COUNTY of VENTURA

PUBLIC SAFETY RACIAL EQUITY ADVISORY GROUP
SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA
1911 WILLIAMS DRIVE, OXNARD, CA
THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 2024
5:30 PM -7:30 PM

MEETING PARTICIPATION:

Topic: **PSREAG Meeting**

Location: **Ventura County Behavioral Health**
Large Training Room
1911 Williams Drive, Oxnard, CA

Members of the public may join in person or by Zoom link below:

Join Zoom Meeting: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85188551246

Dial by your location
+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)
Meeting ID: 851 8855 1246
Find your local number: https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kcHEEW6fU

PUBLIC COMMENTS BY EMAIL:
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OPENING

1. **CALL TO ORDER (5 MIN)**
   a. Welcome
   b. Spotlight a Group Norm
   c. Roll Call & Confirm Quorum
   d. Review Agenda

2. **APPROVAL OF PAST MEETING MINUTES (5 MIN)**

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA AND/OR FOR OTHER ITEMS WITHIN PSREAG SUBJECT MATTER JURISDICTION (10 MIN).**
   a. *All public comments regarding public safety and racial equity are welcome and encouraged. However, please note that the PSREAG does not investigate complaints regarding individual incidents involving law enforcement. Such complaints should be submitted to the involved law enforcement agency.*

REGULAR AGENDA

4. **RATIFY/CONFIRM ALL MEMBER LEADS AND ALTERNATES (7 MIN)**

5. **POLICY AND PRACTICE REPORT: REVIEW UPDATED REPORT AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE (15 MIN)**
   a. Member Discussion
   b. Consider Possible Action

6. **VCSO PRESENTATION (45 MIN)**
   a. Presentation by VCSO/Sheriff Fryhoff
   b. Member Discussion

7. **PSREAG DRAFT OF STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION (20 MIN)**
   a. Presentation by DEI Staff
   b. Member Discussion

8. **MEMBER AND STAFF COMMENTS (10 MIN)**
   a. Opportunity for announcements from members and staff.

9. **ADJOURN**

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Persons who require accommodation f or any au isual or other disability in order to review an agenda, or to participate in a meeting of the Ventura County Public Safety Racial Equity

Group per the American Disabilities Act (ADA), may obtain assistance by requesting such accommodation in writing addressed to the County Executive Office, 800 South Victoria Avenue, Ventura, CA 93009-1740 or telephonically by calling (805) 654-2876 or email to CountyDEI@ventura.org. Any such request f or accommodation should be made at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting f or which assistance is requested.

PUBLIC SAFETY RACIAL EQUITY ADVISORY GROUP

AGENDA ITEM #2:
APPROVAL OF PAST MEETING MINUTES (5 MIN)
DATE: JANUARY 9, 2025

Draft Meeting Minutes for 09.05.24 PSREAG Meeting

PUBLIC SAFETY RACIAL EQUITY ADVISORY GROUP
MEETING MINUTES
1911 WILLIAMS DRIVE, OXNARD, CA
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 2024
5:30 PM -7:30 PM

MEETING PARTICIPATION:

Topic: **PSREAG Meeting**

Location: **Ventura County Behavioral Health**
Large Training Room
1911 Williams Drive, Oxnard, CA

Members of the public may join in person or by Zoom link below:

Join Zoom Meeting: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85188551246

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OPENING

1. **CALL TO ORDER (5 MIN) Called to Order at 5.39pm**
   a. Welcome
   b. Spotlight a Group Norm
   c. Roll Call & Confirm Quorum
      i. Member Organizations' Representatives present who meet quorum requirements:
         1. VCSO, Andrew Salinas
         2. VCDA, Erik Nasarenko
         3. VC Public Defender, Claudia Bautista
         4. VC Probation, Gina Johnson
         5. VC NAACP, Cynthia Gonzales
         6. Santa Paula Latino Town Hall, Monica Ruiz
         7. Black Lawyers of VC, Damon Jenkins
         8. Latinx Bar Association, Vanessa Benitez
         9. We Belong Everywhere, Cindy Liu (online)
         10. CV Interfaith Association, Bob Bland
         11. MICOP, Genevieve Flores-Haro
         12. Future Leaders of America, Ivan Vega
         13. Project 50, Dexter Nunnery
         14. Santa Paula PD, Chief Don Aguilar
      ii. Quorum established
      iii. Also in attendance:
         1. Brooke Lautz
         2. Candice Modica
         3. Gabriela Cazares
         4. Kate English
         5. Paloma Serna (online)
         6. Rajima Danish Engel (online)
         7. Robert O'Reily
         8. Scott Whitney
         9. Willie Lubka

2. **APPROVAL OF PAST MEETING MINUTES (5 MIN)**
   a. **No comments**
   b. **Unanimously Approved**

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA AND/OR FOR OTHER ITEMS WITHIN PSREAG SUBJECT MATTER JURISDICTION (10 MIN).**
    a. *All public comments regarding public safety and racial equity are welcome and encouraged. However, please note that the PSREAG does not investigate complaints regarding individual incidents involving law enforcement. Such complaints should be submitted to the involved law enforcement agency.*
    b. **Public Comment given by Paloma Serna who discussed the need for accountability and transparency regarding in custody jail deaths in the state of California.**

REGULAR AGENDA

4. **OUTLINE FOR ANNUAL REPORT AND REVIEW OF TIMELINE FOR BOS PRESENTATION (25 MIN)**
    a. Presentation by DEI Staff

    b. Member Discussion
        i. **Clarification of presentation content and timing related to comments including accomplishments, challenges and areas of differing opinions.**

5. **UPDATES ON VOTES FOR FUTURE AREAS OF FOCUS (5 MIN)**
    a. Presentation by DEI Staff
        i. Presented next steps for discussion and feedback
    b. Member Discussion
        i. **Future meetings where we can discuss items from previous Ad Hoc's and "parking lot" items from last year's Team Building exercise.**

6. **UPDATE REGARDING DRAFT DATA REPORT FROM POLICY AND PRACTICE AD HOC SUB-COMMITTEE (20 MIN)**
    a. Presentation by Ad Hoc Lead
        i. **Lead presented process to getting to concluding their report**
    a. Member Discussion

7. **PSREAG LOGO SAMPLES (20 MIN)**
    b. Member Discussion

8. **UPCOMING CO-CHAIR ELECTIONS (5 MIN)**
    a. Presentation by DEI Staff
        i. **Proposing elections in October meeting, but new chairs will not take office until January 2025**

> ii. **Co-Chairs are people, not organizations**

9. **MEMBER AND STAFF COMMENTS (10 MIN)**
   c. Opportunity for announcements from members and staff.
      i. **DEI Staff shared update on accommodations that are allowed under the Americans with Disabilities Act as it relates to Brown Act and voting members.**

10. **ADJOURN at 7:11 p.**

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PUBLIC SAFETY RACIAL EQUITY ADVISORY GROUP

AGENDA ITEM #2:
APPROVAL OF PAST MEETING MINUTES (5 MIN)
DATE: JANUARY 9, 2025

Draft Meeting Minutes for 11.21.24 PSREAG Meeting

PUBLIC SAFETY RACIAL EQUITY ADVISORY GROUP
MEETING MINUTES
1911 WILLIAMS DRIVE, OXNARD, CA
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2024
5:30 PM -7:30 PM

MEETING PARTICIPATION:

Topic: **PSREAG Meeting**

Location: **Ventura County Behavioral Health**
Large Training Room
1911 Williams Drive, Oxnard, CA

Members of the public may join in person or by Zoom link below:

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<div align="center">**OPENING**</div>

1. **CALL TO ORDER @ 5:39pm**
   a. Welcome
   b. Spotlight a Group Norm
   c. Roll Call & Confirm Quorum
      i. Member Organizations' Representatives Present who meet quorum requirements:
         1. VCSO, Andrew Salinas
         2. VCDA, Mike Jump
         3. VC Public Defender, Claudia Bautista
         4. VC Probation, Gina Johnson
         5. VC NAACP, Cynthia Gonzales
         6. Santa Paula Latino Town Hall, Christina Eilar
         7. Black Lawyers of VC, Damon Jenkins
         8. We Belong Everywhere, Cindy Liu
         9. CV Interfaith Association, Bob Bland
         10. MICOP, Genevieve Flores-Haro
         11. Diversity Collective, Roland Catabona
         12. Future Leaders of America, Daniel Gonzalez
         13. Santa Paula PD, Chief Don Aguilar
      ii. Quorum established
      iii. Also in attendance:
         1. Angel Garcia
         2. Amy Peake
         3. Brooke Lautz
         4. Candice Modica
         5. Kate English
         6. Laura Hernandez (online)
         7. Melissa McMurdo
         8. Rajima Danish Engel (online)
         9. Vanessa Teran
         10. Willie Lubka (online)

2. **APPROVAL OF PAST MEETING MINUTES**
   a. **Approved without objection**

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA AND/OR FOR OTHER ITEMS WITHIN PSREAG SUBJECT MATTER JURISDICTION**

   a. **No Public Comments**

<div align="center">**REGULAR AGENDA**</div>

4. **POLICY AND PRACTICE REPORT: INCORPORATING LIVE COMMENTS AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE (90 MIN)**

a. **Members discussed comments submitted and made edits during the meeting. Members agreed to bring final version of report to next meeting.**

5. **MEMBER AND STAFF COMMENTS (10 MIN)**
   a. **No announcements**

6. **ADJOURNED @ 7:30pm**

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PUBLIC SAFETY RACIAL EQUITY ADVISORY GROUP

AGENDA ITEM #2:
APPROVAL OF PAST MEETING MINUTES (5 MIN)
DATE: JANUARY 9, 2025

Draft Meeting Minutes for 12.05.24 PSREAG Meeting

PUBLIC SAFETY RACIAL EQUITY ADVISORY GROUP

MEETING MINUTES

1911 WILLIAMS DRIVE, OXNARD, CA
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2024
5:30 PM -7:30 PM

MEETING PARTICIPATION:

Topic: **PSREAG Meeting**

Location: **Ventura County Behavioral Health**
Large Training Room
1911 Williams Drive, Oxnard, CA

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OPENING

1. **CALL TO ORDER (CALLED TO ORDER @ 5:35PM)**
   a. Welcome
   b. Spotlight a Group Norm
   c. Roll Call & Confirm Quorum
      i. Member Organizations' Representatives Present who meet quorum requirements:
         1. VCDA, Mike Jump
         2. VC Public Defender, Brooke Lautz
         3. VC Probation, Gina Johnson
         4. Santa Paula Latino Town Hall, Christina Eilar
         5. Black Lawyers of VC, Damon Jenkins
         6. Latinx Bar Association, Vanessa Benitez
         7. We Belong Everywhere, Cindy Liu (online)
         8. CV Interfaith Association, Bob Bland
         9. MICOP, Vanessa Teran
         10. Diversity Collective of VC, Roland Catabona
         11. Future Leaders of America, Ivan Vega
      ii. Quorum Established
      iii. Also in attendance:
         1. Angel Garcia
         2. Candice Modica
         3. Santa Paula PD, Chief Don Aguilar (online)
         4. Gabriela Cazares
         5. Kate English
         6. Melissa McMurdo
         7. Sarah Garcia
         8. Willie Lubka (online)
   d. Review Agenda

2. **APPROVAL OF PAST MEETING MINUTES (5 MIN)**
   a. Minutes from the last meeting will be posted in the next meeting.

3. **PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA AND/OR FOR OTHER ITEMS WITHIN PSREAG SUBJECT MATTER JURISDICTION (10 MIN).**
   a. *All public comments regarding public safety and racial equity are welcome and encouraged. However, please note that the PSREAG does not investigate complaints regarding individual incidents involving law enforcement. Such complaints should be submitted to the involved law enforcement agency.*

REGULAR AGENDA

4. **CO-CHAIR ELECTIONS NOMINATION FORM RESULTS AND ACTION TO VOTE FOR OFFICERS FOR 2025 CALENDAR YEAR (15 MIN)**
   a. Presentation by DEI Staff
   b. Member Discussion
   c. Consider Possible Action

d. Cynthia Gonzales and Gina Johnson selected as Co-Chairs
e. Cindy Liu selected as Secretary

5. **POLICY AND PRACTICE REPORT: REVIEW UPDATED REPORT AND POSSIBLE ACTION TO APPROVE (70 MIN)**
   a. Public Comment
   b. Presentation by Ad Hoc Lead
   c. Member Discussion
   d. Consider Possible Action
      i. **The presentation was accidentally not linked to the public prior to the meeting. Therefore, no discussion took place. No action was taken. A potential special meeting will be scheduled if possible. Otherwise, this agenda item would the rescheduled for the January 9, 2025 meeting.**

6. **MEMBER AND STAFF COMMENTS (10 MIN)**
   a. Opportunity for announcements from members and staff.

7. **ADJOURNED at 6:12pm.**

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PUBLIC SAFETY RACIAL EQUITY ADVISORY GROUP

## AGENDA ITEM #4: RATIFY/CONFIRM ALL MEMBER LEADS AND ALTERNATES

	Point of Contact (s)	Names of leads and alternates confirmed	Changes/Updates and/or other notes
1. VC Sheriff's Office	Sheriff Fryhoff (lead) Andrew Salinas (alternate)		
2. VC District Attorney	Erik Nasarenko (lead) Mike Jump (alternate)		
3. VC Public Defender	Claudia Bautista– (lead) Brooke Lautz (alternate)		
4. VC Probation	**Gina Johnson (lead)-Co-Chair** Candice Modica (alternate)		
5. City of Santa Paula	Chief Don(ald) Aguilar (lead) Commander Eric Starna (alternate)		
6. VC NAACP	**Cynthia Gonzalez (lead) -Co-Chair** Helaine Stallion (alternate)		
7. Santa Paula Latino Townhall	Christina Eilar (lead) Monica Ruiz (alternate)		
8. Black Lawyers of VC	Damon Jenkins (lead) Rabiah Rahman (alternate)		
9. Latinx Bar Association	Vanessa Benitez (lead) Vacant (alternate)		
10. We Belong 805	Cindy Liu (lead) - Secretary Allice Chou (alternate)		
11. VC Project 50	Dexter Nunnery (lead) Jason Maxwell (alternate)		
12. Conejo Valley Interfaith Association	Bob Bland (lead) Willie Lubka (alternate)		
13. MICOP	Genevieve Flores-Haro (lead)		

AGENDA ITEM #4: RATIFY/CONFIRM ALL MEMBER LEADS AND ALTERNATES

|			
	Vanessa Teran (alternate)		
14. Diversity Collective of VC	Roland Catabona (lead) Luis Andrade (alternate)		
15. Future Leaders of America	Danel Gonzalez (lead) Ivan Vega (alternate)		

County Staff Attending (Not Members):
   Child Support Services
   DA
   CEO
	Marcus Mitchell
	Rajima Danish –Engel
	Kate English		

Updated 05/21/2024 GC
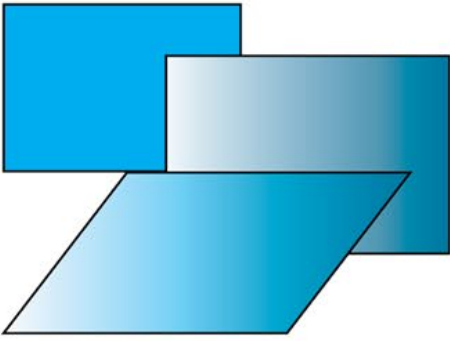
RACIAL EQUITY IN THE POLICIES AND PRACTICES OF THE VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

An Examination of Racial And Identify Profiling Data
For the Ventura County Sheriff's Office

Prepared by

PUBLIC SAFETY RACIAL EQUITY ADVISORY GROUP

November 2024
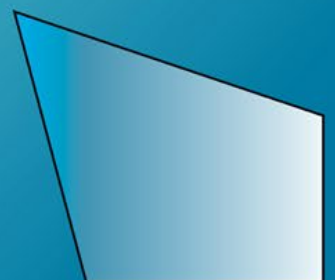
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Citizens of Ventura County depend on our county sheriff and his staff to keep us safe: to protect us from those who would harm us or take that which belongs to us, and to bring to justice those who have engaged in these crimes.

In order to accomplish what we ask of them, it is not only desirable but necessary that the sheriff and his deputies work in partnership with the community. When the sheriff's office and the community work together as partners to maintain safety, prevent crime, and apprehend those who break the law, everyone is safer.

However, cooperation between law enforcement and the communities they serve is more difficult, if not impossible, when a significant segment of the population feels that they are unfairly targeted by law enforcement because of their race, national origin, disability, or gender identity. In the past, there have been anecdotal accounts of racial discrimination by law enforcement officers. However, there was no way to determine if these were isolated incidents or evidence of a larger pattern of discriminatory behavior. In 2015, The California legislature passed the Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA)[1], which required all law enforcement agencies in California to collect and report data relative to the race, nationality, gender identity, and disability of persons stopped by deputies. The Ventura County Sheriff's Office (VCSO) began collecting this data in 2021. This data can serve as a means for a more comprehensive and objective examination of interactions between law enforcement and racial and ethnic minorities.

The Policies and Practices Subcommittee of the Ventura County Public Safety and Racial Equity Advisory Group[2] has performed the first comprehensive analysis of the VCSO RIPA data to determine if there is evidence of disparate impact on communities of color.

This study was not undertaken in an attempt to demonstrate that Ventura County Sheriff's Deputies are motivated by racial animus in the performance of their duties. To the contrary, it was and remains our conviction that most law enforcement officers in this county perform their duties without fear or favor and are not motivated by animus toward persons of any race, ethnicity, disability, or sexual orientation. Further, nothing in our study to date has caused us to alter that belief.

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[1] Racial and Identity Profiling Act, Cal. Assembly Bill 953, Cal. (2015-2016), Chapter 466 (Cal. Stat. 2015).

[2] Ventura County Board of Supervisors (BOS) resolution adopted on November 10, 2020

==Evidence supports that implicit bias and structural racism can and do result in disparate outcomes of People of Color. In acknowledging that implicit bias and structural racism impact all systems, and in recognition of anecdotal reports from community members and acts reported in the press, this report acknowledges that in an organization of 700-plus deputies, implicit bias and structural racism are playing a role in outcomes.==

This study uses the RIPA data and other related information to conduct a comprehensive examination of interactions between law enforcement and the community they serve to assess the impact VCSO policy and practices on racial and ethnic minorities.

We are aware that some in the law enforcement community have pointed to shortcomings of the RIPA data and provided reasons why traditional interpretations of this data, including those of the California State RIPA Board, are flawed. In the Data Analysis section, we discuss the most common objections cited by law enforcement including those identified by The Peace Officers Research Association of California[3]. It is our opinion that although there are ambiguities in the RIPA data, this data is still the best indicator that we have of disparate impact on racial and ethnic minorities.

The study examined RIPA data from the VCSO dashboard,[4] additional data provided by the sheriff, and Ventura County data found on the California Department of Justice Open Justice Data Portal.[5] This study examined the racial and ethnic distribution of 25 different Ventura County law enforcement interactions with the public. In 24 of these 25 types of law enforcement interactions with the public, the results favored White persons and were disproportionately negative for Hispanic and African American individuals.

The study found that if a person is Hispanic or African American, their chances are significantly greater to be:

1. Stopped for:
   - a traffic violation

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[3] Withrow, B. (2023). *Racial & Identity Profiling Advisory Board 2022 Annual Report: A Critical Analysis.* Peace Officers Research Association of California. https://porac.org/wp-content/uploads/PORAC-2022-RIPA-Report-Analysis_FINAL.pdf

[4] Ventura County Sheriff's Office. (2024). *RIPA Dashboard.* https://www.venturasheriff.org/RIPA.html

[5] Cal. Dept. of Justice. (2024). *Data Portal.* https://openjustice.doj.ca.gov/data

- Reasonable suspicion
2. Subjected to
    - Curbside Detention
    - Patrol Car Detention
    - Physical or Vehicle Contact
    - Removal from Car
    - Being Handcuffed
    - Completion of a Field Interview Card
    - Searched
3. To be
    - Considered a Suspect
    - Subjected to the use of force
    - Charged with Resisting Arrest
    - Arrested
4. To have their complaints dismissed
5. To be less likely to report a crime

The data that supports these conclusions is presented in the Results Section of this report.

The Discussion section of this paper examines seven key interactions between law enforcement and the minority community. These areas are:

- Reasonable Suspicion,
- Use of Force,
- Resisting Arrest,
- Cover Charges And Blaming The Victim
- Complaint Resolution,
- Pretextual Stops, and
- Consensual Searches

These areas were chosen because they are not only subjective and transactional but also have a high potential for escalating minor encounters into major confrontations with severe consequences for the accused. The interactions between law enforcement officers and the people they stop are asymmetrical with the police officers in a position of power and authority. The dynamics of that interaction are often dictated by the way in which individual officers navigate that asymmetrical power relationship. People of Color often have a history of perceived harassment, intimidation, and lack of respect that magnifies the potential for conflict escalation in their encounters with law enforcement. In the Discussion section of this paper, the disproportionate representation of Hispanic and African Americans in Ventura

County statistics for these 5 areas are discussed in the broader context of these asymmetrical power relationships.

The paper concludes with a discussion of Next Steps. This section discusses the next steps to be taken by the PSREAG in the continuing examination of racial equity in Ventura County Public Safety Agencies and the development of actionable recommendations to create a climate of racial and ethnic justice and fairness.   Collaboration with key stakeholders, including the VCSO and representatives from other county public safety agencies, will be pivotal in these ongoing discussions. Their involvement ensures not only a deeper understanding of the rationale behind current policies but also draws upon the invaluable real-life experiences of the individuals entrusted with the responsibility of public safety within our county. Through this concerted effort, we strive towards meaningful progress and lasting change in our pursuit of equity and justice for all.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The Ventura County Board of Supervisors (BOS) resolution adopted on November 10, 2020[6], declared racism a public health crisis and pledged to promote equity, inclusion, and diversity in housing, employment, economic development, health care, and public safety in the County of Ventura. In June of 2021, the Ventura County BOS established the Public Safety Racial Equity Advisory Group (PSREAG)[7] to provide a forum where public safety and community leaders could collaborate to identify strategies and proposals to improve institutional law enforcement practices.

Consistent with this mission, the PSREAG established a Policy and Practice Subcommittee to assess whether the VCSO's policies and practices have disparate impacts on ethnic minorities and People of Color. Although this study is not exhaustive, and our work is ongoing, it is essential to provide this progress report to indicate what our analysis has revealed to date.

The subcommittee began its work with an analysis of the practices of Ventura County Sheriff Officers, and that analysis forms the basis for this report.

This study was undertaken with the assumption that the vast majority of VCSO Deputies perform their duties without fear or favor and do not allow racism or implicit bias to influence their interactions with the community they serve. However, that does not preclude the possibility that there is some number of deputies, however small that number may be, whose biases, conscious or unconscious, may influence their decisions and actions. A recently reported incident where a non-sworn sheriff's technician tore down a Black Lives Matter banner posted on private property, current lawsuits that allege discrimination, and several complaints against the Sheriff's Office would tend to confirm that premise.

Before the Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA) of 2015 (AB 953), the only data available to examine this premise was the accounts of individuals who believed that they had experienced disparate treatment by law enforcement because of their race or ethnicity and the reports of law enforcement officers

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[6] Ventura County Board of Supervisors. (2020). *Resolution Declaring Racism a Public Health Crisis and Pledging to Promote Equity, Inclusion, and Diversity in Housing, Employment, Economic Development, Health Care, and Public Safety in the County of Ventura and Endorsing the Work and Direction of the Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Task Force.* Retrieved from: https://www.vchca.org/images/HEAC/Adopted_Resolution_Declaring_Racism_a_Public_Health_Crisis_-_English_Spanish.pdf

[7] Public Safety and Racial Equity Advisory Group. (2024, August 7). County of Ventura. https://www.ventura.org/county-executive-office/dei/psreag/

themselves. However, the RIPA required all law enforcement agencies in California to collect and report data relative to the race, nationality, gender identity, and disability of persons stopped by deputies. The VCSO began collecting this data in 2021. This paper represents an attempt to perform a comprehensive examination of that data and to learn what it tells us about the impact of the policy and practices of the VCSO on racial and ethnic minorities.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data Sources

Data used in this study was derived from several sources, including the Ventura County Sheriff's Racial Identify Profile Act Dashboard which contains racial and ethnic identities of victims, suspects, arrestees, and persons stopped by Sheriff's Deputies.

Stop data is divided into three categories: "Reason for Stop", "Actions Taken During Stop", and "Result of Stop". This study examined the following parameters found in the RIPA data.

- Stops
- Total Stops
- All Stops
- Reason for Stop
- Traffic Violations
- Other than Traffic Violations
- Reasonable Suspicion
- Consensual Encounter Resulting in Search
- Action Taken During Stop
- None
- Curbside Detention
- Patrol Car Detention
- Field Interview Card Completed
- Removed from Vehicle by Order
- Physical or Vehicle Contact
- Handcuffed
- Consent Search
- Result of Stop
- Citation
- No Action

- Warning
- Arrest without warrant
- In-Field Cite & Release
- Field Interview Card Completed
- Total Arrests
- Victims
- Suspects

In addition, the sheriff provided the following data as part of a presentation to the PSREAG

- Use of Force
- Complaints
- Crime Report Suspect Descriptions
- Shoplifting Arrestees
- Organized Retail Theft (ORT)
- Data accessed from the California Department of Justice Open Justice Data Portal included the following
- Arrests by category (Misdemeanor, Felony, and Status)
- Complaints

Finally, the data on Resisting Arrest was provided by VCSO in September 2022.

Population Profile

2020 Census data was used to characterize the population served by the VCSO[8]. The Sheriff's Department is responsible for 95% of the geographic area in the county and provides public services to 55% of the total county population. In order to accurately profile the areas served by the VCSO the census data for the county was adjusted by subtracting the population numbers for the five cities in the county with municipal police departments. The derived population profile for the VCSO is shown in Figure 1.

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[8] U.S. Census Bureau. (n.d.). *Quick Facts: Ventura County, California.* U.S. Dept. of Commerce. Retrieved August 8, 2024, from https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/venturacountycalifornia,US/RHI125222#RHI125221
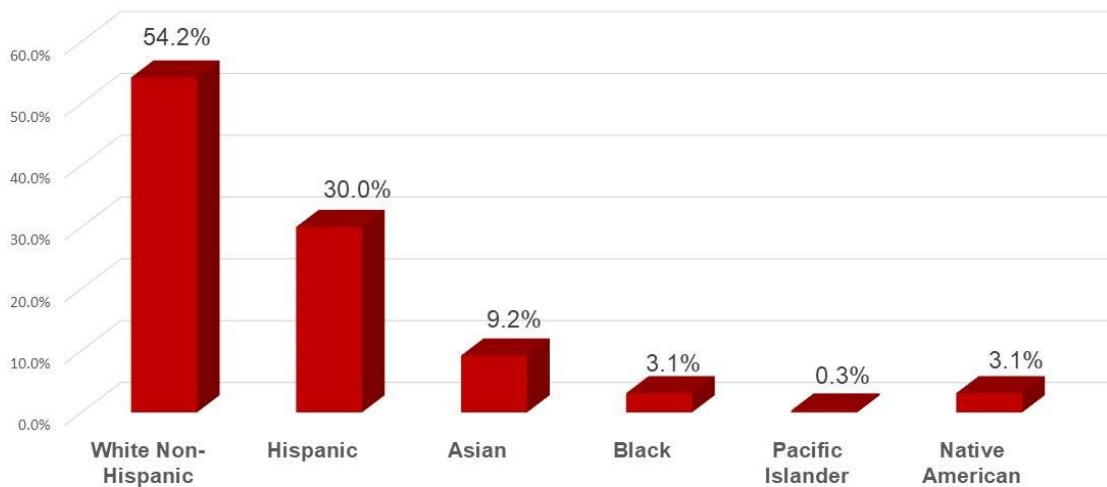
Figure 1 Racial and Ethnic Makeup of VCSO Jurisdiction

SCOPE & LIMITATIONS

The RIPA Dashboard published by the VCSO did not include data relative to perceived sexuality, disability, or English fluency of the person stopped and, therefore, not included in this study. The PSREAG recognizes these gaps in the data and encourages future studies to examine the data relevant to these identifying categories.

All of the five Ventura County municipalities with their own police forces were required to begin to collect RIPA data by January 2022 and to report that data to the California State Attorney General by April of 2023 for the previous year. However, RIPA data was unavailable for these five municipalities when this analysis was conducted.

The information analyzed included data from several periods, depending on the source. The most current data comes from the RIPA dashboard, which is updated monthly. The VCSO provided additional data in a presentation to the PSREAG in August 2023. The California Attorney General's Data Portal reflects data reported by California law enforcement agencies for the calendar year 2022. Finally, there is a limited amount of data provided by the VCSO in September of 2022, which has not been updated and is not available from other sources.

The data on the RIPA Dashboard and other sources is inconsistent in how data is presented for racial/ethnic groups, representing a small percentage of the measured parameter. For example, the percentage of Asians stopped

is presented on the dashboard. However, in the data for curbside detention, Asians are included with other racial groups in the "Other" category.

Constraints and Considerations in the Analysis of RIPA Data

There are well-documented limitations on the interpretation of RIPA data that constrain or create ambiguity regarding the conclusions that can be drawn from this data.

One issue concerning the interpretation of the RIPA stop data revolves around the question of what the deputy knew and when he or she knew it. The argument has been made that because, in many cases, the deputy could not perceive the race or ethnicity of the individual prior to the stop, therefore, the basis for the stop could not be racial animus or bias. The VCSO is one of the few agencies in the state that includes a question as to whether or not the deputy could perceive the racial demographic prior to the stop. Responses to this question indicate that in 87% of the cases, deputies reported that prior to the stop, they were unable to perceive the race or ethnicity of the person being stopped. This would appear to indicate that the racial disparities in the stop data were not a result of bias on the part of the deputy making the stop.

There are a few considerations to keep in mind when considering this question.

First, it should be pointed out that other data contradict this conclusion.

The trends shown in the Ventura County data are not unique but rather are consistent with a nationwide pattern of disproportionate stops of Hispanic and African Americans. In a paper titled "Race and Reasonable Suspicion[9], Ric Simmons states:

> Whether because of implicit bias, explicit racial prejudice, or a belief that certain races are more likely than others to engage in certain kinds of criminal activity, there is a vast amount of empirical evidence that police pull over African American and Hispanic individuals far more often than White individuals.

 "Veil of Darkness" studies[10] have found that after dark when officers are less able to determine the race or ethnicity of the driver, there is a decrease

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[9] Simmons, Ric. (2020). Race and Reasonable Suspicion, *Florida Law Review*, 73(413), Ohio
State Legal Studies Research Paper No. 572,
SSRN: https://ssrn.com/abstract=3696453 or http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3696453

[10] Pierson, E., Simoiu, C., Overgoor, J., Corbett-Davies, S., Jenson, D., Shoemaker, A.,

in the number of People of Color who are stopped. Such findings certainly raise doubt about the claims that officers are generally unable to ascertain the race of the person they are stopping.

Second, we must consider the possibility that this is a distinction without a difference. Data from the VCSO dashboard revealed that for 14% of the stops (15,000), the deputy was able to perceive the race or ethnicity of the person stopped prior to the stop. Given these results, it is difficult to make the case that the differences in stop data between White persons and other ethnic groups are not significant because the deputy could not perceive the identity of the person prior to the stop.

Third, we must keep in mind that the question of whether or not the deputy could determine the demographic of the person being stopped applies only to the initial stop After the person in question has been stopped, the deputy has had personal contact with the individual and thus may have a very good idea of the ethnicity of the person stopped.[11] Consequently, data such as "Result of the Stop" and "Action taken during Stop" reflect actions taken with a reasonable idea of the race or ethnicity of the person involved.

RESULTS

STOPS

The basic stop data shows that Hispanics are stopped at a rate that is 151% of their representation in the population, and African Americans are stopped at a rate that is 139% of their representation in the population (See Figure 2). By contrast, White individuals are stopped at a rate that is 79.7% of their population percentage.

Ramachandran, V., Barghouty, P., Phillips, C., Shroff, R., and Goel, S.. (2020). A large-scale analysis of racial disparities in police stops across the United States. *Nature Human Behaviour*, Vol. 4. Also available at: https://openpolicing.stanford.edu/

[11] Lofstrom, M., Hayes, J., Martin, B., and Premkumar, D. (2022). Racial Disparities in Traffic Stops. *Public Policy Institute of California.* https://www.ppic.org/publication/racial-disparities-in-traffic-stops/
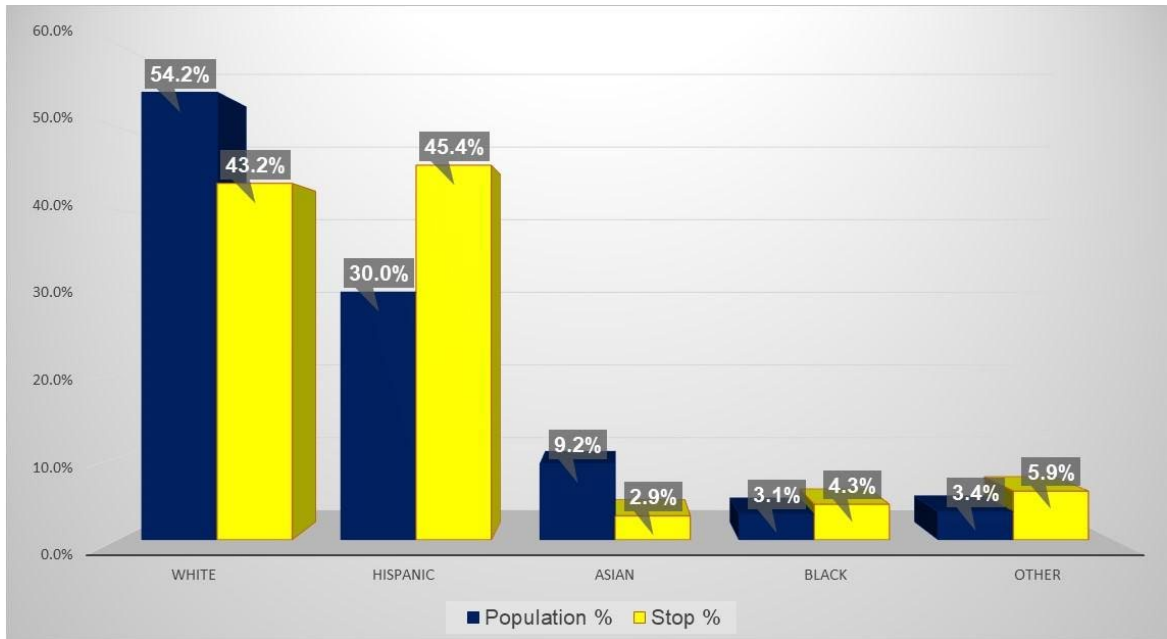
**Figure 2 Stop Data vs Population**
Source: RIPA Dashboard

Traffic Stops are by far the most frequent reason for a stop as opposed to "Reasonable Suspicion", "Outstanding Warrant", "Parole Violation" and other non-traffic related reasons. The subcommittee's review of the data revealed that the distribution for Traffic Stops closely mirrors the data for all stops (See Figure 3).
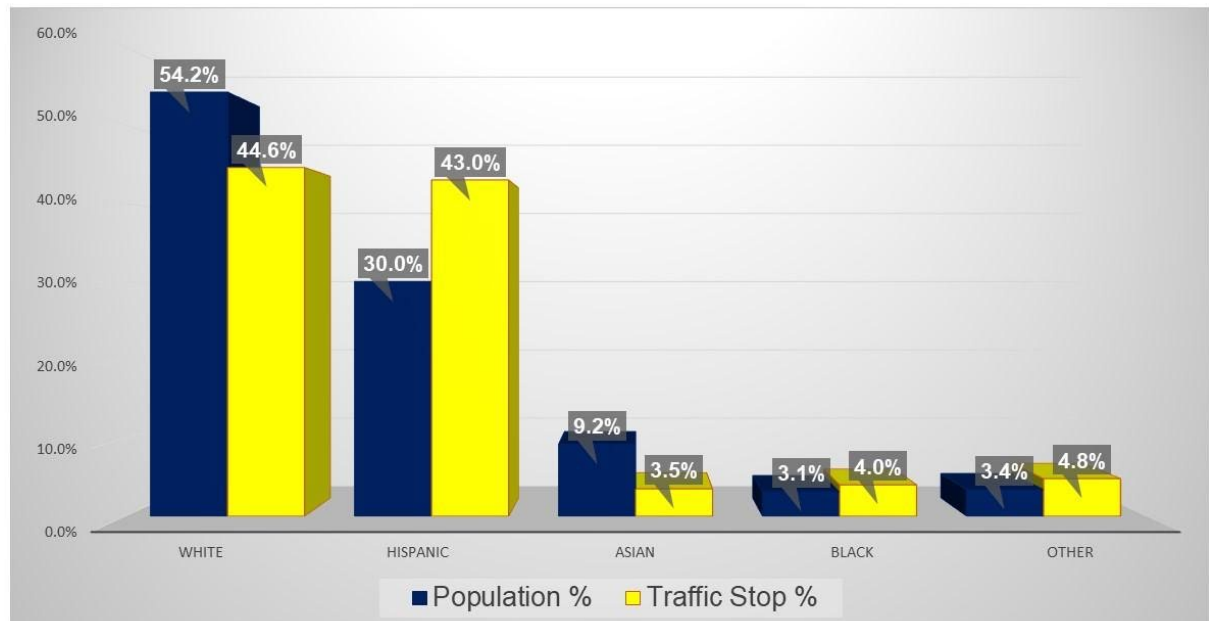
Figure 3 Traffic Stops vs Population
Source: RIPA Dashboard

However, when traffic stops are removed from the data, and we look only at the other reasons for a stop, the Hispanic Stop Rate is 174% or their representation in the population, the corresponding rate for African Americans is 168%, compared to 72% for White persons (See Figure 4).
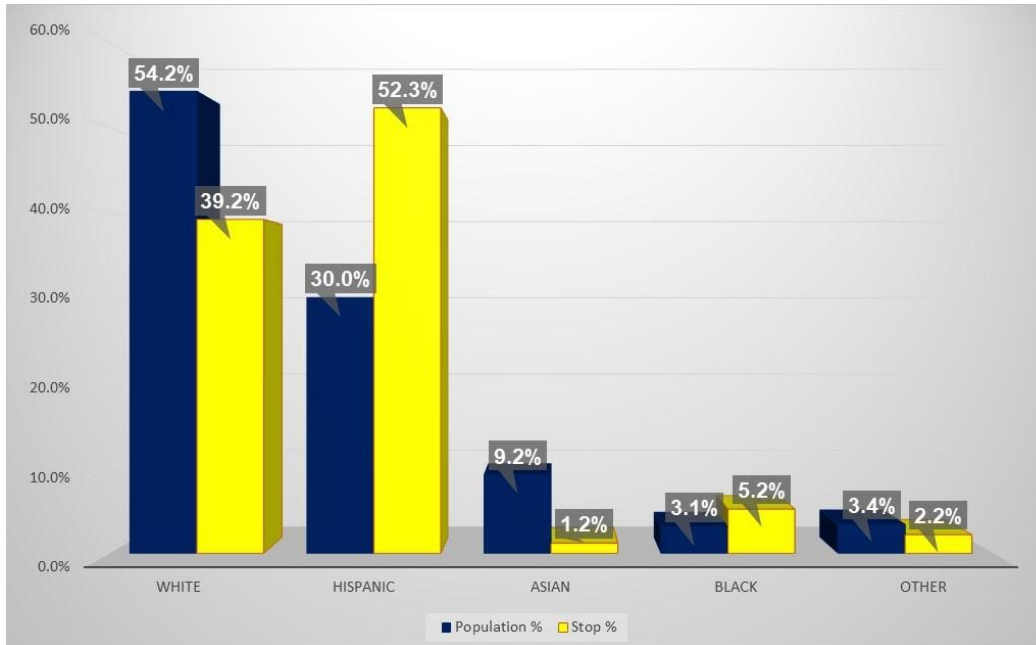
Figure 4 Other Than Traffic Stop vs Population
Source: RIPA Dashboard

The Ventura County Sheriff's Office has added a data point to their RIPA data collection that is not required by state law. Deputies are asked if they could perceive the race or ethnicity of the person prior to the stop. When the data is segregated into only those stops where the deputy indicated that they could perceive the race of the person prior to the stop, we find that even in these cases, the number of stops for Hispanics and African Americans is greater than their representation in the population. Stops of White persons are considerably less than their representation (See Figure 5). In fact, the differences are more dramatic for the population where the demographics are perceived prior to the stop than they are for all stops. For African Americans, the number of stops where the race is perceived prior to the stop is 5.3%, and for all stops, the percentage is 4.3%, a 23% increase. For Hispanics, the corresponding numbers are 50.2% versus 45.4% for all stops. On the other hand, the numbers for White stops are 41.2% as opposed to 43.2% for all stops.
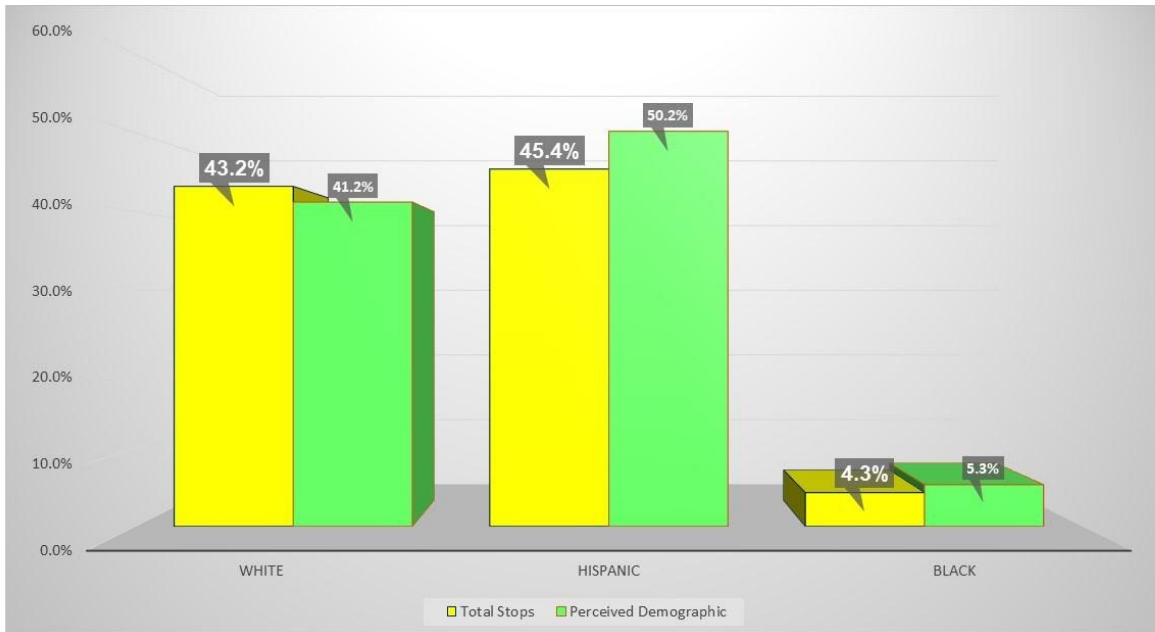
Figure 5 Total Stops vs Stops When Deputy Perceived Race Prior to Stop
Source: RIPA Dashboard

REASON FOR STOP

As shown in Figures 6 and 7, when Traffic Stops were excluded from the data, Reasonable Suspicion was the leading reason for a stop, accounting for more than all other non-traffic stops combined.

Reasonable suspicion is a highly subjective measure and correspondingly showed the most significant disparity based on ethnicity. African Americans were stopped for reasonable suspicion at a rate that was 210% of their representation in the population. For Hispanics, the rate was 162% of their representation compared with 78% for Whites (See Figures 6 through 10). The implications of these findings are discussed in greater detail in the Discussion Section of this paper.
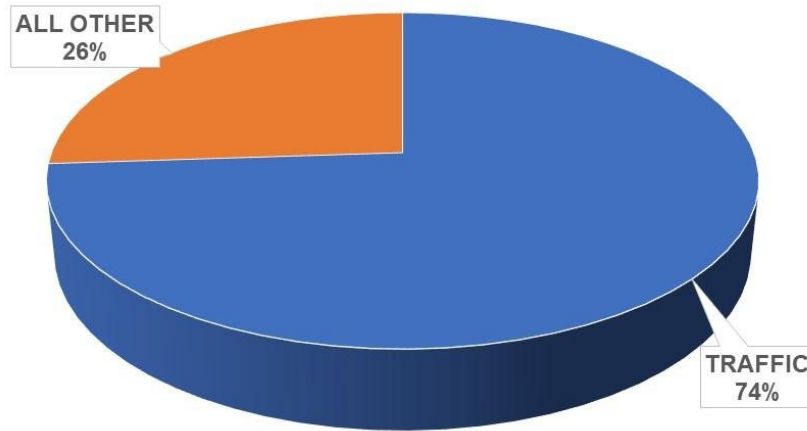
Figure 6 Reason For Stop
Source: RIPA Dashboard

Total Number of Stops 105,500
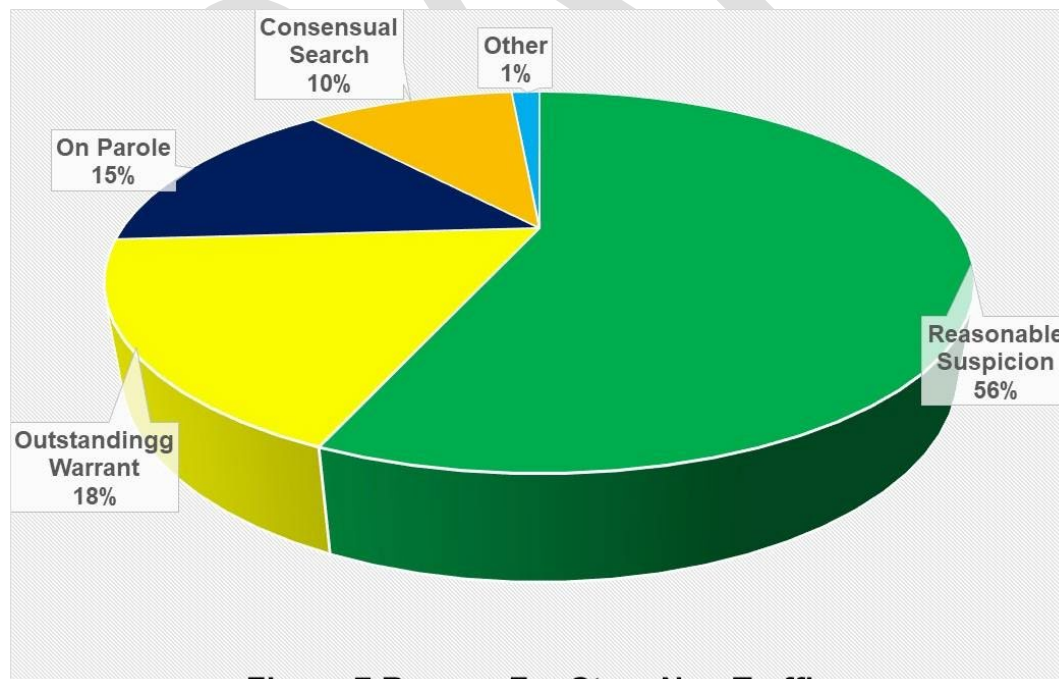
Figure 7 Reason For Stop Non-Traffic
Source: RIPA Dashboard

Total non-Traffic Stops 27,223
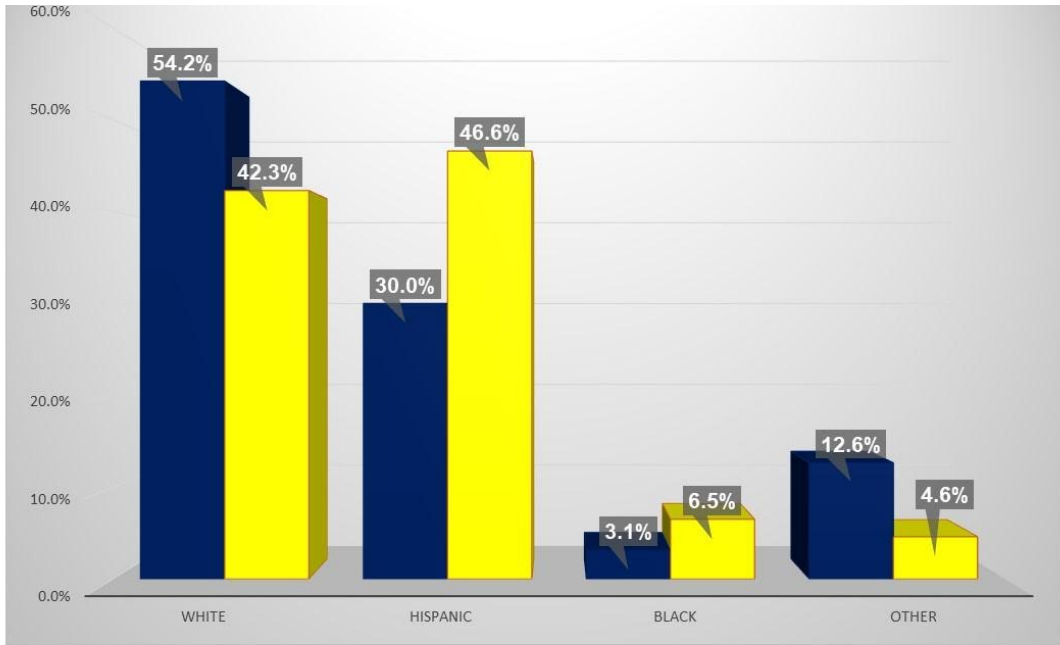
Figure 8 Stops for Reasonable Suspicion Compared to Population
Source: RIPA Dashboard
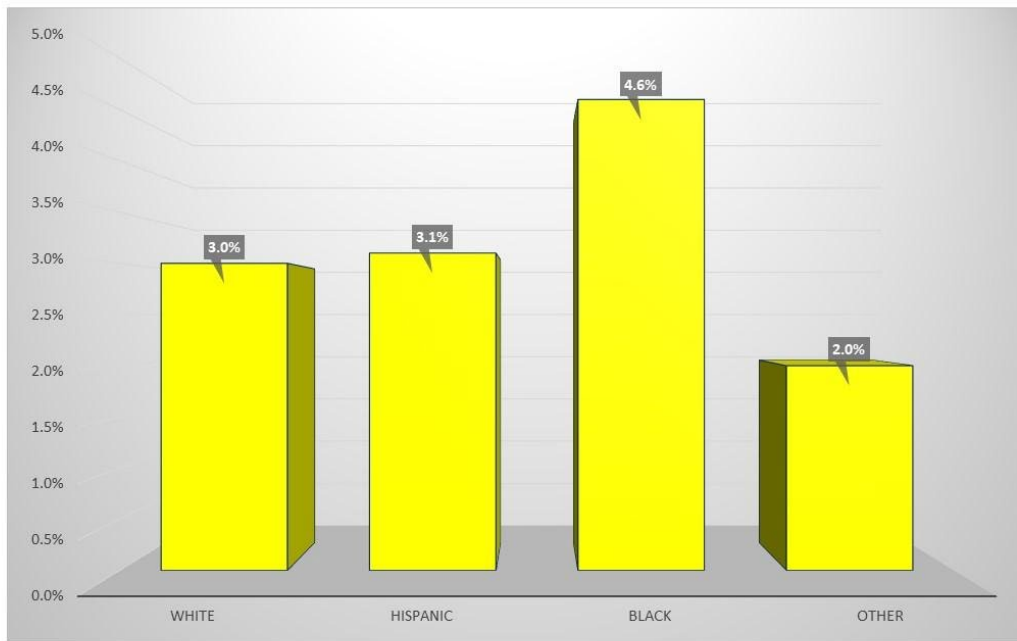
Figure 9 Stops for Reasonable Suspicion as a Percentage of All Stops
Source: RIPA Dashboard
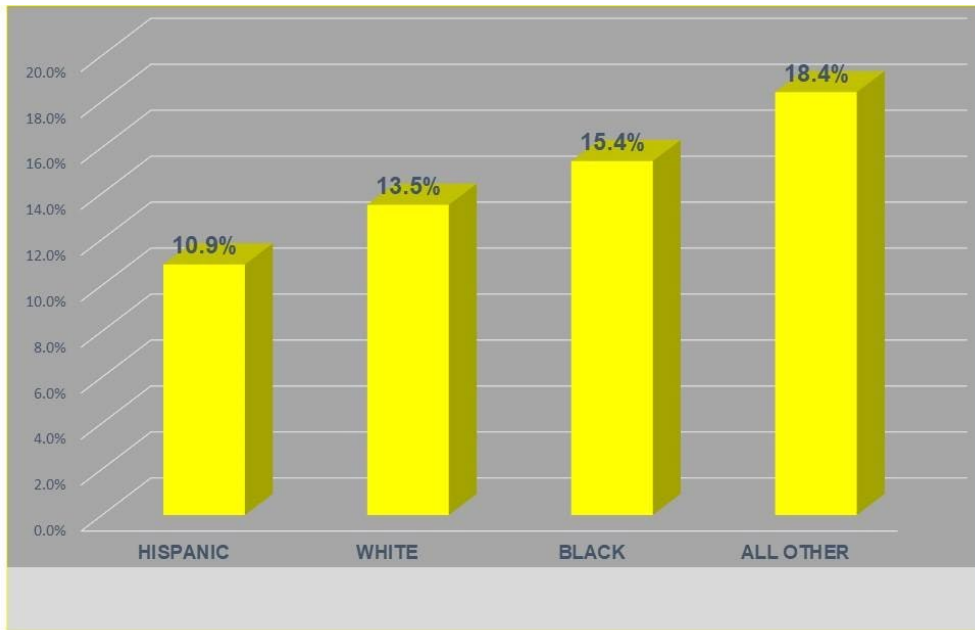
**Figure 10 Reasonable Suspicion As A Percent Of Non-traffic Stops**
Source: RIPA Dashboard

Data concerning Consensual Encounters Resulting in Search reveals that Hispanics are searched at a rate that is 190% of their representation in the population, while White persons are searched at a 68% rate. African Americans are searched at a rate that is slightly higher than their representation, and all other groups are searched at rates that are significantly lower than their representation in the population (see Figures 11 & 12)
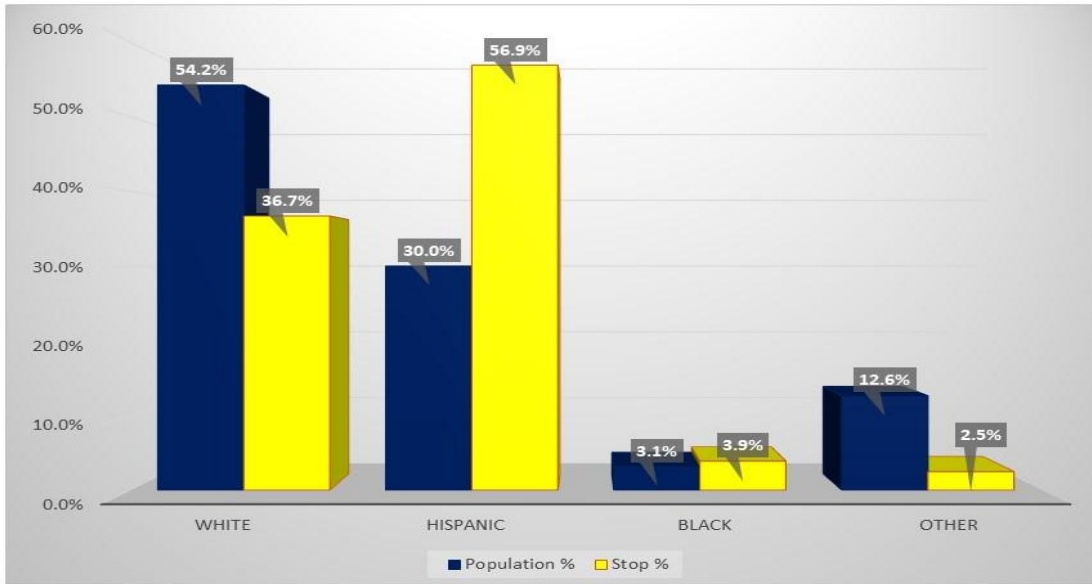
Figure 11 Consensual Search vs Population
Source: RIPA Dashboard
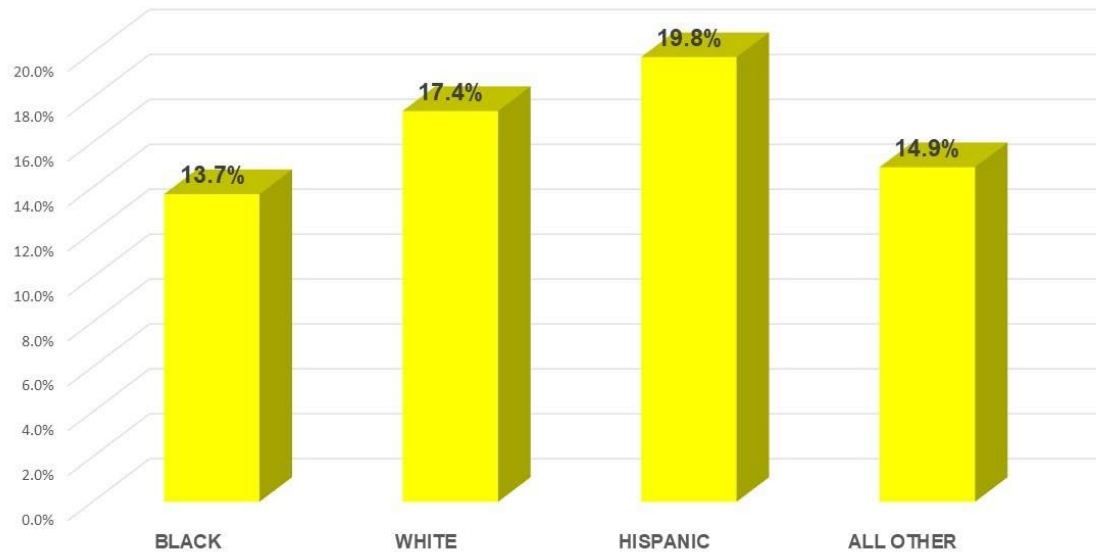
Figure 12 Consensual Search as a Percentage of non Traffic Stops
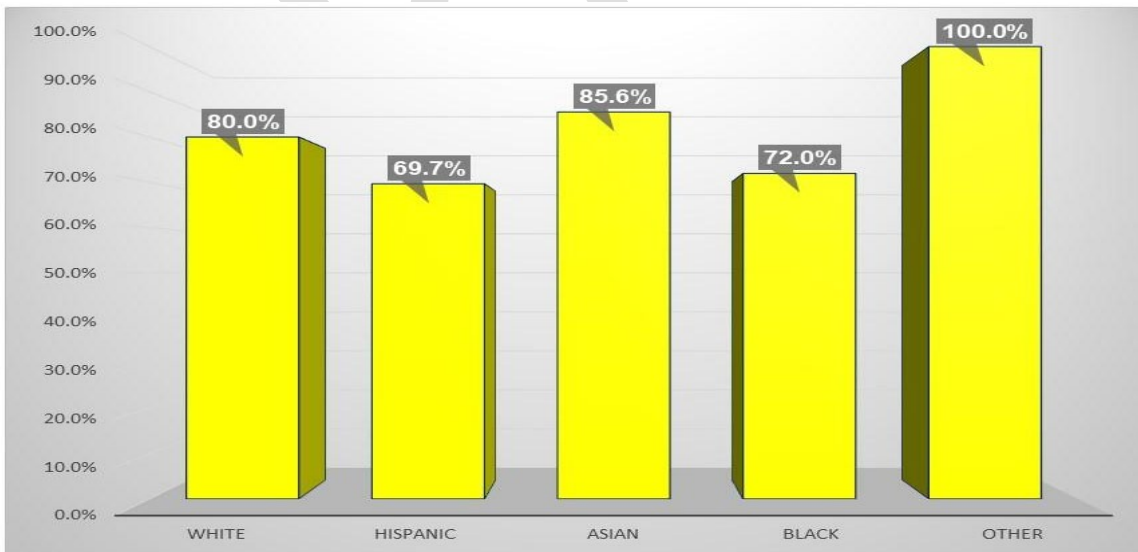Source: RIPA Dashboard

ACTION TAKEN DURING STOP

During the vast majority of stops, no action was taken. In fact, the number of stops in which no action was taken is three times larger than all other actions combined. In comparison with their population percentage, Asians

were most frequently stopped with no action taken, followed by White persons.

Hispanics and African Americans were least likely to have no action taken during a stop (See Figures 13 & 14).


% STOPS NO ACTION TAKEN VS % POPULATION

	WHITE	HISPANIC	ASIAN	BLACK
Population %	54.2%	30.0%	9.2%	3.1%
No-Action Stop %	45.8%	41.9%	3.4%	4.1%
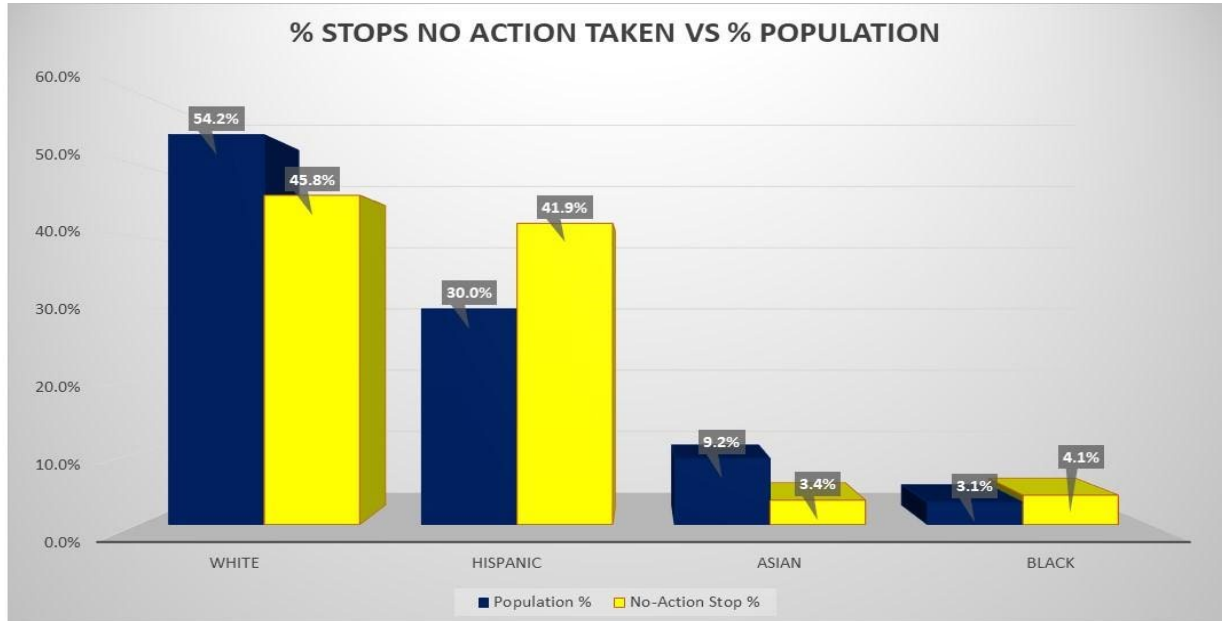
Figure 13 Percent Stops No Action Taken Vs Percent Population
Source: RIPA Dashboard

WHITE	HISPANIC	ASIAN	BLACK	OTHER
80.0%	69.7%	85.6%	72.0%	100.0%

Figure 14 Percentage of Stops with No Action Taken
Source: RIPA Dashboard

When action was taken during a stop, the most frequent forms of action were Curbside Detention and Patrol Car Detention. When we examined the

percentage of stops resulting in either Curbside Detention or Patrol Car Detention, the data demonstrates a pattern that is the same as other variables. In Ventura county, an African American or Hispanic individual has a greater chance of being detained curbside or detained in a patrol car than a White individual. In the case of patrol car detention, Asians were also more frequently detained than their White counterparts (See Figures 15 & 16).
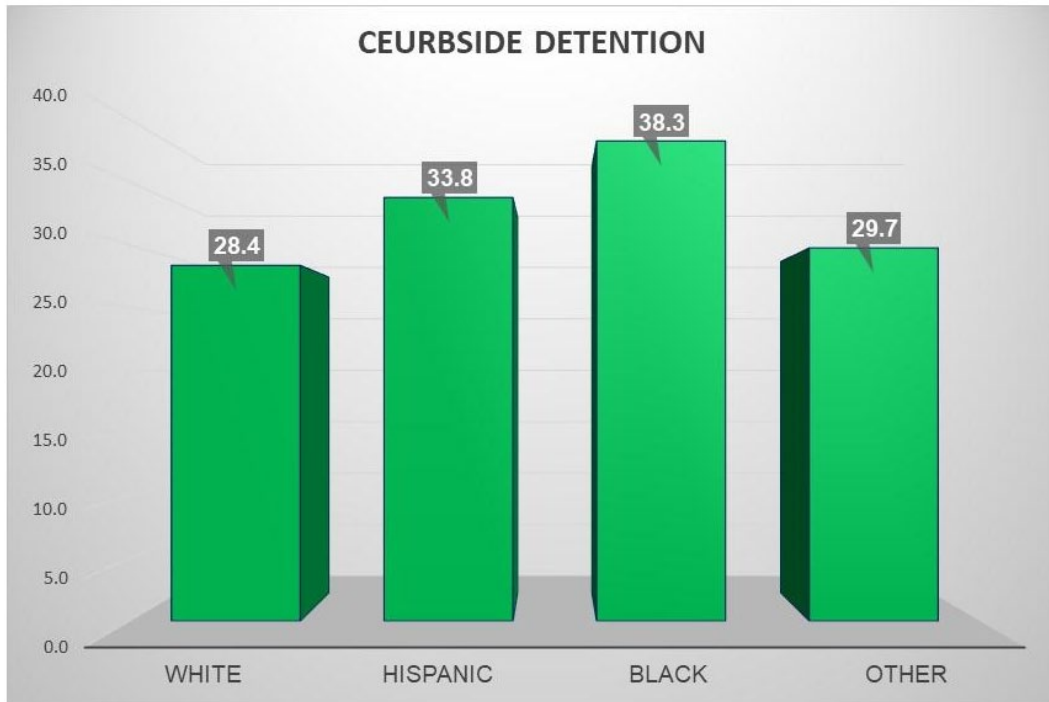
Figure 15 Curbside Detention (Number per 1,000 Stops)
Source: RIPA Dashboard
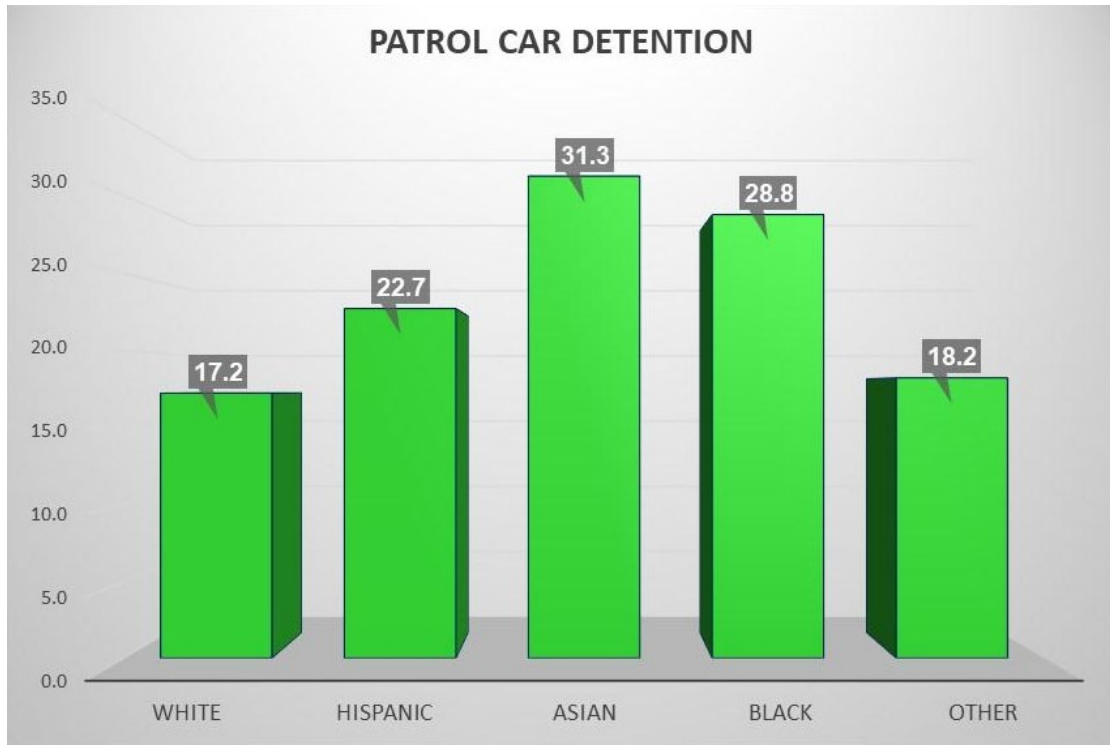
Figure 16 Patrol Car Detention (Number per 1,000 Stops)
Source: RIPA Dashboard

Physical or vehicle contact between a sheriff's deputy and an individual occurred during a stop 252 times. Of those 252 contacts, 144, or 57.1%, were Hispanic. This number represents 190% of Hispanic representation in the population and 3.3 instances per 1,000 stops population. For Asians, the number is 3.3 instances per 1,000 and 1.8 for both Whites and African Americans. (See Figure 17).
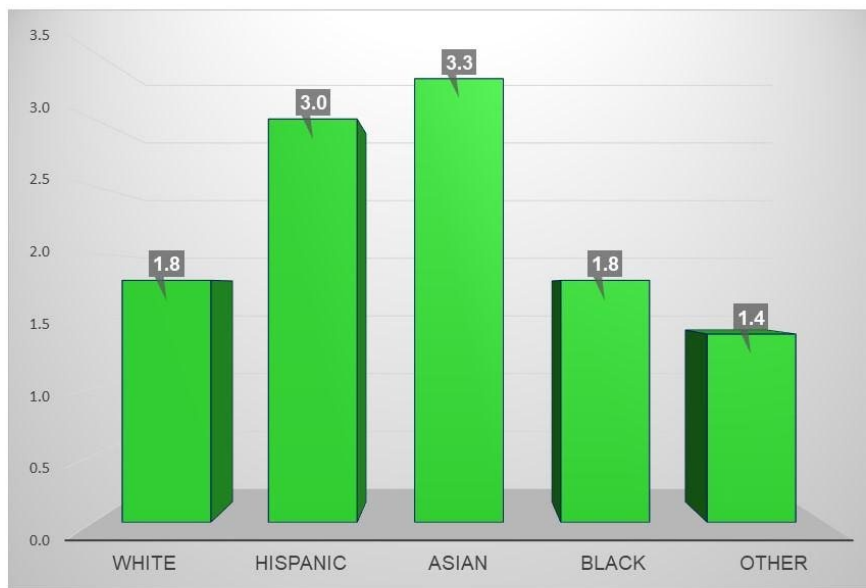
Figure 17 Physical or Vehicle Contact (Number per 1,000 Stops)
Source: RIPA Dashboard

In total, 345 people were removed from their cars by order of the sheriff's deputy, and the subjects were overwhelmingly Hispanic. The number of Hispanics removed from their vehicles was 208, more than half of all people removed from their cars, and roughly double the number of Whites removed, even though the White population percentage was considerably lower. Relative to the population, the rate of removal for Hispanic residents was 200% of their representation in the population compared to 57% for their White peers. The comparable number for African Americans was 148%. The same pattern is evident when data is analyzed by examining the number of times a person was removed from their car per 1,000 stops. When the data is examined as the number of stops per 1000, the pattern is the same: Hispanics were removed 4.3 times per 1000 and 3.5 for African Americans compared to 2.3 times for Whites. (See Figures 18 and 18A).
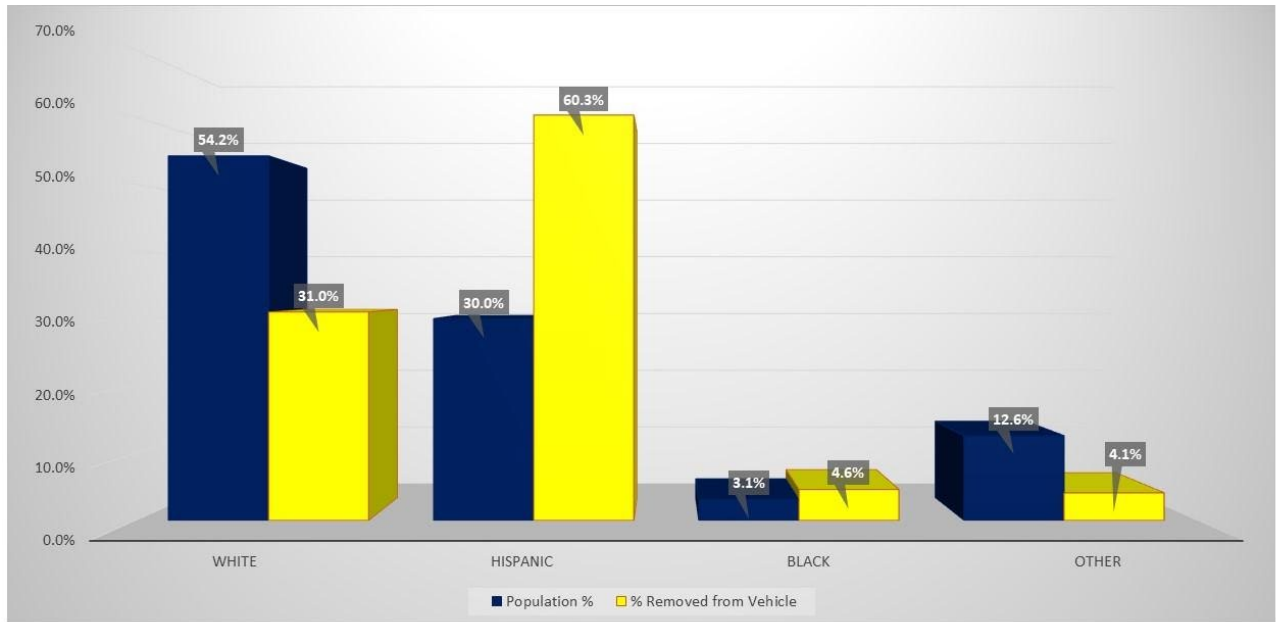
Figure 18 Percent Removed from Vehicle compared to % Population
Source: RIPA Dashboard
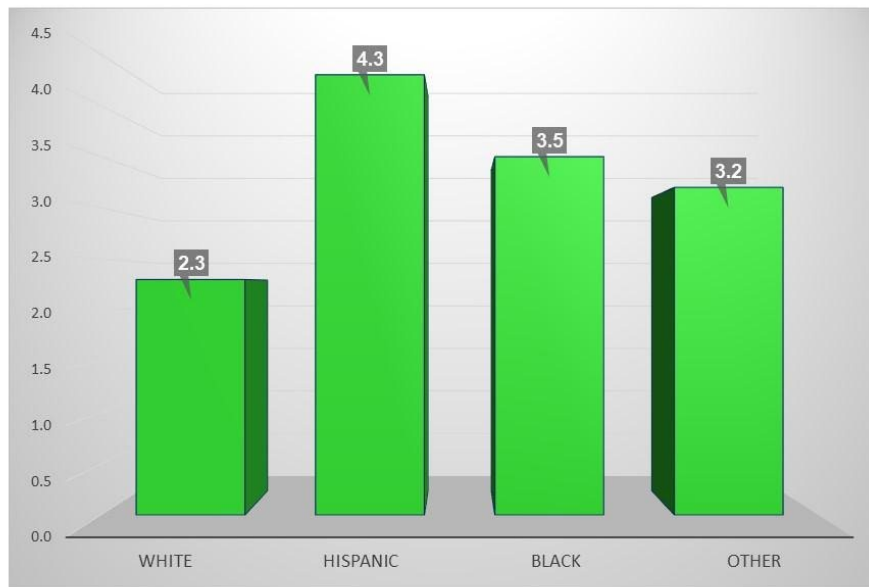
Figure 18A Removed from Vehicle (Number per 1,000 Stops)
Source: RIPA Dashboard

A pattern of disparity among racial groups is evident again in the number of times a person was handcuffed. For Hispanics, the rate was again

significantly greater than any other group, followed by African Americans and then by Whites. (See Figure 19)
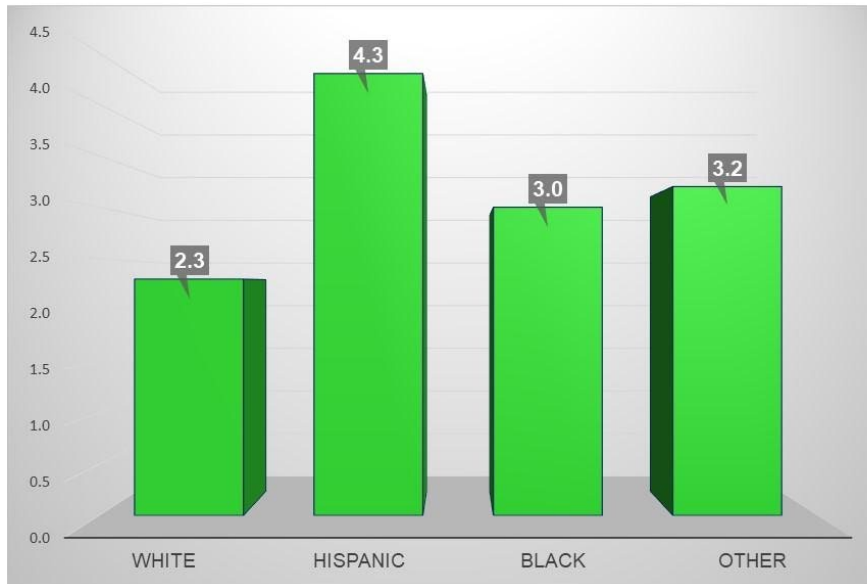
Figure 19 Handcuffed (Number per 1,000 Stops)
Source: RIPA Dashboard

People of Color are more likely to have a field interview card completed as a result of the stop than their White counterparts; however, in this case, the rate for African Americans is the highest, followed by Hispanics, and the rate for Whites is the lowest of all groups (See Figure 20).
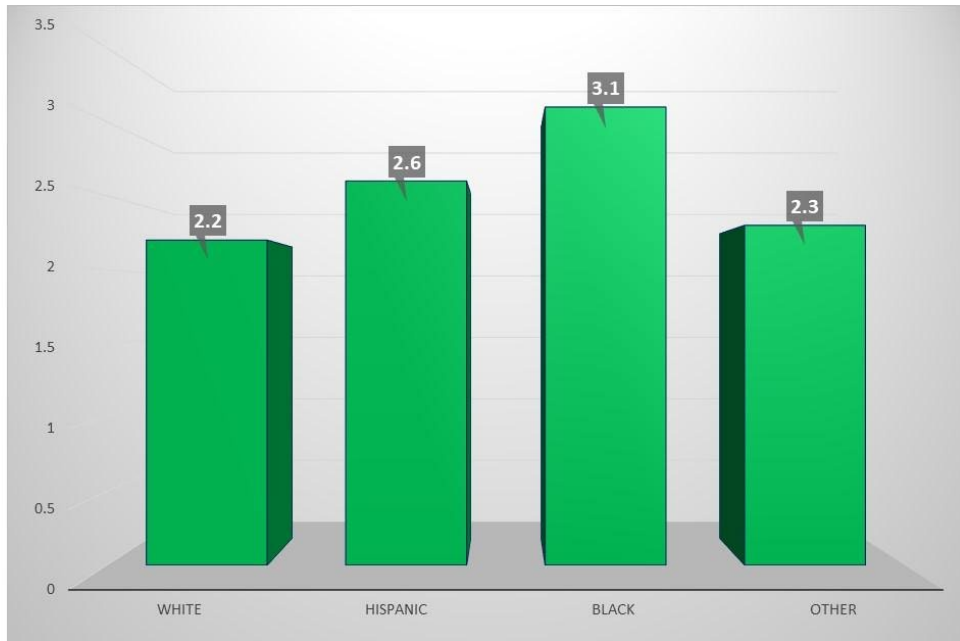
Figure 20 Field Interview Card Completed (Number per 1,000 Stops)
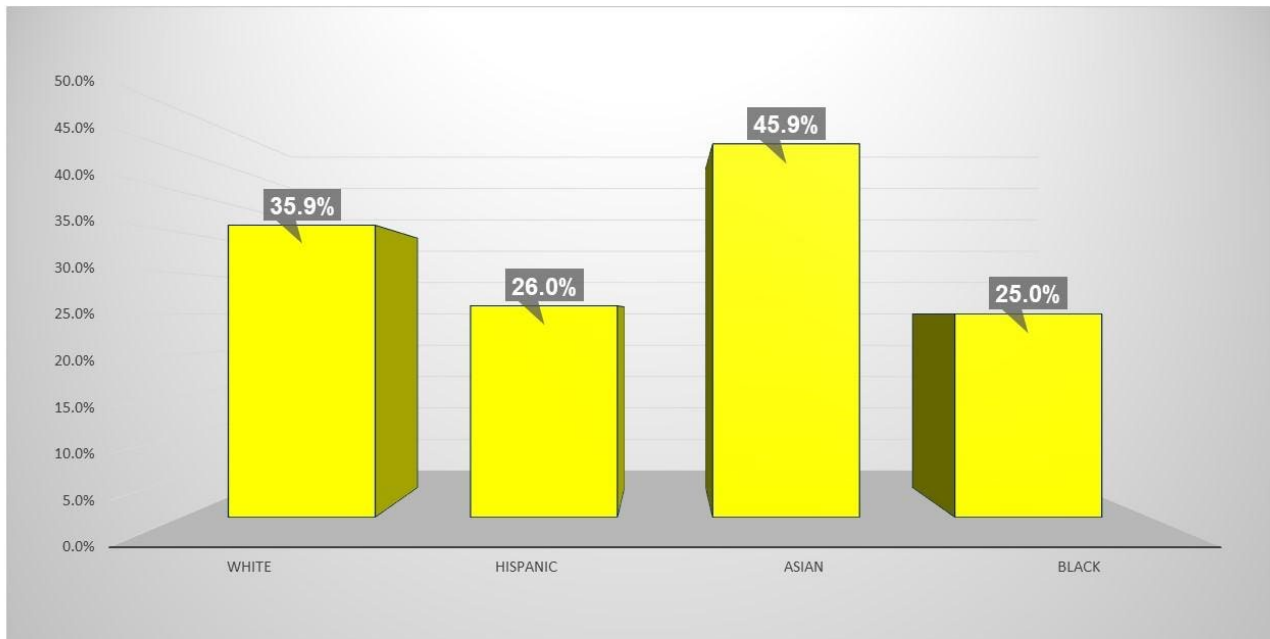Source: RIPA Dashboard

RESULT OF STOP

A citation was the most frequent action that resulted from a stop. For citations, the differences between communities of color narrow, and the percentage of citations for each group comes closer to the ratio in the population for all groups except Asians, whose percentage of citations is still far below their percentage in the population (See Figure 21 & 21A).
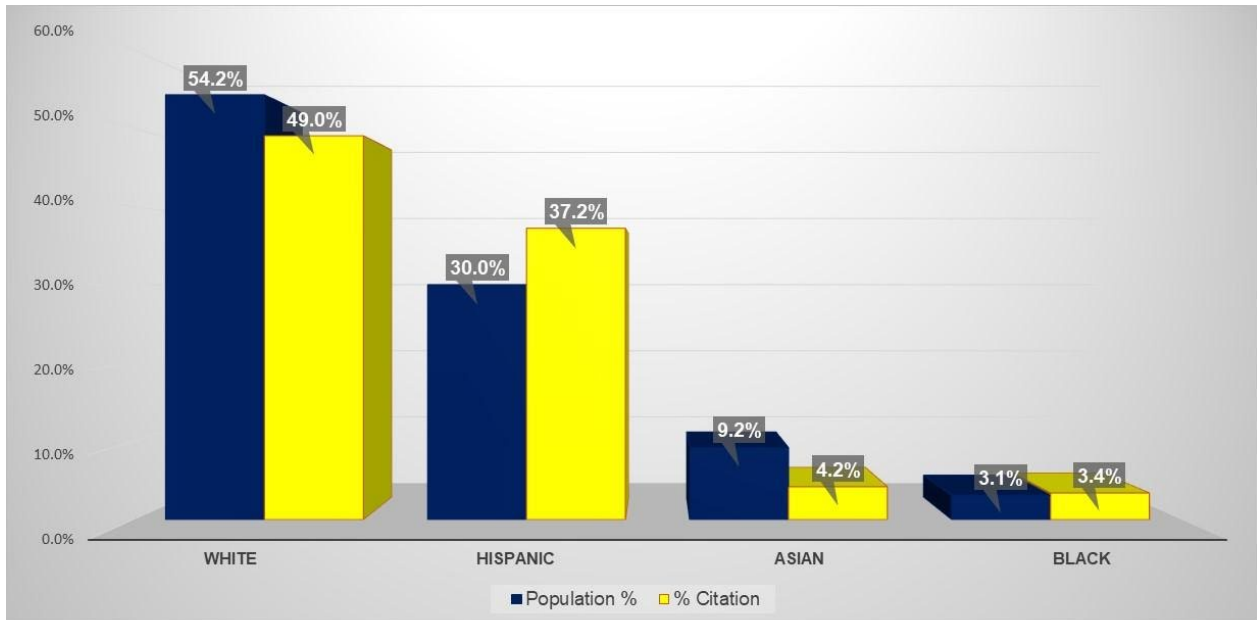
Figure 21 Percentage of Citations vs Percentage of Population
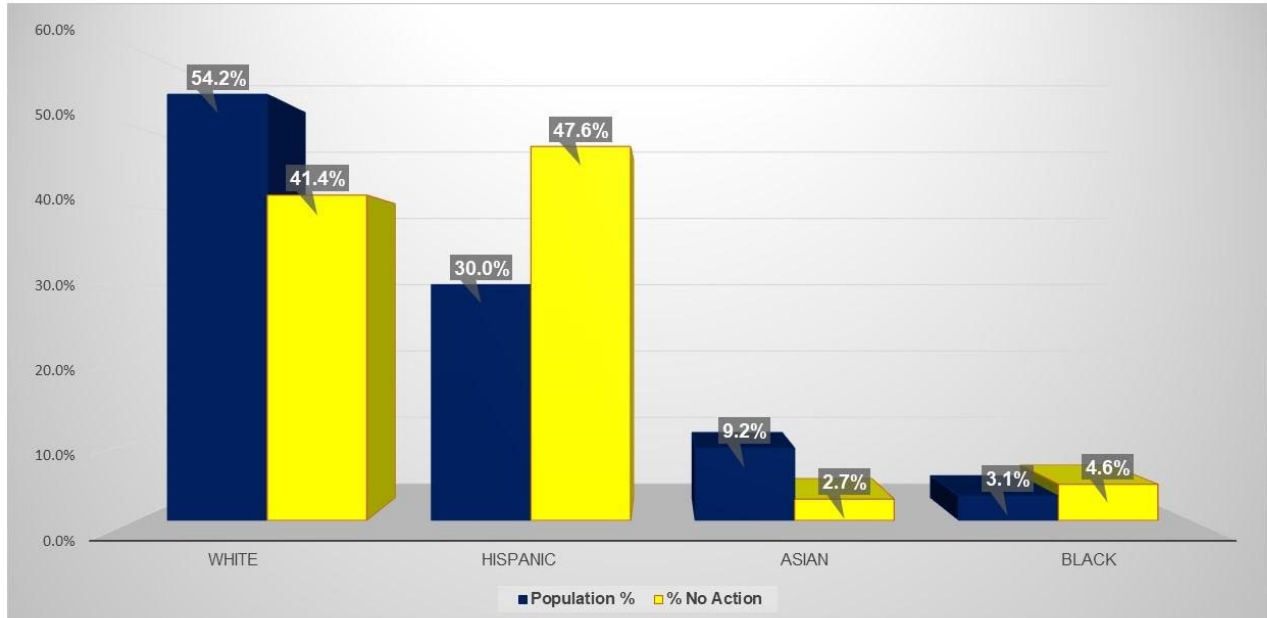Source: RIPA Dashboard

Figure 21A Percent Stops Resulting in Citation
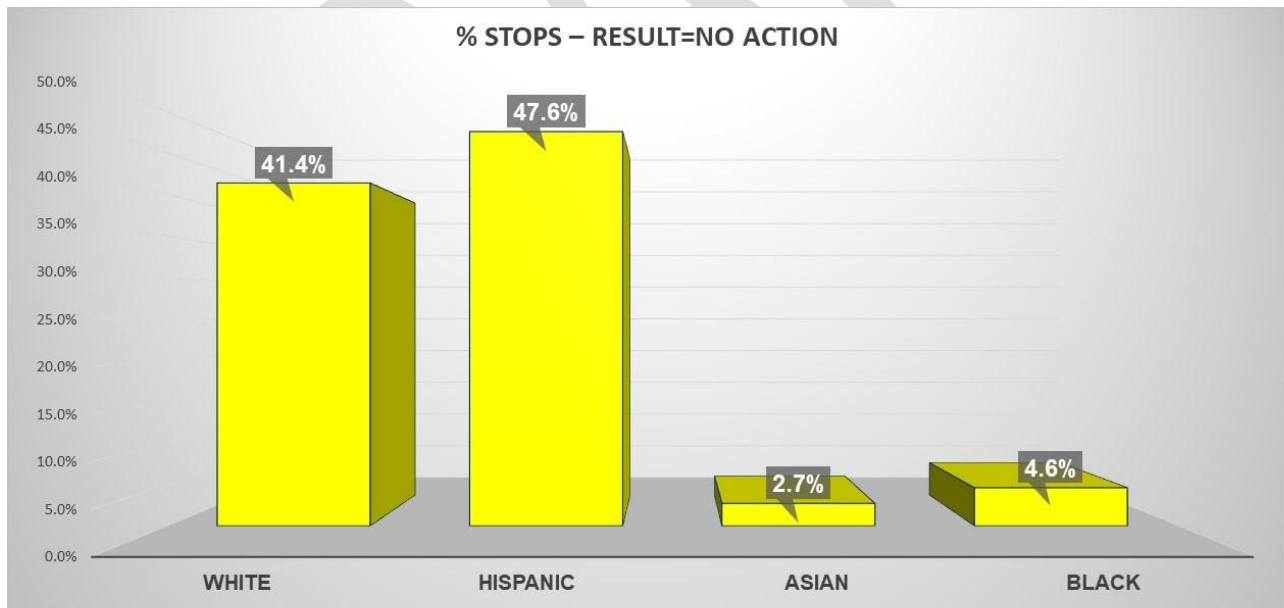Source: RIPA Dashboard

The second most frequent result is "no action." "No action" occurs more frequently for Hispanics and African Americans relative to their percentage in the population than for Whites and Asians. Hispanics were released with no action taken in cases 159 % of the time respective to their representation in the population. For African Americans, the percentage was 145% of their

representation. For Whites and Asians, the corresponding numbers are 76% and 29%. (See Figure 22 & 22A)
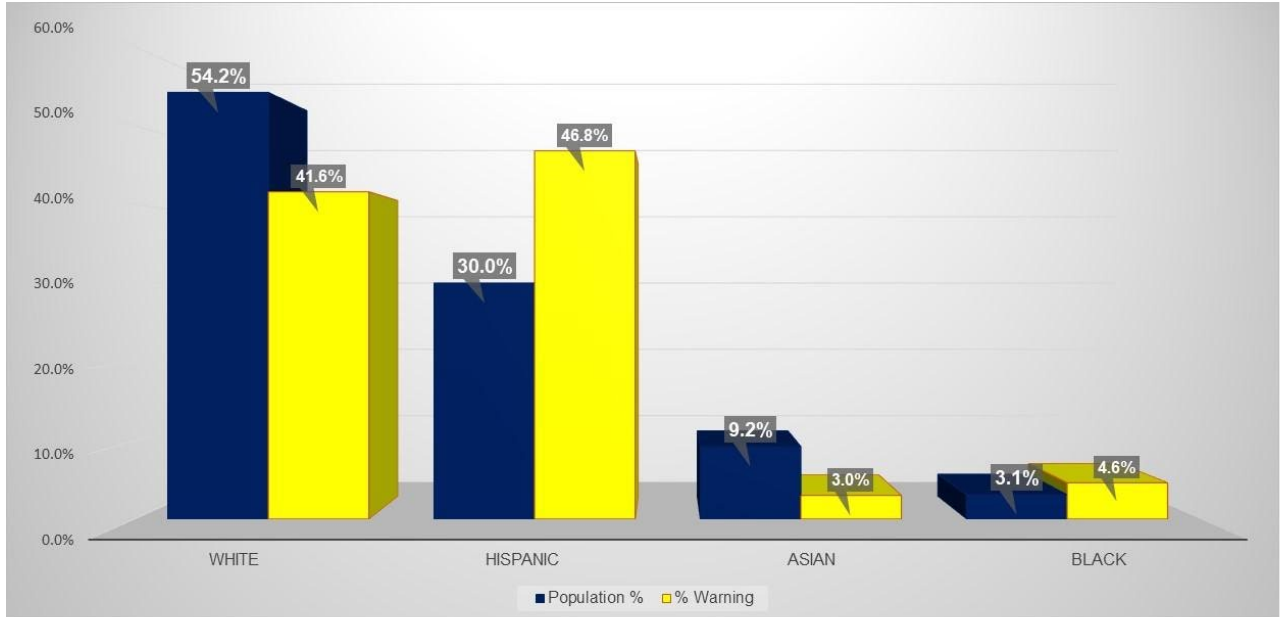

Figure 22 Percentage No Action vs Percentage of Population
Source: RIPA Dashboard

Figure 22A Percent Stops Resulting in No Action
Source: RIPA Dashboard

The same pattern exists for warnings: Hispanics and African Americans received warnings much more frequently than Whites and Asians relative to
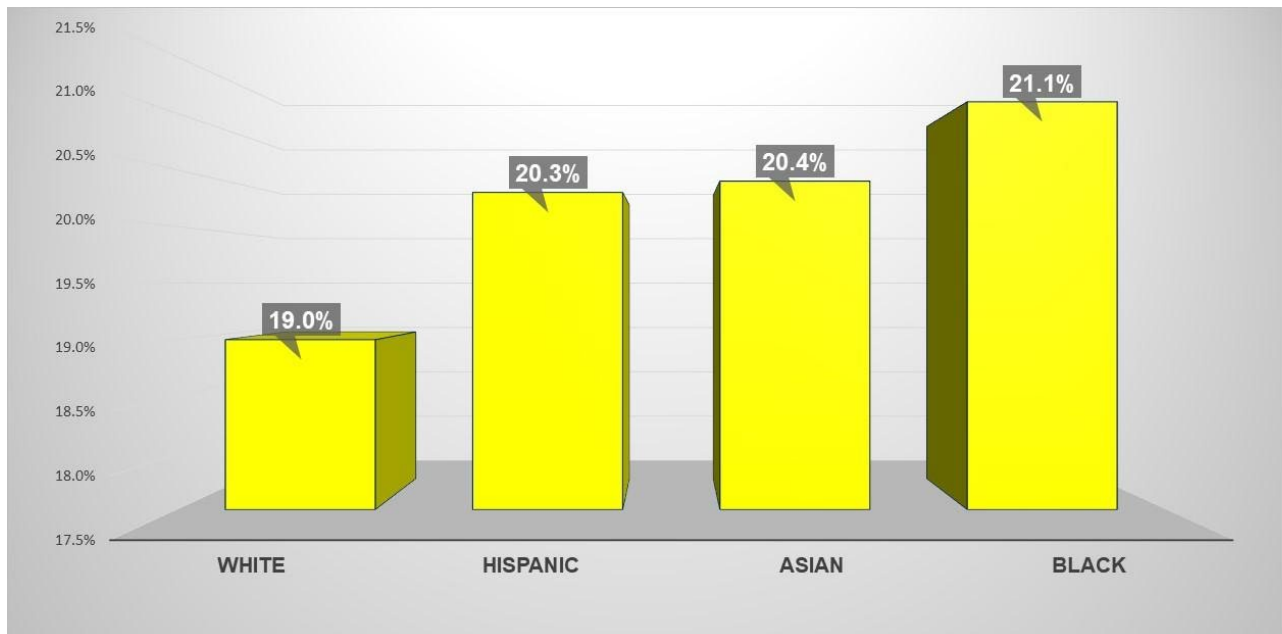
their population. Hispanics received warnings 156% of their representation in the population and African Americans 145%. In contrast, the frequency of warnings for Whites was 77% of their representation in the population and 33% for Asians. (see Figures 23 & 23A)

Figure 23 Percentage Warning vs Percentage of Population
Source: RIPA Dashboard

Figure 23A Percent Stops Resulting in a Warning
Source: RIPA Dashboard

The concern related to Hispanics and African Americans being given warnings, or no action taken more frequently than other groups is that these can be indicators of pretextual stops which research has shown more frequently target Hispanics and African Americans.[12]

Cite and Release data indicates that Hispanics are cited and released at a rate that is 176% of their representation in the population, and for African Americans, the rate is nearly identical at 177%. By contrast, the rate for Whites is 70%. (See Figures 24 & 24A)

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[12] Murphy, R. (2021). Illinois Traffic Stops Still Disproportionately Targets Black Drivers. *ACLU Illinois. https://www.aclu-il.org/en/news/illinois-traffic-stops-still-disproportionately-targets-black-drivers*
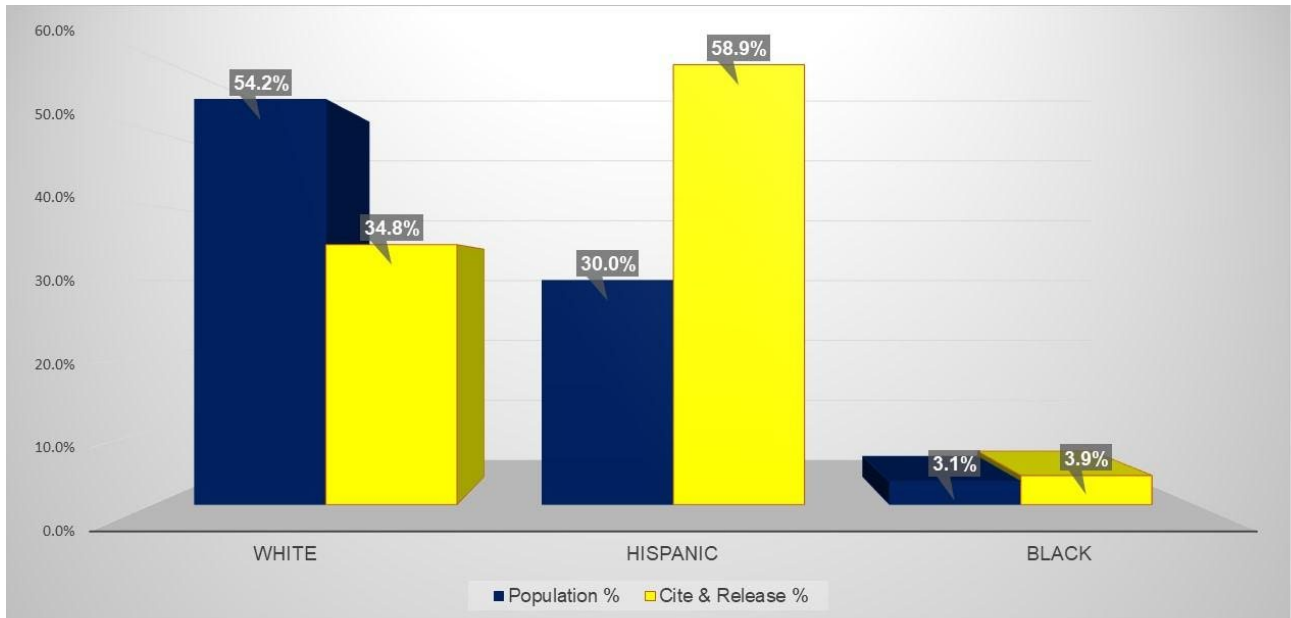
Figure 24 Percentage Cite & Release vs Percentage of Population
Source: RIPA Dashboard
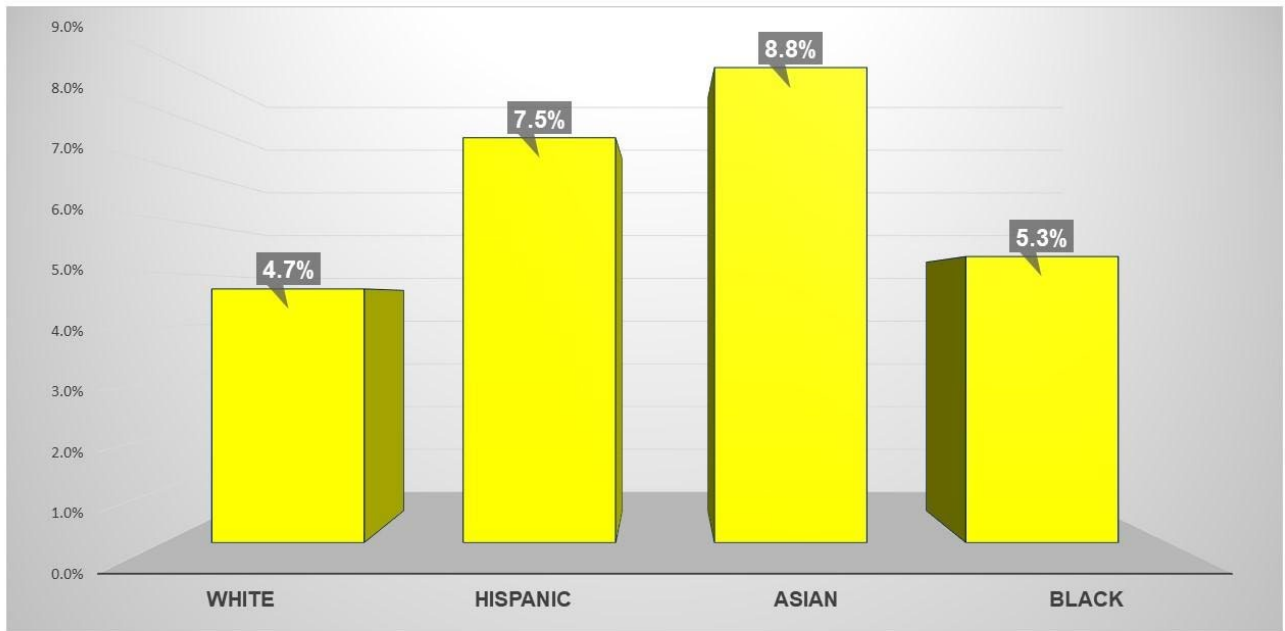
Figure 24A Percent Stops Where Result is In-Field Cite & Release
Source: RIPA Dashboard

Field Interview cards are completed at the discretion of the deputy making the stop and imply the need to document the presence of a person in a given neighborhood under certain specific circumstances. Field Interview cards are completed far more frequently for Hispanic individuals and African Americans than Whites or others. For African Americans, the cards are

completed at a rate that is 200% of their representation in the population, and for Hispanics, the corresponding rate is 157%. For Whites, the percentage is 76%, and 106% for all others. (See Figures 25 & 25A)
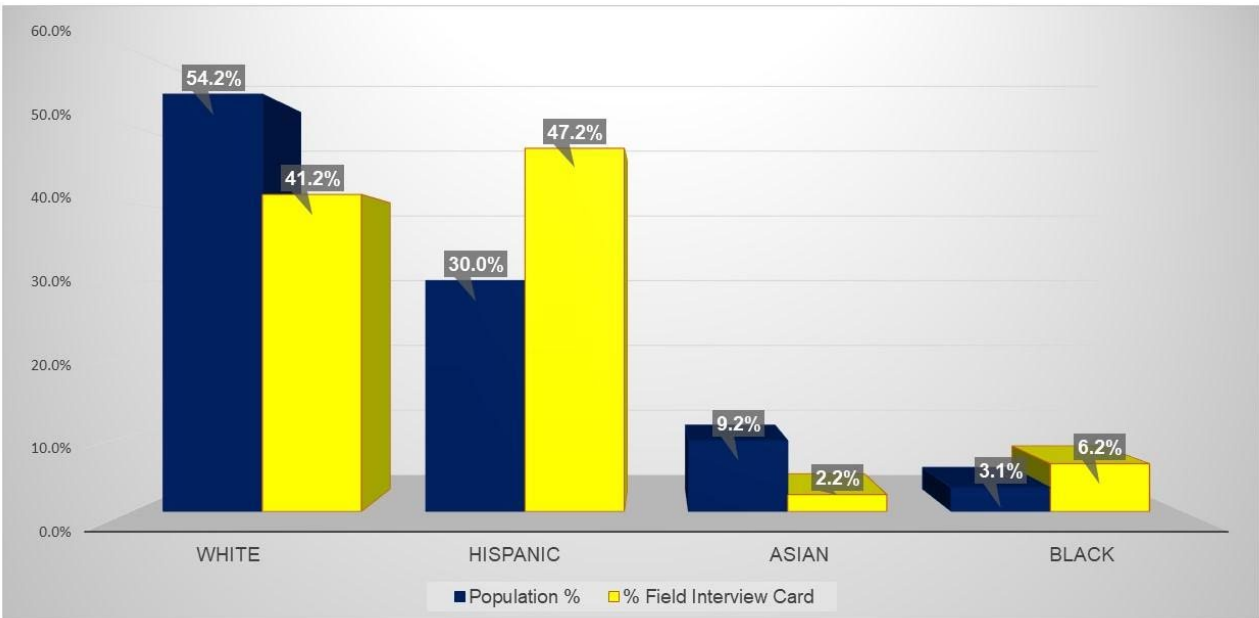
Figure 25 Field Interview Cards vs Percentage of Population
Source: RIPA Dashboard
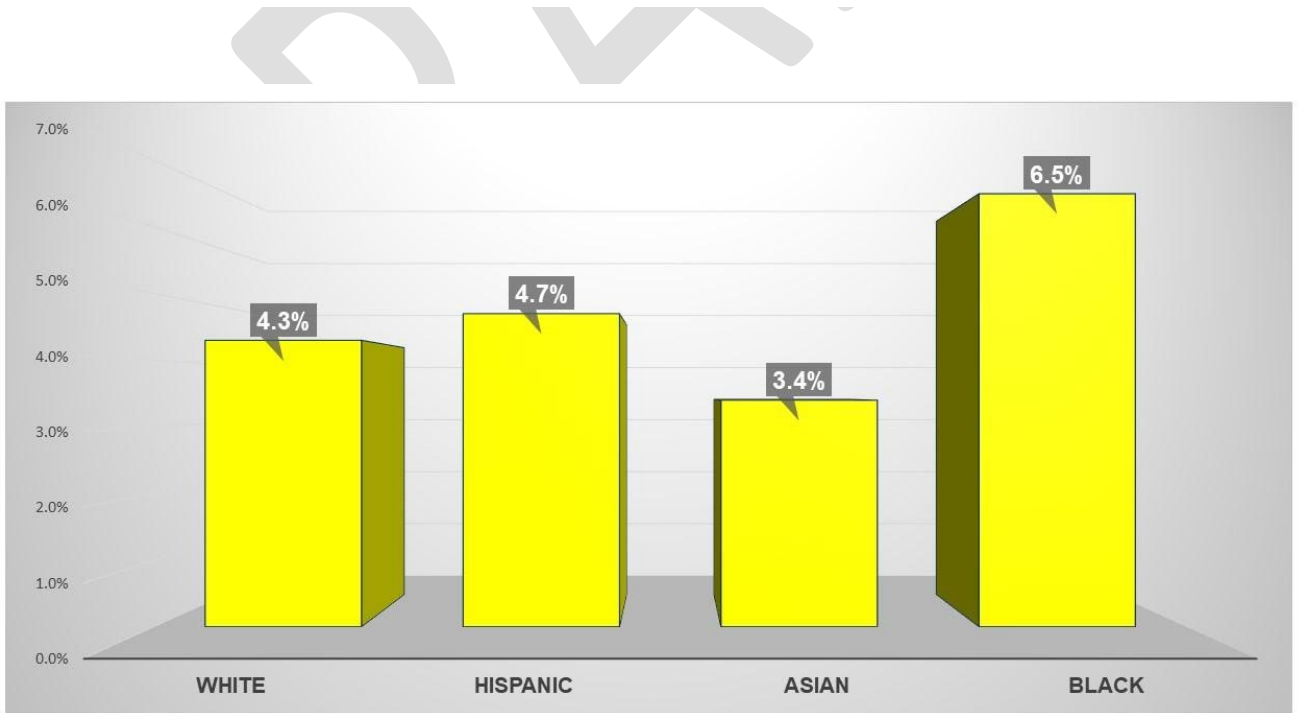
Figure 25A Percent Stops Resulting in Completion of Field Interview Card
Source: RIPA Dashboard

ARRESTS

The RIPA Dashboard shows Hispanics are arrested at a rate that is 185% of their representation in the population.

African Americans are arrested at a rate that is 139% of their representation in the population. Whites, on the other hand, are arrested at a rate of 63.4% of their representation. (See Figure 26)
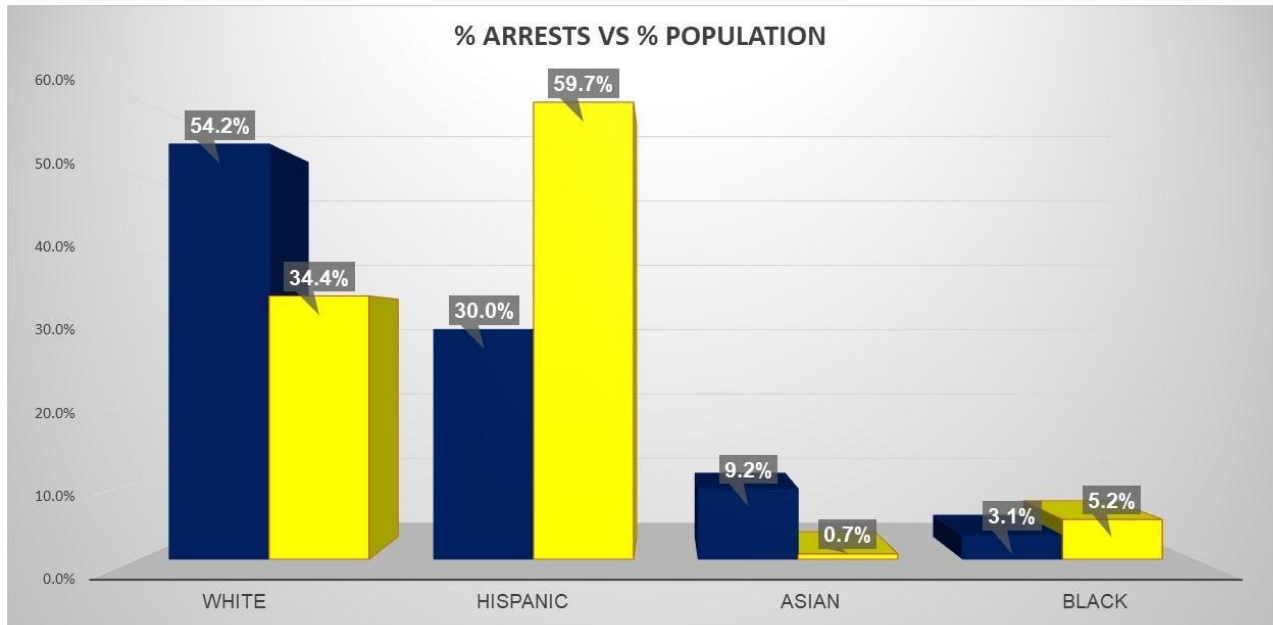
Figure 26 Stops Resulting in Arrest Compared to Population
Source: RIPA Dashboard

When the arrest data is broken down according to those arrests without a warrant and those pursuant to a warrant, the data yields the following result. For arrests without a warrant, Hispanics were arrested at a rate that was 136% of their representation, African Americans at 195%, and Whites at 95%. (See Figure 27) If the arrests are examined as a percentage of stops for the respective groups, Hispanics are arrested at a rate of 9.1%, African Americans at 10%, and Whites at 6.9% (See Figure 28).

Figure 27 Stops Resulting in Arrest without Warrant Compared to Population
Source: RIPA Dashboard
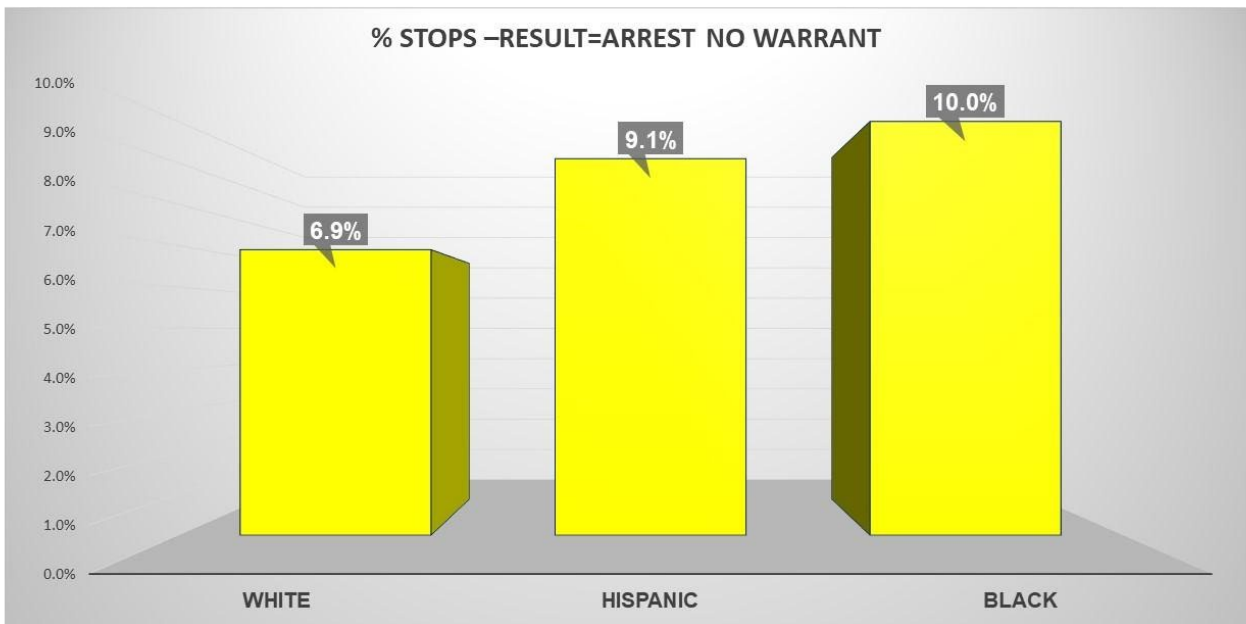
Figure 28 Percent of Stops That Result in Arrest with No Warrant
Source: RIPA Dashboard

For arrests pursuant to a warrant, Hispanics are arrested at a rate that is 198% of their representation in the population, African Americans at 116%, and Whites at 65% (See Figure 29). When the data is examined as a
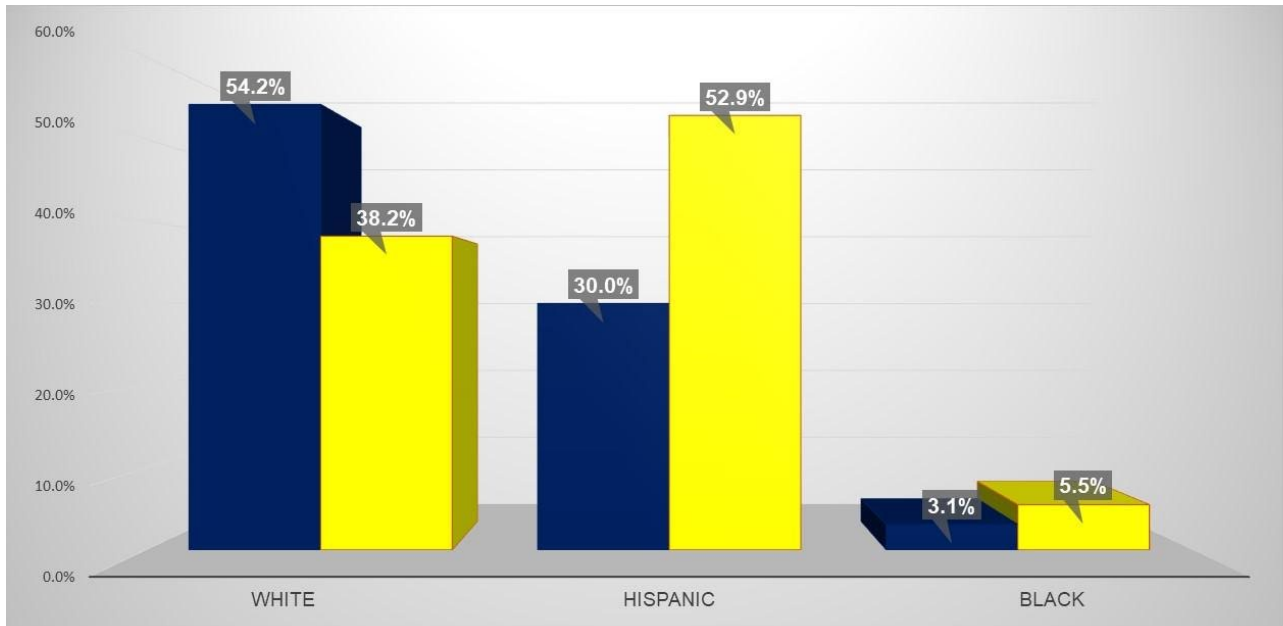
percentage of stops, the numbers are 3.7% for Hispanics, 2.3% for African Americans, and 2.3% for Whites (See Figure 30)
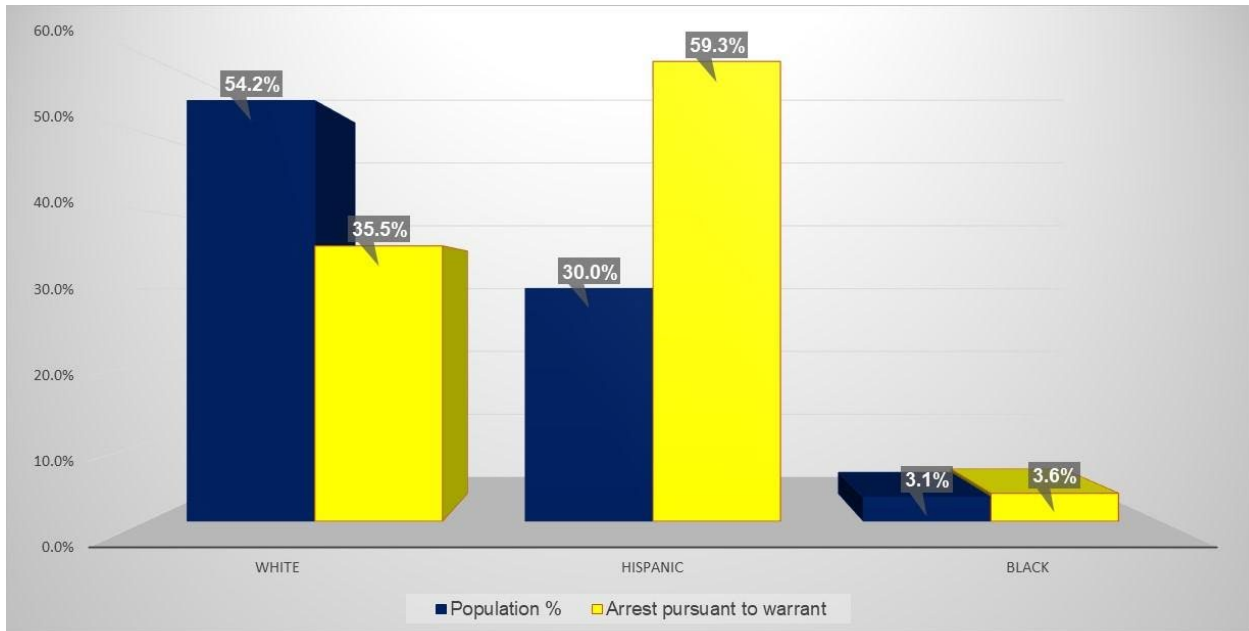
Figure 29 Stops Resulting in Arrest with a Warrant Compared to Population
Source: RIPA Dashboard

Figure 30 Percent Stops That Result in Arrest with a Warrant
Source: RIPA Dashboard

Arrest data, as reported to the California State Department of Justice, is broken down into three categories: Misdemeanor, Felony, and Status. The Status category typically refers to an individual's legal status. This could include being arrested for status as a minor, parole terms, or immigration-related detention due to visa violations or other legal issues regarding one's residency status. Essentially, it's an arrest made not necessarily for a new criminal offense but for a status-related reason.
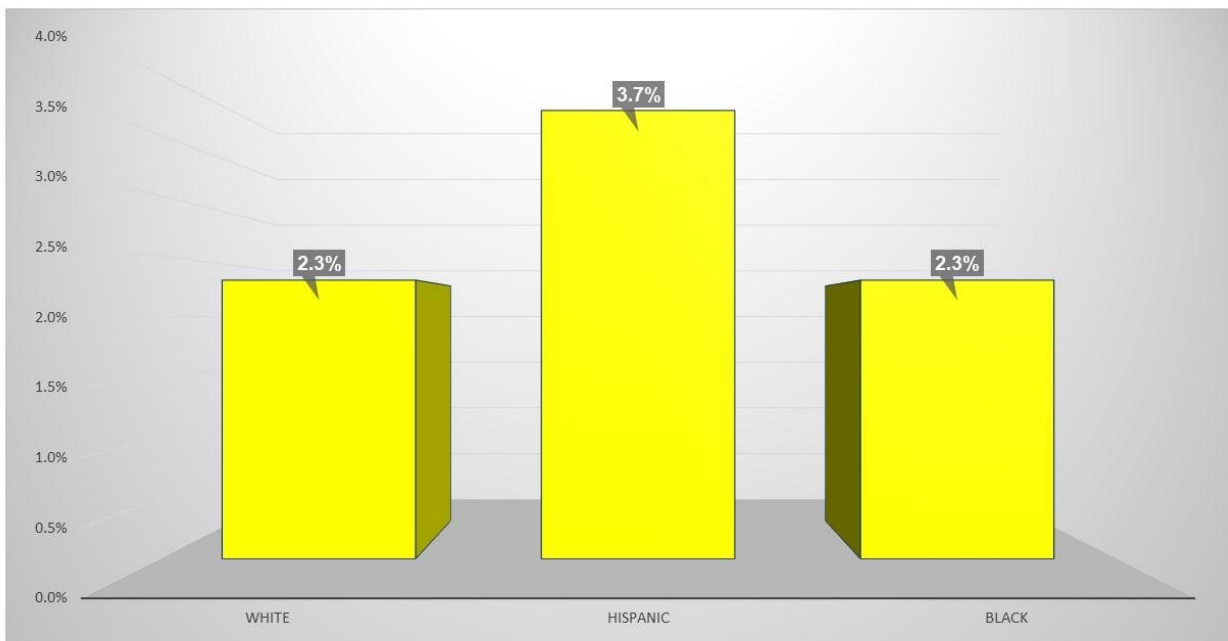
The results show that for the White population, the arrest rate varied from 32.8 percent of their representation in the population for status arrests to 51.4% for Misdemeanors and 62.7% for Felonies. For the Hispanic Population, the corresponding percentages were 257% for status arrests, 206% for misdemeanors, and 197% for felonies. For African Americans, the numbers were 106%, 223%, and 142% (See Figure 31).
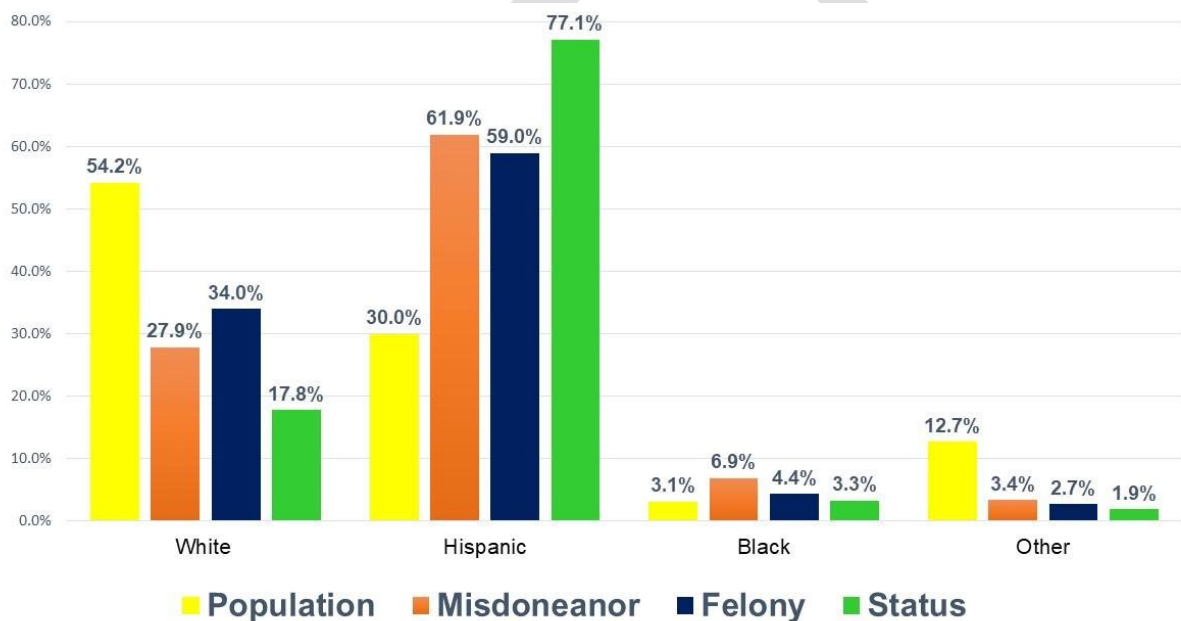
Figure 31 Percent of Total Arrests by Race for CY 2022
Source: California DOJ Open Justice Data Portal

RESISTING ARREST

The data on resisting arrests was first analyzed by comparing the percentage of people in a given racial or ethnic group cited for resisting arrest to the percentage of that group in the population. The results showed wide variation between the rates at which Hispanic and African American individuals were charged with resisting arrest and the rate at which their White peers were charged. Hispanics were charged at a rate that was equal

to 210% of their representation in the population, and African Americans were charged at a rate that was 216 % of their representation in the population. On the other hand, Whites were charged at a rate that was 54.6% of their representation, and Asians were charged at a significantly lower rate of 10.9%

Resisting Arrest data was further analyzed by calculating the frequency of resisting arrest for a given ethnic group as a percentage of that group's total number of arrests.

The data showed a similar pattern to the previous analysis for Hispanics and African Americans compared to Whites.

Whites were charged with resisting arrest in 0.58% of all White arrests, Hispanics were charged at a rate of 0.79% of their arrests (1.4 times the rate for Whites), and African Americans were charged with resisting arrests at a rate of 1.03% of their arrests (1.8 times the White rate). One outlier in the data was the percentage of Asians charged with resisting arrest when compared with total Asian arrests. Asians were charged with resisting arrest in 3.13% of their arrests, which is several times larger than any other racial or ethnic group. This result stands in contrast to the previous analysis, which shows that the number of charges for resisting arrest among Asians in comparison to their representation in the population is lower than any other group. The sample in this instance is too small to draw specific conclusions related to this contrast. Out of 43,416 arrests, only 93, or 0.2% were Asian. As a result, a few charges of resisting arrest in a given year could dramatically alter this percentage. (See Figures 32 & 33)
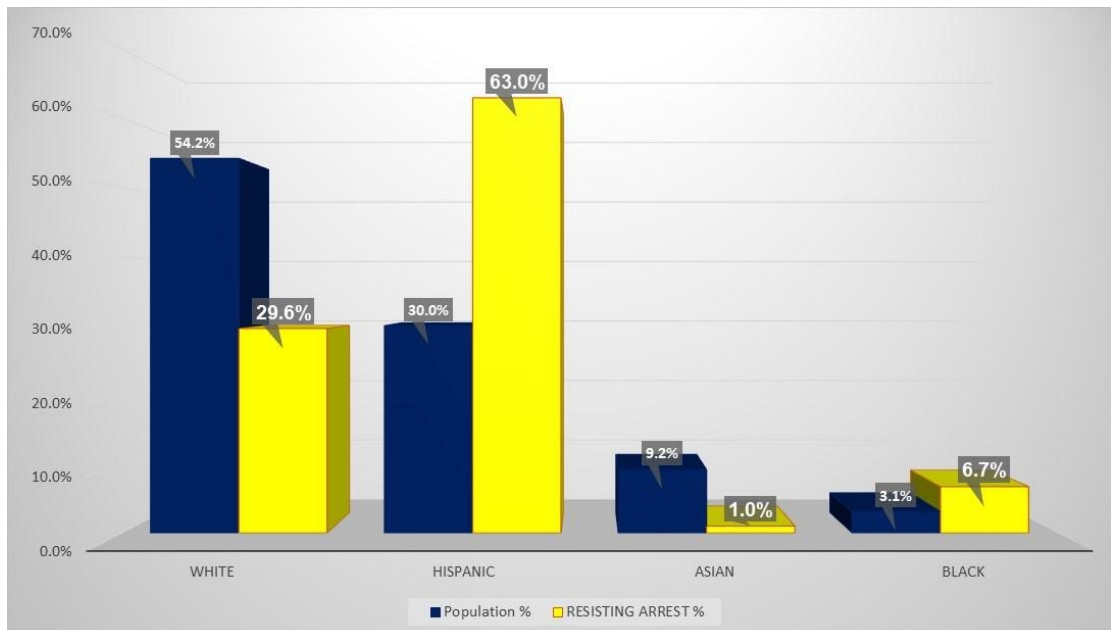
Figure 32 Percent Resisting Arrest Charges Compared to Population
Source: Data Provided by VCSO
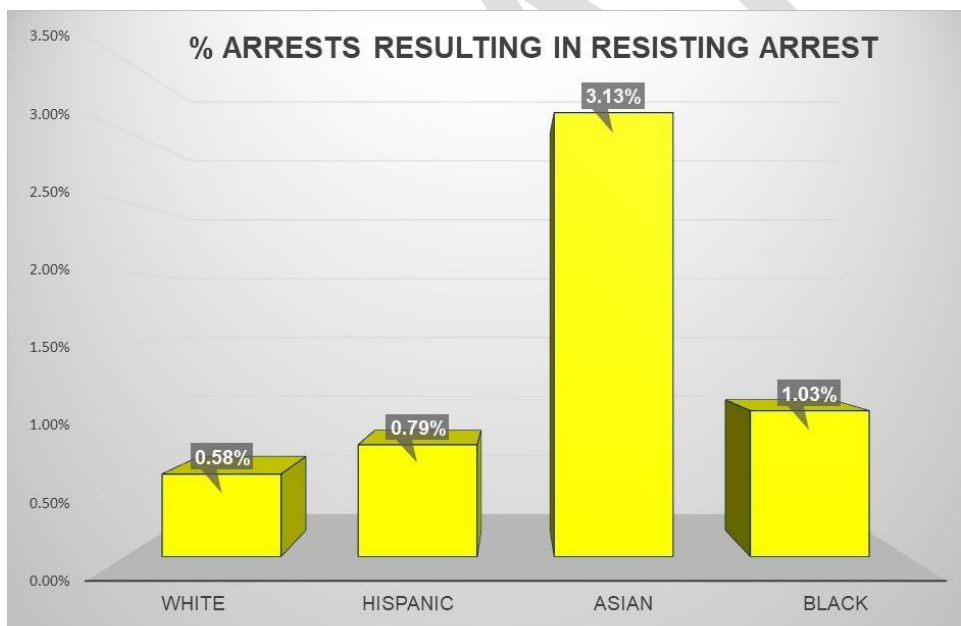
Figure 33 Resisting Arrest Charges as a Percent of all Arrests
Source: Data Provided by VCSO

USE OF FORCE

Most police law enforcement agencies, including the VCSO, require that when force is employed, it must be both necessary and proportional to the circumstances. Moreover, deadly force should only be used if all other

reasonable means have been exhausted. Data from the VCSO Presentation to the PSREAG in July 2023 indicated a pattern consistent with this policy. Of the 530 Use of Force incidents in 2022, non-deadly force was used in 74.2% of the cases; intermediate force (pointing weapon, takedown, control hold, hand strike, taser, etc.) was used 25.7% percent of the time, and deadly force was used only once, or 0.2% of the times (See Figure 34)
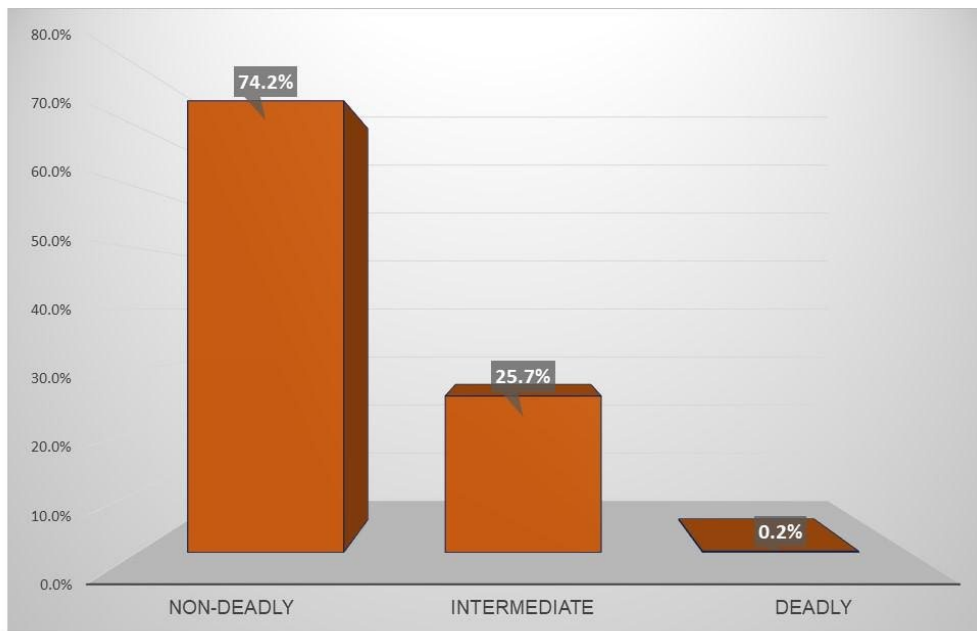
Figure 34 Use of force by Type in CY 2022
VCSO Presentation to PSREAG July 2023

Force was employed against Hispanics and African Americans in far greater proportions than their White counterparts. In the calendar year 2022, Hispanics were subjected to the use of force by sheriff's deputies at a rate that was 184 percent of their representation in the population, African Americans 139% and Whites 52%. If the rates are adjusted for the frequency with which each ethnic group is stopped, the same inequities exist. Force was employed against White persons in 1.2% of their stops, whereas force was used against African Americans in 2.9% of their stops, a rate more than double their White counterparts. For Hispanics, the rate was 1.7%, which is also significantly higher than that of Whites. (See Figures 35 & 36)
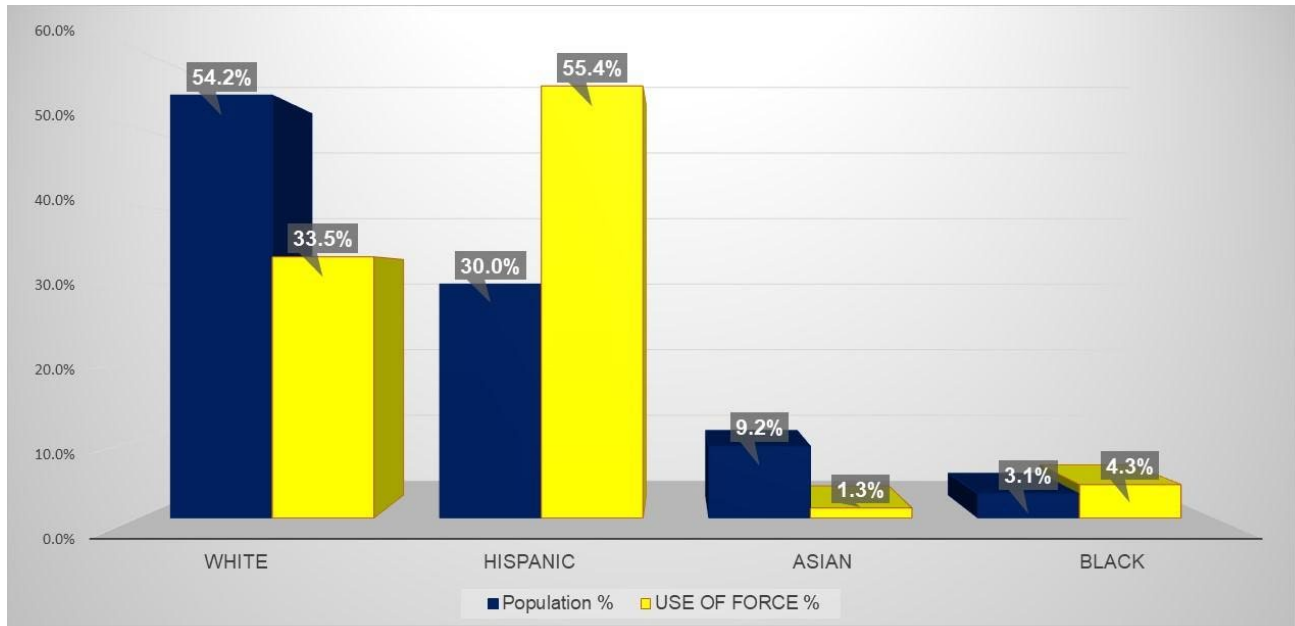
Figure 35 All Instances of Use of Force in CY 2022 Compared to Population
VCSO Presentation to PSREAG July 2023
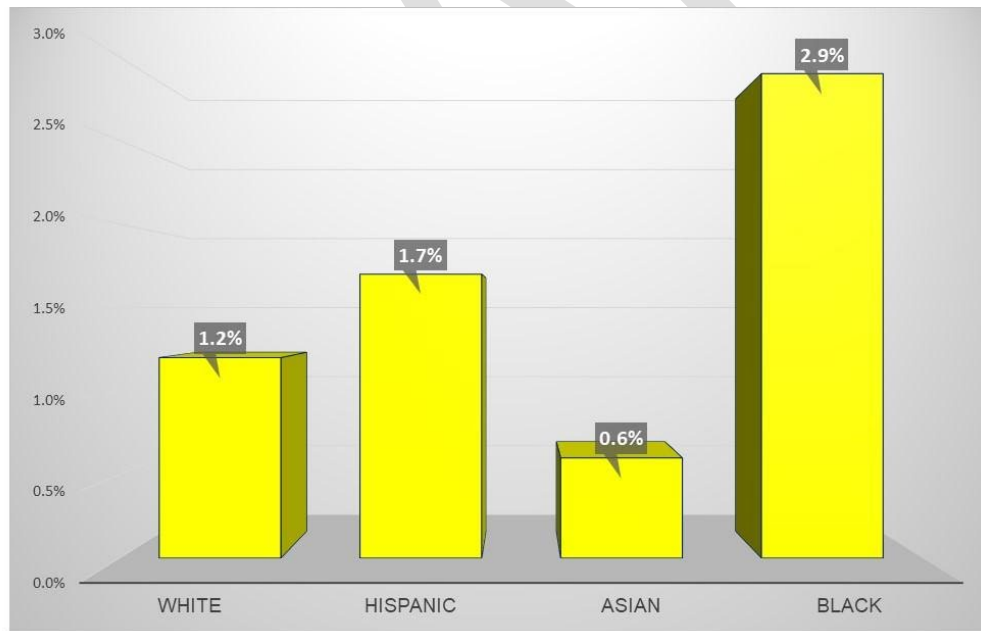
Figure 36 Use of force as a Percent of All Stops in CY 2022
VCSO Presentation to PSREAG July 2023

VICTIMS

The Victim Data on the RIPA Dashboard indicates that People of Color, including Hispanics, Asians, and African Americans, are victims of crimes at

rates substantially less than their White peers. The data reveals that Hispanics represent only 18.6 percent of the victims, even though they represent 30% of the population. On the other hand, their White counterparts represent 54.2% of the population and a roughly equal percentage of the victims (48.8). The rate for Asians is 1.8% compared to 9.2% of the population, and for African Americans, the numbers are 1.9% compared with 3.1%. (See Figure 37)

This result can be attributed to many different causes, including socioeconomic differences that make Whites more likely targets of crime. Alternatively, the data may indicate that People of Color are less likely to report crimes than Whites. The latter conclusion is consistent with other research that has found, for example, that Hispanics are less likely to report crimes committed against them than their White peers. The PSREAG research paper entitled "Immigration Enforcement, Public Safety, And Racial Equity In Ventura County" concluded that "evidence supports the notion that immigrants are less likely to report crime either as witnesses or as victims when local law enforcement is known to voluntarily cooperate with ICE, particularly concerning crimes that are sensitive in nature such as sexual violence or domestic violence."

Finally, it should be noted that 29.9% of the victims were in the classifications of unknown race, two or more races, and other races, which is an ambiguity that could dramatically change the conclusions that can be drawn from the victim data. Consequently, the Victim data must be considered inconclusive. (See Figure 37)
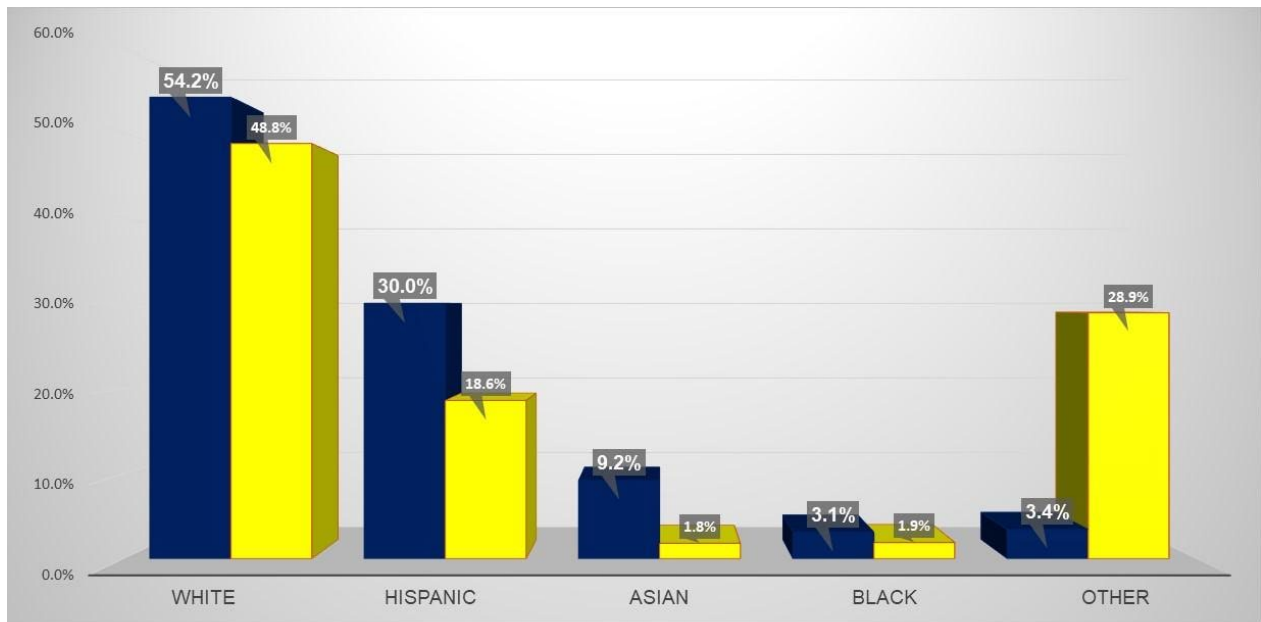
Figure 37 Victims Compared to Population
Source: RIPA Dashboard

SUSPECTS

The RIPA dashboard shows that Hispanics represent 33.6 % of suspects and 30.0 % of the population. African Americans represent 3.1% of the population and 6.0% of suspects. (See Figure 38). Additional data provided by the Sheriff presents 2022 "Crime Report Suspect Descriptions" by ethnicity. The divergence from population statistics is even more dramatic in this subset of the suspect data, with Hispanic suspects at 49.2% of suspects and African Americans representing 15.3%. However, the RIPA data shows that over one-third of the suspects are of unknown ethnicity. This makes it difficult to draw definitive conclusions since the unknown number could dramatically change the balance between any of the represented groups. The Crime Report Suspect Descriptions data has a similar ambiguity resulting from the fact that it did not include individuals whose ethnicity was not recorded, and we have no idea of the size of this "unknown" population.
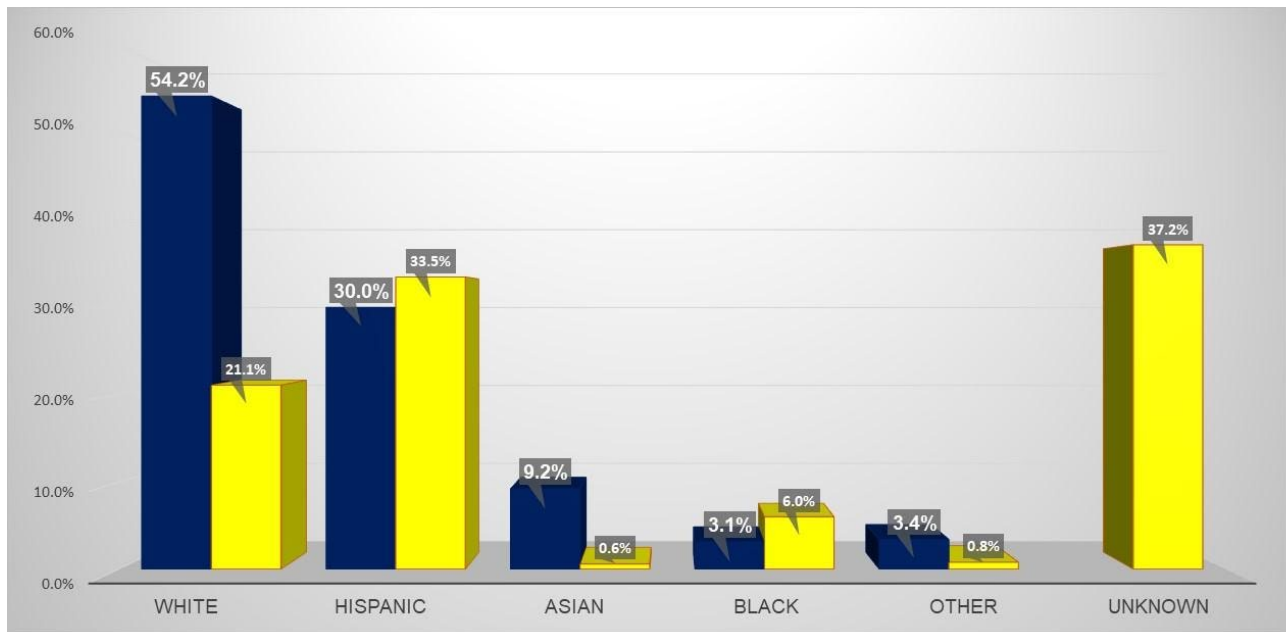
Figure 38 Suspects Compared to Population
Source: RIPA Dashboard

COMPLAINTS

Ventura County Complaint data show that in the six years from 2016 to 2022, 584 complaints were filed, an average of 97 per year. Current data on the average number of complaints per agency nationwide was unavailable. However, data from a 2002 study by the Bureau of Justice found that the nationwide average was 6.6 per 100 sworn officers. For the Ventura County Sheriff's Office, this would equate to 51 yearly complaints.

Of the 584 complaints, 54 were sustained, a rate of 9.2% for all complaints. When the complaint is based on race, the picture changes dramatically. In the six years between 2016 and 2022, there have been 80 complaints based on race; during that time, none were sustained. (See Figure 39)
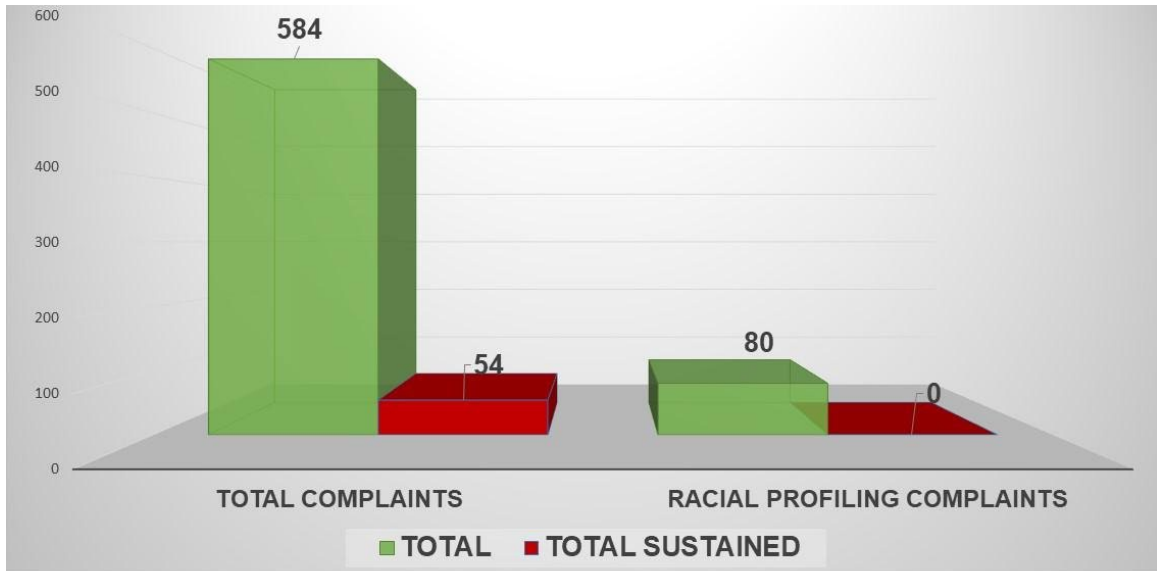
Figure 39 Sustained Complaints Compared to Total Complaints 2016 to 2022
Source Data Provided by VCSO in September 2021

Data on the origin of complaints was available between 2016 and 2021.

Complaints are designated as having originated within the department or from citizens. The data shows that 2 to 4 department complaints are sustained for every citizen complaint. (See Figure 40)
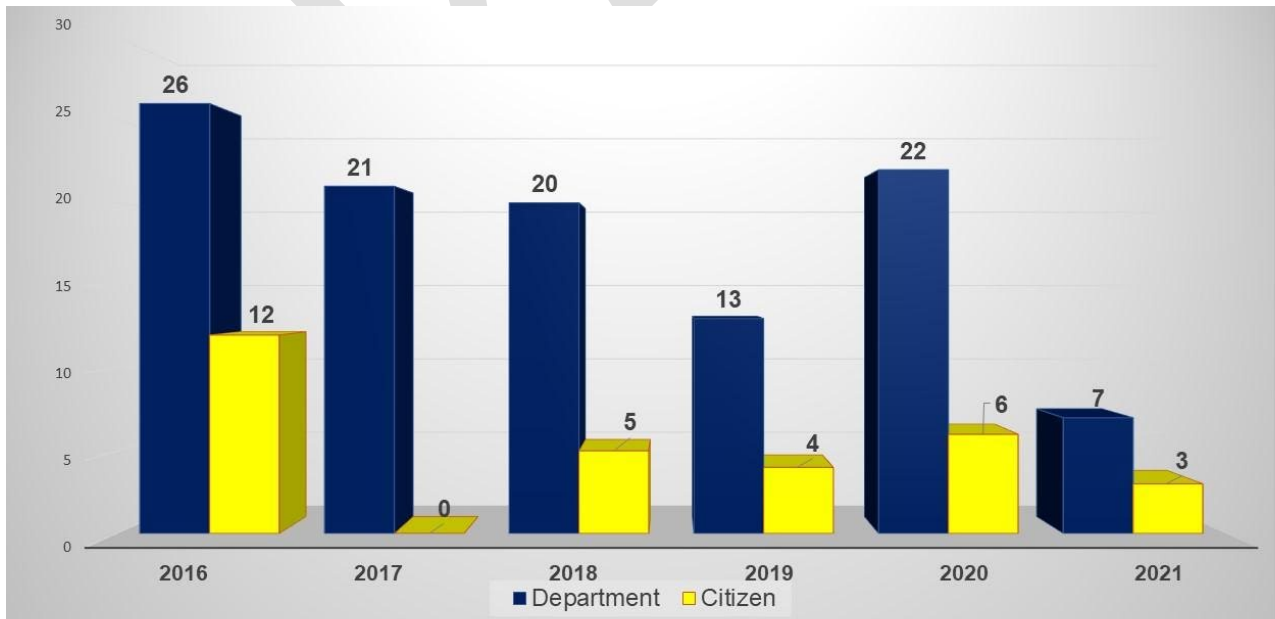
Figure 40 Sustained Complaints by Origin - CY2021
Source: Data Provided by VCSO in September 2021

DISCUSSION

What the Data Shows

The analysis shows that the outcomes of encounters with Ventura County Sheriff's deputies are consistently more negative for Hispanic and African American people than for their White counterparts. RIPA data was not consistently available for Asian and Middle Eastern populations because, in most cases, they were lumped into a category labeled "Other."

This propensity for adverse outcomes for Hispanic and African American individuals is consistent across a wide range of encounters. Relative to their representation in the population, Hispanics and African Americans are more likely to:

- have force used against them
- be arrested
- be charged with resisting arrest
- be searched
- be subjected to curbside detention,
- be subjected to patrol car detention,
- be handcuffed
- be removed from their vehicle,
- have field interview cards filled out for them,
- be subject to status arrests (Hispanic)

This pattern of disparate impact could result from many factors other than their race. It could be a random outcome, and it could be because African American and brown people commit more crimes, it could be because these two groups fail to cooperate with deputies when stopped, or a combination of all of these.

However, when nearly every variable for which we have data shows the same consistent pattern of disparate impact for African American and Hispanics, one must consider the possibility that race and ethnicity are contributing factors to these outcomes. Additional data is required to further examine this premise.

These trends are not unique to Ventura County but are consistent experiences and studies nationwide. The following paragraphs discuss data

and trends from Ventura County in the context of findings and experiences from other jurisdictions nationwide.

REASONABLE SUSPICION

Reasonable suspicion is the legal standard that allows police to stop and question someone based on a reasonable belief that they are involved in criminal activity. There is ample evidence that many police officers, motivated by explicit or implicit bias, *believe* that race can be an indicator of criminality.[13]

As a 2018 federal commission on police practices noted:

> Studies show that law enforcement officers hold many of the same biases as the general public, and in implicit bias tests, patterns are nearly universal. African American people (especially African American men) are more often associated with or quickly paired with being 'threatening' and this tends to hold true regardless of the race or ethnicity of the person taking the test.[14]

Former FBI Director James Comey put the issue more bluntly:

> A mental shortcut becomes almost irresistible and maybe even rational by some lights. The two young African American men on one side of the street look like so many others the officer has locked up. Two White men on the other side of the same street – even in the same clothes – do not. The officer does not make the same association about the two White guys, whether that officer is African American or White. And that drives different behavior.[15]

This explicit or implicit bias explains some, if not most, of the higher rates of stops and arrests against African American and Hispanic individuals.[16]

Studies have shown how reasonable suspicion has been utilized in four major U.S. cities, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Chicago, and New York, to provide empirical evidence of said policy's racially discriminatory outcomes.

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[13] Simmons, *supra* note 9.

[14] U.S. Commission on Civil Rights. (2018). *Police Use of Force: An Examination of Modern Policing Practices.* https://www.usccr.gov/files/pubs/2018/11-15-Police-Force.pdf

[15] *Ibid.*

[16] Simmons, *supra* note 9.

[17] [18] [19] [20]Such abuses are not simply hypothetical but are the daily reality for millions of minorities.

These four case studies of cities show that police have considerable power to stop citizens and perform searches based on minimal facts. However, the implications of this point differ depending on who the citizen is and where they live. The unfortunate fact is that reasonable suspicion has resulted in stops and frisks of residents of inner cities-primarily poor persons, African Americans, and Hispanic Americans-far out of proportion to their numbers, and often without justification.

Data from the Ventura County Sheriff indicate a similar pattern to that of the studies mentioned above. When Traffic Violations were excluded from the data, Reasonable Suspicion was the leading reason for a stop, accounting for more stops than all other reasons combined.

African Americans were stopped for reasonable suspicion at a rate that was 210% of their representation in the population. For Hispanics, the rate was 162% of their representation compared with 78% for Whites.

USE OF FORCE

Studies have shown that law enforcement tends to use more force against African American and Hispanic citizens than White citizens.

A study of 1.6 million 911 calls in two cities published in the American Economic Review in March 2022 reported that African American and Hispanic civilians are respectively 55 and 75 percent more likely to experience any force and five times as likely to experience a police shooting.

A 2017 study published in the British Journal of Criminology concluded that White officers use greater force on African American suspects than they do on White suspects.

[17] Ayres, I., & Borowsky, J. (2008). A Study of Racially Disparate Outcomes in the Los Angeles Police Department.
   ACLU of Southern California. Retrieved from http://islandia.law.yale.edu/ayres/Ayres LAPD Report.pdf

[18] Stop and Frisk in Chicago. (2015, March). *ACLU of Illinois*.
   Retrieved from http://www.aclu-il.org/wp-_content/uploads/2015/03/ACLU_StopandFrisk_6.pdf

[19] *Daniels, Et Al. v. the City of New York*. (2012). Center for Constitutional Rights.
   http://ccrjustice.org/home/what-we-do/our-cases/daniels-et-al-v-city-new-york

[20] Jonas, D. (1989). Pretext Searches and the Fourth Amendment: Unconstitutional Abuses of Power. *University of Pennsylvania Law Review*, 137(5), 1791-826.

A study by the Center for Policing Equity reported by CNN[21] in which thousands of incidents where law enforcement interactions turned forceful concluded that African Americans are much more likely to be involved than other groups. The report found the average rate of using force among African Americans to be 3.6 times as high as among whites and 2.5 times as high as the overall rate.[22]

Survey data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics on police interactions in 2019 and 2020 provide the broadest look at relations between police officers and the public.[23] Among the findings of this survey were the following:

1. Black residents were more likely to be stopped by police than white or Hispanic residents.

2. Black and Hispanic residents were more likely to have multiple contacts with police than white residents.

3. When police initiated an interaction, they were twice as likely to threaten or use force against Black and Hispanic residents than against white residents.

4. African American people were also nearly 12 times more likely than White people to report that their most recent police contact involved misconduct, such as using racial slurs or otherwise exhibiting bias.

A study in Chicago based on police officers' own descriptions of more than 60,000 incidents revealed that officers used force more often against African Americans even though they offered lower levels of resistance than Whites.[24]

In their 2023 report, the California State RIPA Board employed a multivariate statistical model to consider the impact of the stopped individuals' race/ethnicity on whether force was used during a stop. Results of the analysis showed that African American and Hispanic individuals were more likely to have force used against them compared to White individuals. In contrast, Asian and other individuals were less likely. Compared to White individuals, the odds of officers using force during a stop were 1.24 times and 1.09 times as high for African American and Hispanic individuals,

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[21] Scutti, S. (2016). *Police more likely to Use Force on Blacks than Whites, Study Shows.* https://www.cnn.com/2016/07/12/health/police-use-of-force-on-blacks/index.html

[22] *Ibid.*

[23] *Contacts Between Police and the Public, 2020 U.S. Department of Justice Revised March 1, 2024 Office of Justice Programs Bureau of Justice Statistics Special Report NOVEMBER 2022 NCJ 304527*

[24] Arthur, R. (2019). *New Data Shows Police Use More Force against African American Citizens even though Whites Resist More. https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2019/05/chicago-police-department-consent-decree-black-lives-matter-resistance.html?pay=1724170704338&support_journalism=please*

respectively. Asian and Other individuals whom officers stopped had lower odds of having force used against them (0.69 and 0.84, respectively), relative to the odds for individuals officers perceived as White. Results of the analysis showed that African American and Hispanic individuals were more likely to have force used against them compared to White individuals. In contrast, Asian and other individuals were less likely.[25]

The Ventura County Use of Force data is consistent with data from cities and counties across the country in showing that force is used against People of Color at a much higher rate than their White peers. In fact, the Ventura County data shows that force is used against African Americans at a rate that is higher than the statewide average.

- In 2022, African Americans were subject to the Use of Force at a rate that was 242% of the rate of their White counterparts. Hispanics were subjected to the use of force at a rate that was 142% of the rate at which Whites had force used against them.

Several reasons have been offered for this disparity. One possibility is that deputies have a lower threshold for the use of force when the person involved is African American or Hispanic. Thus, actions that precipitate use of force when suspects are People of Color might not evoke the same reaction if the person involved is White. Since the number of use-of-force incidents is relatively small, a small number of deputies employing this differential judgment could account for the differences we are seeing. Studies in cities such as New York have shown that a very small percentage of all police officers account for the majority of cases involving the use of force.[26]

Another possible explanation is what criminologists describe as officer-created jeopardy: Officers may place themselves in danger by, for example, standing in front of fleeing vehicles, reaching inside car windows, or firing their weapons in what is later described as self-defense.[27] Another alternative explanation is that officers may exaggerate the threat. In other cases, local police officers, state troopers, or sheriff's deputies may respond with outsize aggression to disrespect or disobedience — a driver talking

[25] California State Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory Board. (2023). Annual Report 2023.
https://oag.ca.gov/system/files/media/ripa-board-report-2023.pdf

[26] New York State Police. (2023). ACLU of New York. https://www.nyclu.org/data/new-york-state-police

[27] Stein, R., Willis, H., Smith, B., Reneau, N., Taylor, R., Kirkpatrick, D., Eder, S., Barker, K., and Beswetherick, M. (2021). *Before the Final Frame: When Police Missteps Create Danger.*
https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/10/30/video/police-traffic-stops-danger-video.html

==highlight==back, revving an engine, or refusing to get out of a car, what officers sometimes call "contempt of cop."[28]==

The Ventura County Sheriff has a policy of investigating every case where force was used by a deputy against a civilian.

However, the details of those investigations have yet to be made public. As a result, there is no way for the public to know what was investigated, how thoroughly it was investigated, and what the results of that investigation were.

If, for example, the goal of such investigations was to determine whether or not the deputy involved broke the law or violated department policy, that investigation would not uncover racially based differences in the threshold for violence or "officer-created jeopardy."

RESISTING ARREST

In New Jersey, a teenager was beaten by police.[29] Footage of the beating showed police officers punching 19-year-old Cyprian Luke, who reportedly identifies as Afro-Latino, in the head as one of the officers repeatedly shouted, "Stop resisting!" The mantra "stop resisting" is a familiar one to anybody who has assessed police violence. The premise that if African American people complied during police interactions, there would be no police brutality is a common trope. According to newly revealed data on the use of force cases in Chicago, it is a story with no basis in reality.

In California, anyone who willfully resists, delays, or obstructs any public officer, peace officer, or emergency medical technician in the discharge or attempt to discharge any duty of their office or employment can be charged with resisting arrest. This charge includes, among other things, fleeing, threatening, assaulting, or failing to provide ID to a police officer during arrest.

The breadth and scope of the ordinance makes it applicable to a wide range of persons, situations, and actions and, therefore, potentially subject to

[28] Kirkpatrick, D., Eder, S., Barker, K. & Tate, J (2021). Why Many Police Traffic Stops Turn Deadly, *New York Times*. https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/31/us/police-traffic-stops-killings.html; *see also* Megahan, B. (2022). Our Asshole System: Contempt of Cop Charges and the First Amendment, University of North Carolina School of Law. https://journals.law.unc.edu/firstamendmentlawreview/our-asshole-system-contempt-of-cop-charges-and-the-first-amendment/

[29] Duffy, C., & Kaden., A. (2019). NJ Teen Beaten by Police Emotional After Judge Delays Decision to Release Him from Jail, *PIX 11*. https://pix11.com/news/local-news/new-jersey/nj-judge-delays-decision-on-whether-to-release-teen-beaten-by-police/

differing standards of applicability depending on the race or ethnicity of the person involved.

Sociologists at the University of Wisconsin-Madison reviewed 13 years of California criminal history data from 2006 to 2018 to analyze racial disparities in arrests, charges, and convictions.[30]

A review of the data concluded that African American and Hispanic individuals were arrested, charged, and convicted at higher rates for resisting arrest as compared to White individuals. The disparities were heightened in some counties. Specifically, the study highlights Ventura County as having one of the highest racial disparities in resisting arrest charges between Hispanics and Whites in the state.

Current data from the Ventura County Sheriff's RIPA dashboard indicates this trend continues. Data analyzed in this study shows that Hispanics were charged with resisting arrest at a rate that was equal to 210% of their representation in the population, and African Americans were charged at a rate that was 216 % of their representation in the population. On the other hand, Whites were charged at a rate that was 54.6% of their representation. When examined as a percentage of arrests, the same trend is evident. Hispanics were charged at a rate that was 1.4 times that of Whites, and African Americans were charged at a rate that was 1.8 times the White rate.

COVER CHARGES AND BLAMING THE VICTIM

Emmett Brock was leaving work and driving to an appointment. On the way, he witnessed Deputy Joseph Benza "behaving in an aggressive manner" toward a woman.[31] When Brock drove past, he "flipped him off casually" and continued driving. He then noticed Benza had started following him for several blocks, but he did not see any lights or sirens.

He said he called 911 because he was confused about what was happening and was concerned for his safety, and the dispatcher said if there were no lights and sirens, he could continue on as normal. Brock continued to a 7-Eleven and parked in front of the store, where Benza confronted him. Benza

[30] Light, M.T., & Kim., J. (2019). Racial Disparities in California Criminal History Data No.001: Charges of Resisting Arrest, *University of Wisconsin-Madison.* https://users.ssc.wisc.edu/~mlight/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/Fact_Sheet_No.001.pdf

[31] Mossburg, C., & Romine, T. (2023). LA County Sheriff's Department Accused of excessive force as newly released video shows man yelling 'you're gonna kill me' during arrest, *CNN.* https://www.cnn.com/2023/07/26/us/los-angeles-sheriffs-deputy-whittier-use-of-force/index.html

told him, "I stopped you," which Brock said confused him after what the 911 dispatcher had said about not needing to stop if there were no lights or sirens. He replied, "No, you didn't," and moved toward the store when Benza grabbed him and threw him on the ground less than 10 seconds after first approaching him.

The two men struggle in the parking lot, with the deputy on top of Brock and Brock telling Benza to get off him, yelling, "Stop! You're gonna kill me!"

As the deputy lies on top of Brock, he can be heard in the video telling him to move his arms behind his back. Brock replies repeatedly that he can't because the deputy has pinned his hands. Brock told CNN that his hands were pinned under his stomach and were stuck because of the weight of Benza on top of him.

In a report following the incident, Benza wrote that he stopped Brock for a vehicle code violation because he saw an object hanging from the rear-view mirror. "I punched S/Brock face and head, using both of my fists, approximately eight times in rapid succession," Benza wrote in a report following the incident. Benza also reported that Brock repeatedly tried to bite him, which was also noted in the medical report, with a comment following the exam that "there are no bite marks at this time."

Brock was arrested for mayhem, resisting arrest, causing injury to a police officer, obstructing or resisting a police officer, and failure to obey a police officer.

The preceding is an excerpt from a CNN article describing an encounter between an LA County Sheriff's deputy and a Whittier school teacher in February 2023. This case is detailed here because it may be representative of a larger pattern of law enforcement activity wherein officers who abuse their authority then "blame the victim" by charging the accused with resisting arrest and other related charges. Victim-blaming is a harmful practice that sometimes occurs in cases of police violence. When authorities fail to charge an officer in a shooting, they may shift blame onto the victim. This approach undermines justice and perpetuates a troubling narrative.

For instance, in the case of Tamir Rice, a 12-year-old boy killed by officers while playing with a toy gun, the city of Cleveland initially argued that Rice was responsible for his own death due to his failure to exercise caution.

"Cover charges" is a term used to describe charges against citizens during encounters with police—especially when it's a questionable "use of force" situation. The three most common charges are resisting arrest, battery on a

police officer, or fleeing[32] from an officer. Often, these are the only charges filed, but they are sometimes used in combination with other alleged offenses. Whereas <mark>all of the accused have a constitutional right to a jury trial, the overwhelming majority of cases resolve before that point in the criminal process.</mark>

Peace officers can use these offenses — typically resisting arrest, battery of an officer and flight from an officer — to arrest people they have assaulted, experts say. The charges, which are sometimes used in combination with other offenses, allow officers to cover up their use of excessive force and help shield the department from civil liability, according to civil rights attorneys. Because the resisting arrest statute is written so broadly that it can be applied to almost any situation, convictions are relatively easy to secure. And once someone is convicted or enters a guilty plea, they often lose the right to sue for any alleged police brutality.

in a 2017 report on Chicago Police Department's pattern of using excessive force, DOJ officials wrote "We heard from numerous advocates and individual victims of police abuse that officers who engaged in force against a civilian routinely file baseless police assault and battery charges against the victim and other witnesses to the misconduct," "Filing false charges not only constitutes an independent civil rights violation, but is a powerful discouragement to potential complainants and witnesses regarding police misconduct."[33]

CPD is not the only department where this happens. In December 2015, Jefferson Parish Louisiana, Sergeant Julio Alvarado grabbed a 14-year-old boy by the neck and slammed his head into the ground. After the boy was taken to the hospital, Alvarado appeared in the boy's room and warned him, "Use this as an example of what can happen." The deputy then booked the young boy into the juvenile detention center for resisting an officer and battery on an officer, as well as disturbing the peace and obstruction of a highway

In an event reminiscent of the George Floyd incident, a Kenosha, Wisconsin a police officer was shown on video kneeling on the neck of a African American 12-year-old middle school girl who had been involved in a fight. The police officer faced no charges but the 12 year old girl was charged with juvenile disorderly conduct.

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[32] Judicial Council of California (2024). *2024 Court Statistics Report: Statewide Caseload Trends, 2013-14 Through 2022-2023.* https://www.courts.ca.gov/documents/2024-Court-Statistics-Report.pdf (noting that rate of California Superior Court felony cases disposed before trial is 97%, p. 55).

[33] U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division and U.S. Attorney's Office Northern District of Illinois. (2017). *Investigation of the Chicago Police Department.* https://www.justice.gov/opa/file/925846/dl

News organizations have identified the use of cover charges in cities from Seattle to San Jose to Washington, D.C. The Justice Department noted the problem in civil rights investigations in Los Angeles, Detroit, and New Orleans.

What are the lessons for Ventura County

Whereas the studies and examples cited above come from communities quite different from Ventura County, it is our belief that they should be viewed as an invitation to examine local policies, practices, and data to determine to the extent possible whether this is a problem in our local community.

The process starts with what we know and allowing that to point us toward what we need to know but don't know, then parsing what we don't know into (1) that which we can know and (2) that which we will probably never know.

For example, we Know from the RIPA data that in Ventura County Hispanics were charged with resisting arrest at a rate that was equal to 210% of their representation in the population, and African Americans were charged at a rate that was 216 % of their representation. When the demographics are taken out of the equation by looking at resisting arrest as a percentage of total arrests for the group, we find that for Hispanics, and African Americans the percentage of arrests that result in resisting arrest charges is significantly higher than the percentage for Whites. The percentage for Hispanics was 41% higher than the percentage for Whites. The corresponding percentage for African Americans was 78% higher.

What can we conclude from this data? The short answer is "at this point, not much". However, what we can say is that the Ventura County data shows a combination of: (1) force being used more frequently on Hispanic and African American residents and (2) African American & Hispanic people being charged with resisting arrest more frequently than their White counterparts. This is consistent with the pattern of other jurisdictions throughout the country.

COMPLAINTS

Our discussion of Complaints is based on the following assumptions.

1. Experience with complaints from the public in areas other than law enforcement informs us that many complaints are based on a lack of knowledge and understanding of the rules governing the situation they are complaining about and, for that reason, may be found to be without merit.

Correspondingly, the same may be true regarding complaints about law enforcement.

2. Conversely, no one wakes up in the morning and says, "I think I will file a complaint against the VCSO today ."When a complaint is filed, it is because someone had an encounter with a sheriff's deputy that left them feeling that they had been disrespected, treated unfairly, and/or physically harmed.

3. These formal complaints are just the tip of the iceberg. PSREAG member orgainzations report that individuals have come to them with race based complaints against the VCSO but have not filed formal complaints with the sheriff. In fact, two such individuals have brought their complaints to the PSREAG while electing not to file a formal complaint

4. Any agency that investigates itself without any outside oversight or review will be more likely to find no wrongdoing

5. The high rejection rate and lack of transparency are causing ill will and distrust in the community.

It is not surprising that most of the complaints filed against the VCSO are not sustained. What is surprising is the percentage. When 90% of complaints are not sustained, and most of the ones that are sustained originate within the department and do not come from the public; when out of the 75 complaints based on race, not a single one has been sustained; even the most skeptical of observers would have to question the validity of these findings.

Moreover, many complainants experience of the process is: I filed a complaint, I received an acknowledgment that the complaint had been received and then I heard nothing for a year or more and finally I received a form letter that said we investigated ourselves. We found we had done nothing wrong – case closed!

Whereas we are not in a position to comment on the thoroughness and impartiality of the investigations into these complaints, we do believe that more transparency and independent review will go a long way toward restoring public confidence in the process. Because people have no visibility into the process, they do not feel that it is fair, and they leave the experience with a negative opinion of the Sheriff's Office.

For any agency that interacts with the public, the communities they serve must have confidence that they perform their duties with fairness and impartiality. If each complaint is approached as a learning opportunity rather than a criminal indictment against a deputy, these complaints can provide valuable lessons learned on how to avoid future complaints. Each complaint should be examined, not just in terms of whether the deputy involved violated the law or department policy, but also what caused the complainant

to feel aggrieved in this encounter and could the situation have been handled in a way that would not have left the citizen feeling they had been disrespected or mistreated. These lessons learned can provide best practices for future interactions with the public.

PRETEXTUAL STOPS

Pretextual stops are stops initiated by law enforcement for a minor traffic violation, with the actual purpose of investigating or searching for evidence of another unrelated crime.

We have no way of knowing from the RIPA data exactly how many of the 107 thousand stops made by Ventura County Sheriff Deputies were pretextual stops. However, we know that VC Sheriff's Deputies employ pretextual stops because the sheriff sent a letter to the State Legislature defending the need for pretextual stops.

A recent presentation by the Ventura County Sheriff's Office reported that in 2022, deputies made 34,466 stops, and of that number, 16.9% (or 5,825) were for Non-Moving Violations, and 21.7% (or 7,479) were for equipment violations. Perhaps not all, but at least some of these were pretextual stops.

During that same period, 4,785 stops were made for Reasonable Suspicion, and it is probable that some of these stops were pretextual stops. As evidenced by the cases described below, pretextual stops, like any stops, can turn violent or even deadly.

Walter Scott was stopped for a non-functioning third brake light; Tyre Nicols was stopped for what was alleged to be reckless driving; Kurt Reinhold was stopped for jaywalking; Patrick Lyoya was stopped for an unspecified traffic violation; Jayland Walker's car had a broken taillight and a missing license plate bulb, Ricky Cobb was pulled over for not having taillights and Sandra Bland stopped for failure to signal a lane change. What these motorists and many others like them had in common is that they all were African American, they all were stopped for relatively minor traffic violations, and they all were killed by the people who were supposed to protect and serve them (except Sandra Bland who died in police custody)

These cases demonstrate why such interactions may have an even higher potential for violence: an individual stopped may not believe that they have committed a violation and that such a stop is a pretext and may be prepared to challenge the officer when he approaches. The reason given by the officer for the stop may not be the real reason they are being detained, and the accused individual may be angry about being stopped for little or no reason.

Further, if the person is a person of color, they may believe that their race or ethnicity was a factor in the decision to stop them. African Americans refer to this as being stopped for "driving while Black."

Consequently, when an officer approaches the vehicle in such a case, they may be approaching a driver who is already irritated, if not outright angry, over being targeted for what that accused individual perceives to be a pretextual stop. At that point, the officer's attitude is critical in de-escalating the situation or escalating the conflict further. In many cases, a calm, professional demeanor by the officer can prevent the situation from escalating. On the other hand, an officer whose approach is confrontative, authoritarian, or hostile can exacerbate the potential conflict and result in a "fight or flight" response from the person being stopped. The accused individual may try to escape by driving or running away or they may become more combative and non-cooperative. Either response on the individual's part evokes an even more hostile response from the officer, and the situation may quickly spiral out of control.

Severe injury or death can be the outcome of this conflict escalation spiral, and that has been the case in many instances throughout the country. Fortunately, there have been no deaths at the hands of Ventura County Sheriff's Deputies during pretextual stops. However, the probability of such an outcome increases the more pretextual stops are used.

CONSENSUAL SEARCH

A consensual search is a type of search conducted by law enforcement officers in the United States after obtaining the voluntary consent of the person being investigated. Searches that are the product of consent are one of several recognized exceptions to the warrant requirement of the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution. The three main categories of searches are a search of a house, automobile or pedestrian. In the case of an automobile, it is assumed the officer has already seized the car and the encounter is a Terry stop. When an officer returns a driver's identification, the encounter has been transformed into a consensual encounter. In the case of a pedestrian, a consensual encounter can lead to a Terry stop based on information gathered during conversation.

The existential question here is "why would anyone grant sheriff's deputies the right to search their automobile?'" This is especially true if that person has something illegal in their possession. There are several reasons why this might happen.

• Lack of awareness – many people are not aware that they have the right to refuse a consent search

• Deceptive practices - Law enforcement officers can use a variety of deceptive practices to induce a person to consent to a search

- Imagine this scenario: You're driving home. Police pull you over, allegedly for a traffic violation. After the stop is completed and the officer returns your license and registration, instead of telling you that you are free to go, the officer catches you off guard by asking: "You don't have anything illegal in your car do you?" [34]You reply "No". Then the officer states "Well then you don't mind if I search your car do you?" The person having already stated that they do not have anything illegal in their possession, feels pressure to prove it by permitting a search. If the person hesitates or says no, the officer may imply that they have something to hide.[35]

- A more devious but less common variant of the above scenario occurs when the officer purposefully misinterprets the person's reply. In response to the above question, if the person responds "Yes"; does that mean he is giving permission for the search or does that mean he is saying "yes, I mind"? On the other hand, if the person responds "no", does that mean the person is saying "No I don't mind" or "No I do not give permission for this search"?[36]

• Compliance – Some people may consent to a search out of respect for authority, fear of retaliation, or desire to cooperate with law enforcement. Because of the asymmetrical power relationship between the law enforcement officer and the person they have stopped, the driver feels pressure to comply, even when they have been informed that they are not required to by law. Studies have shown that in private encounters with authority figures, people agree to behaviors that they would not normally assent to.

There is a greater risk of racial and other bias, intentional or implicit, in consent searches because the police have a high degree of subjective

[34]

[35] In Ohio v. Robinette (1996) the Supreme Court decided an officer does not need to inform the driver that the stop

      has ended. He can continue questioning and request a search of the vehicle. Since the encounter has now become a consensual encounter it is outside the protection of the Fourth Amendment. The Supreme Court assumed that a reasonable person would know the encounter was over and feel free to drive away .

[36] Parker, Brett. (2015). Consent Searches and the Need to Expand Miranda Rights, *Stanford Politics.* https://stanfordpolitics.org/2015/09/23/consent-searches-need-expand-miranda-rights/

discretion. Whether to ask a person for "consent" to search is a high-discretion decision. The officer needs no suspicion at all and will almost always receive compliance.

Ventura County Sheriff's Office data shows Hispanic drivers accounted for 56.9% of the consensual searches although they represent only 30% of the population, whereas White drivers accounted for only 36.7% of the consensual searches while more than 54% of the population.

Some states and cities have passed laws that require officers to notify a person of their right to refuse, but not California. The following are examples of Cities and states requiring informed consent.

Colorado

The state of Colorado enacted an informed consent law requiring police to inform drivers of their right to decline a consent search. The law was enacted in an effort to reduce racial profiling. It extends not only to drivers but also pedestrians. [12]

Fayetteville, North Carolina

Fayetteville, North Carolina, came under criticism after a study showed between 2009 and 2010 African American motorists were three times more likely than Whites to be searched after a stop. A law was passed requiring police to get written consent before performing a search beginning March, 2012.

Durham, North Carolina

In October, 2014 Durham, North Carolina, adopted a written-consent policy for all searches. This was after the city was presented with clear documentation that African American motorists were searched well above their share of the city's population.

New York City

The Right to Know Act was passed in 2017 by New York City's city council in response to the aggressive use of stop-and-frisk in New York City by the police department. The law consists of two parts. One is the "Consent to Search" law which requires an officer to inform someone they have the right to deny a search and to make sure that person understands that right. The other is the "NYPD ID" law, which requires the officer, in certain situations, to hand out business cards with their name, rank, badge number and command.

NEXT STEPS

Ventura County Sheriff's Office

If one is looking for proof of racial animus in the Ventura County Sheriff's office, they will not find it in this study. That being said, this study provides ample data that indicates that the policies and practices of the VCSO have a disparate impact on People of Color, in particular Hispanics and African Americans.

While not every deviation from statistical norms is an indication of racial bias, there are certain parameters that command our attention because of the following statistical anomalies:

- **Magnitude of Deviation**: differences surpass what may be anticipated from random variation.
- **Consistency with National Trends**: data aligns with evidence from studies and incidents in other jurisdictions nationwide, and the VCSO data demonstrates a parallel trend.

In data sets demonstrating these statistical deviations the PSREAG will collaborate with VCSO representatives to:

- Examine whether or not there are reasonable explanations, other than race, that will explain the differences found in the data
- Obtain and analyze other data that might shed more light on the findings of this study, and
- Make recommendations for changes in VCSO policies and practices that will address the racial/ethnic differences found in the data and/or shed more light on the causes for these differences

Municipal Police Departments

The PSREAG also commits to analyze the data from the five municipal police departments in Ventura County: Simi Valley, Santa Paula, Oxnard, Port Hueneme, and Ventura. This includes analysis of RIPA data and requesting additional data as required to assess racial equity.

Agency's Statement

VISION STATEMENT

THE VENTURA COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE
IS COMMITTED TO INCREASING AND
STRENGTHENING
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS AND UTILIZING
TECHNOLOGIES AND
EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICES
TO ENHANCE
COLLABORATIVE
EFFORTS AT REDUCING
CRIME AND
IMPROVING PUBLIC SAFETY.
OUR AGENCY WILL ALSO
ENDEAVOR TO RECRUIT,
RETAIN, AND
PROMOTE A DIVERSE GROUP
OF HONEST, ETHICAL,
AND HIGHLY QUALIFIED
APPLICANTS THAT REFLECT
AND REPRESENT THE
COMMUNITIES WE SERVE

STRATEGY

OUR STRATEGY FOR
ACCOMPLISHING THIS MISSION
IS TO PRESERVE THE PEACE,
PREVENT CRIME,
APPREHEND OFFENDERS,
FACILITATE PROBLEM SOLVING
COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS,
ENFORCE LAWS,
PROVIDE SECURE
AND HUMANE
DETENTION FOR PERSONS
LAWFULLY ENTRUSTED TO
OUR CARE, AND
DISPLAY EMPATHY
AND RESPECT
FOR THE DIGNITY OF
ALL INDIVIDUALS

MISSION STATEMENT

WE,
THE MEMBERS OF
THE VENTURA COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE,
ARE COMMITTED TO
SAFEGUARD
THE LIVES
AND
PROPERTY OF
RESIDENTS
OF
VENTURA COUNTY
AND RESPOND
TO PUBLIC
CONCERNS IN A MANNER
WHICH IS FAIR,
UNBIASED,
LAWFUL, AND PROMOTES
NEIGHBORHOODS
FREE FROM CRIME

SEVEN PILLARS

1 LEADING THE LAW ENFORCEMENT ORGANIZATION

2 COMBINING TRADITIONAL AND MODERN POLICING MODELS

3 USING EVIDENCE TO GUIDE POLICING

4 COMMUNITY PARTNERED POLICING

5 ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS

6 PROVIDING SECURE AND HUMANE DETENTION FOR INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS

7 IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR ALL
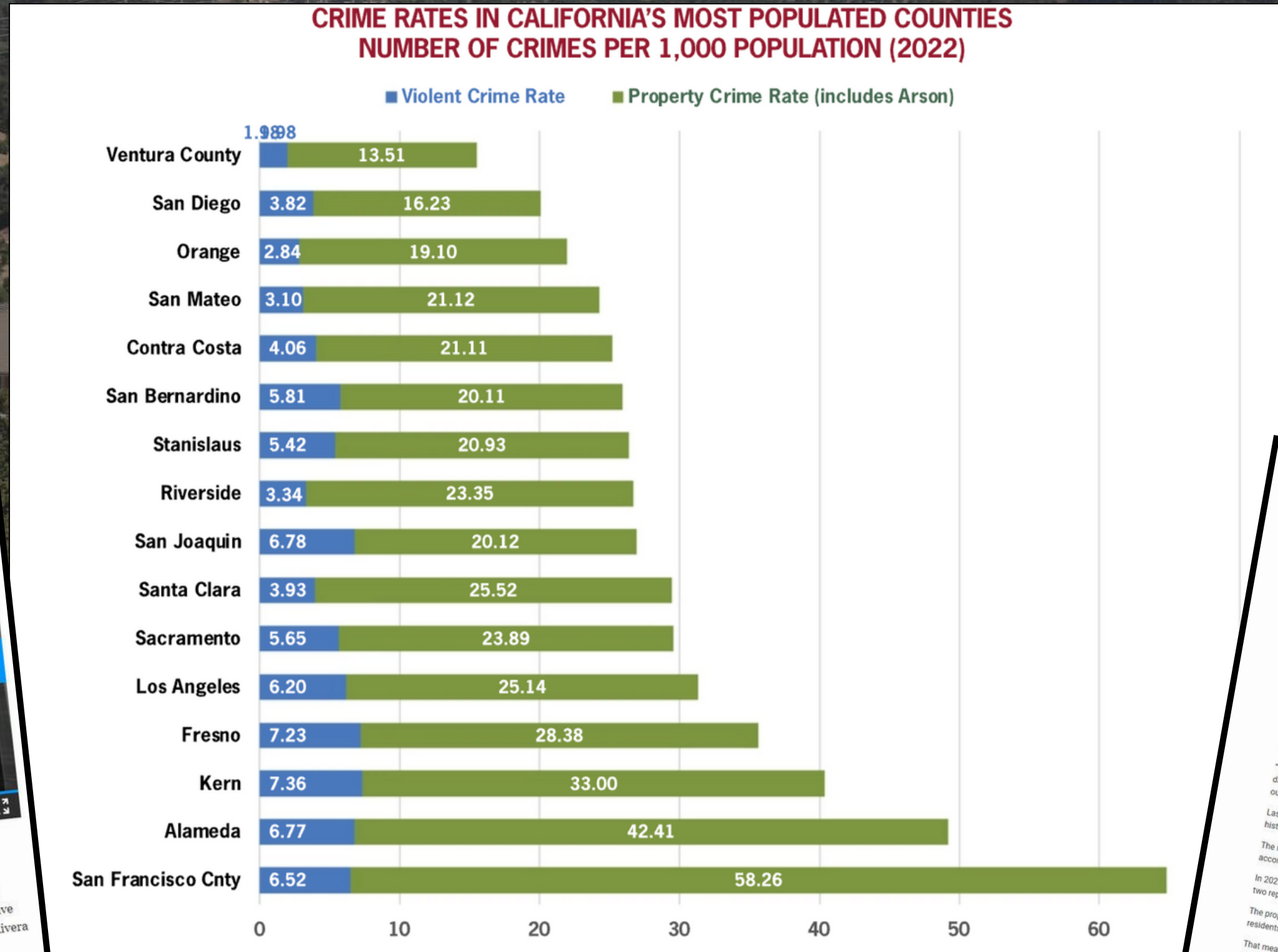
GETTING THE JOB DONE

1350 EMPLOYEES
791 SWORN
559 PROFESSIONAL STAFF

WE PATROL 95% OF THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA AND PROVIDE PUBLIC SAFETY SERVICES TO 55% OF THE TOTAL COUNTY POPULATION

CAMARILLO | FILLMORE | MOORPARK | OJAI | THOUSAND OAKS

VENTURA COUNTY SAFEST LARGE COUNTY IN STATE

CRIME RATES IN CALIFORNIA'S MOST POPULATED COUNTIES
NUMBER OF CRIMES PER 1,000 POPULATION (2022)

■ Violent Crime Rate   ■ Property Crime Rate (includes Arson)

County	Violent Crime Rate	Property Crime Rate
Ventura County	1.98	13.51
San Diego	3.82	16.23
Orange	2.84	19.10
San Mateo	3.10	21.12
Contra Costa	4.06	21.11
San Bernardino	5.81	20.11
Stanislaus	5.42	20.93
Riverside	3.34	23.35
San Joaquin	6.78	20.12
Santa Clara	3.93	25.52
Sacramento	5.65	23.89
Los Angeles	6.20	25.14
Fresno	7.23	28.38
Kern	7.36	33.00
Alameda	6.77	42.41
San Francisco Cnty	6.52	58.26

TRANSPARENCY AWARD

SHERIFF'S OFFICE WEBSITE REVAMP

ESTABLISHING COMMUNITY COUNCILS
AT ALL PATROL STATIONS
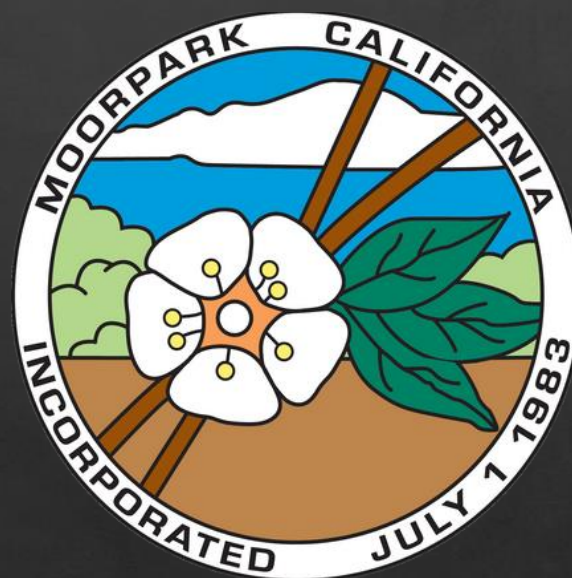
SOCIAL MEDIA FOR ALL PATROL STATIONS

@VCSHERIFF ✓
@CAMARILLOPD
@FILLMOREPD
@LOCKWOODSHERIFF
@MOORPARKPD
@OJAIPD
@THOUSANDOAKSPD
@VCSOHQSTATION

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

BODY WORN & IN-CAR CAMERAS

- PROGRAM BEGAN AUGUST 2016
- 85,368 HOURS OF VIDEO
- 118 TERABYTES OF DATA STORED
- 431,343 TOTAL VIDEOS
- DASH CAM / IN-CAR VIDEOS WILL DEPLOY IN 2025
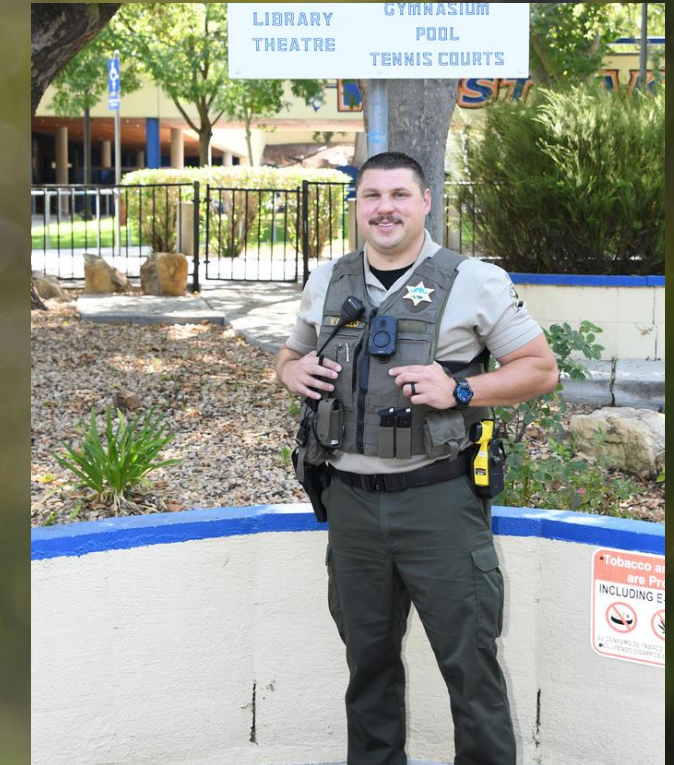
HOMELESS LIASION UNIT (HLU)

OPENING OF HEALTH & PROGRAMMING UNIT AT TODD ROAD JAIL

VETERAN'S HOUSING UNIT (D.E.L.T.A)

BIOMETRIC ARMBAND TESTING FOR INMATES

GRAND JURY REPORT FINDINGS

2020 - 2021
Ventura County Grand Jury

Final Report

Policing by The Ventura County Sheriff's Office

April 30, 2021

Investigation reviewed policies and procedures, bias in policing, use of force by officers, use of body worn cameras, and diversity within the agency.
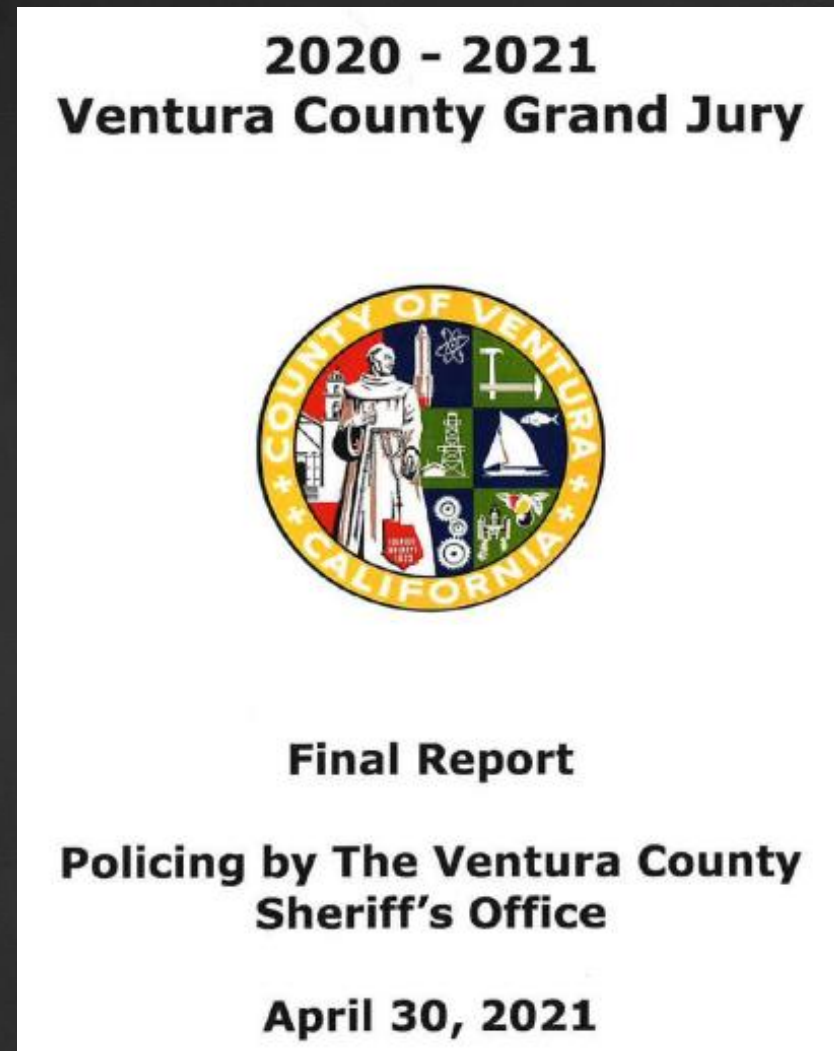
- VCSO conducts thorough background investigations as part of its efforts to identify bias in its recruits.
- Commends VCSO for its extensive hiring procedures, training, and policies designed to address issues raised by bias and use of force.
- Reviewed citizen complaints for the calendar years 2018 through 2020 and did not find any pattern of bias or improper force in those citizen complaints

SERVE WITH INTEGRITY

PROTECT WITH HONOR

These courses incorporate thought-stimulating discussions, personal perspectives, and scenario-based exercises that challenge the status quo and engage participants for learning development in the 21st Century.

TOPICS DISCUSSED:

- But Really, Why'd You Stop Me?: The Intentional Art of Trust-Building
- Deeper community engagement to improve police legitimacy
- Battling Bias through Relationship-Building: Maintaining your voice in your relationships
- STOP "Stop Resisting": A Discussion on Strategic Communication
- Making Corrections: Discussing the "institutionalized" behaviors that jeopardize our safety inside of jails and prisons
- Communication, De-escalation, and Community Trust-Building Training

DIVERSITY IN THE WORKFORCE

Ethnicity, Gender	Academy Class 24-1	Academy Class 24-2	Totals
Hispanic	8	26	34
Caucasian	7	26	33
Black		1	1
Female	5	10	14
Male	10	43	53
DACA		2	2

Ethnicity	Sworn (%)	Civilian (%)	VC Population
American Indian	0.4%	3.8%	3%
Asian	4.1%	7.7%	9.2%
Black	2.3%	1.9%	3.1%
Hispanic	35.2%	44.2%	30%
Pacific Islander	1.0%	0%	0.3%
White	57.0%	42.3%	54.2%

Over 50% of sworn officers hired are minorities

INCREASED DIVERSITY WITHIN OUR LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCY WILL HELP US CONTINUE TO BUILD TRUST AND LEGITIMACY WITHIN OUR COMMUNITY. DIVERSITY IN LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES HAS SHOWN THEY ARE MORE OPEN TO REFORM, MORE WILLING TO INITIATE CULTURAL AND SYSTEMIC CHANGES, AND MORE RESPONSIVE TO THE RESIDENTS THEY SERVE

AWARDED $20 MILLION GRANT
FOR ORT ENFORCEMENT

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND INTEREST!

PUBLIC SAFETY RACIAL EQUITY ADVISORY GROUP

AGENDA ITEM #7: PSREAG DRAFT OF STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION

Jan. 9, 2025 Meeting: Strategic Planning Meeting Prep

- **Introduce Survey in relation to topics of concern for 2025**

PART I: STRENGTHENING TRUST & BUILDING COLLECTIVE IMPACT (Feb 2025 Meeting)

I. **Welcome (5 minutes)**
II. **Review Norms & Moving at the Speed of Trust (15 minutes)**
III. **Defining Collective Impact (15 minutes)**
IV. **Office of DEI: PSREAG Then and Now (5 minutes)**
V. **Small Group Work (60 minutes)**
    a. Each group has three agencies, one public safety and two community-based organizations
    b. Guiding questions:
        i. How do you define Public Safety?
        ii. What does racial equity mean you?
        iii. Who does the Public Safety Racial Equity Advisory Group advise? (What is our Sphere of Influence?)
VII. **Rank Survey & Parking Lot Review Process:**
    a. Survey group between Part I and Part II to rank data/problem to review in more detail in 2025
VIII. **Reflection:** What is your "why"? (5 minutes)
IX. **Check in:** Where are we now? **(5 minutes)**
X. **Closing and Next Steps: (10 minutes)**
    a. What issues do we want to prioritize? Acknowledgment of challenges within the scope of the PSREAG.

PART II: BUILDING ON SUCCESSES & PLANNING FOR 2025 (March 2025 Meeting)

I. **Welcome (2 minutes)**
II. **Office of DEI: Part I Recap (5 minutes)**
    a. Reiterate key concepts and areas of focus
III. **Problem/Focus Statement Refresh: Small Group Break Out Session (30 minutes)**
    a. What would you need from fellow member organization representatives in this group to continue efforts to build trust? Rank the top two areas.
IV. **Review Survey Results (15 minutes)**
    a. To be shared with the PSERAG as part of the agenda; review top 2-3
V. **Specific, Measurable, Achievable and Time-Bound (SMART Goals): Small Group Session (30 minutes)**
    a. Is this goal specific enough?
    b. What resources or steps are needed to make this achievable?
    c. What is a realistic timeline?
VI. **Sharing and Peer Feedback (30 minutes)**
    a. Each group shares their SMART goal; group provides constructive feedback
VII. **Action Plan and Wrap Up (10 minutes)**
    a. Office of DEI outlines 2-3 immediate steps to work towards SMART goals
    b. ODEI Recaps key takeaways and draft of new Problem/Focus Statement

Recommendations for Group Consideration

The following recommendations are organized according to the three expected outcomes of project activities: 1) Improving Group Functioning, 2) Creation of Actionable Goals, and 3) Increasing Readiness for Cross-Sector Collaboration.

1. Improving Group Functioning

Dr. Williams recommends implementing the tools of **shared values, norms, psychological safety, focused participation logs, and parking lot** to meet the outcome of 'improved methods and practice of group communication, group decision-making, and group functioning to ultimately achieve PSREAG tasks of delivering policies and procedures.'

1a. Shared Values (Approved By Group Consensus)

Practicing from a foundation of shared values promotes trust and authentic connection. Dr. Williams recommends revisiting shared values consistently within the group process.

1b. Norms (Approved by Group Consensus)

Norms are behavioral expectations for building trust and group efficiency. Dr. Williams recommends reviewing and acknowledging norms during each PSREAG meeting (see Appendix).

1c. Promoting Psychological Safety (Approved by Group Consensus)

Psychological safety is defined as a shared belief held by members of a team that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking. Healthy risk taking is necessary for change. Dr. Williams recommends that members practice psychological safety behaviors and that group facilitators monitor, praise, and validate psychological safety behaviors that are displayed in the group setting (see Logs below).

1. Acknowledge own learning
2. Acknowledge own fallibility
3. Model curiosity

1d. Focused Participation Logs (Needs further consideration or adaptation)

Behavior tracking is a powerful facilitation tool, as it focuses facilitator attention on behaviors, providing an opportunity for 'in the moment' validation or redirection. Moreover, being observed for an identified reason is known to change human behavior; therefore, this tool is encouraged to reinforce, validate, and promote psychological safety promoting behaviors. A Focused Participation log template is attached as a PDF for group facilitators to consider.

1e. Parking Lot (Approved by Group Consensus)

A Parking Lot is an effective facilitation tool to maintain group structure and focus while also ensuring participant needs are met. A Parking lot is a maintained list of questions or discussion topics that arise during a meeting that are not appropriate to be addressed at the moment. They are identified and listed in the Parking Lot to be addressed and checked off ✓when addressed at a later time. Facilitator best practices include a post-meeting debrief, where an action plan strategy is developed for Parking Lot Items.

2. Creation of Actionable Goals

Dr. Williams recommends implementing the tools of **focused voice, intentional community voice, SMART goal setting, facilitation structure** to meet the outcome of 'creation of actionable goals to circulate professional resources (time, energy, roles, skills) to reach the group's purpose and goals.'

2a. SMART Goal Setting (Approved by Group Consensus)

Dr. Williams recommends that the group identify **1-2 key issues** or problems that they want to address **per year**. The 1-2 key issues or 'problems to solve' will be identified via a SMART goal setting workshop: Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant, Timely. A list of 11 categories of identified needs may be found in the Findings section.

Addressing 1-2 key issues or problems per year will focus the group to meet the recommended goal of preparing an **annual report of recommendations** that includes:

1) Context of the Problem
2) Relevant Data
3) Discussion
4) Recommendations
5) Limitations
6) Next Steps

This recommended format does not force consensus on an issue, as it allows for multiple perspectives to be shared and collective ownership over the report-writing process. The discussion and limitations sections allow for complexities of the issue to be identified and addressed, to promote collective action in the development of the report. In this way, the process of preparing and writing report sections are stepping stones to a forward-change direction. Moreover, the report structure provides the opportunity for feasible collective action given the structure, capacity, and resources of the PSREAG.

2b. Facilitation Structure (Needs further consideration)

Dr. Williams recommends that to promote meeting efficiency, each monthly PSREAG meeting will focus on **1 topic and 1 objective.** Example meeting objectives include:

1) Identify the context of the problem
2) Present and discuss data

Facilitators will promote equal and active participation of members during the focused discussion section of the meeting. With this structure, meeting minutes will serve as material for appropriate sections within the **annual report of recommendations.**

2c. Focused Voice (Needs further consideration)

Dr. Williams recommends that members preface comments made within meetings using the following phrase: **"On behalf of [specific community group or constituency]".** The purpose of this phrase is to focus meeting dialogue to the identified 1 topic and 1 objective, ensure each member has equal opportunity to represent the needs, opinions, and perspectives of a specific community or constituency during the meeting, and to document each contribution on behalf of the community or constituency they represent as material for the **annual report of recommendations.** Members should come prepared to the meeting with anecdotal stories, lived experience data, case studies, examples, and other specific information from the community they represent on the identified meeting topic.

2d. Intentional Community Voice (Needs further consideration)

Dr. Williams recommends that members invite community members to PSREAG meetings, to speak on the identified meeting topic, to share lived experience, personal examples, and community specific

information relevant to the meeting topic and meeting objective. This participation will serve as documented data to inform the annual report of recommendations.

3. Increasing Readiness for Cross-Sector Collaboration

Dr. Williams recommends the tools of **Readiness Ramp, 4 Pillars for Cross-Sector Collaboration, Book Club, and Retreat Guide** to meet the outcome of 'recommendations for actions to increase readiness for cross-sector change.'

3a. Readiness Ramp (Needs further consideration)

Readiness, motivation, or capacity to address an identified issue or take action are inherently varied across individuals, groups, institutions, organizations, and societies. Dr. Williams recommends the group to conceptualize the varying readiness levels of an identified issue to inform their SMART goal setting, and the 'discussion' and 'recommendations' sections of the annual report of recommendations.
- Facilitation prompts might be: *Given the various readiness levels and resources at hand, what are the strategic actions we can take as a group?. Looking at the Readiness Ramp, what is the readiness level (1-9) of your organization, community, or constituency to take action on this issue? How can we 'ramp up' our readiness to take action?*
- A 'discussion' section of the report might read: *Given the varying levels of readiness for action within the group as evidenced by [context of the problem], we recommend the following next steps.*
- A 'recommendations' section of the report might read: *Due to XYZ, members of our group are at varying levels of readiness to take action on a policy recommendation for this issue. Therefore, our recommendations for immediate next steps to increase readiness are XYZ. Longer-term recommendations that this group will consider as agenda topics in future meetings are as follows.*

3b. Four Pillars of Cross Sector Collaboration (Needs further consideration)

Dr. Williams recommends the group continue the sequential steps of the 4 Pillars for equity-centered cross-sector collaboration

3c. Book Club (Needs further consideration)

Systemic racial equity change requires understanding, motivation, and strategic action. The following book recommendations were introduced in Retreat #1 as incentives for participation and cross-sector relationship building. As identified in Retreat #1 group discussion, the group evidences varying levels of understanding and comfort with the following concepts that are critical for systemic racial equity change:
systemic equity, inclusion, racial justice, racial equity, internalized racism, interpersonal racism, institutional racism, intersectionality, privilege, and white body supremacy.

To promote collaborative dialogue on these topics of privilege and oppression, and how structural racism presents within groups, organizations, and institutions, Dr. Williams recommends the following books to guide discussion, reflection, and learning. Consistent and ongoing guided book discussion circles of *My Grandmother's Hands* and *Beyond your Bubble,* with a reading and discussion schedule, are recommended.

3d. Retreat Guide (Approved by Group Consensus)

Dr. Williams recommends members revisit the discussion questions in the retreat guide as they promote active reflection and prompt difficult conversations about systemic racism. Following Retreat #1, a handful of members completed the task of meeting with another PSREAG member for focused discussion and ally-building. Various members have identified interest and hesitancy in meeting with a specific PSREAG member that they haven't spoken to before. Dr. Williams encourages building relational connections via the retreat guide questions or book recommendations, and to take a healthy risk to send an email invitation or phone call to set up a meeting. Informal trust building among members will increase opportunities for large group trust building.

Notes from PSREAG Retreat #2

EARTH - WIND - FIRE - WATER

Feelings on Findings
- Sad, heavy, despair
- Not surprised
- Not always safe
- Not alone, comforted
- Oversight was always goal for some, there is a desire to move towards oversight
- Critiques should be thoughtful so as not tobe divisive or invoke an us vs. them framework
- We need to be able to work together
- both/and
- Report was on point *captured realities of group *Water
- Holding itself accountable
- Goals need to be focussed
- Excited by vision *Report defines a path forward *Hope
- We cover too many topics
- Keep norms visible and in front of group at each meeting *Earth
- Growing Pains
- Retreat would have been good to have at the beginning
- Relationships are developing cross sector
- Frustration that we are not farther
- Report was complex
- Tough to read
- Optimistic & hopeful
- Informative

Feelings on Findings continued

- Duality of feelings, both/and hope and despair
- We need to overcome the despair, keep hope going and put despair in the rear view
- Noble cause
- Group is still young
- Form over content issue, form (sh**) gets in the way

Feelings on Recommendations
- Going down the right path, recommendations are on point
- We have shared values even with different ways of getting there
- Psychological safety is critical
- Norms should be in front of us
- Focus on local instead of national *agree- national needs to be acknowledged as the context/ reality and as having an impact locally
- Focus on / goals per year *agree *agree *agree
- Use parking lot so meetings don't get off topic *agree on Parking lot
- Book group would need to be more practical with other options like presentations, videos or audio book options
- Recommendations are a good path forward and a dramatic shift, challenge will be to narrow focus to one/goals
- We all need to feel heard
- Challenging - learning - book group
- Respecting each others time is critical, meetings should not go late
- Norm of taking space with care is important with this group since some speak more than others
- Preparing for disagreement, we will not always agree
- Behavior logs feel awkward - others felt behavior logs were super helpful - one suggested it be a self evaluation tool

Recommendations

Agreed to:
- Shared Values
- 1 to 2 goals per year
    - Facilitator is needed to shape process around 1-2 goals per year
- Norms
- Promoting Psychological Safety
- Smart Goals
    - would need to relate to the 1-2 topics per year
    - possible to survey the community or have focus groups to choose goals
- Retreat Guide Tool

Needs more discussion:
- Behavior Logs
- One topic per meeting
    - some flexibility in meeting agenda is needed
    - may not be realistic
    - we should prioritize time for a main topic
- Readiness Ramp - need more understanding around this
- Book Group

Shared privately, concern that existing ad hoc work will not be included in 1-2 goals per year

Report of Recommendations

Ventura County Public Safety Racial Equity Advisory Council

Date: 3/27/23

Prepared For: Ventura County Public Safety Racial Equity Advisory Group

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Table of Contents

Introduction

Dr. Williams is grateful for the opportunity to support the VC PSREAG in their learning and action with this report of recommendations. This report and Retreat #2 (April 6) are the two final activities of Dr. Williams' engagement. Dr. Williams invites questions, feedback, and future consultations as the group implements the tools and recommendations.

Approach

Dr. Williams brings expertise in scientific, trauma-informed, and equity-centered behavior and systems change design. Dr. Williams' design of the retreats, data collection activities, and recommendations are informed by the following source materials (see Appendix).

> GARE Communications Guide (May 2018)
> Liberatory Design
> Psychological Safety (Amy Edmonson, 1999)
> Race Equity and Inclusion Action Guide (Anne E Casey Foundation)
> Community Readiness Model (Plested, Edwards & Jumper-Thurman 2006)
> 4 Pillars of Cross-Sector Collaboration (Central Coast Regional Equity Initiative & Evolve Equity
>   Psychology, Inc).

Recommendations for Group Consideration

The following recommendations are organized according to the three expected outcomes of project activities: 1) Improving Group Functioning, 2) Creation of Actionable Goals, and 3) Increasing Readiness for Cross-Sector Collaboration.

Improving Group Functioning

Dr. Williams recommends implementing the tools of **shared values, norms, psychological safety, focused participation logs, and parking lot** to meet the outcome of 'improved methods and practice of group communication, group decision-making, and group functioning to ultimately achieve PSREAG tasks of delivering policies and procedures.'

Shared Values

Practicing from a foundation of shared values promotes trust and authentic connection. Dr. Williams recommends revisiting shared values consistently within the group process.

Norms

Norms are behavioral expectations for building trust and group efficiency. Dr. Williams recommends reviewing and acknowledging norms during each PSREAG meeting (see Appendix).

Promoting Psychological Safety

Psychological safety is defined as a shared belief held by members of a team that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking. Healthy risk taking is necessary for change. Dr. Williams recommends that members practice psychological safety behaviors and that group facilitators monitor, praise, and validate psychological safety behaviors that are displayed in the group setting (see Logs below).
1. Acknowledge own learning
2. Acknowledge own fallibility
3. Model curiosity

Focused Participation Logs

Behavior tracking is a powerful facilitation tool, as it focuses facilitator attention on behaviors, providing an opportunity for 'in the moment' validation or redirection. Moreover, being observed for an identified reason is known to change human behavior; therefore, this tool is encouraged to reinforce, validate, and promote psychological safety promoting behaviors. A Focused Participation log template is attached as a PDF for group facilitators to consider.

Parking Lot

A Parking Lot is an effective facilitation tool to maintain group structure and focus while also ensuring participant needs are met. A Parking lot is a maintained list of questions or discussion topics that arise during a meeting that are not appropriate to be addressed at the moment. They are identified and listed in the Parking Lot to be addressed and checked off ✓when addressed at a later time. Facilitator best practices include a post-meeting debrief, where an action plan strategy is developed for Parking Lot Items.

Creation of Actionable Goals

Dr. Williams recommends implementing the tools of **focused voice, intentional community voice, SMART goal setting, facilitation structure** to meet the outcome of 'creation of actionable goals to circulate professional resources (time, energy, roles, skills) to reach the group's purpose and goals.'

SMART Goal Setting

Dr. Williams recommends that the group identify **1-2 key issues** or problems that they want to address per year. The 1-2 key issues or 'problems to solve' will be identified via a SMART goal setting workshop: Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant, Timely. A list of 11 categories of identified needs may be found in the Findings section.

Addressing 1-2 key issues or problems per year will focus the group to meet the recommended goal of preparing an **annual report of recommendations** that includes:

1) Context of the Problem
2) Relevant Data
3) Discussion
4) Recommendations
5) Limitations
6) Next Steps

This recommended format does not force consensus on an issue, as it allows for multiple perspectives to be shared and collective ownership over the report-writing process. The discussion and limitations sections allow for complexities of the issue to be identified and addressed, to promote collective action in the development of the report. In this way, the process of preparing and writing report sections are stepping stones to a forward-change direction. Moreover, the report structure provides the opportunity for feasible collective action given the structure, capacity, and resources of the PSREAG.

Facilitation Structure

Dr. Williams recommends that to promote meeting efficiency, each monthly PSREAG meeting will focus on **1 topic and 1 objective.** Example meeting objectives include:

1) Identify the context of the problem
2) Present and discuss data

Facilitators will promote equal and active participation of members during the focused discussion section of the meeting. With this structure, meeting minutes will serve as material for appropriate sections within the **annual report of recommendations.**

Focused Voice

Dr. Williams recommends that members preface comments made within meetings using the following phrase: **"On behalf of [specific community group or constituency]".** The purpose of this phrase is to focus meeting dialogue to the identified 1 topic and 1 objective, ensure each member has equal opportunity to represent the needs, opinions, and perspectives of a specific community or constituency during the meeting, and to document each contribution on behalf of the community or constituency they represent as material for the **annual report of recommendations.** Members should come prepared to the meeting with anecdotal stories, lived experience data, case studies, examples, and other specific information from the community they represent on the identified meeting topic.

Intentional Community Voice

Dr. Williams recommends that members invite community members to PSREAG meetings, to speak on the identified meeting topic, to share lived experience, personal examples, and community specific

information relevant to the meeting topic and meeting objective. This participation will serve as documented data to inform the annual report of recommendations.

Increasing Readiness for Cross-Sector Collaboration

Dr. Williams recommends the tools of **Readiness Ramp, 4 Pillars for Cross-Sector Collaboration, Book Club, and Retreat Guide** to meet the outcome of 'recommendations for actions to increase readiness for cross-sector change.'

Readiness Ramp

Readiness, motivation, or capacity to address an identified issue or take action are inherently varied across individuals, groups, institutions, organizations, and societies. Dr. Williams recommends the group to conceptualize the varying readiness levels of an identified issue to inform their SMART goal setting, and the 'discussion' and 'recommendations' sections of the annual report of recommendations.

- Facilitation prompts might be: *Given the various readiness levels and resources at hand, what are the strategic actions we can take as a group?. Looking at the Readiness Ramp, what is the readiness level (1-9) of your organization, community, or constituency to take action on this issue? How can we 'ramp up' our readiness to take action?*
- A 'discussion' section of the report might read: *Given the varying levels of readiness for action within the group as evidenced by [context of the problem], we recommend the following next steps.*
- A 'recommendations' section of the report might read: *Due to XYZ, members of our group are at varying levels of readiness to take action on a policy recommendation for this issue. Therefore, our recommendations for immediate next steps to increase readiness are XYZ. Longer-term recommendations that this group will consider as agenda topics in future meetings are as follows.*

4 Pillars of Cross Sector Collaboration

Dr. Williams recommends the group continue the sequential steps of the 4 Pillars for equity-centered cross-sector collaboration

Book Club

Systemic racial equity change requires understanding, motivation, and strategic action. The following book recommendations were introduced in Retreat #1 as incentives for participation and cross-sector relationship building. As identified in Retreat #1 group discussion, the group evidences varying levels of understanding and comfort with the following concepts that are critical for systemic racial equity change:
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To promote collaborative dialogue on these topics of privilege and oppression, and how structural racism presents within groups, organizations, and institutions, Dr. Williams recommends the following books to guide discussion, reflection, and learning. Consistent and ongoing guided book discussion circles of *My Grandmother's Hands* and *Beyond your Bubble,* with a reading and discussion schedule, are recommended.

My Grandmother's Hands by Resmaa Menakem

My Grandmother's Hands provides a roadmap for racialized trauma healing using somatic-based mindfulness tools and community-based relational healing. The book provides a definition of 'white body supremacy' and illustrates examples of how internalized and institutional racism present in individuals, groups, and communities. Mindfulness-based practices are outlined for individual and collective healing. As a trained mindfulness practitioner, Dr. Williams introduced various mindfulness and grounding resources during Retreat #1. To further support the group's racialized trauma healing journey, Dr. Williams is providing each PSREAG member a copy of this book. More information on somatic healing for racialized trauma may be found here: https://www.resmaa.com/.

Beyond Your Bubble by Dr. Tania Israel

Beyond your Bubble is published by the American Psychological Association LifeTools Series and is a tool for building common ground within political polarization. Dr. Williams communicated with Dr. Tania Israel for her intention to utilize her book as an incentive in Retreat #1. Dr. Israel is a psychologist, researcher and speaker. https://taniaisrael.com/

Retreat Guide

Dr. Williams recommends members revisit the discussion questions in the retreat guide as they promote active reflection and prompt difficult conversations about systemic racism. Following Retreat #1, a handful of members completed the task of meeting with another PSREAG member for focused discussion and ally-building. Various members have identified interest and hesitancy in meeting with a specific PSREAG member that they haven't spoken to before. Dr. Williams encourages building relational connections via the retreat guide questions or book recommendations, and to take a healthy risk to send an email invitation or phone call to set up a meeting. Informal trust building among members will increase opportunities for large group trust building.

Data Collection

PSREAG members were invited to voluntarily and actively participate in project activities and data collection activities. Formal confidential data collection took place in the form of two surveys. Informal data was collected via participation and discussion content during the two retreats, behavioral observations, and individual consultations with Dr. Williams. Trained retreat facilitators collected information via behavioral observations and behavior logs.

Behavioral Observations

Behavioral observations of group process were conducted during the following PSREAG meetings: December 1, 2022, January 5, 2023, February 2, 2023, March 2, 2023.

Consultations

Dr. Williams engaged in frequent and ongoing consultations with VC DEI staff on identifying group needs, preparing for the retreat, training in retreat facilitation tools, debriefing meetings, and discussion of preliminary findings.

Individual confidential consultations were conducted with PSREAG members during February and March 2023 in order to understand and identify member needs and recommendations for the group. Three (3) meetings were conducted with Public Safety members and five (5) meetings with CBO members.

Findings

Survey 1: Psychological Safety Survey

Members were asked to rate the PSREAG for the following elements of Psychological Safety (n=22). The following elements of psychological safety are opportunities for member growth within the group:
1. Deliberately acting in a way that undermines another's efforts
2. Rejecting others for being different
3. Bringing up problems and tough issues
4. Actively acknowledge own fallibility
5. Model curiosity and ask lots of questions

Retreat 1

Expectation Setting

Upon check-in at Retreat #1, PSREAG members were asked to write one word expectations for the retreat. The most reiterated expectations were progress (3x), unity (2x), understanding (2x), and honesty (2x).

Small Groups

The 23 PSREAG participants that attended Retreat #1 were divided into four small groups to answer questions about reciprocal relationships, power and privilege, and group success. Trained facilitators guided small group sessions. Bulleted summaries are listed below:

Relationship Building

- Identified strong relationships with supervisors, law enforcement, mentors, mentees, and volunteers.
- In an effective, collaborative relationship, some positive emotions felt are fun, joy, and shared common values.
- Members also shared how they can give transparency to contribute to collaborative relationships.

Acknowledgement of Power
- When asked about their identity, members expressed the need to know what their own privileges are and how there are degrees of power and privilege that can vary depending on the situation.
- Many members spoke of code-switching - For example, being too light skinned or not "POC enough" for one space while feeling completely isolated in spaces that are designed for dominant culture.
- Members shared different forms of oppression: sexism, skin color, racial, who counts as or is seen as "American", ableism.
- Members also noted a difference between acquired privilege (through education, wealth, status for example) versus unearned privilege (skin color).
- Members shared the impact of their identities including feelings of prejudgment, assumptions, and difficulty to show up as their full selves when navigating privilege and oppression in the same space.
- When asked how they can transform discomfort to growth opportunities, members identified how they can acknowledge these fears and discomfort and work to dismantle assumptions.

Group Success
- Many characteristics were shared about what a "successful" group looks like, including shared common goals/aligned mission and where something real is produced and results in change.
- Examples of member contributions to the group are active participation, being a voice for the unheard, and working through trauma.
- Lastly, when asked about what personal actions members could take towards growth, responses included **courage, showing up, vulnerability, authenticity, commitment, staying curious, asking questions, assuming positive intent, listening, working on biases, and being open minded.**

Focused Participation Logs

Trained small group facilitators completed Focused Participation Logs to encourage and reinforce participation and engagement. Behavior tracking is a powerful facilitation tool, as it focuses facilitator attention on behaviors, providing an opportunity for 'in the moment' validation or redirection.

Findings: Active participation and engagement were observed in all small groups via sharing verbal answers or journaling answers to the discussion prompts. Over the course of the three small groups, participation increased as evidenced by increased behaviors of 'sharing personal examples and stories," and "praising peers". A few participants demonstrated Psychological Safety skills consistently

throughout the three groups (roughly 15%), the most common skills being "acknowledging own learning" and "acknowledging fallibility". No participants displayed inattentive or disruptive behaviors.

Rose, Bud, Thorn

Members were asked to complete a Rose, Bud, Thorn worksheet and submit their confidential responses to Dr. Jonnie WIlliams at the end of Retreat #1 (n=23). Common themes for each question are presented in order of response frequency.

Rose - What is one good thing that happened in today's retreat?
- Forming new relationships and strengthening current relationships with PSREAG members
- Many members highlighted how they were able to be open and vulnerable when speaking and listening to others.
- A few members expressed their appreciation of the strong facilitation and retreat activities.

Bud - What is one thing you are looking forward to?
- Members highlighted how they are eager to continue building relationships and getting to know the members better.
- Many members expressed how they are looking forward to the next retreat/gathering to discuss notes and analyze if the tools discussed in Retreat #1 are being used.
- A few members discussed their readiness to begin the work and identify next steps.

Thorn - What is one struggle you experienced today?
- A few members voiced concerns about being unheard and how there are previous tensions not addressed.
- Some members expressed their internal struggle of being able to be honest and open with the group.
- A few members described them wanting to continue to meet more people.
- One member described how they are going to continue their efforts to learn.
- Another member voiced their worries about Phin.

Parking Lot

Participant questions or discussion topics that did not fall within the planned retreat meeting structure were logged in a Parking Lot to be addressed at a later time (see Appendix).

Survey 2: Visioning Collaborative Success

PSREAG members were asked to complete a confidential visioning survey in anticipation of Retreat #2 (n=25).

Defining Racial Equity Advocacy

Members were asked if they identify as a racial equity advocate and if so, what does that mean and look like in the PSREAG space. Almost all members identified as a Racial Equity Advocate, and those who did not explained why. Main themes are presented in order of response frequency.

Sharing lived experiences. Members expressed how important their personal experiences are when advocating for racial equity.

Contributing perspectives to the conversation. Members shared how they bring new perspectives and insights to these conversations around racial equity.

Need to surround ourselves with people who have the same vision. To advocate for racial equity, one member shared how it is crucial that they work with people who have the same vision and goals in order to create change.

Equal access. Members shared how racial equity includes advocating for equal opportunities, access, and treatment.

Dismantling harmful systems in place. Members shared that an important component of racial equity is acknowledging and addressing the harmful systems/structures in place.

Speaking up about racial equity. Most members highlighted the importance of speaking up and leading racial equity efforts by identifying and learning more about racial and health disparities.

Expanding to other areas of equity advocacy. A few members shared how they also identify as other types of advocates (civil rights, disability justice, etc.) or an equity advocate for a wider spectrum of issues across gender, education, law, and justice.

Listening and supporting others. Members highlighted that a part of being a racial equity advocate is to listen and be open to other's perspectives.

Those who do not identify as a "racial equity advocate". A few members did not identify as a racial equity advocate, although they explained how they believe racial equity is important.

Main Purpose of PSREAG

Members were asked their perspective on the main purpose of PSREAG. Main themes are presented in order of response frequency.

Community groups and law enforcement to work together. Members shared how the purpose of PSREAG is to foster the building of trust and understanding and to ensure all perspectives shared and considered between community members/organizations and law enforcement.

Identify local racial equity issues and problems within public safety. The next step that members expressed is to identify racial inequities within the public safety sector, which can be done by engaging community members, conducting research, and reviewing policies/current studies.

Address and discuss these racial equity issues/problems. Members shared that it is important to address these iniquities collaboratively.

Identify and brainstorm potential solutions. After identifying and discussing racial equity issues, members shared that PSREAG needs to work together to brainstorm potential solutions.

Reach agreements. An important part of PSREAG is to ensure that all voices are heard and that potential solutions are agreed upon before moving forward.

Serve our community. Members shared the overarching goal of PSREAG is to better serve the Ventura community by promoting and achieving racial equity.

Educate others on racism. An important part of PSREAG's purpose is to continuously educate others on racism, which may look like acknowledging historic/current policies in place and addressing implicit biases.

Create social justice change. Members believe that the overall end goal of PSREAG is to create long-lasting social change for the region.

Current Performance

When members were asked about their current performance with 1) exchanging information and 2) increasing access, the average response for both was "Not well." However, "Not well" was selected more times when members were asked about exchanging information compared to increasing access.

- Member rating of PSREAG performance with exchanging information, education, and ideas between public safety and community leaders are as follows: 22% Well, 43% Not well, 35% Neutral.
- Members were asked to rate PSREAG's performance with increasing access, transparency, and fostering mutual understanding between public safety and community leaders. Findings: 8% Well, 39% Not well, 52% Neutral.

Purpose of the Group

Identifying Problems to Solve

Members were asked to identify **1-3 problems** they would like to solve that this group can be the solution for. 11 problem categories were identified. Themes are presented in order of frequency.

Cross-Sector engagement and healthy relationships between law enforcement, public agencies, racial equity advocacy leaders, and community members. and other public agencies.

Establish Civilian oversight committee. Members shared the importance of establishing an oversight committee to address allegations of violence and discrimination.

Reform Civilian Sheriff office complaint procedure to provide greater objectivity and transparency.

Increasing language access and services.

Equal treatment to undocumented and other migrant community members .

Convene public forums to provide open communication on specific issues between community members and government agencies.

Law Enforcement policy reform. Specific approaches include:
- Investigate existing public county policies and practices that have a disparate impact on racial and ethnic minorities and develop recommendations that will help to diminish that impact.
- Invite police reform experts to advise the group and investigate model policies to inform and update our County's policies.

RIPA. Some members identified the importance of investigating data to understand the disparities and find a solution through policy or practice change to solve this issue.

ICE. Multiple responses identified ending cooperation between the Sheriff's office and ICE and increasing trust and cooperation in communities with large immigrant populations.

Conduct public forums to educate the public on racial equities. One suggestion was to educate the public on the socioeconomic and generational factors associated with increased risk of victimization and adult criminal conduct.

Increase safety for boys and men of color. One suggestion was addressing mechanisms schools can take to secure the safety of our children when walking home from school.

Increase community public safety overall. One member identified the importance of addressing reduction of theft and hate crimes.

Engage local residents, specifically youth, to generate interest and apply for careers in law enforcement.

Commission a Community Survey to determine the issues that are of greatest concern to communities who suffer the most when there is not racial equity.

Prevention of racially motivated police stops and police violence.

Acknowledge and communicate racial equity issues to BOS.

Number of Problems to Solve

Members were asked to identify a realistic and feasible number of problems that this group can work together towards solving, per year. 76% of the group reported between 1-3 problems: 1 problem (12%), 2 problems (20%), 3 problems (40%), between 1-3 problems (4%, 1 person).

Collaboration

Collaboration Skills

Members were asked to rank **how knowledgeable** PSREAG members are overall about how to collaborate. Findings show that 24% reported that PSREAG members are not knowledgeable, with 23.8% reporting they are knowledgeable and 52.4% reporting they are neutral.

Members were asked to identify PSREAG leaders who collaborate, and their collaborative leadership behaviors. Four members identified leaders' collaboration skills as a growth opportunity.

Improve communications to create greater understanding

Members were asked to identify the **importance** of improving communications to create greater understanding. Findings: 72% Extremely Important, 24% Somewhat Important, <1% Not Very important.

Members were asked to rate PSREAG **readiness** for improving communications to create greater understanding. Findings: 52% Somewhat Ready, 30% Not Very Ready, 17% Unsure.

Identify strategies to improve institutional law enforcement practices

Members were asked to identify the **importance** of identifying strategies to improve institutional law enforcement practices. Findings: 88% Extremely Important, 1% Somewhat Important, <1% Not Very important.

Members were asked to rate PSREAG **readiness** for identifying strategies to improve institutional law enforcement practices. Findings: 40% Somewhat Ready, 43% Not Very Ready, 13% Unsure.

Leadership

Members were asked to identify PSREAG leaders who collaborate, and their collaborative leadership behaviors. The following findings of leadership strengths summarize 15 responses (many skipped the question or stated 'unsure') of member-identified leaders:

Leaders come to meetings prepared to lead a discussion about the materials that were provided.

Leaders display strong communication skills and facilitation of participant discussion on difficult topics.

Strengths

Members were asked to identify the strengths of PSREAG collaborative efforts. Themes are presented in order of response frequency.

Commitment to Racial Equity. Data captured PSREAG's passion, drive, commitment, and persistence of members on racial equity topics.

Diverse composition. Members shared the diverse composition of PSREAG and the perspectives, knowledge, and skills of membership.

Relationships between members. Data findings show the value of relationships created and strengthened in PSREAG.

Barriers

Primary Obstacles

Members were asked what are the primary obstacles to PSREAG collaborative efforts. Main themes are presented in order of response frequency.

Lack of trust.

Lack of focus of the group and lack of timely, structured meetings.

Professional self interest and political agendas.

Disinterest in change.

Lack of structure, purpose, and agency of the group.

Poor focus and expectation setting by leadership.

Power imbalance between Public Safety and CBOs.

Lack of baseline understanding on topics and uninformed membership.

Some members take too much air time stating personal opinions.

Difficulty of holding parties accountable.

Unreasonable expectations of some group members on the impact this group can have in a short

amount of time.

Decision Making and Communication Barriers

Members were asked to identify 1-2 group decision making and communication barriers.

Difficulty making decisions as a group. Members shared how it is hard to reach agreements and consensus as a group in order to move forward.

Negative and disruptive behaviors. Members explained disruptive behaviors that occur such as lack of listening, poor communication and healthy collaboration.

Formal and Informal Spaces for Collaboration

Members were asked to list any formal or informal spaces for public sector and community leaders to collaborate on public safety racial equity topics. Areas for advocacy and connection outside of PSREAG are listed below with common themes **bolded** with examples in *italics*:

Law Enforcement Spaces. Members shared several examples of law enforcement spaces to potentially collaborate with, specifically in Oxnard.
- *OXPD community advisory meetings*
- *Oxnard PD Chief advisory group*
- *Sheriff's community councils*
- *Police Chiefs / Sheriffs community advisory boards*
- *Public Safety Events*
- *Ride-alongs*

Advocacy Spaces. Some members mentioned advocacy groups to collaborate with who are doing similar racial equity work, such as:
- *Crime victims rights advocacy*
- *ADL Walk Against Hate*
- *GARE [Government Alliance on Race and Equity]*
- *Coalition for Anti-Racist Glendale*

Community Spaces. A member referenced a specific community organizing group that is a CBO member of PSREAG, that uplifts and centers community voices in racial equity advocacy.

Other Public Spaces: Members referred to other public places including schools, city councils, and neighboring counties to engage with. One member identified the importance of accepting outside help and thought leadership.

Prioritizing Meeting Time

Members were asked to prioritize meeting time based on 4 key actions. Findings demonstrate that the group would like to focus 30-40% of the meeting time on each of these actions:

1. Problem solving issues and working towards concrete measurable goals.
2. Discussion of local racial equity issues (e.g. data, public safety policies).
3. Two-way dialogue: learning from each other.

Conclusion

Dr. Williams hopes that this report becomes a useful tool for PSREAG to utilize in their immediate next steps and work moving forward. Please see the Appendix for references, tools, and more specific findings. Dr. Williams invites questions, feedback, and future consultations as the group implements the tools and recommendations.

Appendices

1: References and Source Material

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4 Pillars for Cross Sector Collaboration, Central Coast Regional Equity Initiative & Evolve Equity Psychology, Inc.

2: 4 Pillars of Cross Sector Collaboration

They were developed in partnership with the Central Coast Regional Equity Initiative's Strategic Action Planning Workgroup. As *Systems Change Strategist and Research Partner*, Dr. Williams engaged the workgroup in participatory action workshops and analyzed qualitative tri-county participant data to yield the 4 Pillar Model.

4 Pillar Model	PSREAG Activities

Pillar 1: Building Trusting Cross-Sector Relationships ● Psychological safety ● Communication agreements ● Healthy boundaries are needed to reduce an "us vs. them" mindset ● Invite new authentic connections and strengthen existing connections	Retreat #1 Psychological Safety Survey
Pillar 2: Acknowledgement of Power & Privilege ● Awareness and understanding ● Naming of structural power imbalance across sectors, institutions, social locations, lived experience, and roles	Retreat #1
Pillar 3: Successful Reciprocal Collaboration ● Giving and receiving to build resource-sharing alliances ● Promote a "collective narrative" ● Catalyze grassroots alliances and organic organizing efforts	Visioning Collaborative Success Survey Retreat #2
Pillar 4: Sustainable Resource Circulation Circulating resources (time, funding, people, roles, skills, space, data) reliably & consistently to produce replicable data-driven actions that achieve measurable results	Retreat #2

3: Norms

These norms integrate previous meeting agreements which were then agreed as part of the bylaws in 2021. In February 2022, the bylaws were ratified again. During the February 2023 retreat, these then agreements/bylaws were discussed and added to by members of PSREAG. The language changed from meeting agreements to norms as we choose to interact with each other to create safety, productivity, and community with the hopes that these norms extend beyond meetings into our everyday interactions.

- **Pause, feel, & reflect**
- **Embrace vulnerability & discomfort**
- **Mindful of power & privilege** - Own your own intentions and impacts.
- **Curiosity** - Constant learning. How did you come to think this way or believe that?
- **Mutual respect** - Honoring time and place; discuss in an efficient manner
- **Listening** - Open-mindedness to others comments and feedback; awareness, quiet reflection is okay, slowing down and really listening. Emphasizing the building steps before action. Practicing patience.
- **Withhold judgment** - Consider an idea before rejecting or being critical to it.
- **Both/And thinking** - Expressing individuality while also being a team player.
- **Coming together in circle** - Being present in the moment and working collectively with positive intentionality. Having space where others know they can reach out to each other for peer support.

- **Practice bravery to foster emotional & physical safety** - Honoring the practice of calling things in, if something feels uncomfortable, calling in in a non-confrontational way, in spirit of discovery and learning
- **Speaking openly & honestly** - Transparently expressing our truth in a compassionate and respectful way. Respond to others in positive and effective ways that move the conversation forward. Challenge with care.
- **Naming, addressing, & resolving tension** - Acknowledging relational ruptures and proactively repairing. Challenge with care. Own your intentions and impacts. Assume positive intent.
- **Valuing each other** - Acknowledge and value the lived experience and insight of what others bring to the table. Empathize with another's perspective, especially those that come from a different sector, field, or profession. Lift each other up for their contributions. Recognize each other as representatives of different communities.
- **Cultivate shared vision, commitment & common goals**
- **Mindful of the space we take up in the room** - Calling ourselves into sharing.

4: Parking Lot

A Parking Lot is an effective facilitation tool to maintain group structure and focus while also ensuring participant needs are met. A Parking lot is a maintained list of questions or discussion topics that arise during a meeting that are not appropriate to be addressed at the moment. They are identified and listed in the Parking Lot to be addressed and checked off ✓ when addressed at a later time.

Facilitator best practices include a post-meeting debrief, where an action plan strategy is developed for Parking Lot Items.

Date	Question or Topic	Action Plan	Person Responsible
2/11/23	● Address white hats		
2/11/23	● Phin's absence - no one telling group		
2/11/23	● More whole group dialogue		
2/11/23	● 1:1 workshop these questions		
2/11/23	● Unintentional oppressor		
2/11/23	● Are we truly mission aligned?		

2/11/23	● Define racial equity		
2/11/23	● What is white body supremacy?		
2/11	● Embracing vulnerability and discomfort can be an obstacle in the big group		

5: SMART Goal Setting

SMART goal setting is recommended to meet expected outcome of Pillar 4, Sustainable Resource Circulation: Creation of actionable goals to circulate professional resources (time, energy, roles, and skills) to PSREAG to reach the group's purpose and goals. SMART Goals are Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant, Timely. Dr. Williams recommends a SMART goal-setting workshop for the 11 categories of identified needs may be found in the Findings section.

6: Retreat Guide

The 2/11 retreat guide can serve as a continual tool for individual or group earning, process, and reflection.

7: Data Findings

Survey 1: Psychological Safety Survey

Findings are ranked in level of importance for group consideration as growth opportunities to increase psychological safety.

Psychological Safety Element	Strength	Opportunity for Growth	Neutral
Deliberately acting in a way that undermines another's efforts	36% disagree	27% agree	36% neutral
Rejecting others for being different	36% disagree	23% agree	40% neutral

Bringing up problems and tough issues	40% agree	23% disagree	36% neutral
Mistakes are held against you	32% disagree	14% agree	55% neutral
Actively framing work as learning problem, not execution problem	37% always/often	13% rarely	50% sometimes
Safety for risk taking	41% agree	9% disagree	50% neutral
Actively acknowledge own fallibility	63% always/often	37% sometimes	-
Model curiosity and ask lots of questions	45% always/often	55% sometimes	-
Difficulty asking others for help	50% disagree	5% agree	45% neutral
Unique skills and talents are valued and utilized	50% agree	5% disagree	45% neutral

Readiness for Collaboration

	1. Improve communications to create greater understanding	2. Identify strategies to improve institutional law enforcement practices
Readiness Level of PSREAG	52% Somewhat Ready 30% Not Very Ready 17% Unsure	40% Somewhat Ready 43% Not Very Ready 13% Unsure
Importance of these collaborative efforts	72% Extremely Important 24% Somewhat Important <1% Not Very important	88% Extremely Important 1% Somewhat Important <1% Not Very important

Prioritizing Meeting Time

Responses voted by 10 or more members are **bolded.**

Ranking	Action	Percentage of Time (# votes)
1	Problem solving issues and working towards concrete measurable goals	50% or more (8 ppl) **30-40% (11 ppl)** 10-20% (6 ppl)
2	Discussion of local racial equity issues(e.g. data, public safety policies)	50% or more (8 ppl) **30-40% (10 ppl)** 10-20% (6 ppl)
3	Two-way dialogue: learning from each other.	50% or more (4 ppl)

		30-40% (10 ppl) **10-20% (10 ppl)**
4	Discussing immediate concerns of the day (national level events or issues)	50% or more (1 person) 30-40% (5 ppl) **10-20% (16 ppl)**

The Community Readiness Model

The process of advancing equity and reducing disparities is complex and challenging, especially as "readiness for change" is inherently varied across individuals and groups. "Readiness" is the degree to which a group is motivated and prepared to act on an equity issue. Readiness-appropriate strategic action is necessary for effective, successful, and sustainable change within teams, organizations, and communities (Plested, Edwards & Jumper-Thurman, 2006). The Readiness Ramp is a metaphor to embody the experience of traveling up and down a physical ramp, to understand and guide group behavior change (Evolve Equity Psychology, Inc).

9 High Level of Community Ownership
Detailed & sophisticated data exists about prevalence, causes, & consequences. Effective evaluation guides new directions. Model is applied to other issues.

8 Confirmation/ Expansion
Efforts are in place. Community is comfortable using services & support

7 Stabilization
Activities are supported by administrators or community leaders. Staff are trained & experienced.

6 Initiation
Enough info is available to justify efforts; activities are underway.

5 Preparation
Active leaders begin planning in earnest. Community offers modest support of efforts.

4 Pre-Planning
There is clear recognition that something must be done; there might be a group addressing it.

3 Vague Awareness
Most feel there is a local concern; no immediate motivation to act.

2 Denial/Resistance
Some recognize that it is a concern; little recognition it might be occurring locally.

1 No Awareness
Issue not generally recognized by the community as a problem.

The Readiness Ramp is a visual tool developed by Evolve Equity Psychology, Inc. to introduce equity change-agents to the Community Readiness Model (Plested, Edwards & Jumper-Thurman, 2006) and encourage use of Community Readiness Handbook. Source: Plested, B.A., Edwards, R.W., & Jumper-Thurman, P. (2006, April). Community Readiness: A handbook for successful change. Fort Collins, CO: Tri-Ethnic Center for Prevention

8:Readiness Ramp

9: Focused Participation Log

Behavior tracking is a powerful facilitation tool, as it focuses facilitator attention on behaviors, providing an opportunity for 'in the moment' validation or redirection. Moreover, the act of being observed is known to change human behavior; therefore, this tool is encouraged to reinforce, validate, and promote psychological safety promoting behaviors.

Meeting Title:										Observer Name:	
Date/Time:											
		Focused Participation			Engagement		Psychological Safety			Not following norms	Questions	Parking Lot Items
	Name	Presenting	Discussing	"Speaking on behalf of"	Humor	Praising Peer	Acknowledges own learning	Acknowledges own faillibility	Modeling Curiosity			

Report of Recommendations

Ventura County Public Safety Racial Equity Advisory Council

Date: 3/27/23

Prepared For: Ventura County Public Safety Racial Equity Advisory Group

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Table of Contents

Introduction

Dr. Williams is grateful for the opportunity to support the VC PSREAG in their learning and action with this report of recommendations. This report and Retreat #2 (April 6) are the two final activities of Dr. Williams' engagement. Dr. Williams invites questions, feedback, and future consultations as the group implements the tools and recommendations.

Approach

Dr. Williams brings expertise in scientific, trauma-informed, and equity-centered behavior and systems change design. Dr. Williams' design of the retreats, data collection activities, and recommendations are informed by the following source materials (see Appendix).

> GARE Communications Guide (May 2018)
> Liberatory Design
> Psychological Safety (Amy Edmonson, 1999)
> Race Equity and Inclusion Action Guide (Anne E Casey Foundation)
> Community Readiness Model (Plested, Edwards & Jumper-Thurman 2006)
> 4 Pillars of Cross-Sector Collaboration (Central Coast Regional Equity Initiative & Evolve Equity
>   Psychology, Inc).

Recommendations for Group Consideration

The following recommendations are organized according to the three expected outcomes of project activities: 1) Improving Group Functioning, 2) Creation of Actionable Goals, and 3) Increasing Readiness for Cross-Sector Collaboration.

Improving Group Functioning

Dr. Williams recommends implementing the tools of **shared values, norms, psychological safety, focused participation logs, and parking lot** to meet the outcome of 'improved methods and practice of group communication, group decision-making, and group functioning to ultimately achieve PSREAG tasks of delivering policies and procedures.'

Shared Values

Practicing from a foundation of shared values promotes trust and authentic connection. Dr. Williams recommends revisiting shared values consistently within the group process.

Norms

Norms are behavioral expectations for building trust and group efficiency. Dr. Williams recommends reviewing and acknowledging norms during each PSREAG meeting (see Appendix).

Promoting Psychological Safety

Psychological safety is defined as a shared belief held by members of a team that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking. Healthy risk taking is necessary for change. Dr. Williams recommends that members practice psychological safety behaviors and that group facilitators monitor, praise, and validate psychological safety behaviors that are displayed in the group setting (see Logs below).

1. Acknowledge own learning
2. Acknowledge own fallibility
3. Model curiosity

Focused Participation Logs

Behavior tracking is a powerful facilitation tool, as it focuses facilitator attention on behaviors, providing an opportunity for 'in the moment' validation or redirection. Moreover, being observed for an identified reason is known to change human behavior; therefore, this tool is encouraged to reinforce, validate, and promote psychological safety promoting behaviors. A Focused Participation log template is attached as a PDF for group facilitators to consider.

Parking Lot

A Parking Lot is an effective facilitation tool to maintain group structure and focus while also ensuring participant needs are met. A Parking lot is a maintained list of questions or discussion topics that arise during a meeting that are not appropriate to be addressed at the moment. They are identified and listed in the Parking Lot to be addressed and checked off ✓when addressed at a later time. Facilitator best practices include a post-meeting debrief, where an action plan strategy is developed for Parking Lot Items.

Creation of Actionable Goals

Dr. Williams recommends implementing the tools of **focused voice, intentional community voice, SMART goal setting, facilitation structure** to meet the outcome of 'creation of actionable goals to circulate professional resources (time, energy, roles, skills) to reach the group's purpose and goals.'

SMART Goal Setting

Dr. Williams recommends that the group identify **1-2 key issues** or problems that they want to address per year. The 1-2 key issues or 'problems to solve' will be identified via a SMART goal setting workshop: Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant, Timely. A list of 11 categories of identified needs may be found in the Findings section.

Addressing 1-2 key issues or problems per year will focus the group to meet the recommended goal of preparing an **annual report of recommendations** that includes:
1) Context of the Problem
2) Relevant Data
3) Discussion
4) Recommendations
5) Limitations
6) Next Steps

This recommended format does not force consensus on an issue, as it allows for multiple perspectives to be shared and collective ownership over the report-writing process. The discussion and limitations sections allow for complexities of the issue to be identified and addressed, to promote collective action in the development of the report. In this way, the process of preparing and writing report sections are stepping stones to a forward-change direction. Moreover, the report structure provides the opportunity for feasible collective action given the structure, capacity, and resources of the PSREAG.

Facilitation Structure

Dr. Williams recommends that to promote meeting efficiency, each monthly PSREAG meeting will focus on **1 topic and 1 objective.** Example meeting objectives include:
1) Identify the context of the problem
2) Present and discuss data

Facilitators will promote equal and active participation of members during the focused discussion section of the meeting. With this structure, meeting minutes will serve as material for appropriate sections within the **annual report of recommendations.**

Focused Voice

Dr. Williams recommends that members preface comments made within meetings using the following phrase: **"On behalf of [specific community group or constituency]".** The purpose of this phrase is to focus meeting dialogue to the identified 1 topic and 1 objective, ensure each member has equal opportunity to represent the needs, opinions, and perspectives of a specific community or constituency during the meeting, and to document each contribution on behalf of the community or constituency they represent as material for the **annual report of recommendations.** Members should come prepared to the meeting with anecdotal stories, lived experience data, case studies, examples, and other specific information from the community they represent on the identified meeting topic.

Intentional Community Voice

Dr. Williams recommends that members invite community members to PSREAG meetings, to speak on the identified meeting topic, to share lived experience, personal examples, and community specific

information relevant to the meeting topic and meeting objective. This participation will serve as documented data to inform the annual report of recommendations.

Increasing Readiness for Cross-Sector Collaboration

Dr. Williams recommends the tools of **Readiness Ramp, 4 Pillars for Cross-Sector Collaboration, Book Club, and Retreat Guide** to meet the outcome of 'recommendations for actions to increase readiness for cross-sector change.'

Readiness Ramp

Readiness, motivation, or capacity to address an identified issue or take action are inherently varied across individuals, groups, institutions, organizations, and societies. Dr. Williams recommends the group to conceptualize the varying readiness levels of an identified issue to inform their SMART goal setting, and the 'discussion' and 'recommendations' sections of the annual report of recommendations.

- Facilitation prompts might be: *Given the various readiness levels and resources at hand, what are the strategic actions we can take as a group?. Looking at the Readiness Ramp, what is the readiness level (1-9) of your organization, community, or constituency to take action on this issue? How can we 'ramp up' our readiness to take action?*
- A 'discussion' section of the report might read: *Given the varying levels of readiness for action within the group as evidenced by [context of the problem], we recommend the following next steps.*
- A 'recommendations' section of the report might read: *Due to XYZ, members of our group are at varying levels of readiness to take action on a policy recommendation for this issue. Therefore, our recommendations for immediate next steps to increase readiness are XYZ. Longer-term recommendations that this group will consider as agenda topics in future meetings are as follows.*

4 Pillars of Cross Sector Collaboration

Dr. Williams recommends the group continue the sequential steps of the 4 Pillars for equity-centered cross-sector collaboration

Book Club

Systemic racial equity change requires understanding, motivation, and strategic action. The following book recommendations were introduced in Retreat #1 as incentives for participation and cross-sector relationship building. As identified in Retreat #1 group discussion, the group evidences varying levels of understanding and comfort with the following concepts that are critical for systemic racial equity change:
systemic equity, inclusion, racial justice, racial equity, internalized racism, interpersonal racism, institutional racism, intersectionality, privilege, and white body supremacy.

To promote collaborative dialogue on these topics of privilege and oppression, and how structural racism presents within groups, organizations, and institutions, Dr. Williams recommends the following books to guide discussion, reflection, and learning. Consistent and ongoing guided book discussion circles of *My Grandmother's Hands* and *Beyond your Bubble,* with a reading and discussion schedule, are recommended.

My Grandmother's Hands by Resmaa Menakem

My Grandmother's Hands provides a roadmap for racialized trauma healing using somatic-based mindfulness tools and community-based relational healing. The book provides a definition of 'white body supremacy' and illustrates examples of how internalized and institutional racism present in individuals, groups, and communities. Mindfulness-based practices are outlined for individual and collective healing. As a trained mindfulness practitioner, Dr. Williams introduced various mindfulness and grounding resources during Retreat #1. To further support the group's racialized trauma healing journey, Dr. Williams is providing each PSREAG member a copy of this book. More information on somatic healing for racialized trauma may be found here: https://www.resmaa.com/.

Beyond Your Bubble by Dr. Tania Israel

Beyond your Bubble is published by the American Psychological Association LifeTools Series and is a tool for building common ground within political polarization. Dr. Williams communicated with Dr. Tania Israel for her intention to utilize her book as an incentive in Retreat #1. Dr. Israel is a psychologist, researcher and speaker. https://taniaisrael.com/

Retreat Guide

Dr. Williams recommends members revisit the discussion questions in the retreat guide as they promote active reflection and prompt difficult conversations about systemic racism. Following Retreat #1, a handful of members completed the task of meeting with another PSREAG member for focused discussion and ally-building. Various members have identified interest and hesitancy in meeting with a specific PSREAG member that they haven't spoken to before. Dr. Williams encourages building relational connections via the retreat guide questions or book recommendations, and to take a healthy risk to send an email invitation or phone call to set up a meeting. Informal trust building among members will increase opportunities for large group trust building.

Data Collection

PSREAG members were invited to voluntarily and actively participate in project activities and data collection activities. Formal confidential data collection took place in the form of two surveys. Informal data was collected via participation and discussion content during the two retreats, behavioral observations, and individual consultations with Dr. Williams. Trained retreat facilitators collected information via behavioral observations and behavior logs.

Behavioral Observations

Behavioral observations of group process were conducted during the following PSREAG meetings: December 1, 2022, January 5, 2023, February 2, 2023, March 2, 2023.

Consultations

Dr. Williams engaged in frequent and ongoing consultations with VC DEI staff on identifying group needs, preparing for the retreat, training in retreat facilitation tools, debriefing meetings, and discussion of preliminary findings.

Individual confidential consultations were conducted with PSREAG members during February and March 2023 in order to understand and identify member needs and recommendations for the group. Three (3) meetings were conducted with Public Safety members and five (5) meetings with CBO members.

Findings

Survey 1: Psychological Safety Survey

Members were asked to rate the PSREAG for the following elements of Psychological Safety (n=22). The following elements of psychological safety are opportunities for member growth within the group:
1. Deliberately acting in a way that undermines another's efforts
2. Rejecting others for being different
3. Bringing up problems and tough issues
4. Actively acknowledge own fallibility
5. Model curiosity and ask lots of questions

Retreat 1

Expectation Setting

Upon check-in at Retreat #1, PSREAG members were asked to write one word expectations for the retreat. The most reiterated expectations were progress (3x), unity (2x), understanding (2x), and honesty (2x).

Small Groups

The 23 PSREAG participants that attended Retreat #1 were divided into four small groups to answer questions about reciprocal relationships, power and privilege, and group success. Trained facilitators guided small group sessions. Bulleted summaries are listed below:

Relationship Building

- Identified strong relationships with supervisors, law enforcement, mentors, mentees, and volunteers.
- In an effective, collaborative relationship, some positive emotions felt are fun, joy, and shared common values.
- Members also shared how they can give transparency to contribute to collaborative relationships.

Acknowledgement of Power
- When asked about their identity, members expressed the need to know what their own privileges are and how there are degrees of power and privilege that can vary depending on the situation.
- Many members spoke of code-switching - For example, being too light skinned or not "POC enough" for one space while feeling completely isolated in spaces that are designed for dominant culture.
- Members shared different forms of oppression: sexism, skin color, racial, who counts as or is seen as "American", ableism.
- Members also noted a difference between acquired privilege (through education, wealth, status for example) versus unearned privilege (skin color).
- Members shared the impact of their identities including feelings of prejudgment, assumptions, and difficulty to show up as their full selves when navigating privilege and oppression in the same space.
- When asked how they can transform discomfort to growth opportunities, members identified how they can acknowledge these fears and discomfort and work to dismantle assumptions.

Group Success
- Many characteristics were shared about what a "successful" group looks like, including shared common goals/aligned mission and where something real is produced and results in change.
- Examples of member contributions to the group are active participation, being a voice for the unheard, and working through trauma.
- Lastly, when asked about what personal actions members could take towards growth, responses included **courage, showing up, vulnerability, authenticity, commitment, staying curious, asking questions, assuming positive intent, listening, working on biases, and being open minded.**

Focused Participation Logs

Trained small group facilitators completed Focused Participation Logs to encourage and reinforce participation and engagement. Behavior tracking is a powerful facilitation tool, as it focuses facilitator attention on behaviors, providing an opportunity for 'in the moment' validation or redirection.

Findings: Active participation and engagement were observed in all small groups via sharing verbal answers or journaling answers to the discussion prompts. Over the course of the three small groups, participation increased as evidenced by increased behaviors of 'sharing personal examples and stories," and "praising peers". A few participants demonstrated Psychological Safety skills consistently

throughout the three groups (roughly 15%), the most common skills being "acknowledging own learning" and "acknowledging fallibility". No participants displayed inattentive or disruptive behaviors.

Rose, Bud, Thorn

Members were asked to complete a Rose, Bud, Thorn worksheet and submit their confidential responses to Dr. Jonnie WIlliams at the end of Retreat #1 (n=23). Common themes for each question are presented in order of response frequency.

Rose - What is one good thing that happened in today's retreat?
- Forming new relationships and strengthening current relationships with PSREAG members
- Many members highlighted how they were able to be open and vulnerable when speaking and listening to others.
- A few members expressed their appreciation of the strong facilitation and retreat activities.

Bud - What is one thing you are looking forward to?
- Members highlighted how they are eager to continue building relationships and getting to know the members better.
- Many members expressed how they are looking forward to the next retreat/gathering to discuss notes and analyze if the tools discussed in Retreat #1 are being used.
- A few members discussed their readiness to begin the work and identify next steps.

Thorn - What is one struggle you experienced today?
- A few members voiced concerns about being unheard and how there are previous tensions not addressed.
- Some members expressed their internal struggle of being able to be honest and open with the group.
- A few members described them wanting to continue to meet more people.
- One member described how they are going to continue their efforts to learn.
- Another member voiced their worries about Phin.

Parking Lot

Participant questions or discussion topics that did not fall within the planned retreat meeting structure were logged in a Parking Lot to be addressed at a later time (see Appendix).

Survey 2: Visioning Collaborative Success

PSREAG members were asked to complete a confidential visioning survey in anticipation of Retreat #2 (n=25).

Defining Racial Equity Advocacy

Members were asked if they identify as a racial equity advocate and if so, what does that mean and look like in the PSREAG space. Almost all members identified as a Racial Equity Advocate, and those who did not explained why. Main themes are presented in order of response frequency.

Sharing lived experiences. Members expressed how important their personal experiences are when advocating for racial equity.

Contributing perspectives to the conversation. Members shared how they bring new perspectives and insights to these conversations around racial equity.

Need to surround ourselves with people who have the same vision. To advocate for racial equity, one member shared how it is crucial that they work with people who have the same vision and goals in order to create change.

Equal access. Members shared how racial equity includes advocating for equal opportunities, access, and treatment.

Dismantling harmful systems in place. Members shared that an important component of racial equity is acknowledging and addressing the harmful systems/structures in place.

Speaking up about racial equity. Most members highlighted the importance of speaking up and leading racial equity efforts by identifying and learning more about racial and health disparities.

Expanding to other areas of equity advocacy. A few members shared how they also identify as other types of advocates (civil rights, disability justice, etc.) or an equity advocate for a wider spectrum of issues across gender, education, law, and justice.

Listening and supporting others. Members highlighted that a part of being a racial equity advocate is to listen and be open to other's perspectives.

Those who do not identify as a "racial equity advocate". A few members did not identify as a racial equity advocate, although they explained how they believe racial equity is important.

Main Purpose of PSREAG

Members were asked their perspective on the main purpose of PSREAG. Main themes are presented in order of response frequency.

Community groups and law enforcement to work together. Members shared how the purpose of PSREAG is to foster the building of trust and understanding and to ensure all perspectives shared and considered between community members/organizations and law enforcement.

Identify local racial equity issues and problems within public safety. The next step that members expressed is to identify racial inequities within the public safety sector, which can be done by engaging community members, conducting research, and reviewing policies/current studies.

Address and discuss these racial equity issues/problems. Members shared that it is important to address these iniquities collaboratively.

Identify and brainstorm potential solutions. After identifying and discussing racial equity issues, members shared that PSREAG needs to work together to brainstorm potential solutions.

Reach agreements. An important part of PSREAG is to ensure that all voices are heard and that potential solutions are agreed upon before moving forward.

Serve our community. Members shared the overarching goal of PSREAG is to better serve the Ventura community by promoting and achieving racial equity.

Educate others on racism. An important part of PSREAG's purpose is to continuously educate others on racism, which may look like acknowledging historic/current policies in place and addressing implicit biases.

Create social justice change. Members believe that the overall end goal of PSREAG is to create long-lasting social change for the region.

Current Performance

When members were asked about their current performance with 1) exchanging information and 2) increasing access, the average response for both was "Not well." However, "Not well" was selected more times when members were asked about exchanging information compared to increasing access.

- Member rating of PSREAG performance with exchanging information, education, and ideas between public safety and community leaders are as follows: 22% Well, 43% Not well, 35% Neutral.
- Members were asked to rate PSREAG's performance with increasing access, transparency, and fostering mutual understanding between public safety and community leaders. Findings: 8% Well, 39% Not well, 52% Neutral.

Purpose of the Group

Identifying Problems to Solve

Members were asked to identify **1-3 problems** they would like to solve that this group can be the solution for. 11 problem categories were identified. Themes are presented in order of frequency.

Cross-Sector engagement and healthy relationships between law enforcement, public agencies, racial equity advocacy leaders, and community members. and other public agencies.

Establish Civilian oversight committee. Members shared the importance of establishing an oversight committee to address allegations of violence and discrimination.

Reform Civilian Sheriff office complaint procedure to provide greater objectivity and transparency.

Increasing language access and services.

Equal treatment to undocumented and other migrant community members .

Convene public forums to provide open communication on specific issues between community members and government agencies.

Law Enforcement policy reform. Specific approaches include:
- Investigate existing public county policies and practices that have a disparate impact on racial and ethnic minorities and develop recommendations that will help to diminish that impact.
- Invite police reform experts to advise the group and investigate model policies to inform and update our County's policies.

RIPA. Some members identified the importance of investigating data to understand the disparities and find a solution through policy or practice change to solve this issue.

ICE. Multiple responses identified ending cooperation between the Sheriff's office and ICE and increasing trust and cooperation in communities with large immigrant populations.

Conduct public forums to educate the public on racial equities. One suggestion was to educate the public on the socioeconomic and generational factors associated with increased risk of victimization and adult criminal conduct.

Increase safety for boys and men of color. One suggestion was addressing mechanisms schools can take to secure the safety of our children when walking home from school.

Increase community public safety overall. One member identified the importance of addressing reduction of theft and hate crimes.

Engage local residents, specifically youth, to generate interest and apply for careers in law enforcement.

Commission a Community Survey to determine the issues that are of greatest concern to communities who suffer the most when there is not racial equity.

Prevention of racially motivated police stops and police violence.

Acknowledge and communicate racial equity issues to BOS.

Number of Problems to Solve

Members were asked to identify a realistic and feasible number of problems that this group can work together towards solving, per year. 76% of the group reported between 1-3 problems: 1 problem (12%), 2 problems (20%), 3 problems (40%), between 1-3 problems (4%, 1 person).

Collaboration

Collaboration Skills

Members were asked to rank **how knowledgeable** PSREAG members are overall about how to collaborate. Findings show that 24% reported that PSREAG members are not knowledgeable, with 23.8% reporting they are knowledgeable and 52.4% reporting they are neutral.

Members were asked to identify PSREAG leaders who collaborate, and their collaborative leadership behaviors. Four members identified leaders' collaboration skills as a growth opportunity.

Improve communications to create greater understanding

Members were asked to identify the **importance** of improving communications to create greater understanding. Findings: 72% Extremely Important, 24% Somewhat Important, <1% Not Very important.

Members were asked to rate PSREAG **readiness** for improving communications to create greater understanding. Findings: 52% Somewhat Ready, 30% Not Very Ready, 17% Unsure.

Identify strategies to improve institutional law enforcement practices

Members were asked to identify the **importance** of identifying strategies to improve institutional law enforcement practices. Findings: 88% Extremely Important, 1% Somewhat Important, <1% Not Very important.

Members were asked to rate PSREAG **readiness** for identifying strategies to improve institutional law enforcement practices. Findings: 40% Somewhat Ready, 43% Not Very Ready, 13% Unsure.

Leadership

Members were asked to identify PSREAG leaders who collaborate, and their collaborative leadership behaviors. The following findings of leadership strengths summarize 15 responses (many skipped the question or stated 'unsure') of member-identified leaders:

Leaders come to meetings prepared to lead a discussion about the materials that were provided.

Leaders display strong communication skills and facilitation of participant discussion on difficult topics.

Strengths

Members were asked to identify the strengths of PSREAG collaborative efforts. Themes are presented in order of response frequency.

Commitment to Racial Equity. Data captured PSREAG's passion, drive, commitment, and persistence of members on racial equity topics.

Diverse composition. Members shared the diverse composition of PSREAG and the perspectives, knowledge, and skills of membership.

Relationships between members. Data findings show the value of relationships created and strengthened in PSREAG.

Barriers

Primary Obstacles

Members were asked what are the primary obstacles to PSREAG collaborative efforts. Main themes are presented in order of response frequency.

Lack of trust.

Lack of focus of the group and lack of timely, structured meetings.

Professional self interest and political agendas.

Disinterest in change.

Lack of structure, purpose, and agency of the group.

Poor focus and expectation setting by leadership.

Power imbalance between Public Safety and CBOs.

Lack of baseline understanding on topics and uninformed membership.

Some members take too much air time stating personal opinions.

Difficulty of holding parties accountable.

Unreasonable expectations of some group members on the impact this group can have in a short

amount of time.

Decision Making and Communication Barriers

Members were asked to identify 1-2 group decision making and communication barriers.

Difficulty making decisions as a group. Members shared how it is hard to reach agreements and consensus as a group in order to move forward.

Negative and disruptive behaviors. Members explained disruptive behaviors that occur such as lack of listening, poor communication and healthy collaboration.

Formal and Informal Spaces for Collaboration

Members were asked to list any formal or informal spaces for public sector and community leaders to collaborate on public safety racial equity topics. Areas for advocacy and connection outside of PSREAG are listed below with common themes **bolded** with examples in *italics*:

Law Enforcement Spaces. Members shared several examples of law enforcement spaces to potentially collaborate with, specifically in Oxnard.
- *OXPD community advisory meetings*
- *Oxnard PD Chief advisory group*
- *Sheriff's community councils*
- *Police Chiefs / Sheriffs community advisory boards*
- *Public Safety Events*
- *Ride-alongs*

Advocacy Spaces. Some members mentioned advocacy groups to collaborate with who are doing similar racial equity work, such as:
- *Crime victims rights advocacy*
- *ADL Walk Against Hate*
- *GARE [Government Alliance on Race and Equity]*
- *Coalition for Anti-Racist Glendale*

Community Spaces. A member referenced a specific community organizing group that is a CBO member of PSREAG, that uplifts and centers community voices in racial equity advocacy.

Other Public Spaces: Members referred to other public places including schools, city councils, and neighboring counties to engage with. One member identified the importance of accepting outside help and thought leadership.

Prioritizing Meeting Time

Members were asked to prioritize meeting time based on 4 key actions. Findings demonstrate that the group would like to focus 30-40% of the meeting time on each of these actions:

1. Problem solving issues and working towards concrete measurable goals.
2. Discussion of local racial equity issues (e.g. data, public safety policies).
3. Two-way dialogue: learning from each other.

Conclusion

Dr. Williams hopes that this report becomes a useful tool for PSREAG to utilize in their immediate next steps and work moving forward. Please see the Appendix for references, tools, and more specific findings. Dr. Williams invites questions, feedback, and future consultations as the group implements the tools and recommendations.

Appendices

1: References and Source Material

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4 Pillars for Cross Sector Collaboration, Central Coast Regional Equity Initiative & Evolve Equity Psychology, Inc.

2: 4 Pillars of Cross Sector Collaboration

They were developed in partnership with the Central Coast Regional Equity Initiative's Strategic Action Planning Workgroup. As *Systems Change Strategist and Research Partner*, Dr. Williams engaged the workgroup in participatory action workshops and analyzed qualitative tri-county participant data to yield the 4 Pillar Model.

4 Pillar Model	PSREAG Activities

Pillar 1: Building Trusting Cross-Sector Relationships ● Psychological safety ● Communication agreements ● Healthy boundaries are needed to reduce an "us vs. them" mindset ● Invite new authentic connections and strengthen existing connections	Retreat #1 Psychological Safety Survey
Pillar 2: Acknowledgement of Power & Privilege ● Awareness and understanding ● Naming of structural power imbalance across sectors, institutions, social locations, lived experience, and roles	Retreat #1
Pillar 3: Successful Reciprocal Collaboration ● Giving and receiving to build resource-sharing alliances ● Promote a "collective narrative" ● Catalyze grassroots alliances and organic organizing efforts	Visioning Collaborative Success Survey Retreat #2
Pillar 4: Sustainable Resource Circulation Circulating resources (time, funding, people, roles, skills, space, data) reliably & consistently to produce replicable data-driven actions that achieve measurable results	Retreat #2

3: Norms

These norms integrate previous meeting agreements which were then agreed as part of the bylaws in 2021. In February 2022, the bylaws were ratified again. During the February 2023 retreat, these then agreements/bylaws were discussed and added to by members of PSREAG. The language changed from meeting agreements to norms as we choose to interact with each other to create safety, productivity, and community with the hopes that these norms extend beyond meetings into our everyday interactions.

- **Pause, feel, & reflect**
- **Embrace vulnerability & discomfort**
- **Mindful of power & privilege** - Own your own intentions and impacts.
- **Curiosity** - Constant learning. How did you come to think this way or believe that?
- **Mutual respect** - Honoring time and place; discuss in an efficient manner
- **Listening** - Open-mindedness to others comments and feedback; awareness, quiet reflection is okay, slowing down and really listening. Emphasizing the building steps before action. Practicing patience.
- **Withhold judgment** - Consider an idea before rejecting or being critical to it.
- **Both/And thinking** - Expressing individuality while also being a team player.
- **Coming together in circle** - Being present in the moment and working collectively with positive intentionality. Having space where others know they can reach out to each other for peer support.

- **Practice bravery to foster emotional & physical safety** - Honoring the practice of calling things in, if something feels uncomfortable, calling in in a non-confrontational way, in spirit of discovery and learning
- **Speaking openly & honestly** - Transparently expressing our truth in a compassionate and respectful way. Respond to others in positive and effective ways that move the conversation forward. Challenge with care.
- **Naming, addressing, & resolving tension** - Acknowledging relational ruptures and proactively repairing. Challenge with care. Own your intentions and impacts. Assume positive intent.
- **Valuing each other** - Acknowledge and value the lived experience and insight of what others bring to the table. Empathize with another's perspective, especially those that come from a different sector, field, or profession. Lift each other up for their contributions. Recognize each other as representatives of different communities.
- **Cultivate shared vision, commitment & common goals**
- **Mindful of the space we take up in the room** - Calling ourselves into sharing.

4: Parking Lot

A Parking Lot is an effective facilitation tool to maintain group structure and focus while also ensuring participant needs are met. A Parking lot is a maintained list of questions or discussion topics that arise during a meeting that are not appropriate to be addressed at the moment. They are identified and listed in the Parking Lot to be addressed and checked off ✓when addressed at a later time.

Facilitator best practices include a post-meeting debrief, where an action plan strategy is developed for Parking Lot Items.

Date	Question or Topic	Action Plan	Person Responsible
2/11/23	● Address white hats		
2/11/23	● Phin's absence - no one telling group		
2/11/23	● More whole group dialogue		
2/11/23	● 1:1 workshop these questions		
2/11/23	● Unintentional oppressor		
2/11/23	● Are we truly mission aligned?		

2/11/23	● Define racial equity		
2/11/23	● What is white body supremacy?		
2/11	● Embracing vulnerability and discomfort can be an obstacle in the big group		

5: SMART Goal Setting

SMART goal setting is recommended to meet expected outcome of Pillar 4, Sustainable Resource Circulation: Creation of actionable goals to circulate professional resources (time, energy, roles, and skills) to PSREAG to reach the group's purpose and goals. SMART Goals are Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Relevant, Timely. Dr. Williams recommends a SMART goal-setting workshop for the 11 categories of identified needs may be found in the Findings section.

6: Retreat Guide

The 2/11 retreat guide can serve as a continual tool for individual or group earning, process, and reflection.

7: Data Findings

Survey 1: Psychological Safety Survey

Findings are ranked in level of importance for group consideration as growth opportunities to increase psychological safety.

Psychological Safety Element	Strength	Opportunity for Growth	Neutral
Deliberately acting in a way that undermines another's efforts	36% disagree	27% agree	36% neutral
Rejecting others for being different	36% disagree	23% agree	40% neutral

Bringing up problems and tough issues	40% agree	23% disagree	36% neutral
Mistakes are held against you	32% disagree	14% agree	55% neutral
Actively framing work as learning problem, not execution problem	37% always/often	13% rarely	50% sometimes
Safety for risk taking	41% agree	9% disagree	50% neutral
Actively acknowledge own fallibility	63% always/often	37% sometimes	-
Model curiosity and ask lots of questions	45% always/often	55% sometimes	-
Difficulty asking others for help	50% disagree	5% agree	45% neutral
Unique skills and talents are valued and utilized	50% agree	5% disagree	45% neutral

Readiness for Collaboration

	1. Improve communications to create greater understanding	2. Identify strategies to improve institutional law enforcement practices
Readiness Level of PSREAG	52% Somewhat Ready 30% Not Very Ready 17% Unsure	40% Somewhat Ready 43% Not Very Ready 13% Unsure
Importance of these collaborative efforts	72% Extremely Important 24% Somewhat Important <1% Not Very important	88% Extremely Important 1% Somewhat Important <1% Not Very important

Prioritizing Meeting Time

Responses voted by 10 or more members are **bolded.**

Ranking	Action	Percentage of Time (# votes)
1	Problem solving issues and working towards concrete measurable goals	50% or more (8 ppl) **30-40% (11 ppl)** 10-20% (6 ppl)
2	Discussion of local racial equity issues(e.g. data, public safety policies)	50% or more (8 ppl) **30-40% (10 ppl)** 10-20% (6 ppl)
3	Two-way dialogue: learning from each other.	50% or more (4 ppl)

		30-40% (10 ppl) **10-20% (10 ppl)**
4	Discussing immediate concerns of the day (national level events or issues)	50% or more (1 person) 30-40% (5 ppl) **10-20% (16 ppl)**

The Community Readiness Model

The process of advancing equity and reducing disparities is complex and challenging, especially as "readiness for change" is inherently varied across individuals and groups. "Readiness" is the degree to which a group is motivated and prepared to act on an equity issue. Readiness-appropriate strategic action is necessary for effective, successful, and sustainable change within teams, organizations, and communities (Plested, Edwards & Jumper-Thurman, 2006). The Readiness Ramp is a metaphor to embody the experience of traveling up and down a physical ramp, to understand and guide group behavior change (Evolve Equity Psychology, Inc).

9 High Level of Community Ownership
Detailed & sophisticated data exists about prevalence, causes, & consequences. Effective evaluation guides new directions. Model is applied to other issues.

8 Confirmation/ Expansion
Efforts are in place. Community is comfortable using services & support

7 Stabilization
Activities are supported by administrators or community leaders. Staff are trained & experienced.

6 Initiation
Enough info is available to justify efforts; activities are underway.

5 Preparation
Active leaders begin planning in earnest. Community offers modest support of efforts.

4 Pre-Planning
There is clear recognition that something must be done; there might be a group addressing it.

3 Vague Awareness
Most feel there is a local concern; no immediate motivation to act.

2 Denial/Resistance
Some recognize that it is a concern; little recognition it might be occurring locally.

1 No Awareness
Issue not generally recognized by the community as a problem.

8:Readiness Ramp

9: Focused Participation Log

Behavior tracking is a powerful facilitation tool, as it focuses facilitator attention on behaviors, providing an opportunity for 'in the moment' validation or redirection. Moreover, the act of being observed is known to change human behavior; therefore, this tool is encouraged to reinforce, validate, and promote psychological safety promoting behaviors.

Meeting Title:									Observer Name:	
Date/Time:										
	Name	Focused Participation			Engagement		Psychological Safety			Not following norms	Questions	Parking Lot Items
		Presenting	Discussing	"Speaking on behalf of"	Humor	Praising Peer	Acknowledges own learning	Acknowledges own faillibility	Modeling Curiosity			