

# Grant Update

## A Summary of Grant Activity

Governor's Crime Commission

NC Criminal Justice Analysis Center

### SIGI: The Statesville/Iredell Gang Initiative

After a decline in gang activity in 2000, there has been a steady increase in the number of gang problems reported by law enforcement agencies. According to the National Youth Gang Survey, the number of jurisdictions reporting gang activity has increased by 15.4 percent between 2002 and 2008<sup>1</sup>. North Carolina GangNET reports indicate that 23 gangs have been validated as active in Iredell County as of December 2010.

#### *The Problem*

The presence of gangs has increased dramatically in Iredell County since 2006. There has been an increase in documented cases of gang-related vandalism, weapons possession, violence and drug-related crime. Disruptive behavior in schools has also increased by 49 percent, along with students copying gang dress, using gang signs on notebooks and identifying as gang members on social networking sites. These sites include photographs of youth with friends showing gang signs and posing with weapons, drugs, money and dressed in gang apparel. According to the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council of Iredell County, intake cases have doubled over the past two years along with an increase in substance abuse cases, serious behavioral problems and youths associating with others involved in criminal activity.

In 2007, Iredell County had the third highest violent crime rate in the 43 non-metropolitan counties and ranked 19<sup>th</sup> in the state in total violent crime. There have been increases in violent crimes, armed robberies, burglaries and graffiti reported. A large portion of these increases have been attributed to gangs.

#### *The Grant*

The Statesville Police Department developed the Statesville/Iredell Gang Initiative to tackle the growing gang problem at the city and county level. The grant incorporates aspects of the High Point Gang Model, Charlotte's Gang of One program and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Comprehensive Gang Model. The initiative brings together members of 34 different agencies to partner in creating programs to target youth at risk for gang involvement. It includes all police departments in the county, the sheriff's office, the U.S. Attorney's office, the local prosecutorial district, the school system, juvenile justice programs, faith-based organizations, the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council and a host of other organizations and agencies. It targets youth between the ages of seven and 24 and their families on a full time basis offering prevention, intervention, suppression, and re-entry programs, encompassing gang-involved youth and young adults, as well as younger adolescents and teens that may be familiar with gangs but not yet involved in gang activity.



*The Statesville/Iredell Gang Initiative grew out of a meeting of local and state criminal justice agencies and community organizations in 2008 to determine how to address gang issues in Statesville and Iredell County.*



### ***Goals and Objectives***

*“We hope everyone in the community will get behind this plan. It will take support from our elected officials, a leap of faith from local employers and courage from residents in the areas most blighted by crime and gang activity.”*

— Editor  
Statesville Record &  
Landmark



*The renovation of the Dobson Community Center was sponsored by SIGI, the Statesville Housing Authority, Appropriate Placement Options and Lowe's Home Improvement. It was a community-oriented, volunteer effort aimed at updating a run-down facility in an area known for illegal drugs, gang activity and violent crime.*



SIGI involves a broad range of programs and activities designed to address the gang problem across Iredell County. Gang intelligence officers identify and validate gang members, monitor gang activity, collect gang intelligence, enter information into the GangNet database, assist investigators with gang-related cases and support the Gang Resistance, Education, Awareness and Training (GREAT) program. Community resource coordinators are responsible for matching available community resources with at risk or gang-involved youth. They also make certain that partner agencies meet program requirements, assess the results of program activity and monitor the progress of youth referred to the various programs. Intervention and prevention programs include a broad spectrum of activities from counseling programs for substance abuse, parenting programs, education and employment services, to team-building skills and conflict resolution techniques. The goal is to provide a full range of services and mentoring through a variety of county agencies and organizations to prevent and reduce gang activity.

Initial activity on the grant began in 2008 with the establishment of the partnership of 34 agencies and organizations and the development of a resource guide for their use. Gang Intelligence Officers and Community Resource Coordinators were hired in the summer of 2009 and the first prevention and intervention programs were implemented. The scope of the grant includes validating gang members and conducting call-ins which give the offenders a chance to hear what the community and law enforcement has to say on the subject of their offending; reducing crime, gang graffiti and drug arrests throughout Iredell County; actively recruiting at-risk youth for gang prevention and faith-based programs; providing parenting skills classes for Hispanic parents of gang-involved youth; delivering conflict-resolution, truancy mediation and anger management training; and providing reentry services to youth returning to the community after incarceration.

### ***Community Involvement***

SIGI is a cooperative, county-wide effort aimed at addressing the gang problem in Iredell County. Through the combined efforts of community agencies, organizations and the faith-based community, a network has been established to meet the needs of individuals who are at-risk for gang involvement or already engaged in a gang. Activities initiated by the Boys & Girls Club include the Street Smart program to help youth develop leadership, team building and conflict resolution skills; the development of a Teen Summit Against Violence targeting over 350 at-risk youth; and the Reasonable Attitudes Program (RAP). They also provide ‘success coaches’ to mentor and counsel youth. Power Cross is a faith-based program that involves at-risk youth in developing football, leadership and team building skills. Additional community programs focus on family support, parenting services, substance abuse education, and employment services.

Reentry programs implemented by Appropriate Placement Options (APO) include mentoring services as well as cognitive behavioral intervention sessions, substance abuse treatment, educational opportunities and gang awareness training. Also, the Iredell-Statesville school system will implement the Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) program in all district middle schools along with further support of the Safe School Coordinator position that will establish protocol for identifying and intervening in gang related activities within schools.

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### ***Program Evaluation***

The first year of the Statesville/Iredell Gang Initiative has been successful. The program has received active support from the community. A number of local agencies have become involved in providing an array of services to contribute to the program. Continuous events keep the community actively involved with program activities. Cooperative agreements exist between law enforcement at the local, state and federal levels and community partners. During the first year, the Iredell-Statesville School System and the Employment Security Commission have become participants in the initiative. While some partners have not been able to meet their performance goals or objectives, additional partners have been identified and brought in to fill the gaps left by those agencies. Some of the additional programs have included athletic programs, job skill development programs and a bullying-prevention program established by the school system.

*“We are going to show them this is not a path you want to choose. They are going to have to make up their minds and commit to change their lives.”*

*— Capt. Dan Miglin  
Statesville Police  
Department*

### ***Accomplishments***

Since the program’s inception in July of 2009, more than 200 gang members or affiliates have been entered into the GangNET database. As a result of more than 60 offender call-ins, there has been a decrease in the number of aggravated assaults, sexual assaults, robberies and graffiti incidents. More than 50 students have been enrolled in the Responsible Attitudes Program at the Boys & Girls Club where each student’s academic progress has been monitored and all of the students have set post-secondary goals. APO has served 388 youth and 421 adults. Their activities have included the organization of a Global Youth Service Day, Lights on After School, National Night Out, summer and After-school sessions at Boys & Girls Club and other community events.



*The Former Offender Employability Workshop, sponsored by SIGI, brought in employers from all fields, including temporary agencies, the Employment Security Commission and related groups to inform employers about the tax advantages and other benefits of hiring ex-offenders.*

Faith-based initiatives have played an important role in the SIGI program. Ordered Steps has had 10 classes completed thus far with 133 students successfully finishing the course. A Christian football league implemented by Power Cross has successfully involved 85 at-risk youth, developing skills in football, leadership, character building and team building. As a result of the program’s activities, school attendance and the grade point averages of participants have increased, while disciplinary actions taken against them have decreased.

### ***Summary***

The Statesville/Iredell Gang Initiative seeks to continue to reduce the amount of gang activity within the county, while at the same time; they seek to provide a positive example of how a gang initiative should be implemented. Through the combined coordination of community associations and programs, law enforcement and school systems; this initiative works with gang prevention, education and deterrence for those not yet involved in gang activity as well as rehabilitation, intervention, and reentry for those currently involved in gang activity returning from the Department of Correction.

*“[The] Statesville/Iredell Gang Initiative is working.”*

*— Costi Kutteh, Mayor  
City of Statesville*

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1/ Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (2010). Highlights of the 2008 National Youth Gang Survey. Retrieved January 26, 2011 from <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/ojjdp/229249.pdf>

# SIGI: The Statesville/Iredell Gang Initiative

## GRANT SUMMARY

Area Served: Iredell County

Implementing Agency: Statesville Police Department

Project Director: Captain Dan Miglin, Statesville Police Department

Funding: Federal Funds: \$438,280.73

Overview: Statesville/Iredell Gang Initiative will establish a cooperative of 34 partner agencies, including law enforcement, social services, community organizations and faith-based groups to produce an environment to reduce youth gang participation and violence in affected neighborhoods through prevention, intervention, suppression and re-entry strategies.

Accomplishments: Since July 1, 2009:

- Two hundred gang members have been entered into GangNET.
- Twenty-one gang-related educational presentations have been made.
- Currently 29 federal and state cases are being developed against known or suspected gang members.
- In UCR Part I violent offenses, there have been no homicides (100 percent decrease), aggravated assaults have decreased by 24 percent, sexual assaults have decreased by nine percent and robberies declined by 22 percent. There was a 74 percent increase in burglaries, from 43 to 75 reported.
- Graffiti incidents have declined by 48 percent.
- While arrests for drug-related crime are up by 10 percent, cocaine seizures were down by 60 percent and marijuana seizures were down by 40 percent
- Two call-ins have been conducted for a total of 40 offenders, with 100 percent participation. Twenty-five percent sought services through the Community Resource Coordinator. Nine have re-offended and are now serving active sentences.
- Reentry services have been provided to 26 gang-involved or at-risk youth.
- Conflict resolution training has been provided to 139 youth, with a 94 percent success rate.
- Anger management courses have been provided to 500 youth. This is an ongoing program, so final results are not yet available.
- Parent advocacy training has been provided to 81 families with a 100 percent success rate.
- Other goals and objectives related to the grant are still in progress and, as a result, have not yet been met.