

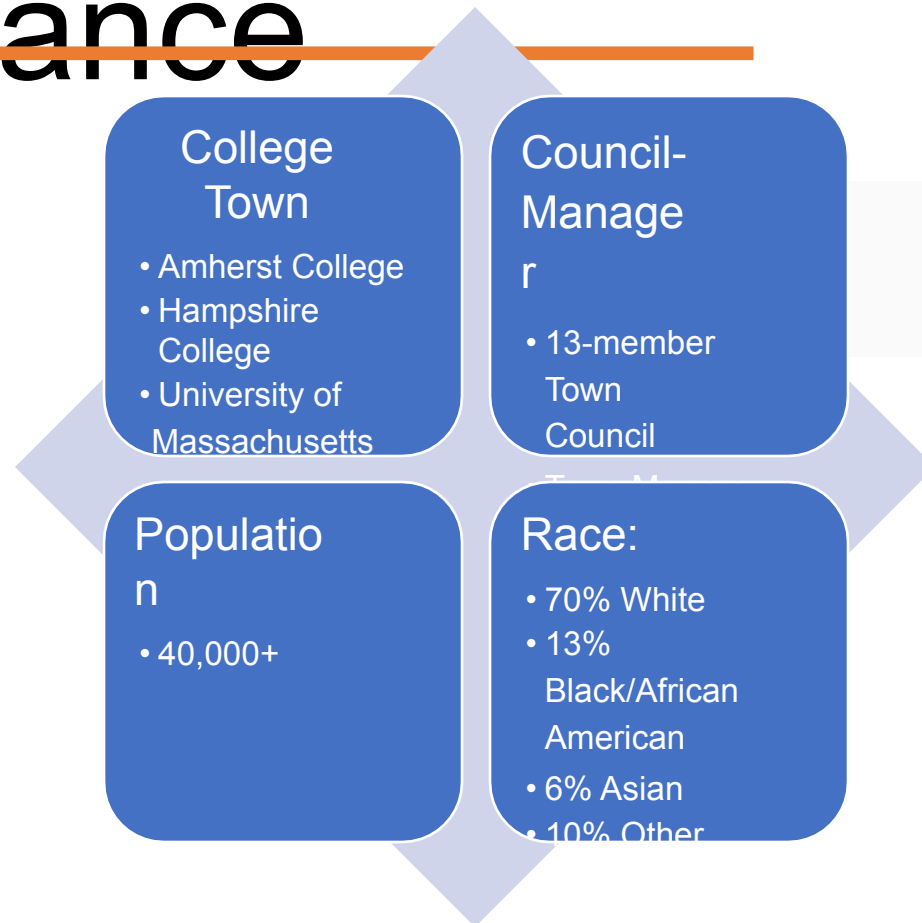
COMMUNITY RESPONDERS FOR EQUITY, SAFETY, AND SERVICE (CRESS)

Earl Miller, CRESS Director



TOWN OF
AMHERST
MASSACHUSETTS

Amherst at a Glance

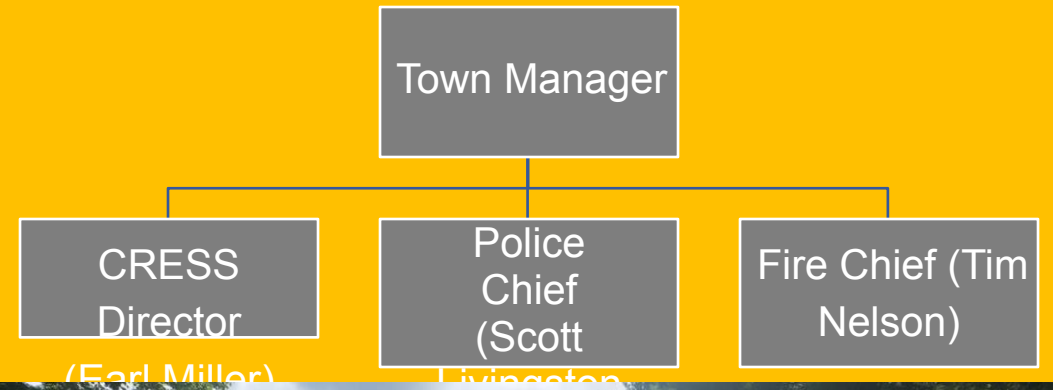


CRESS = Community
Responders for Equity,
Safety, and Service

Third leg of public safety
(with Fire and
Police/Dispatch)

Not co-responder

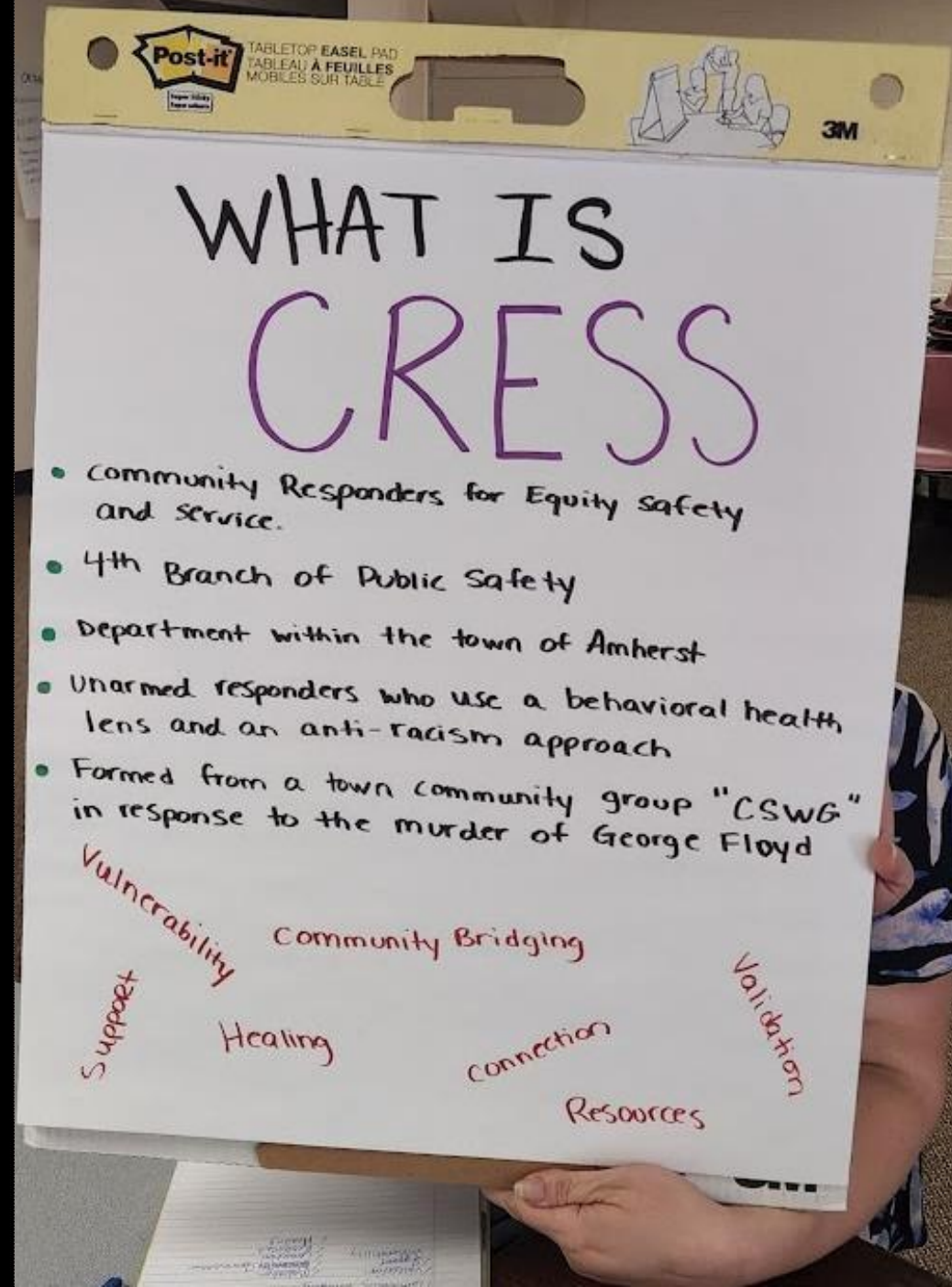
model; alternative for
dispatch



Implementation

The reason for creating this department is to provide community safety services in situations that don't involve violence or serious crime. It will create a civilian, unarmed alternative to calls that might otherwise require a response from the Police Department.

The purpose is to ensure that any public safety response is anti-racist, equitable, just, and fair and that we offer preventative services that get at the root of assisting our community members to avoid necessitating public safety involvement in the first place.



Implementation

Team:

CSWG – 3 Members
Police Chief and Police
Captain Fire Chief
(includes EMS) Assistant
DEI Director
Dispatch Supervisor when
needed

Funding:

\$170k in Town funds
(eliminated
2 police positions)
\$90k State earmark

HOW YOU'D LIKE TO SEE
S IMPLEMENTED IN YOUR
COMMUNITY!

THE TOWN OF
HAVERST

COMMUNITY SAFETY
WORKING GROUP

Thursday September 9th from
pm - 9pm via Zoom!

I be holding a community
to hear your concerns about
and to hear your ideas on
menting CRESS into our
community!

CRESS Mission Statement

An
overarching
sense

Trauma
Informed Care

Antiracism

of optimism
Being
unarmed

Person
-
centere
d

Collaboration

CRESS Department Staff

Earl
Miller
Director
#2201



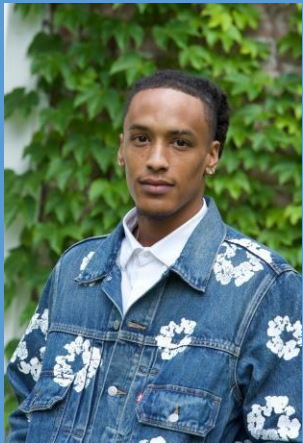
Kat Newman
(and Brady)
Program
Assistant #2202



Kate Shapiro
Implementation
Manager #2211



Responders



Kevaw
n Lord
#2204



Brittany
Haughto
n #2205



Vaness
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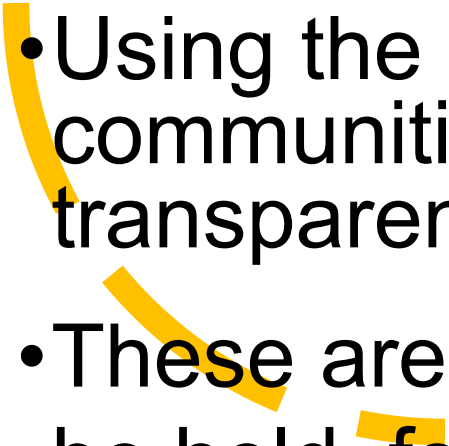
Tim
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#2210



CRESS TRAINING

- Unarmed, person centered, trauma informed, antiracist Public Safety agency.
 - Unarmed does not mean unprepared, untrained, or afraid. We exist in a community that has, historically, shown an ability to have challenging conversations and to hold the highest ideals of a Commonwealth.
 - Using the lessons of our community and the communities around us, CRESS will be rooted in a transparent set of values.
 - These are not ordered by importance. They all must be held for our work to succeed.
- 

CRESS TRAINING

9 weeks of training designed to prepare staff to respond to calls in the field.

Utilized and relied on both outside agencies/organizations as well as current town departments and knowledge

"The training was everything we needed and was so eye-opening...for me it was a lot of unlearning and learning in how to talk to people."

- Vanessa Phillips, #2206





Report writing, situational awareness, de-escalation, CPR, quality of life concerns

Police, Fire



Antiracism restorative justice circles

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Social media policy, technology policy, dealing with the press, customer service role playing

Information Technology, Town Manager's Office



Town COVID-19 response

Public Health, Police, Town Manager's Office

Working with Senior Citizens

Senior Center

Open Questions
Affirmations
Reflections
Summaries
↑ MI SKILLS ↑

Characteristics

- inspirational
- motivational
- good speaker
- reassuring
- positive outlook
- good listener
- understand from your point of view
- leadership
- being a role model
- selfless
- helpful / always there
- empathetic / kindness
- generous
- resilient
- lovable
- loyal
- trustworthy
- compassionate

JOB

Description

sees potential in others
they don't see themselves
help them grow into it

When the Conversation turns to
Suicide, Working with Voice Hearers

Nonviolent Communication

Identity and Anti-Bias part 1: Implicit Bias

Tips for Helping People with ASD
Feel Safer

Building Trust and Healing Harms:
Intro to Trauma-Informed Practices &
Restorative Justice

Vicarious Traumatization: Taking
Care of Those Who Take Care of
Others



First

Calls

Lessons

Example 1: Arson at High School

- Incident: Bathroom fires in high school required evacuation of students/staff
- Fire and Police responded
- CRESS requested by Fire Chief
- Provided support for crowd control (worked with students and staff regarding building reentry)
- Reduced the load on fire and police so those departments could focus on actively making sure fire concern was addresses and investigation could begin
- Lesson learned: A clear on-scene command structure needs to be

Example 2: Unhoused Woman at Local Market

- Incident: Unhoused woman experiencing mental health challenges at local market – Market personnel concerned for safety
- Market called Police called twice to help – limited success
- Police Chief and Dispatch Supervisor decided to try a CRESS response
- 3rd time is a charm: CRESS responded successfully – transported woman and belongs to shelter
- Lessons learned: CRESS can spend more time at a call than police
- Lived experiences as a form of connection deeply matters
- Follow-up and relationship-building are crucial on both individual and systemic level (ie: able to support individual after the incident, strengthened relationship with local housing agency in Town)

Example 3: Overdose at Homeless Shelter

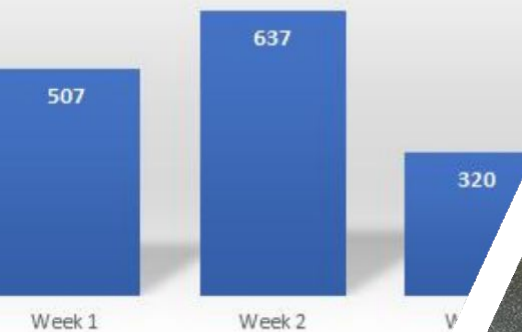
- Incident: Overdose death at Local Satellite Shelter for the Unhoused
- Called by shelter provider
- Roommate traumatized
- Wellness checks for shelter staff
- Lessons learned: Community care matters (Upstream work and anticipating needs.) Although this incident was outside of Amherst, the individuals impacted by this loss will soon be in Amherst for the winter (due to satellite shelter closing for season)
- Community connection matters (CRESS Responder knew roommate of individual who passed away so was able to connect more effectively and empathetically)
- Sitting with people in a time of loss, while both simple and complex, is important
- Need to establish formal response process with other cities and towns



**Community
Engagement:**

**Public Safety
through
Prevention and
Relationship**

1st Month Community Engagement Data (09/06/22-09/30/22)



Community Engagement
COVID Ambassadors
Experience
Town/Community Events
Apartment Complexes
College Move-in
Days Meal



Lessons Learned

- **Voices of BIPOC community members are central**
- **Listen actively and be responsive**
- **White leaders needs to share/shed leadership with/to BIPOC community members**
- **Show Town management/police leadership: progressive, responsive, attentive, credible**
- **Communicate among stakeholders**
- **Be Present; Remain Transparent**
- **Being Defensive is Counter Productive**
- **Guts to try Something New**
- **Be Resilient...It is REALLY HARD Work!**