



Civic Action

A monthly update from the National Civic League

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Yes, Virginia, There are Good Examples of Police-Community Relations

By Doug Linkhart, President of NCL

The media coverage of the past few years has highlighted some serious problems in police-community relations, particularly among police officers and people of color. Thankfully, this attention is leading to some much-needed conversations and reforms.

At the same time, it's important to note that there are many communities where police and community members work harmoniously to keep their communities safe. Some of the winners of our All-America City awards demonstrate benefits that can be realized from this kind of positive civic engagement.



Let's start with Virginia, where the City of Norfolk, a city in which civic engagement is a way of life, where community leaders and police have created the Redefining Community Campaign. The goal of this campaign is to cultivate trust and mutual respect among community members and police, with special attention to racial perceptions and relations.

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Across the country, Spokane, Washington has been a model of community policing for decades. One of their recent projects is the Youth and Police Initiative (YPI), an early intervention and prevention program that works to build trust in the law while reducing stereotypes by providing training, team-building and role playing to create productive relationships among youth and police officers.

Up north, in Columbia Heights, Minnesota, the police department works hand-in-hand with the school district to mentor kids, improve attendance and performance, and engage kids in positive relationships with police. The city has created a Peace Park and Police and Fire Tribute of Peace, and the police department offers "Shop with a Cop," "Coffee with a Cop," and "Eat and Greets."

As we join the rest of the country in mourning the deaths of the police officers in Dallas, as well as the recent victims of police shootings, NCL will continue its commitment to identify and share examples of what's possible, initiatives that demonstrate the kind of civic engagement that all communities should enjoy.

2016 All-America City Awards

The 2016 All-America City Awards concluded on the evening of June 19th by naming [10 winning communities](#). The event weekend is much more than a competition. With over 530 participants from the 20 finalist communities, the event is a time to hear about the good happening in American cities and to learn from peers across the country on how to adopt and adapt those innovative practices.

The passion and commitment to improving communities was palpable throughout the event with many



participants citing the experience had reignited their fire to work on solving community issues.

The projects presented by the 20 finalist communities displayed engagement, collaboration, inclusiveness, innovation and impact. These projects address pressing issues of poverty, housing, health and education that many American communities face today and provide innovative solutions to ensure all youth can succeed. [You can find information on all 60 projects to help bring these solutions to your community in the 2016 AAC event program.](#)

Social Futurist Has a Message for Cities

Chances are good that almost half of all jobs in the US will be eliminated in the next 5 - 10 years, and this has profound implications for cities—and especially for lower-income communities. At least that's the word from researchers at MIT and Oxford. From the "Internet of Things" and next generation artificial intelligence, the world of the Jetsons is here!



Above And
Beyond
All That
We Know

How to thrive
and succeed in
the current world
paradigm shift

CHET W. SISK

Social Futurist Chet W. Sisk has written several books on this shift and how to lead, work and develop communities in a time of fewer jobs but more opportunities. Sisk spoke at the United Nations in 2015 and he is working with the World Assembly of Youth and cities and organizations around the country to help them prepare for the changing world of work and technology.

Sisk is particularly concerned about working people in communities of color being the first to feel job loss from service sector automation and middle managers who will be replaced at faster and faster rates over the next 5 years. "We are more globally connected, technologically empowered and information savvy than at any time in human history," according to Sisk. "Let's use these three tools to strengthen our communities for everyone".

For more information, visit www.leadtheshift.com

SolSmart: Locally Powered, National Distinguished

[SolSmart is a new national designation program, funded by the U.S. Department of Energy](#) that aims to reduce solar "soft costs," the non-hardware costs of going solar like permitting, financing, installation labor, and customer acquisition. Reducing soft costs can increase return on investment for solar customers. **Complex or poorly-defined local government policies and processes can add \$2,500 or more to the cost of going solar.** Participation in the SolSmart program not only helps to reduce the soft costs of going solar, but it signals that these communities are "open for solar business," which can help to spur solar adoption, create jobs, and boost local economies.

[Learn how you can receive free technical assistance to help lower solar "soft costs" and become designated a SolSmart community.](#)

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