Prevention, Intervention, and Enforcement: A summary report on the innovative and successful practices of the San Francisco District Attorney’s Office.
Dear Fellow San Franciscans:

I am honored to present this summary of achievements the District Attorney’s Office has made over the past year.

In 2012, we invested significant resources in the development and expansion of innovative tools for our prosecutors. We also launched public information campaigns, strengthened school partnerships, and engaged in constructive dialogue with our community advisory groups.

Thanks to the commitment of our prosecutors, investigators, paralegals, victim advocates, and support staff, we accomplished the following:

- Reduced homicide backlog from 36% in 2011 to 82% by Fall of 2012.
- Created the nation’s first Alternative Sentencing Program to help prosecutors develop meaningful sentencing recommendations to reduce recidivism.
- Expanded the Neighborhood Court and Neighborhood Prosecutor Program citywide. Almost 700 cases were sent to Neighborhood Court in 2012.
- Increased Victim Services outreach resulting in 5410 victims served in 2012.
- Launched a new data system to measure the success of the office’s innovations.
- Increased enforcement by adding extra focus on the community’s most serious and violent offenders.

I am proud of the hard working staff at the District Attorney’s Office. Our collective mission is to establish and maintain a first-class prosecutor’s office that adheres to our social ideals and administers justice in an equitable manner. Together we have made significant progress in making San Francisco the safest large city in America.

Sincerely yours,

George Gascón
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**OFFICE AT A GLANCE**

At the District Attorney's Office we are committed to achieving justice for our city's residents. We work tirelessly to hold offenders accountable, protect and support victims, and innovate to break the cycle of crime.

Our office not only investigates and prosecutes crime, we also prosecute white collar crime cases involving consumer fraud, real estate fraud, insurance fraud and financial fraud against elders and environmental protection. We have over 250 staff working hard every day to serve the people of San Francisco and fight crime. We are made up of prosecutors, victim advocates, paralegals, investigators, and other support staff. Our office is divided into three major departments: Operations, Special Operations and Support Services.

In 2012 the District Attorney’s Office reviewed over 22,000 arrests from police agencies. Approximately 12,000 of those cases were charged or handled through probation revocation proceedings.

While reported crime in San Francisco remains low, our office has increased its reach to serve more victims. The Victim Services Division served 5,410 victims and survivors in 2012.

The services and operations of a prosecutor’s office extend beyond the halls of justice. Not only has the role of prosecutors evolved, so has the scope of the mission and services provided. We now focus attention and resources on prevention and intervention in addition to enforcement. This annual report is organized into three major sections: Enforcement, Intervention and Prevention. The Enforcement Section provides an overview of our specialized work in the criminal division. The Intervention section highlights the innovative practices led by our Office, and the Prevention section covers the work we conduct to keep our communities engaged and informed about how we can all be safer together.
ENFORCEMENT

Every day, our prosecutors are on the frontlines of the criminal justice system holding offenders accountable to make our communities safe. In 2012, our prosecutors reviewed over 22,000 arrests from police agencies and filed approximately 12,000 of these cases. In this annual report, we provide an overview of each unit and highlight specific units to provide a deeper understanding about the incredible work of our prosecutors.

CRIMINAL DIVISION

Our Criminal Justice Division consists of the following units: Child Assault, Domestic Violence, Gangs, General Felonies, Hate Crimes, Homicide, Juvenile, Misdemeanors, Preliminary Hearings, and Sexual Assault.

CHILD ASSAULT

The San Francisco District Attorney’s Office Child Assault Unit prosecutes child assault cases vertically, with experienced attorneys handling the case from arraignment to trial. The team handles child sexual and physical abuse, child endangerment, child sex trafficking and internet crimes against children, including child pornography. The unit focuses on holding offenders accountable and protecting children from those who seek to harm and exploit them. The attorneys assigned to prosecute these cases take special care to establish a trusting relationship with the children they encounter in their cases to minimize the trauma and repair the harm.

In October 2012, Assistant District Attorney Leslie Cogan secured a conviction against a resident child molester who molested his young niece over the course of two years. The defendant was sentenced to over 16 years in state prison and ordered to pay $625,000 in restitution to the victim to compensate her for noneconomic damages she sustained as a result of being molested. This restitution order followed another ground-breaking award for non-economic damages involving two victims and an award of over $1.5 million. These restitution orders are structured to assist victims to get their lives back together and hold offenders accountable for their actions.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE UNIT

The San Francisco District Attorney’s Office Domestic Violence (DV) Unit handles all domestic violence cases vertically, with prosecutors from within the unit keeping the cases from arraignment to trial. The Unit reviews all domestic violence reports brought to the office to determine whether charges should be filed. Also within the Unit are prosecutors that specialize in vulnerable victim abuse (the elderly and
dependent adults) and stalking cases. These types of cases frequently intersect with domestic violence because they are often centered around the home and/or intimate relationships.

Domestic Violence is frequently a gateway crime. Studies show that early childhood exposure to violence at home leads to many adult social disorders including violent criminal behavior. Many of those exposed to violence at home become other offenders or victims of domestic violence. Consequently, domestic violence prevention, intervention, and prosecutions are core strategies used by the San Francisco District Attorney’s Office to eradicate violence against women and children at home.

Since 2010, San Francisco experienced an 86% increase in the number of open DV cases. This increase in workload for prosecutors created a need for additional staffing. With the assistance of the anti-DV community, the Mayor’s Office, and the Board of Supervisors, we were granted a supplemental budget increase to hire additional prosecutors, investigators, and victim advocates in 2013.

With the newly funded staffing levels we are reorganizing our DV unit in 2013 to create a seamless process for victims and their families. Under the new configuration, specially trained and supervised teams of prosecutors, victim advocates, investigators, and paralegals work together to hold offenders accountable, protect victims and their families and repair the harm.

**Gangs**

The San Francisco District Attorney’s Office Gang Unit handles gang cases, including gang homicides. The unit focuses on the most violent gang members and associates who victimize our community. When appropriate, the Gang Unit also focuses on preventing the next generation of violent gang members by working with other partners to help transitional age youth address their needs.

**General Felonies**

The San Francisco District Attorney’s Office General Felonies Unit is part of a larger horizontal prosecution team that includes Preliminary Hearings and Felony Rebooking. These teams handle well over 90% of all felony cases charged by the Office. The crimes prosecuted include attempted murder, assault, mayhem, kidnapping, torture, robbery, burglary, auto theft, fraud, possession of stolen property, arson, vandalism, felonious thefts, criminal threats, weapons possession, crimes on Muni and BART, narcotics, and prosecution of career criminals involved in committing serious and violent felonies.
People v. Edwin Ramos

Few cases have captivated the people of San Francisco as much as the triple murders of the Bologna family. In June 22, 2008, Tony was driving back from a family picnic with his three sons Michael, Matthew, and Andrew when Edwin Ramos mistook them as members of a rival gang and fired at the family car at an intersection in the Excelsior neighborhood. On May 9, 2012, after a 4 month trial, a jury found Ramos guilty of 3 counts of 1st degree murder and 1 count of attempted murder. Andrew, the surviving son, bravely testified during the trial. Ramos was sentenced to 3 consecutive terms of life without the possibility of parole and 182 years to life to be served concurrently. Years of hard work by Assistant District Attorney Harry Dorfman and SFPD Inspector Tom Newlin went into obtaining justice for the Bologna family and the city of San Francisco.

Hate Crimes Unit

The San Francisco District Attorney’s Office’s Hate Crimes Unit, handles hate crime cases vertically from arraignment to trial. By handling hate crime cases vertically, it makes it easier for our office to notice trends and allows us to work more closely with the San Francisco Police Department in ongoing investigations. Additionally, we ensure that there is a single point of contact with the community in addressing hate crimes. By focusing our attention on hate crimes cases, we can work together in ensuring that San Francisco is a safe place for all. In 2012, our Hate Crimes Unit reviewed 23 cases and took action on 18 cases. These cases involved a variety of hate crimes including crimes against Latinos and members of the LGBT community.

Homicide Unit

The San Francisco District Attorney’s Office Homicide Unit serves on a 24 hour on call response team for homicides and search warrants. In 2011, District Attorney Gascón committed to reducing the backlog of old homicide cases. The office received an additional assistant district attorney position to help address the issue. By the Fall of 2012, 82% of the cases in the homicide backlog (cases over four years old) were resolved. All these cases resulted in convictions. In 2012, the office continued to aggressively prosecute homicides and charged 31 new cases.

Juvenile Unit
The San Francisco District Attorney’s Office Juvenile Unit handles all juvenile criminal cases in San Francisco. Juvenile cases involving gangs, sexual assault, domestic violence, elder abuse, homicide and truancy are all handled by specialized prosecutors in this unit. The Juvenile Unit recognizes that young offenders should be treated differently, with an emphasis on rehabilitation and restorative justice. By focusing the right attention on young offenders, the next generation of habitual offenders can be prevented.

**MISDEMEANORS**

The San Francisco District Attorney’s Office Misdemeanor Unit handles misdemeanor cases from arraignment to trial. It handles the highest number of cases in the office. Misdemeanor cases include assault and battery, some property and drug crimes, DUIs, and gun possession. Additionally, the Misdemeanor Unit staffs Quality of Life Offenses in Traffic Court, restitution proceedings, prostitution prevention and diversion programs.

**PRELIMINARY HEARINGS**

The San Francisco District Attorney’s Office Preliminary Hearing Unit handles all charged general felony cases through the preliminary hearing. A preliminary hearing is held after a complaint has been filed to determine whether there is enough evidence to proceed to a trial. The Preliminary Hearing Unit handles the highest number of felony cases in the office including anything from attempted murder to narcotics.

**SEX ASSAULT UNIT**

The San Francisco District Attorney’s Office Sexual Assault Unit handles sexual assault cases vertically, with prosecutors from the unit keeping the case from arraignment through trial, maintaining the highest level of continuity and sensitivity for sexual assault survivors. Cases are prosecuted vigorously, consistent with our mission to ensure community safety by removing the most serious and violent offenders from our streets.
People v. Frederick Dozier

A serial rapist threatened the public safety of residents in the Mission District because of brutal attacks on three women between June and December 2011. Survivor One was attacked in the area of 24th St. and South Van Ness. Survivor Two was attacked in the area of 24th St. and Potrero St. Survivor Three was attacked in the area of 24th St. and Fair Oaks St. All three female survivors were choked, brutally raped and robbed. On November 13th, 2012, a jury convicted Frederick Dozier, 33, of 25 felony counts including multiple counts of kidnapping, sexual assault and robbery. The defendant was sentenced to 373 years to life and was ordered to pay over $256,000 in restitution. Assistant District Attorney Marshall Khine prosecuted the case.

White Collar Crime Division

The White Collar Crime Division investigates and prosecutes a wide variety of complex and high profile cases. This division focuses on public corruption cases, environmental crime, consumer fraud, financial crimes against elders, real estate and investment scams, identity theft, crimes involving the use of computers or other technology, various forms of insurance fraud and welfare fraud. Cases handled by this Division are usually extremely document intensive, tend to involve many victims, and often involve financial loss well in excess of $100,000. Several of the units are supported in whole or in part by grant funding or other non-General Fund sources. The Special Prosecutions Unit consists of four sub-units: Public Integrity, Consumer Protection, Environmental Justice, and Workplace Safety. The Economic Crimes Unit consists of seven sub-units: High Tech/Identity Theft, Elder Financial Abuse, Real Estate Fraud, Mortgage & Investment Fraud, Insurance Fraud, and Welfare Fraud. In 2012, the Mortgage and Investment Fraud Unit in 2012 prosecuted 10 defendants who defrauded at least 45 victims out of more than $5.5 million dollars.

People v. Jay Shah, People v. Winston Lum

Lum and Shah are 2 of the 5 co-conspirators involved in a scheme using an elaborate series of “confidence man” type tricks and impersonations to get access to properties at One Rincon Hill and convince a bank to provide a $2.2 million dollar loan that was paid to a fictitious Nevada company and deposited into a confidential Swiss bank account. On September 20, 2012, after a six month trial, a jury convicted Jay Shah of 13 felony counts, including grand theft, money laundering, forgery, filing forged documents, and conspiracy. He was convicted under California's Aggravated White Collar Crime Enhancement and convicted of a strike under California's three strikes laws. He was sentenced to 20 years in state prison and fined over $14 million dollars. Winston Lum was found guilty of 6 of 15 felony counts including grand theft, identity theft, procuring or offering false or forged instruments for record, filing of false or forged documents related to single-family residences, attempted grand theft. Assistant District Attorney Sandip Patel prosecuted the case.
**INTERVENTION**

In 2012 the San Francisco District Attorney’s Office continued to invest significant resources in the development and expansion of innovative tools that prosecutors can use to foster safe and livable communities. District Attorney George Gascón integrated community based victim services, led the continued success of Truancy Court, created the nation’s first Alternative Sentencing Program, implemented the Neighborhood Prosecutor Program, and expanded Neighborhood Courts. These intervention tools are rooted in an understanding of the complex nature of circumstances that lead to crime and victimization and the recognition that sustainable public safety can only be achieved when the community and criminal justice partners work together. Interventions set in motion in the aftermath of a crime must include a parallel investment in outcomes for victims and offenders to ensure that our communities are made whole. Sanctions and diversion opportunities tailored to the criminogenic attributes of those harming our communities, and comprehensive and culturally inclusive victim/witness services are essential to ending cycles of crime.

**REMOVING BARRIERS FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME**

The San Francisco District Attorney’s Office is dedicated to Susan Herman’s principles of Parallel Justice namely that in addition to holding offenders accountable, we ensure victims are helped and are safe to recover from the trauma of the crime and regain control of their lives. We recognize that this sometimes means meeting our victims in places where they feel most safe and comfortable.

**Victim Services Community Office Hours**

In 2012 the District Attorney’s Office continued to expand the reach of the Victim Services Division by establishing office hours in the community. In partnership with Mujeres Unidas y Activas in the Mission, the Bayview YMCA, and Cameron House in Chinatown, the District Attorney’s Office has expanded the reach of our Victim Services Division by holding office hours at facilities throughout the city. At these sites, residents are able to make appointments or walk in off the street and meet with trained Victim/Witness advocates from the District Attorney’s Office.
The Victim Services Division provides services in English, Cantonese, Mandarin, Spanish, and Vietnamese. In cases where the victim requires additional language assistance, Advocates utilize the language line services. Victim Advocates assist victims of serious and violent crime in filing claims with the State Victim Compensation Program, offer crisis intervention and emergency assistance and provide help navigating the criminal justice system. Additionally, Advocates work with victims, witnesses and their families to identify community resources and make referrals to medical and mental health care providers. The Victim Services Division also helps in securing restitution, assisting with witness relocation, and meeting transportation needs for eligible individuals. In 2012, the Victim Services Division served 5,410 victims representing a 12% increase in caseloads from 2011.

**Access for All**

To ensure that foreign-national victims have access to the criminal justice system and vital victim services, the District Attorney’s Office has provided training to foreign consulates regarding hate crimes, human trafficking and domestic violence crimes. Speakers from the District Attorney’s Office discuss the unique nature of hate crimes, the effects such crimes have on the community, and San Francisco's response. Participating countries in 2012 included China, México, El Salvador, Guatemala, Peru, the Philippines, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland, and Ukraine.

**Children Exposed to Violence**

Children and youth who are exposed to violence can suffer significant trauma. Untreated, this trauma can have long-term effects on their health and well-being, ability to learn in school and sense of safety in their community. Unfortunately for many years these young victims have not had access to the services they need to heal from their trauma.
In 2012, the District Attorney’s Office partnered with San Francisco's Safe Start Program to increase access to victim compensation and to educate the community about this resource for children and youth who witness community violence. Funded by California's Victim Compensation Program, the program provides a maximum of $5000 in reimbursement for mental health counseling for children and youth exposed to violence. Witnesses who qualify can apply for compensation through one of the Safe Start Programs located at Family Resource Centers throughout the city. All services are optional, free, confidential and available in English, Spanish, Cantonese and Mandarin.

"Children’s exposure to violence is a public health problem with a devastating impact on children’s development, affecting their emotional growth, cognitive development, physical health and school performance. That is why SafeStart is partnering with the DA’s Office to reduce the impact of violence on young children by helping families access valuable resources in the community, such as the Victim Compensation Program. "

~Blia Moua, Safe Start Program

**Domestic Violence Survivor Outreach**

The San Francisco District Attorney's Office recognizes domestic violence as a serious crime and is dedicated to ensuring victims have access to community-based and culturally competent recovery resources. The District Attorney's Office maintains a first-of-its-kind Domestic Violence Outreach Program that targets cases in which the victim has children and is limited English proficient. Within 24 hours of the arrest of the abuser, victims receive a phone call in their native language and are provided with crisis intervention, court support and advocacy, and assistance with claiming victim compensation. If the victim consents, an advocate makes an appointment to visit with them at a location of their choice within 72 hours of the incident or within 48 hours of receiving the referral.

In late 2012, through a partnership with the Department on the Status of Women, Asian Women’s Shelter and La Casa de las Madres, the District Attorney's Office received $650,000 from the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of Violence Against Women. The grant is being used to improve prosecution of domestic violence, improve the criminal justice system’s support for high risk victims, and enhance
community-based direct services for domestic violence victims who are high risk, who are limited English proficient, and/or are LGBT. These goals will be met through centralized prosecution, trainings within the District Attorney’s Office, trainings with criminal justice partners, development of a danger assessment tool, and enhancement of direct services.

By locating our services in places of comfort and convenience for San Francisco victims, we can continue to break down the barriers that keep victims and witnesses of crime from engaging with law enforcement and securing the support and much needed services they need and deserve.

**Truancy Court**

In San Francisco, 94% of homicide victims under age 25 are high school drop outs. Now five years into the District Attorney’s Truancy Initiative, we continue to partner with San Francisco Superior Court, San Francisco Unified School District, the Truancy Assessment and Resource Center (TARC), Human Services Agency and other public and community-based agencies to operate our problem solving, collaborative Truancy Court model. Truancy Court focuses on San Francisco’s most chronically truant students – who sometimes have missed up to several months of school. Through this model, parents and students are encouraged to take accountability for their truancy (or their children’s truancy) – and then to work with all partners to improve attendance. Families are provided with a range of supportive services, from case management to therapeutic referrals to transportation assistance. Throughout the year, District Attorney Representatives travel to schools across the City to speak with families who are struggling with truancy, to inform them about state attendance rules and to encourage them to improve their attendance. We also participate on the school district’s Student Attendance Review Board – which meets individually with truant students and their families in an attempt to resolve truancy prior to prosecution.

Truancy Court is, by design, reserved for students whose attendance has not improved despite multiple interventions and offers of support. In 2012, the District Attorney’s Office took 40 cases to truancy court but met with over 550 families to explain attendance laws and encourage them to get help to address their truancy.
Alternatives in Action

Arrested for robbery, a 19-year-old heavy marijuana user, high school dropout, father of a young child and part-time employee at a fast food restaurant faced up to 5 years in prison and a felony strike. His case was referred to the Alternative Sentencing Planner who recognized an opportunity to help the defendant turn his life around. In exchange for a lesser plea, the defendant agreed to 1 year of probation, ankle monitoring, one year of substance abuse treatment and enrollment in a charter school to complete his GED/High School diploma. In less than 1 year since the incident leading to his arrest, the defendant has successfully graduated from Five Keys Charter School with his high school diploma.

Arrested for passing bad checks, a 23-year-old check fraud suspect faced a maximum of 5 years in prison. The product of a broken home, the young woman had lost a stillborn baby and was using speed and heroin by the age of 18. She got pregnant by her pimp, left the baby with her family, and moved to San Francisco where she was caught for passing bad checks with a man she met in a recovery program. After her case was reviewed by the Alternative Sentencing Planner, the young woman received a year in jail, and two years at an inpatient gender specific drug treatment center, which will work with her toward reunification with her child through on site visitation and parenting support provided by Homeless Prenatal Services.

This collaborative effort has paid off. Since the District Attorney’s Office launched its Truancy Initiative in 2007, the number of chronically truant students in SFUSD has declined by 37%. We are grateful to our partners in this work. In the coming year, we hope to infuse additional services into Truancy Court to widen the support network for our families. Keeping children in school reduces the likelihood that they get into crime and/or become victims of crime. National data shows that 75% of all truant students eventually drop out of school, and 75% of incarcerated individuals were habitually truant.

Alternative Sentencing Program

A leader in innovative approaches to criminal justice, the San Francisco District Attorney’s Office is embarking on a new approach to address the causes of crime, hold offenders accountable and preserve public safety. District Attorney George Gascón launched the Alternative Sentencing Program in February 2012. He hired the office’s first Alternative Sentencing Planner to give prosecutors additional information about alternative criminal justice sanctions regarding cases eligible for public safety realignment, as well as, other selected cases where an alternative to a jail or prison sentence may be possible.

The Alternative Sentencing Planner assists prosecutors in the identification of safe, effective sanctions that will address the offender’s criminogenic needs and help advance public safety. For defendants to be eligible, the assigned prosecutor must agree to the alternative sentence, and the defendant must agree to follow all of the sanctions identified by the San Francisco’s District Attorney’s Office.

Since the first full year of implementation, the Alternative Sentencing Planner has reviewed over a thousand cases and at the request of Assistant District Attorneys, conducted in depth reviews for 114 of these defendants. With the goal to enhance public safety and reduce recidivism, the Alternative Sentencing Planner focuses on the offenders and their readiness for rehabilitation through the application of best practices designed to reduce reoffending and increase individual accountability.
Neighborhood Prosecutors

San Francisco is a city of diverse residents, diverse communities – and diverse public safety problems. Many of the public safety concerns that most affect our community’s quality of life do not necessarily translate to high-profile cases and jury trials. Our community stakeholders – residents, merchants, and neighborhood organizations – are important sources of information regarding these issues. And they are essential partners in generating solutions.

In 2012, District Attorney George Gascón brought to scale his pilot Neighborhood Prosecutor program by assigning a team of five Assistant District Attorneys to cover the City’s ten police districts. Each Neighborhood Prosecutor is responsible for two district Police Stations. They are also tasked with community outreach working with neighborhood stakeholders to solve local public safety problems.

Their role is to work shoulder to shoulder with community members to address each neighborhood’s unique challenges. Our Neighborhood Prosecutors collaborate with the San Francisco Police Department, City Attorney and other City agencies to address a wide range of local concerns including code violations and graffiti. They also explore strategies that other cities (and even countries) have employed to achieve successes with some of the most persistent crime and quality of life challenges that our communities face.

Neighborhood Prosecutors also play a critical role in our Neighborhood Courts Program, described below. They personally review the misdemeanor and infraction citations generated by their assigned stations in order to refer individuals to Neighborhood Court. They reach out to the cited individual, as well as the victim, to orient them to Neighborhood Court and schedule a hearing.

Neighborhood Prosecutors also charge appropriate cases through the traditional court process; in certain cases, they personally handle cases that are of particular importance to their neighborhood.

#### Neighborhood Prosecutor at Work

**North Beach**

After 3-4 years of daily visits to Liguria Bakery on Stockton Street, a man who was a well-known neighborhood nuisance, escalated from a general annoyance to potentially dangerous. He entered the bakery one morning screaming profanities and threatening the owner and his family. When the defendant was stopped by police, he began shouting profanities and threatening to kill one of the officers. Assistant District Attorney Marisa Rodriguez followed the case closely making sure the defendant was prosecuted. Assistant District Attorney O’Bryan Kenney, prosecuted the case, and the man was put on probation and ordered to undergo mental health counseling. He was also ordered to stay away from Liguria Bakery, and a 4 block area along Columbus Avenue.
**Neighborhood Court**

In 2011, District Attorney George Gascón reformed and expanded the city’s community courts to a new model called Neighborhood Court. The District Attorney’s Office designed the new model to achieve four primary goals:

- **Efficient case resolution.** Neighborhood Court participants can have their case heard within a couple of weeks and fully complete the process before they would have even appeared at their criminal court arraignment.

- **Community-driven solutions.** The community that is affected by the crime gets to direct the plan for repairing that harm.

- **Reduced burden on criminal courts.** Neighborhood Court saves both time and money for criminal courts and the agencies that work in them. Low level offenders are resolved for a fraction of the cost associated with our traditional court system.

- **Reduced recidivism.** By keeping low-level offenders out of the traditional system, Neighborhood Courts are able to address low level offenders’ criminogenic needs without the impact a criminal record can have on an individual’s ability to work, obtain housing and other services which help reduce recidivism.

As individuals gain a true understanding of the impacts of their actions, they may be less likely to reoffend. Now in its second year, Neighborhood Court is an alternative to the traditional criminal justice process for certain misdemeanor and infraction offenses. Instead of charging cases for criminal prosecution, the District Attorney’s Office through our Neighborhood Prosecutors refers certain misdemeanor and infraction cases to Neighborhood Court, and a panel of volunteer “adjudicators” hears the case. There are ten Neighborhood Courts across the city, with over 100 adjudicators serving on them and a waitlist of over 30 additional community members who wish to serve. In 2012 the District Attorney’s Office sent 698 cases to Neighborhood Court.

Adjudicators are members of San Francisco’s diverse neighborhoods who volunteer to hear the cases. They have been trained in restorative justice and problem solving. They are NOT defense attorneys, prosecutors, or judges. They include residents, merchants, students, parents and retired people. During Neighborhood Court sessions, adjudicators hear from the offender and the victim (in cases where there is a victim), and discuss the impact of the crime on the community.

To resolve the case, adjudicators issue “directives,” like community service or restitution, to repair the harm caused by the incident.
In June 2012, three young men broke onto a boat and started helping themselves to the owner’s beverages while ransacking the rooms into disarray. Surprised by the arrival of the owner and his girlfriend, the young men made racial slurs to the owner’s girlfriend, tried to flee the scene, and knocked the owner over onto a previously injured knee. The noise attracted attention from people passing by, including two off-duty FBI agents who tackled the suspects. Arrested and jailed for three days, all three faced charges of second degree burglary and vandalism. The case was referred to the North Beach Neighborhood Court where the owner described the emotional impact on him and his girlfriend. The young men were each ordered to stay away from the docks, pay restitution in the amount of $1,295, and write an apology letter to both the victims. Although initially the owner wanted the young men to be charged in criminal court, he was satisfied with the neighborhood court outcome and noted how impressed he was with the panelists. By using the Neighborhood Courts, the case was resolved much more quickly and effectively than similar cases that follow the traditional court system providing accountability for the offenders and justice for the victim.
**PREVENTION**

As the lead law enforcement official for the City and County of San Francisco, the District Attorney serves not only as a prosecutor but a leader in prevention programming and community education. In 2012, the District Attorney’s Office invested significant resources developing public information campaigns, strengthening school partnerships, and establishing shared plans of action with our community advisory groups.

**PUBLIC INFORMATION CAMPAIGNS**

**Informing the Community: A Call to Action**

In 2012, the District Attorney’s Office led six Public Information and Outreach Campaigns. These campaigns included Elder Abuse Prevention, Anti-Bullying, Victim Services Outreach, Traffic Safety and Fraud Prevention.

**ELDER ABUSE PREVENTION**

*The Invisible Crime*

San Francisco has one of the highest concentrations of seniors living independently, and is home to an increasingly aging population. These older adults include a high concentration of non-English speaking seniors, LGBT seniors, and a higher than average percentage of individuals with disabilities. Often reliant on caregivers, some seniors are subject to physical and financial abuses. Known as the “invisible crime”, elder financial abuse is an under-recognized and under-reported crime because a victim may not even know someone is stealing from them.

Recognizing a lack of public awareness of elder abuse, District Attorney George Gascón launched a yearly citywide multilingual public awareness campaign during Elder Abuse Prevention Month each May. In partnership with the Institute on Aging the District Attorney’s Office selected financial elder abuse as the subject for the 2012 campaign. The 2012 campaign kicked off with a presentation on preventing elder financial abuse at the San Francisco Senior Center and a merchant walk to hand out prevention posters. Throughout the city, ads in English, Spanish, Chinese and Russian were displayed on bus shelters and
Muni buses displaying a hotline to report incidents of elder abuse. The campaign has been recognized as a national model because of its success in increasing awareness and educating seniors on recognizing incidents of abuse.

A major public information campaign was conducted in the Chinese community to protect mostly elderly Chinese women who were being targeted by a scam where the offenders promise to conduct a blessing ritual and steal the victim’s valuables. As a result of the crime prevention efforts in partnership with community groups and the media, several arrests have been made, prosecutions are ongoing and the level of community awareness concerning these crimes has increased. In one case, a potential victim recognized the scam and called the police leading to the arrest and prosecution of the offenders.

The District Attorney’s Office will continue to partner with community groups Self Help for the Elderly, Asian Pacific American Community Center, Asian Pacific Islander Legal Outreach, SF SAFE and others to educate the community about scams and other prevention measures.

**ANTI-BULLYING**

"Bye Bye Bullying"

Bullying has been shown to be one of the top reasons students miss school. In fact, studies have shown that 36% of students who’ve been bullied reported missing school within 30 days of the incident. The District Attorney’s Women’s Advisory Committee identified bullying as their top issue and developed a video contest for middle and high school students.

"Self-Help for the Elderly is grateful that District Attorney Gascón is starting this campaign to bring awareness on Financial Elder Abuse to our community. 19% of San Franciscans are seniors over 60 years old. Elder abuse destroys our seniors’ lives, financially and socially.”

~ Anni Chung, Executive Director of Self Help for the Elderly.
The contest, launched in October 2012 to coincide with Bullying Prevention Awareness month challenged students to work together to create a 60-second video addressing what bullying is, its effects, and viable solutions to the problem. The contest generated interest from students at high schools and middle schools all over the city, and a total of 58 videos were received.

Traffic Safety

What’s the Rush

Among California cities, San Francisco has historically had one of the highest per capita vehicle-pedestrian injury collision rate. During the holiday season the city’s streets and sidewalks become even more crowded and congested than they are on a daily basis. To encourage the public to share the streets and help prevent avoidable tragedies, District Attorney George Gascón launched a citywide multilingual traffic safety campaign during the month of December. Ads titled “What’s the Rush” in English, Spanish, and Chinese were displayed on digital bus shelters and Muni bus exteriors and interiors for the month. Three variations of the ad are posted featuring fines and an image of a driver, pedestrian, and bicyclist making illegal maneuvers.
School Partnerships

Burton High School

We know from data – and from our own experiences in Truancy Court – that one of the hardest transitions for truant students is the leap from middle school to high school. Specifically, students whose eighth grade attendance was below 85% are most likely to become high school dropouts. In 2011, San Francisco Unified School District launched its “Early Warning Indicator” project – identifying students whose middle school attendance and academic performance will likely lead to a rocky high school transition.

In Fall 2011, the District Attorney’s Office, in partnership with Burton High School and the Truancy Assessment and Resource Center (TARC), launched a pilot project to help these students make a strong start in high school. Now in our second year of this pilot, the District Attorney’s Office funds two case managers at Burton High School who work closely with incoming ninth graders who had poor attendance and grades in middle school. Rather than wait until these students start to struggle, the case managers reach out to them at the start of the school year and support them in their transition to ninth grade.

San Francisco Sentencing Commission

The San Francisco Sentencing Commission, an initiative of the District Attorney’s Office, was created through local legislation to analyze sentencing patterns and outcomes. The Commission advises the Mayor, Board of Supervisors, and other City departments on the best approaches to reduce recidivism and makes recommendations for sentencing reforms that advance public safety and use best practices in criminal justice. District Attorney George Gascón took this bold step to unite leaders of all relevant city departments, representatives of advocacy, service and academic institutions to inform our practice and improve our ability to lower crime and make our communities safer.

Ultimately the commission will make recommendations that establish a sentencing system that retains meaningful judicial discretion, avoids unwarranted disparity, recognizes the most efficient and effective use of correctional resources, and provides a meaningful array of sentencing options. Over the course of the next two years the Sentencing Commission will:

- Evaluate effective and appropriate sentences for the most violent offenders.
• Explore opportunities for drug law reform.
• Examine inconsistencies in the penal code related to realignment sentencing.
• Identify and define the most important factors that reduce recidivism.

The Sentencing Commission held two meetings in 2012. Full agendas and meeting minutes are available on http://www.sfdistrictattorney.org/.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY ADVISORY GROUPS

Preventing crime involves working with the community to create meaningful partnerships to improve public safety. We are safer together when community members and law enforcement work together to identify public safety issues and solutions. Six advisory groups were created to advise District Attorney George Gascón on public safety issues. Members of these advisory groups consist of stakeholders from the neighborhoods, merchants, businesses, community-based organizations and residents who meet quarterly to create public safety solutions. Each group identified key policy areas to be investigated for action. Over thirty meetings were conducted over the past year resulting in significant achievements and partnerships.

African American Advisory Group
Top Issue Areas: Barriers to Employment, School Disengagement and Access to Mental Health Resources.

The African American Advisory Group prioritized increased opportunities for job training, additional ways to engage adults to serve in mentorship programs, and reducing the stigma of mental health in the community. To find new and existing job training opportunities for qualified offenders, memoranda of agreements were negotiated with two trade unions to provide employment training and potential employment opportunities. An informal relationship with another labor group resulted in placements for employment positions and discussions with other unions are ongoing. A campaign to increase adult participation in mentorship programs and increased access to mental health services are in the works for 2013.

Asian/Pacific Islander Advisory Group
Top Issue Areas: Elder Abuse, Public Education regarding District Attorney’s services, and Scam Prevention

The Asian/Pacific Islander Advisory Group initiated a public education campaign regarding elder financial abuse resulting in more public awareness about the
“blessing scams.” Alongside Self Help for the Elderly and API Legal Outreach, we held three outreach meetings in Chinatown, Sunset, and Visitation Valley to educate the community on how to avoid blessing scams. Additionally, outreach meetings were conducted with non-profits identified by the API Advisory Group to explain the kinds of services we provide.

**Latino Advisory Group**

**Top Issue Areas:** Immigration, Public Safety, and Youth Violence Prevention

The Latino Advisory Group established a robust mission statement: *Our Mission is to advise District Attorney George Gascón on issues affecting the Latino Community. We will critically review, investigate, analyze, and eventually prepare a work plan through a timely, open and fair process. Together, we will work to keep ourselves informed about the community’s perspectives and identifying promising options on important subjects. In this process, we want productivity, respect, creativity, and clarity. Respect is important – in our communications, in how we use our time, and in seeking new solutions to old problems.*

The District Attorney’s Office convened meetings with the Latino Advisory Group and relevant agencies to see what can be done improve our ability to deliver public safety services to the Latino Community.

**LGBT Advisory Group**

**Top Issue Areas:** Sexual Orientation and Violence Prevention within in the LGBT Community

In partnership with the LGBT Advisory Group, successful efforts led to the inclusion of LGBT sensitive language on the In Home Support Service website to assist LGBT Elders obtain services. Also the group arranged for LGBT specific training for anti-truancy service providers. Additionally, our Victim Services Division conducted internal training on LGBT appropriate elder abuse and youth related services. Finally, the group worked with community partners on other crime prevention efforts.
Women Advisory Group

Top Issue Areas: Family Violence, School Safety, and Cultural Competent Services for Transgender Community

The Women’s Advisory Group decided to focus on an analysis of data concerning family violence. Starting in 2012, and continuing onto 2013, the District Attorney’s Office is gathering data to analyze the disparities between the 911 calls, reports generated, and cases charged on domestic violence to see what systematic improvements can be made. To address school safety, the group initiated an anti-bullying video contest for San Francisco middle and high students. “Bye-Bye Bullying” was co-sponsored by Common Sense Media, the National Center for Lesbian Rights, the San Francisco Giants Community Foundation, and Zendesk among many others. School officials, community leaders, and corporations came together to launch the video contest, which was publicized in all public and private middle and high schools in San Francisco, (see further discussion on page 18). To address transgender issues in custody, the Women’s Advisory Group advocated for further sensitivity training for law enforcement.

Youth Advisory Group

Top Issue Areas: Sexual Exploitation and Restorative Justice

The District Attorney’s Office convened a meeting of service providers to explore ways to better serve victims of child sex exploitation. Additionally, the District Attorney’s Office is working with advisory group members and other stakeholders to create a new restorative justice system for juveniles. The District Attorney’s Office plans to fully launch both of these initiatives in 2013.

Conclusion

The women and men of the San Francisco District Attorney’s Office, under the leadership of District Attorney George Gascón are committed to the highest level of public service. This 2012 Annual Report provides a brief summary of highlights illustrating this commitment. In partnership with San Francisco’s diverse communities, we look forward to our journey of excellence and continuous improvement in 2013.