

## Strong Cities Network – Member Case Study

### Title

International & Immigrant Teen Police Academy

### Location

City: Aurora

State: Colorado

Country: United States

### Duration and background

Community policing plays an important role in reducing crime and ensuring trust between law enforcement and those they are mandated to protect. To this end, the Aurora Police Department instituted the Citizens' Police Academy in 1993 to improve communication and to obtain citizen input and support throughout the city. The Aurora Police Department holds three distinct Citizens' Police Academies ([Citizen](#), [Senior Citizen](#), and [Teen Citizen](#)), and each is designed to give participants of all ages and abilities a working knowledge of the department.

Building on these earlier programmes, Aurora initiated the International & Immigrant Teen Citizen Academy in 2015 to overcome low levels of trust in local law enforcement often displayed by new local citizens.

### Goals and objectives

The International & Immigrant Teen Citizen Academy specifically aims at establishing trust and improving relationships between law enforcement and Aurora's teen refugee and immigrant population.

The goal is to educate youth from the immigrant and refugee communities about public safety, crime prevention, and community policing and law enforcement issues. In addition, the academy will foster volunteerism, community service and professional careers in police and fire to youths from communities who are traditionally underrepresented in the law enforcement profession.

Through participating in Citizen Academy programmes, it is further hoped that graduates will become partners in identifying problems and solutions to the crime issues that are affecting local communities. Graduates will gain knowledge which they can implement to enhance the quality of life in their respective neighbourhoods.

### Target Groups

Youth from Aurora's immigrant and refugee communities.

### Overall strategy and activities

The International & Immigrant Teen Citizen Police Academy is a three-day programme designed to give the participants a working knowledge of the Aurora Police Department. It consists of a series of interactive classes held daily for three days, and there is no cost to anyone who enrolls. Classes

include internet safety; traffic; K-9 & Dart; demonstrations by SWAT; use of force; and shoot/don't shoot scenarios in the police simulator.

Participants who have completed the entire 11.5 hour programme are invited to attend a graduation ceremony.

## **Partners**

The programme is a joint effort between Aurora's Office of International and Immigrant Affairs, Aurora Police Department and civil society (Aurora Welcome Center); other partners include local public schools from which participants are selected.

Instructors are from the Aurora's Police Academy, Traffic Unit, SWAT team, Gang Unit, K-9 Unit, D.A.R.T. Team, Policy Academy, School Resource Officer Unit, and the Chief of Police among others.

## **Further information**

For further information on Aurora's Citizen & Teen Police Academies visit

[https://www.auroragov.org/residents/public\\_safety/police/citizen\\_teen\\_police\\_academies/](https://www.auroragov.org/residents/public_safety/police/citizen_teen_police_academies/)

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