

## Commission's Quarterly Newsletter Debuts



The Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention is pleased to introduce the first issue of its quarterly newsletter. This newsletter will highlight the extraordinary work being done by the Commission and its partner agencies. Our newsletter will provide resources and information on programs that are making a difference for our children and communities.

The Commission's priorities are to prevent gang involvement, provide intervention programs and help those that are at a higher risk by supporting early prevention efforts. The Commission collaborates with intervention efforts, including workforce readiness, employment and youth development. The Commission also works closely with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies while maintaining a solid working relationship with community groups, faith-based organizations and social services dedicated to stopping crime and violence in our communities. Our goal is to give everyone a clear understanding into the critical work done by the Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention.

*Rickey Laster*

Executive Director, Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention

## Chairman's Corner...



*Dr. Rodney Hood, Chair*

I want to personally thank all of the commissioners and City staff for putting together our first newsletter. It is a pleasure to serve as the Chair of the Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention.

I hope that this newsletter will allow the public to see all of the great work that is being done by the Commission on behalf of the citizens of San Diego.

Over the years, there have been a lot of misconceptions about what the Commission actually does. We are often referred to as the "Gang Commission," which leads people to believe that the Commission has control or power to prevent gang violence. The fact is we do not.

The Commission develops a more strategic, coordinated and collaborative effort between the City, law enforcement agencies, social service providers and our communities.

The objective is preventing, intervening and diverting our youth from gang involvement and its negative impact on society.

*Dr. Rodney Hood*



*Police Chief Shelley Zimmerman and Rev. Rickey Laster.*

## Who is the Commission and What Does It Do?

The Commission consists of 21 commissioners. Eight of the commissioners are referred to as "office holders." These office holders consist of the following agency leaders:

- City of San Diego Police Chief
- Superintendent of San Diego Unified School District
- San Diego County Sheriff
- San Diego County District Attorney
- San Diego County Chief of Probation
- Executive Director of the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)
- President of the San Diego Workforce Partnership
- U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of California

There are also nine City of San Diego resident volunteers representing the nine City Council Districts. These nine volunteers are nominated by their respective Councilmembers.

The remaining three commissioners are appointed by the Mayor and are members of community organizations working on gang issues, including:

- Public health
- Social services
- Reformed ex-gang member

The Commission has three staff members dedicated to assist in the facilitation of Commission meetings and to make sure that the Commission adheres to all laws and Ralph M. Brown Act Rules of Order. Those staff members are:

- Executive Director
- Executive Assistant
- Deputy City Attorney

### **How and Why the Commission Began**

No year in San Diego has ever matched the deadly toll of 2003, in which 19 homicides, including the killing of two innocent victims, Carol Waite and Cynthia Burton, took place. This was the catalyst for the creation of the Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention. Even with the decrease in murders over the years, the City of San Diego had taken a strong position that even one homicide was unacceptable in our community.

The Commission's formal establishment came in 2006. Since that year, it has supported and effectively facilitated the coordination of multiple strategies and agencies cited as critical to reducing gang violence in San Diego.

The Commission's efforts have been noted in *The UNITY Urban Agenda for Preventing Violence Before it Occurs: Bringing a Multi-Sector Prevention Approach to Scale in U.S. Cities* (Prevention Institute, 2010) and the National League of Cities' Institute for Youth Education and Families publication, *Preventing Gang Violence and Building*

### *Communities Where Young People Thrive.*

A lot has happened since the Commission was first started, including a decrease in gang involvement.

In 2015, the City of San Diego had 4,100 documented gang members, including 100 juvenile documented gang members, according to San Diego Police. In 2016, the City had 4,021 documented gang members, including 44 juvenile documented gang members. Currently, the number of documented gang members is 3,729, including 29 documented juvenile gang members.

### **How the Commission Works**

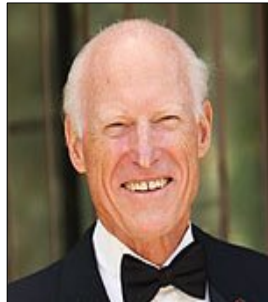
The Commission is constantly working to develop a strategic collaborative effort between various agencies that work with gang-related issues. The Commission makes policy recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on issues of gang prevention, intervention, diversion and high risk engagement methods, identifies local state and federal funding sources and adheres to best practice efforts.

The Commission advocates, formulates and recommends the adoption of policies and ordinances to the proper entities, as well as helps in the creation of guidelines.

### **Where and When the Commission Meets**

The Commission usually meets on the third Thursday of every other month (January, March, May, July, September and November). Locations, dates and times of the meetings are posted on the Commission's website at [www.sandiego.gov/gangcommission](http://www.sandiego.gov/gangcommission). The public is welcome and encouraged to attend.

## Commissioner Spotlight



*Commissioner Gary Lynn*

Commissioner Gary Lynn is a retired U.S. Navy Supply Corps Officer with a specialty in financial management. His civilian employment has included a variety of positions in the community as Director of Finance at United Way of San Diego County, Director of Finance at the American Lung Association of San Diego and Imperial County and most recently as Director of Finance at YWCA of San Diego County.

Lynn's varied community activities include acting as a board member of the Peace Resource Center, member of Veterans for Peace, member of the Finance Committee at the San Carlos United Methodist Church and member of the Staff Relations Committee for California-Pacific Conference of the United Methodist Church.

He is also a former member and chair of the Finance Committee of Alliance San Diego, and a current Finance Committee member of Casa Cornelia Law Center. He also served as a member of the City of San Diego Human Relations Commission.

Lynn earned his bachelor of science degree from San Diego State University and his master's in financial management from Naval Postgraduate School.

His connection with the Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention led him to also serve as a board member and treasurer of Rise

Up Industries. This program was designed to serve the needs of those whose lives have been impacted by gang involvement. They provide integrated gang prevention, gang intervention and post detention reentry services.

Rise Up Industries started its reentry program in February 2016. The post reentry is key in deterring recidivism. The assistance that former gang-involved individuals need to successfully reenter society is the main component of the 18 month program. As part of this program, the individuals receive work experience in the Machine Shop Social Enterprise.

Rise Up promotes long-term employment as essential for successful reentry into society. In the Machine Shop individuals are trained to be computer literate and receive hands on training on computer numerical control machine operations. This is a well-paying position in the trade and is also in high demand.

In addition to work experience and training they are given life skills training, which includes work ethic, tattoo removal, working in real world experiences, working under supervisors and learning appropriate behaviors in a work place setting. Rise Up also provides training in silk screening, embroidery and sales.

In addition to this, Rise Up is working to expand its training facility to triple the number of participants from four to 12 by the end of 2017.

Commissioner Gary Lynn's hard work and positive impact on our community are inspirational to the Commission and others.

## Subcommittee Highlights



*Youth Subcommittee and Youth Leaders*

Formed in September 2016, the Commission's Youth Subcommittee represents people ages 15 to 25 who have been impacted by gangs.

The Subcommittee is working on Recommendation #1 / Overarching Goals, which is part of the Commission's 2015-2020 Strategic Action Plan. The goals include advancing prevention efforts to increase safety, providing opportunities that give hope to young people, and supporting the implementation of services for high-end offenders.

Trauma-informed care, restorative justice practices and culturally appropriate services are the foundation for education and services implemented by the Strategic Action Plan.

Since its inception, the Youth Subcommittee has developed the infrastructure of a Train the Trainer model with youth that are well versed in their understanding of the unified sciences of Adverse Childhood Experiences (neurologically, biologically, epigenetics, toxic stress and resilience building). Subcommittee members are also being trained on the Cradle to Prison and Cradle to Career pipelines.

These youth leaders are creating "Calls to Action"

for solutions with policy and decision makers.

The Commission believes that the youth leaders' advocacy will influence California law makers. On July 11, three of the youth leaders flew to Sacramento for Policymaker Education Day to engage with legislators and legislative staff. Their request to policymakers included trauma-informed resilience building systems across different sectors. Information about the progress of this work will be included in future issues of this newsletter.



*Members of the Youth Subcommittee traveled to Sacramento in July.*

The Youth Subcommittee meets the second Saturday of each month. Agendas with locations and times are posted on the Commission's website at [www.sandiego.gov/gangcommision](http://www.sandiego.gov/gangcommision).

The Youth Subcommittee continues to recruit members who seek opportunities to recognize the power of their voice influence and impact system change. Come join us!

## Collaborative Partnerships: Life Skills Program



*Commissioner Adolfo Gonzales*

Commissioner Adolfo Gonzales, Chief of the San Diego County Probation Department, has embarked on a program to address gang intervention. In an effort to provide realistic opportunities for youth, a unique partnership was formed to target youth (ages 16 to 19) who are on juvenile probation, and who are out of custody but are at risk of returning to custody. This partnership includes the San Diego County Probation Department, the Juvenile Gang Intervention and intensive Supervision Unit, STAR/PAL and several other community groups. Together they formed the Life Skills Program.

As part of a nine-week curriculum, this program combines law enforcement, business professionals, educators and lessons in financial and emotional literacy to teach at risk youth the importance of building a solid foundation for life skills that are required to successfully transition into adulthood.

The focus of the program is to educate youth about the importance of choices, consequences, obstacles and opportunities. The goal is to empower youth by providing them the necessary tools in order to become productive, successful and confident adults.

The program teaches important life lessons such as interpersonal skills; effective communication;

job preparation, retention and advancement; exposure to continued educational and vocational/trade opportunities; public speaking opportunities; and financial and emotional literacy.



*Recent graduates of the Life Skills Program.*

The program curriculum includes:

- Development of a Life Plan;
- A college presentation and field trip to a college campus;
- A work force presentation,
- A healthy lifestyles presentation that includes basic first aid;
- Presentations on financial and emotional literacy;
- Driver's license preparation and a trip to the DMV to obtain a California identification card;
- Information about tattoo removal
- A presentation on juvenile delinquent records sealing.

The most recent class (above) graduated on April 11. This class was focused on youth residing in the Southeast and Mid-City areas of San Diego. The current Life Skills course started July 5 and will continue through Aug. 24. It focuses on youth residing in the County's southern region.

# Success Agents: Together We Succeed

Success Agents offers youth a brighter future by providing mentors, incentives and support services designed to enhance resilience, self-esteem, discipline and other attributes needed to realize one's dreams.

Success Agents debuted at Porter Elementary School in March. With the assistance of team members, teachers and the principal, 10 children in the fourth grade were thoughtfully identified as being at risk and would benefit from a steady dose of assistance and inspiration. Team members include:

- Amber Banning, STAR/PAL;
- Cindy Cipriani, Senior Management Counsel & Outreach Director, Office of U.S. Attorney;
- Marietta Geckos, Prevention and Reentry AUSA, Office of U.S. Attorney;
- Cynthia Hanna, San Diego Police Department;
- Verena Jordan, Porter Elementary Counselor;
- Rev. Ricky Laster, Executive Director, San Diego Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention;
- Lillie McMillan, Porter Elementary Principal;
- Ana Pina, STAR/PAL; and
- Shastity Urias, Smart on Crime Coordinator, Office of U.S. Attorney.

The multi-disciplinary team will follow these students from fourth through eighth grade, and during that time team members will enhance positive outcomes by:

- Providing guidance, literacy assistance, weekly homework help, a teacher mentor; and a law enforcement mentor;
- Motivating kids with fun activities and rewarding incentive programs;

- Offering monthly "Families Supporting Families" workshops to parents/guardians to encourage home-based literacy, enhance discipline and offer resources;
- Strengthening communication between school officials, law enforcement, community partners and families;
- Providing training for teachers and parents/guardians on discipline techniques, gang warning signs and prevention/guidance strategies;
- Developing each student's resilience, individual strengths, confidence, personal skills and conflict resolution abilities;
- Exposing students to new experiences and encouraging development of life goals through an engaging speaker series.



*Success Agents was recognized by the Juvenile Justice Commission in July at its Community Recognition Ceremony.*

In July, the Success Agents program was recognized by the San Diego County Juvenile Justice Commission at its fifth annual Community Recognition Ceremony. The Commission is proud of this accomplishment and looks forward to sharing more highlights about this promising program as it progresses.

# Summer Youth Programs

## Urban Corps

Urban Corps San Diego County hosted two back-to-back Job Fair/Enrollment Events on July 19 and 26 to recruit young adults ages 18 to 26 for placement in the Commission's paid job training and high school education program. The young adults took part in informative sessions that included on-the-spot-interviews and, in some cases, hiring of qualified candidates.

Urban Corp's latest semester started in August. For those who would like to learn more, Urban Corps offers custom presentations at schools or organizations. For more information, contact Sandra Lopez at 619-235-6884 or visit [www.urbancorpssd.org](http://www.urbancorpssd.org).

## Summer Movies in the Park

Free movie showings are held at many local parks throughout San Diego. Check your location and what's playing at the link below: <http://0352d49.netsolhost.com/wp-content/uploads/2017SummerMovieSchedule.pdf>

## Teen Programs at Recreation Centers

Teens are encouraged to take part in Teen Nights events at City recreation centers. There are a multitude of activities in a positive and safe environment. Some recreation centers also have pools and trips to Aquatica water park. Find the recreation center nearest you on the City's website: [www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/centers/recctr](http://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/centers/recctr)

## Volunteer Opportunities

For those students in need of fulfilling their high school requirement of community service hours, volunteering at the City of San Diego can be a great opportunity. The minimum age is 8 with an adult and 13 without an adult. Youth ages 13 and

older must have parent/legal guardian signed liability waiver prior to volunteering. Please bring a liability waiver with you to the event. The waiver, which can also be signed on day of the event, is available at:

[www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/park-and-recreation/pdf/volunteer/volunteerwaiver.pdf](http://www.sandiego.gov/sites/default/files/legacy/park-and-recreation/pdf/volunteer/volunteerwaiver.pdf)

Some volunteer opportunities accept court-referred individuals. This opportunity requires interview and fingerprinting before volunteers can be scheduled.

If you are interested in long-term volunteer opportunities, fill out the appropriate volunteer application and send it to the City of San Diego Park & Recreation Department Volunteer Office via email to [SDVolunteer@sandiego.gov](mailto:SDVolunteer@sandiego.gov). Be sure to include "Volunteer/Internships" in the subject line. The application is available at: [www.sandiego.gov/volunteer-program](http://www.sandiego.gov/volunteer-program)

## Employment Opportunities

The City of San Diego Park & Recreation Department offers both fulltime and part-time positions in recreation and aquatics. For more information, visit: [www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/general-info/employment](http://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/general-info/employment)



*Great work opportunities await at the City's Park and Recreation Department.*





*Team players wanted at your local recreation centers and pools!*

## **CONNECT 2 Careers**

In 2012, the City of San Diego awarded the San Diego Workforce Partnership funding to reinvigorate and re-imagine its summer employment program, formerly known as Hire-A-Youth. Now known as CONNECT2Careers (C2C), the summer employment program addresses San Diego's ongoing skills gap by providing meaningful work experiences that prepare young adults ages 16 to 24 for in-demand jobs. By aligning the career aspirations and educational backgrounds of young adults with businesses committed to developing our emerging workforce, C2C creates a positive experience for both employers and youth.

Why is C2C so important? In San Diego, there are an estimated 43,000 young adults between the ages of 16 to 24 who are not working or not in school. C2C represents a solution to reducing the youth unemployment rate, which is especially important for socially and economically

disadvantaged youth who may not have the networks or support systems to connect them to employment opportunities. By participating in C2C work-readiness workshops, job fairs and hiring events, youth will have an opportunity to acquire and/or strengthen essential (soft) skills, making them far better prepared when they enter the workforce.



*Commissioner Peter Callstrom, President of Workforce Partnership*

Thanks to an increased commitment from the City and County, C2C successfully placed 1,035 young adults in jobs and internships in 2016.

C2C aligns career aspirations and educational background with community-minded businesses to create paid work experiences aimed at preparing youth for future careers.

C2C offers:

- Work-readiness training;
- Connections between your interests and employers looking to hire;
- Career insights and skill-building;
- Staff guidance and support throughout your experience;
- Paid work.

To participate in C2C's program, applicants must live in San Diego County and be between ages 16 to 24 years. There is no promise of employment by completing a C2C application. Employment is dependent upon available jobs and employers' selections.

## Calendar of Events

### August

- Aug. 19 – Passport to Life Career and Education Expo, <http://ptlsandiego.com/passport-to-life/>

### September

- Sept. 9 – San Diego Clean Slate Clinic, [www.sd-csc.org](http://www.sd-csc.org)
- Sept. 21 – Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention meeting, [www.sandiego.gov/gangcommission](http://www.sandiego.gov/gangcommission)

### October

- Oct. 7 – San Diego Clean Slate Clinic, [www.sd-csc.org](http://www.sd-csc.org)

### November

- Nov. 1 – Combined meeting with Public Safety & Livable Neighborhoods Council Committee and Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention meeting, [www.sandiego.gov/gangcommission](http://www.sandiego.gov/gangcommission)
- Nov. 4 – San Diego Clean Slate Clinic, [www.sd-csc.org](http://www.sd-csc.org)

## Meet Our Commissioners



[Adolfo Gonzales](#)



[Alana Robinson](#)



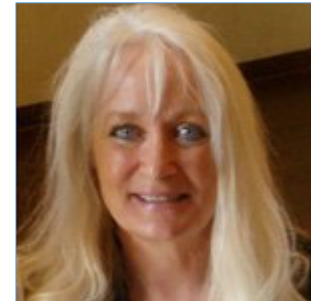
[Archie Robinson](#)



[Summer Stephan](#)



[Cindy Marten](#)



[Dana Brown](#)



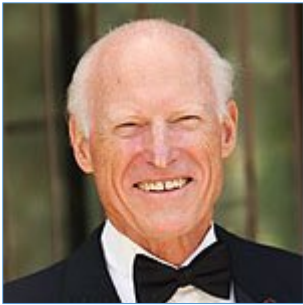
[Donald Johnson](#)



[Elizabeth Bustos](#)



[Gary Gallegos](#)



[Gary Lynn](#)



[Genevieve Jones-Wright](#)



[Joyce Singer Abrams](#)



[Mohamed Ahmed](#)



[Peter Callstrom](#)



[Ray King](#)



[Rodney G. Hood](#)



[Shelley Zimmerman](#)



[William Gore](#)