



St. Louis Initiative to Reduce Violence

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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New Organization Aims to Reduce Violence in “Hot Spot” Crime Areas

The St. Louis Initiative to Reduce Violence will Design and Implement Solutions to Curb Violence in the St. Louis Region

ST. LOUIS, Mo. May 20, 2013 – The St. Louis Initiative to Reduce Violence (SIRV) announced today the launch of its pilot program in Jennings and District 6. SIRV is a grassroots effort to increase community safety, engage youth to build trust and increase the quality of life for families and communities. The program will initially serve Jennings and District 6, with the long-term goal to expand to other communities in the St. Louis area.

The initiative was created by Pastor B.T. Rice of New Horizon Christian Church and NAACP 1st Vice President and Chairman of Police Affairs, St. Louis County branch. SIRV brings together an impressive group of St. Louis crime experts and community leaders, with the goal of facilitating communication and trust with the residents in the neighborhoods of Jennings and District 6.

“As a Pastor in the area, I have seen first-hand how the culture of violence affects our communities and children,” said Pastor Rice. “Through SIRV, we will encourage families and members of the community to take action against violent crime in their neighborhoods. The time to act is now. I want to see the children outside riding their bikes and playing again. No one should have to live in fear.”

The initiative aims to engage communities through different task forces including those focused on reducing violence, improving behavioral health, reaching out to children and young adults in schools and engaging the faith-based community.

“Violent crimes remain unacceptably high in both of the pilot regions,” said Dr. Dan Isom, retired Chief of Police, City of St. Louis and Des Lee Professor of Policing and the Community at University of Missouri, St. Louis. “Crimes in District 6 are one and a half times higher than St. Louis City and over three times higher in Jennings than in St. Louis County. It is necessary that the St. Louis community takes a unified stand to implement solutions to curb violence and improve the lives and safety of those living in these communities.”

SIRV has identified and assembled a Board of Directors to help implement the initiative in the target areas. Board members include law enforcement, local school district officials, judges, community leaders, and university professors.

“With such an outstanding team in place, I am confident we can initiate the pilot program with success and eventually expand the program to other areas in the city,” said Pastor Rice.

All of SIRV’s programs are made possible by caring individuals in the community. To donate to SIRV, visit www.SIRVstl.org.

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About SIRV:

The St. Louis Initiative to Reduce Violence (SIRV) is a grassroots effort involving St. Louis communities, law enforcement, non-profit organizations, faith-based organizations, schools, and community leaders dedicated to designing and implementing solutions to curb violence in the St. Louis region. SIRV aims to change lives by empowering communities and individuals to take a stand against violence, and to educate kids and young adults in positive conflict resolution techniques. For more information, visit SIRVstl.org.