gang members face from other gangs or even from members of their own gang.

In addition, the juveniles and their parents were made aware of gang markings in neighborhoods and schools, as well as the characteristics of at-risk youths, which may include family issues, lack of knowledge about the dangers of gangs, peer pressure, sense of belonging and power, low self-esteem and the need for attention, friendship and protection.

According to a New Jersey State Police Gang Survey, Monmouth County has the second highest number of gangs in the state, with 132 different gangs, just behind Essex County, with 166.

“These types of presentations have a profound effect on our juveniles. It makes them think twice about joining or becoming associated with a gang,” said Sheriff Golden. “However, involvement must also come from parents who should continue to be aware of the problem and communicate with their children about the consequences of belonging to a gang.”

In addition to schools and special groups, the Monmouth County Gang Intelligence Unit conducts programs for judges and courtroom personnel, law enforcement agencies and the private sector. For more information you can contact the Gang Intelligence Unit at (732) 431-7860 ext. 5760.

###