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Montgomery County NAACP Branches and Police Chiefs' Association of Montgomery County Work to Enhance Police and Community Relations

*Organizations join forces to pass motion supporting
The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing*

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (March 6, 2017) — Since last Fall, the NAACP's six Montgomery County branches and members of the Police Chiefs' Association of Montgomery County (PCAMC) have proactively met to enhance police community relations, particularly interactions with minority communities. As a result of these meetings, the PCAMC's Executive Board unanimously passed a motion on January 17, 2017 that supports the six pillars in the May 2015 final report of The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. The report was hailed nationally as a big step in mending the division between law enforcement and the communities they serve.

By passing this motion, the PCAMC aims to enhance the level of cooperation between police and communities by helping Montgomery County police departments adapt the report's recommendations in a manner that best fits the individual agencies and their community. The PCAMC's Executive Board and Human Relations Committee are available to assist departments in adopting these recommendations or improving those they have already adopted. Members of the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) are also stakeholders in this endeavor, and their input into how policies are created or changed regarding police community relations is welcomed and valued.

"Our mission is to establish a true partnership between the two groups, and we are fully committed to achieving this goal," said David Duffy, president of the PCAMC. "We've enjoyed good relationships with all the communities in Montgomery County over the years and these proactive efforts in partnership with the NAACP can only strengthen the foundation we have in place."

Representatives of the NAACP's Montgomery County branches (Ambler, Cheltenham, Main Line, Norristown, Pottstown, and Willow Grove) plan to reach out to local police departments to discuss ways in which they can assist community outreach efforts and ensure effective communication about mutual concerns.

"I am upbeat about the cohesiveness that we have experienced so far," stated John Milligan, president of the Norristown NAACP Branch. "We are optimistic that this initiative will result in positive outcomes for police and community relationships in the foreseeable future."

To further these efforts, Montgomery County police chiefs and NAACP members will attend a training program on March 31 and April 1 titled "Fair and Impartial Policing: Multi-Agency

Command-Community Session.” The program, conducted by Lorie A. Fridell, CEO of Fair & Impartial Policing and an associate professor of criminology at the University of South Florida, will discuss unbiased policing as it relates to policy, training, supervision/accountability, leadership, recruitment/hiring, outreach to diverse communities and measurement. Other community representatives—including members of FOP 14 and the Montgomery County Advisory Council to the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission—may also attend the event. The cost of the class is being shared equally by the PCAMC and the NAACP.

Members of the participating NAACP branches and the PCAMC are committed to continuing to keep communication lines open about police and community relations in Montgomery County.

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The President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing, released May 2015, can be found here:

https://cops.usdoj.gov/pdf/taskforce/taskforce_finalreport.pdf