Boots on The Ground

Community Violence Intervention Program

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Executive Summary

As the City or Raleigh emerges from the Covid-19 pandemic, crime in general, and particularly violent crime, has risen according to most recent reports by the Raleigh Police Department. This affects not only the direct victims of violence, but also threatens residents and communities who are caught up in its wake. We know that a plan for peace must address not only the perpetrators and victims of crime, but also those put at risk for violence by violent actions.

Much of the violence in our city is the work of a small number of people. Working together with the Raleigh Police department we've identified three geographic areas of concern; the Raleigh North Apartments, Pines of Ashton and Cross/Fisher streets. In broad outline, our approach focuses attention and resources on these areas while, at the same time, offering those in its orbit credible, high quality, trauma-informed alternatives to a violent future.

Our goal is to continue to make Raleigh a safe and welcoming environment for anyone who wishes to live here. Raleigh Boots On The Ground (Boots), community partners and the City will use a holistic approach to improve the quality of life for all residents and aim to end the current violence. The team's holistic approach to this goal will be guided by six core principles: using a public health model; partnering with communities and increasing community anti-violence capacity; developing robust trauma-informed services; focused deterrence and community policing; economic development; and evaluating our work with evidence and data.

The public health model recognizes that violence creates tremendous harm and that our response must be commensurate with that harm. Our resources should be aimed at caring for victims and survivors, containing violence so that it does not spread further, and seeking out the root causes of that harm so that it can be prevented in future instances. A public health approach to eliminating violence does not replace, nor is it in conflict with, law enforcement. Creating safety for all requires a range of strategies, including the presence of people trained to confront life-threatening violence. But it also means widening our range of response so that we can provide the appropriate emergency response and, just as importantly, be able to provide ongoing options for people who need longer-term support. We want our police officers to do the work of solving crimes, while others engage farther "upstream" of violence to provide real alternatives to those at risk and to address trauma and other social determinants of health.

A public health approach means organizing support and investments to create a robust and equitable opportunity structure so that the path to peace and well-being is high-quality, credible, visible and within reach for every resident.

We also know that the Boots cannot do this work alone. We must partner closely with community members, businesses, and schools as well as with healthcare providers and the

County. Critical to our partnerships are WakeMed's effort to establish a hospital violence intervention program and our relationships with a variety of organizations to establish community violence intervention activities. We plan to expand our partnerships through an American Rescue Plan Fund Grant provided by the City of Raleigh, which supports community-led anti-violence initiatives.

Finally, we know that continued improvement and wise alignment of resources means evaluating our work, investing in what is effective, and leaving behind what is not. That is why Boots on The Ground and the City are committing resources to gather and analyze data about each element of our approach, ensuring that time, attention, and resources are placed on measures that lead to peace.

Boots on The Ground, our community partners and the City aim to bring safety to all its residents using a holistic, public health focused approach. By creating quality paths of diversion, treating root causes of harm and violence, reinvesting in impacted communities, prioritizing community policing, and leading with evidence-based practices, Raleigh will begin to create a new pathway to peace.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
We give special thanks to North Carolinians Against Gun Violence, Community Justice Action Fund, John Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions, The Health Alliance for Violence Intervention, Moms Rising, Sandy Hook Promise and Giffords Law Center to Prevent Gun Violence.

Community Violence Intervention Evidence Based Solutions

Violence Intervention

Hospital and Community Programs focused on directly intervening interperson or group conflict, negotiating ceasefires and shifting neighborhood cultural norms.

Hospital Based-Violence Intervention Programs (HVIP) are multidisciplinary programs that combine the efforts of medical staff with trusted community-based partners to provide safety planning, services, and trauma-informed care to violently injured people, many of whom are boys and men of color.

Engaging patients in the hospital, during their recovery, is a golden opportunity to improve lives, reduce retaliation and recidivism. The support network continues once patients are released with a pathway for outpatient care and other services.

Instead of waiting for the patient to seek care, HVIPs bring trauma-informed care to the patient while in a hospital-based setting.

Because victims of interpersonal violence are at elevated risk for re-injury and violence perpetration, reaching them during these “teachable moments” is key to a successful hospital-based intervention. Several studies have demonstrated that individuals are particularly receptive to interventions that promote positive behavior change at these moments in healthcare settings.

Victims are provided links to community-based services, mentoring, home visits, follow-up assistance, and long-term case management during these interventions. HVIPs also work to identify and reduce risk factors, such as substance misuse and chronic unemployment, and promote protective factors, such as social support, job readiness, and educational attainment.

Key Components of HVIPs

- **Intervention:** Begins with a brief intervention in the emergency department or at the hospital bedside
- **Care:** Followed by intensive, long-term community-based case management services in the months following the injury
- **Follow up Services:** Crisis intervention, linkages to community-based services, mentoring, home visits, follow-up assistance, and long-term case management are provided by culturally-competent frontline workers who are from the same or similar communities as the clients they serve
- **Addressing the Social Determinants of Health:** HVIPs elevate the issues of the revolving door of violence while addressing inequity and building partnerships with communities and survivors of violence

We will develop a team that consists of WakeMed staff, social workers and violence interrupters to reframe violence as a preventable healthcare issue that can be transformed through trauma-informed care in partnership with at-risk communities.

Cognitive Behavior Therapy

Programs focused on changing the mindset, mental health and ultimately the lifestyle of those most at risk of gun violence.

Raleigh, like many cities such as Philadelphia and Baltimore have experienced a chilling spike in gun violence over the last several years. In 2021, as in the six years prior, more than 300 people died from shootings in Baltimore, a rate for that small city that is even worse than Philadelphia, which also saw more homicides in 2021 — 562 — more than any time in decades. (This year to date, shootings in Philadelphia are basically on par with last year.) Victims these days are more varied than in past shooting sprees, with more women and children dying by guns, but it is still largely young Black men in Baltimore and Philadelphia who are at highest risk of shooting or being shot.

For Raleigh in 2021, there were 31 homicides and so far in 2022, there are 47 homicides. Though our numbers are smaller the impact on individuals, families and communities are the same. Especially in black families.

We will use cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) to retrain the minds of young men and women who are at the high risk of becoming shooters or victims of a shooting in Raleigh — to develop the impulse control and reasoning that will keep them from flying off the handle and firing a weapon. They will do that through a series of seven lessons:

1. **Be present**
2. **Label your feelings**
3. **Move it**
4. **Act on your values**
5. **Stick with it**
6. **Flex your thinking**
7. **Solve it**

In our CVI program, every activity is about one thing: practicing CBT, in a classroom setting, at home, on the street, even in job programs. We will teach the skills over the phone, in groups, on doorsteps, wherever we find the young people and whenever they can find us. To do this effectively we will partner with civic organizations like our Boots on The Ground strategic partners such as fraternities and sororities, faith based institutions, nonprofits and our team of violence interrupters.

As the City’s premier civil rights organization we believe It’s our sacred responsibility to help each of these young people live and not shoot each other.

Survivor Support Services

Programs focused on providing social services for survivors of gun violence, including resources like housing, employment, trauma therapy, etc.

One family who reached out to Gerald Givens after their innocent 16-year old daughter was shot and killed had over $40,000 of out of pocket expenses.

We will guide families to local, state and federal funds for victim assistance programs. In North Carolina, a maximum of $45,000 may be paid for an award for medical expenses related to treatment of injuries as a result of a crime. A maximum of $10,000 may be paid for funeral expenses when the victim dies as a result of a crime. Benefits for approved claims are paid directly to a service provider. We will help families apply for victims compensation benefits.

We will guide them to the City's Addressing Crises through Outreach, Referrals, Networking, and Service (ACORNS) to connect with individuals in crisis and provide them with the resources needed to meet their individual goals.

We will work with the City to develop a web page that provides victim / survivor resources, contact information and links to organizational websites.

We will partner with programs who provide training and work experience for formerly incarcerated persons and other individuals who live in communities most impacted by high levels of violence.

We will partner with summer education and enrichment programs.

Assist with the scaling up of wraparound services—such as housing, medical and mental health care, trauma-informed care, substance use disorder treatment, food assistance, and job placement services—for victims of crime, young people, formerly incarcerated persons, and individuals and households facing economic insecurity.

Ecological Systems

Programs focused on changing the "ecology" of communities most impacted by gun violence through improving the quality of life, access to resources and overall living conditions.

Wellness in our community is the ultimate goal. Gun violence is much more than mass shootings – it includes suicides, homicides, assaults and unintentional deaths that involve a firearm – which occur throughout our country and community in single incidents or small groupings, every day of the year.

But, despite what seemed like a daunting task, we've successfully mitigated deaths of another kind – traffic fatalities. First, the public health and public safety community looked at data to figure out what those risk factors were. We asked: Who died? Where did they die? How did they die? Was there anything that could have prevented the fatality? The answers to those questions

allowed public health partners to develop multi-disciplinary strategies like the Click It or Ticket campaign, airbag and seat belt mandates, and car seat installation as a prerequisite for taking a newborn home from the hospital. As you can guess, these strategies involved cooperation from public health agencies, law enforcement, healthcare providers, and car manufacturers. And, ten years later, our traffic fatalities nationally have been reduced by 25 percent.

When it comes to gun violence, we've asked (and we need to ask more): Who died or was injured? Where did they die or where were they hurt? How did they die or how were they hurt? What were the circumstances surrounding their injury or death that could have been prevented?

The socio-ecological model acknowledges the dynamic interaction of individual, relationship, community, and societal factors in producing health and well-being. Our goal is to make sure we address gun violence as a public health problem at each of the appropriate levels in the model.

- **Individual**
    - At the individual level, the Boots campaign asks all gun-owners to take it upon themselves to know why it's important to store their firearms safely and to take action to do so. The campaign provides incentives through giving individuals a discount on safe storage devices from participating retailers.
- **Relationship**
    - In the socio-ecological model, the relationship component is designed to address how interpersonal relationships can be a predictor of health outcomes. Boots partners with organizations, faith based institutions and law enforcement agencies so that they can provide a brief educational intervention to those who already own firearms and encourage them to purchase and use safe storage devices, like a safe or lockbox.
- **Community**
    - Schools, workplaces and neighborhoods all contribute to how likely it is that a person will become a victim or perpetrator of gun violence. Boots will promote safe gun storage at the community level through billboard campaigns and education, such as social media posts. Boots will encourage community partnerships, and seeks to build relationships between gun retailers and public health by promoting participating Boots retailers on Public Health websites. We hope to equip those who interact with individuals at risk of suicide with the tools they need to reduce access to lethal means (firearms)
- **Societal**
    - Societal factors like economic and social policy, cultural attitudes and beliefs, and inequality between different groups within society can all contribute to an environment where gun violence can breed. Understanding which and what

combinations of policies need to be in place to reduce gun fatalities and injuries is only just beginning. For instance, only 11 states have laws regarding the safe storage of firearms, North Carolina is not yet on that list. Massachusetts is the only state that requires all firearms to be locked in place. Population health research can also help us to understand how attitudes around protective factors such as safe storage are changing, as well as general public awareness around particular risk factors for different types of guns.

Street Outreach (Violence Interrupters)

Street Outreach/Violence Interruption programs employ Violence Interrupters from the community who interrupt cycles of violence by supporting victims, responding to shootings, mediating conflicts, and providing social services. Trained workers immediately work with the victim's network of friends and family to prevent retaliation, identify ongoing conflicts, and talk to key community actors, constantly following the issue and encouraging a peaceful resolution. Interrupters will also work with high-risk individuals that are likely to shoot, get shot and/or go to jail. Building healthy relationships to convince them to change their behavior and refer them to any necessary treatment. They shift community norms to non-violence, responding to every shooting and supporting behavior change by program participants.

Our goal is to stand up a team of 5 Violence interrupters:

- Intervention Manager
- Victims Advocate
- Lead Violence Interrupter
- Violence Interrupter (2)

Conclusion

Our primary goal for FY23 (BootsFiscal Year: January - December) is to assist WakeMed with standing up a HVIP and to get our violence interrupters in the most at risk communities, in particular the 1600 block of New Bern Avenue as identified by our law enforcement partners. We'll have parallel ongoing research, CBT and support services activities with assistance from our community partners.

We will work with the Mayor's office to create a comprehensive plan for our city that will cover the next few years. We will also partner with law enforcement agencies to identify and focus our efforts on chronic violent groups and areas of the city. We will form partnerships to work with affected communities to articulate and implement norms, values, and expectations of nonviolence. By the end of the year we hope to develop and implement a system that ensures permanence and quality assurance. We're looking at the University of Southern California Safe Communities Institute providing violence interrupter training and READI National Center for Safe Communities providing training for CBT. The HAVI is currently training WakeMed staff. Therefore we will be laying a strong foundation with the initial $1.2 million investment of the American Rescue Plan CVI funding.

Essential Partners

WakeMed - https://www.wakemed.org/
WakeMed Health and Hospitals is a 919-bed healthcare system with multiple facilities located around the metropolitan Raleigh, North Carolina area. WakeMed's main campus is located on New Bern Avenue. WakeMed serves multiple counties throughout the state and specializes in a variety of services including cardiology, gastroenterology, neurology, orthopedics, high-risk pregnancy, children's care, trauma, physical rehabilitation and critical care transport.

The Health Alliance for Violence Intervention - https://www.thehavi.org/
The Health Alliance for Violence Intervention (HAVI) is an organization that fosters hospital and community collaborations to advance equitable, trauma-informed care and violence intervention and prevention programs.

Community Justice Action Fund - https://www.cjactionfund.org/
Community Justice works to reduce gun violence in Black and Brown communities by empowering those closest to the pain.

Giffords Center for Violence Intervention - https://giffords.org/intervention/
Giffords Center for Violence Intervention champions community organizations working to save lives on the ground, because they are remarkably effective when given the proper funding and support. Our team researches and promotes community violence intervention strategies, connects community organizations to policymakers and to one another and helps secure funding for violence intervention initiatives nationwide.

Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions-
https://publichealth.jhu.edu/departments/health-policy-and-management/research-and-practice/center-for-gun-violence-solutions
The Johns Hopkins Center for Gun Violence Solutions is engaged in original scholarly research, policy analysis and evidence-based advocacy. An important part of the Center's mission is to serve as an objective and informative resource for policymakers thereby providing accurate information about gun injuries, prevention strategies, and policies.

North Carolinians Against Gun Violence - https://www.ncgv.org/
NCGV has a 25 year track record of being the reliable resource on gun related legislation and its potential impact on the safety of North Carolinians. NCGV informs and educates the public, elected officials, and the media on legislative issues on gun violence prevention.

Gun Violence Prevention Coalition

A Chance 2 Change
ACLU of NC
Action NC
Alliance Behavioral Health Care
Beth Meyer Synagogue
BluePrint NC
Bull City United
Carolina Justice Policy Center
Chairs the Council's Racial Equity Committee
Chapel of the Cross
Chinese American Friendship Association
Christ the King Lutheran Cary
Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Community Justice Action Fund
Disability Rights NC
Duke Graduate Program in Religion
Durham Affairs for Black People
Durham Congregations in Action
Durham Crisis Response
Durham Friends Meeting
Durham Gun Safety Team
Durham PAAC (Parents of Af-Am Children)
El Centro Hispano
El Pueblo
Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina/Peace Committee of North Carolina Council of Churches
Equality NC
Everytown Survivor Network
Fairmont UMC
Injury and Violence Prevention Branch, Div of Public Health, DHHS
Injury Prevention Research Center
Justice Served NC
Kehillah Synagogue
L5 Angels
League of Women Voters Orange, Durham, Chatham & Wake Counties
Moms Demand Action
MomsRising
Mount Pleasant Christian Church
NASW-NC
NC Alliance of Incarcerated Women
NC Child
NC Coalition Against Domestic Violence
NC DH
NC FASTER
NC Justice Center
NC Policy Watch
NC Women United/NARAL NC
North American Climate Conservation and Environment (NACCE)
North Carolina Council of Churches
North Carolinians Against Gun Violence
Not My Generation
Poe Center
Prevent Child Abuse
Public Schools First NC
Raleigh Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance
Religious Coalition for a Nonviolent Durham
School Nurses Association
Sistersong Women of Color Reproductive Justice Collaborative
St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church
St. John’s Metropolitan Community Church in Raleigh
The Rural Center
Umstead Park UCC
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Raleigh
United Methodist Church Board & Society
W. Raleigh Presbyterian Church
Watts Street Baptist Church
WomenAdvanceNC
WUNC-NC Public Radio

Community Violence Intervention Models

Intervention Program	Location
Roca	Chelsea, Massachuettes
The Circle of Brotherhood	Miami, Florida
Youth Alive	Oakland California
414 Life	Milwaukee, Wisconsin
South Pittsburg Coalition for Peace	Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
Anti-Violence Partnership of Philadelphia	Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Community Passageways	Seattle, Washington
Cleveland Peacemakers Alliance	Cleveland, Ohio
No More, Red Dots	Louisville, Kentucky
YouTurn Omaha	Omaha, Nebraska
Chris 180	Atlanta, Georgia

Previous Peace Work of Executive Director

- **Negotiating ceasefires between youth in conflict**
- **Hosted dialogues between citizens, youth, and 8 law enforcement agencies**
- **Promoted safe storage of firearms campaigns**
- **Sponsored 4 school safety events**
- **Hosted law enforcement, clergy and elected official discussions**
- **Supported local, state and national legislation**
- **Attended CVI Training**
- **Served on several in-person and virtual panel discussions on public safety**
- **Provided keynote address for March For Our Lives, Mom Demand Action, NC Council of Churches and more**

Givens delivers the keynote address in June 2022

Planning and Implementation Timetable

Complete	In Progress	Not Started Yet

Tasks	Q1 23	Q2 23	Q3 23	Q4 23
Assess the capacity of violence prevention partnerships				
Convene key stakeholder conversations				
Compile Violent Incident Data				
Compile Evidence Based Strategies				
Draft Initial CVI Program Document				
Refine and Reorganize CVI Document				
Design community engagement				
Develop an open-access data collection system or dashboard to monitor indicators of progress				
Create Panel of Local Leaders to Select Violence Interrupters				
Violence Interrupter Orientation And Training				
Research to address 1600 New Bern Avenue Area of Concern				
Meetings with the Triangle Revitalization Group				
Meetings with New Bern Avenue Elected Officials & Law Enforcement				
Identify social services support for homelessness, drug addiction and poverty				
CBT workshops, meetings and training sessions				
Standup HVIP with WakeMed				
Identify Health and Social Services Partners				
Create and Maintain Website on the City's Domain				
Evaluation of Progress				

Violence Interrupter

Job Description: Violence Interrupters operate in areas where violence and poverty are the norm. Interrupters leverage their individual reputation and street credibility to disrupt the cycle of violence in Raleigh communities. Interrupters are connected to the streets of the toughest neighborhoods with the unique ability to identify and intervene in individual, group and gang-related conflicts before they intensify. If a shooting has occurred, they seek out the victim's friends and relatives and try to prevent a retaliatory shooting. Violence Interrupters are expert conflict mediators utilizing problem-solving skills to address safety risks and to end conflict. This individual will be an integral part of reducing the shootings and homicides in the City of Raleigh. Violence Interrupters will be assigned primarily to a geographic area or citywide. Violence Interrupters receive general supervision from the Lead Violence Interrupter, and support from the Intervention Manager. They are also responsible for staying in compliance with the approved scope of work for this strategy. Some work is performed in an office environment; most work is in the community, with frequent evenings and weekends.

Job Duties And Responsibilities:

- Gain information on potential conflicts in hotspot communities.
- Formulate action plans to help resolve conflicts.
- Attend outreach worker/violence interrupter meetings.
- Meet with high-risk individuals and groups on a daily basis to discuss issues.
- Work to prevent acts of violence and help to prevent all potential retaliatory shootings.
- Develop relationships with influential individuals and groups in the community.
- Refer potential clients/participants to outreach workers or case managers.
- Document conflicts resolved on conflict mediation forms.
- Participate and engage participants in program activities.
- Attend community responses as needed.
- Get to know all the highest risk persons and the people who know them. Work to intervene in circumstances in which violence is likely, including possible retaliation.
- Document all contacts with high risk individuals daily.
- Identify and diffuse “hot spots” for shootings and violence.
- Research causes of shootings/killings to assist in mediating situations and preventing retaliation between individuals and groups (working with the community, outreach programs and local law enforcement to gain information that may be helpful in preventing additional killings) and provide documentation.
- Outreach to the community (individually and as a team member) to build relationships with individuals, residents, businesses, and community groups.
- Provide strong effective communication with clients
- Engage restorative practices in the de-escalation and resolution of conflict.
- Work closely and collaboratively with WakeMed HVIP
- Work as a member of a team – work together to ensure that shootings are reduced.
- Document consistently and accurately record all contacts with clients.
- Attend staff meetings and complete other responsibilities as assigned by the supervisor.
- Participate in violence prevention efforts with other providers as assigned

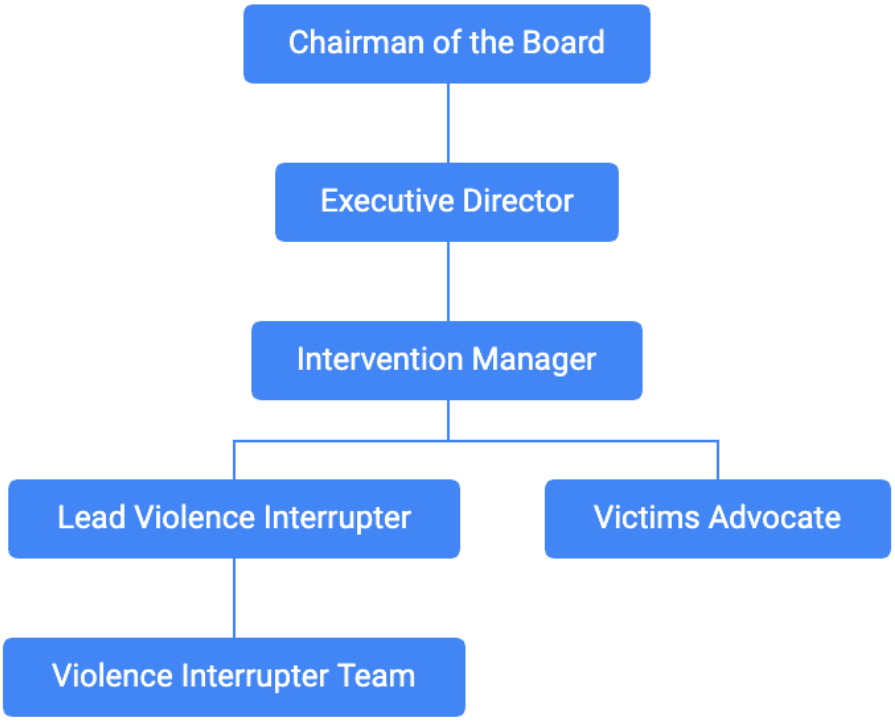
Minimum Qualifications:

- Ability to effectively communicate, connect with, and motivate youth and/or young adults away for impulsive behavior that will lead to violence.
- Ability to stay calm in response to emergencies.
- Experience working with at risk, gang involved or impacted youth and/or adults is required.
- Applicants with personal experience in overcoming violence/ incarceration / violence-related injuries/ gang involvement / the criminal justice system are especially encouraged to apply. However, candidates should have a minimum of 24 months since their release from incarceration.
- Knowledge of urban youth issues, specifically youth violence and juvenile justice;
- Demonstrated ability to work independently and as part of a team;
- Must have strong communication and organizational skills, and possess the ability to communicate effectively with staff members, clients, vendors and the public;
- Ability to work well with diverse populations;
- Proactive, and demonstrates initiative, flexibility, and willingness to try new approaches
- Punctual and extremely reliable;
- Highly organized and detail-oriented;
- Candidate must be computer literate;
- Must be able to present self and program in a professional manner;
- Flexibility to work evenings & weekends;
- Ability to work in stressful situations;
- High School Diploma or GED preferred; applicants working toward completion of GED/diploma will be accepted.
- Must have reliable car, valid insurance and DMV clearance throughout your time of employment;
- A minimum of 2 years' experience working with at-risk gang involved or impacted youth is required. A minimum of 1 year case management or violence interruption experience is strongly preferred.

Other Requirements: Individuals who are hired for this position will be required to maintain a valid North Carolina Driver's License throughout time of employment. The ability to travel is required.

Physical Demands/ Work Environment: Talk, hear. Clear vision at 25 inches or less to view the computer screen and read documents. Must be able to sit at a desk and work on a computer for 1-2 hours/day. Must be able to lift and carry 25 pounds. Working conditions typical of an office environment while in the office; a majority of the work day may be spent outside the office in Raleigh neighborhoods.

Organizational Chart



Letter from the Boots CEO

I am writing this letter as a violence prevention advocate, a human rights leader and a parent. I know a lot of people may have a clear vision of how things ought to be. This plan aims to help adults take the steps needed to create and build a vision for public safety and community well-being.

We are told that there are three types of power: money, knowledge and violence. Let me add a fourth: Who do you know? Some people in our society consider their only power to be violence. As we attempt to take that feeling away through our work in our community, we want to replace it with knowledge and a network of people who can help make changes.

I have seen the causes of violence documented over the years in books about public health, youth, criminal justice and medicine. There are many causes of violence: lack of jobs and job training programs, fear and stereotyping, disrespect for youth, lack of positive role models, lack of access to a powerful network, uncertainty about day-to-day life, positive portrayal of violence by the media, and easy availability of drugs, guns and alcohol. As a community, we need to help one another more than destroy one another.

Most of us know at least one person that got shot. During my lifetime, I know of too many, especially the seven members of my family. But today, I'm more optimistic than I have ever been about our opportunity and ability to change the violent way we live.

From a Boots perspective, law enforcement has a role to play in keeping us safe, but we need an even stronger, non-police way of dealing with public safety and community wellness.

Together, let us take these steps and so many others on a day-to-day basis.

We can do this!

Gerald D. Givens, Jr.
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US Air Force, Retired