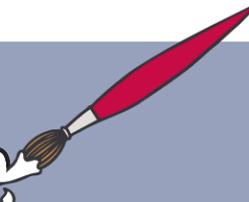Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board's Executive Institute

Fishing in a Shallow Pool: Police Recruitment

Illinois Law Enforcement Executive Institute
Western Illinois University
1 University Circle
Macomb, IL 61455

Phone: (309) 298-2266
Fax: (309) 298-2215

www.ptb.state.il.us/exec/

White Paper

Fishing in a Shallow Pool: Statewide Summit on Issues Related to Police Recruitment

Thomas J. Jurkanin, PhD
Robert J. Fischer, PhD
Vladimir A. Sergevnin, PhD

Introduction
This report is the result of an informal multi-agency exchange of ideas and opinions among law enforcement executives and academics from around the State of Illinois in an effort to explore and help improve law enforcement recruitment practices. It also reflects a dynamic discussion among law enforcement officers and representatives of local governments and police unions.

Although it has been the experience of many agencies that the process of recruiting and hiring new officers presents an array of challenges, it is obvious that there are solutions. We hope that

this report serves as a guide for police agencies as they look for solutions to current recruiting problems. The report contains both theoretical and practical information for police recruitment. Best practices are discussed in a later section of this report.

Scope of the Problem
The problem of police recruitment has been widely covered by the media. Until recently, current police administrators and recruiters have never had a problem attracting large numbers of candidates. Hoover (2001) lists four core questions in contemplating factors affecting police recruitment:

- Is it the economy?

- Is it the occupation's prestige?

- Is it working conditions, the job itself?

- Are we our own worst enemy?

The Economy
Dr. Hoover concludes that it is all four factors but particularly the economy. The other three issues are complicated by the first. In times of plenty, people will not tolerate the conditions that they will in times of need. Government employment, in this case, law enforcement, offers job security. In good economic times, other jobs in the private sector might offer more attractive salaries.
His argument is sound as unemployment is at a 30-year low. The economy appears to be healthy despite the ups and downs of the stock market.

Occupational Prestige
Dr. Hoover also presents a case for a career that has been highly regarded and honored, but also one that many people would not choose as a career. He notes that on a survey of 100 prevalent occupations, citizens consistently rank law enforcement in the bottom half of occupations. In addition, recent media coverage of law enforcement has included the infamous Rodney King incident, the Amadou Diallo case from New York, and the New Jersey issue of racial profiling, to name only a few of the high profile incidents. This type of press coverage has done little to enhance the prestige of the profession.

Working Conditions
While police work offers job stability, it has a "seedy" side. Many young police recruits suffer cultural shock when first immersed in the world of police work that includes crime; homicide; drunks; child abuse; and homeless, battered, and broken people. The shock is real. Police officers operate in society's alleys and are constantly exposed to the worst of human behavior.

The police environment has not changed dramatically over the past few decades. Police agencies are viewed as conservative and traditional and are not proactive in changing the working environment. The 24/7/365 nature of the job also impacts upon one's decision to apply for a police position. Police officers must be on duty, regardless of the day or time. Police must work on Christmas, New Year's Day, and the Fourth of July. Weekend and holiday work and rotating shifts are an expectation. Shifts don't respect personal and family schedules, and officers often miss out on family fun and responsibilities. The police occupation does not look like a modern 21st century job.

Internal conditions also play a role in making the profession difficult. Recent polls indicate that police officers' number-one concern in the workplace is management support. Officers report that they have little faith that their supervisors will support them when political pressure is a factor in the decisionmaking process. Officers are often put on suspension with pay pending the outcome of investigations of complaints, whether valid or not.

Are We Our Own Worst Enemy?
While the preceding discussion has focused on issues over which law enforcement officials have only minimal control, there are areas in the recruiting process where law enforcement can make a substantial change. Currently, the hiring process is often frustrating, time intensive, and demeaning to applicants. According to a recent ILETSB report (Taylor, 2001), the average amount of time involved in the application to hiring is 20 weeks. In some cases, Taylor reported that the process takes up to two years. While police agencies should not make it easier to qualify for a police position, it is possible to make the process less time consuming, cumbersome, and frustrating. In a 2001 report, Durkin indicated that recent law enforcement graduates from the Law Enforcement and Justice Administration program at Western Illinois University, believe that the testing process is inconvenient and arbitrary.

Five Conundrums
Having presented the four core questions, Hoover sets out five conundrums for police administrators as they strive to find solutions to the problem.

1. To increase the occupation's prestige, we will have to raise standards, but raising standards impedes recruitment even more.

2. Police agencies should reflect the racial, gender, and ethnic composition of the communities they serve, but many selection standards have disparate impact upon ethnic minorities.

3. Preventing and ferreting out abusive police practices requires aggressive internal monitoring, but aggressive internal monitoring is a primary negative job characteristic.

4. Family friendly policies are needed to attract and retain quality personnel, particularly women, but family friendly policies wreak havoc with responsive patrol deployment and scheduling.

5. Real change can only occur by changing the profession, but the profession consists of thousands of autonomous agencies employing 1 to 35,000 officers in special districts, villages, cities, counties, states, and federal agencies.

The Search for Solutions
The following pages offer suggestions and possible solutions to some of these questions. The summit participants felt that agencies, over time, can change the relative prestige of the profession and some of the internal issues that impact career choice. Police agencies can do a better job of reaching groups that they have not attracted in the past and do a better job with their traditional job markets. Agencies using new methods of recruitment can make police applicants feel more welcome at the point of job inquiry and throughout the process.

As Hoover (2001) concluded, "To do these things, however, many agencies will have to change their mindset. Today's generation of young people is not going to respond to an attitude of 'It's a privilege to work here.' Their skills are being sought by other organizations. . . . It is unreasonable to expect of them that they will respond to platitudes about life-long loyalty to an organization. From their worldview, organizations are not loyal to their employees, so why should the reverse be true" (p. 5).

The world of the 21st century is different. Technology is dominant. To attract the best and brightest, police agencies need to consider techniques used by competitive private corporations.

Problems in Traditional Recruitment Practices
Increasingly, the issue of police recruitment has become a concern for local law enforcement agencies nationwide. The labor pool for police agencies appears to be shrinking. For example, over 31,000 applicants signed up to take the New York City Police recruiting test in 1996. Three years later, the number of applicants had dropped to 14,600 (Brandon, 2000, p. 37). Chicago has a similar issue. In 1991, 32,000 individuals took the police examination. By 1999, that number had declined to only 5,000 (Main, 2000). In Maricopa County, Arizona, the number declined from 1,454 in 1996 to 791 in 1998 (Swope, 1999, 32-34). And, again, in Illinois the Northwestern Municipal Consortium representing eight Chicago suburban communities reported that their number declined from 1,465 in 1997 to only 600 in 2000 (Gausselin, 2001).

Many other agencies are also discovering that demographic and economic changes have resulted in a dwindling pool of qualified candidates. In many instances, applicant pools are down over 50% from a few years ago.

Why are potential candidates for employment not attracted to policing? The following seven possible reasons surfaced during the summit:

1. Economy

   - Low entry-level salaries for police officers are not competitive with other jobs.

   - Access to disadvantaged and minority candidates is limited by traditional recruiting methods.

   - Budgets for recruiting and advertising are usually restricted.

2. Marketing

   - Police departments don't market themselves well.

   - Police departments are competing against each other.

   - Traditional law enforcement image—male-oriented, a job that requires only physical strength, discrimination images, racial profiling, brutality, corruption, etc.

3. The Hiring Process

- The process is too complicated and too long.

- Residency requirements limit the number of eligible candidates.

- Educational requirements are too high or too low.

- Applications are not standardized.

- Each agency has a repetitive application process.

- Upper age restrictions (i.e., 34) are not reasonable in today's world.

- There tends to be an inherently demeaning selection process.

- Testing is a long and frustrating process; private sector does not test employees so extensively (e.g., arbitrary written test, physical agility testing, drug testing, psychological testing, background checks).

4. High Turnover (This is especially true in small departments, which lose officers to larger agencies.)

5. Low Retention Rates of Quality Applicants

6. Internal and Social Environment

- Police work is not healthy. The internal environment is stressful.

- There is a risk of civil liability and baseless accusations.

- Typically, there is an intrusion of the department into the officer's personal life.

- There is a lack of good mentors in the police department.

- Career development is not satisfactory.

- Lower class subculture—traditionally, police have come from lower levels of the middle class, but work with the lower class.

- Working hours are not conducive to good family relations.

- There is a low level of interaction with professional colleagues.

- The profession may cause the officer to feel isolated.

- Humiliation can be a part of the job.

- Disciplinary procedures are too strict.

7. Job Design

  - Demands of the job are different from expectations.

Police professionals believe that the biggest factor influencing candidate dropout is the lack of awareness of the real job task requirements prior to testing procedures.

External Factors Impacting Police Recruitment
While internal variables certainly play a role in retaining qualified applicants, external factors may have a greater impact on attracting and maintaining a qualified pool of police applicants. Among these external factors, as identified by the summit participants, are the following:

- Candidates may be unable to pass written entrance examinations.

- Reading comprehension, vocabulary, and writing skills are the most difficult areas of the police examination (Brandon, 2000).

- Some representatives from ethnic minority groups are disadvantaged during the testing process because English is a second language.

- There is a lack of trust in police.

- We are losing applicants in the 18- to 21-year age category due to increased problems with drugs and other criminal behaviors.

- There is increased competition from the private sector and military.

- Local government coordination of the hiring process is less than desirable. Commission personnel are often from the civilian community. They do not understand the needs of police agencies.

- There is little support for recruitment from the community.

- In some communities, the applicant pool is down as much as 80% since 1990

- The applicant pool that does exist may be of poor quality

- In 2000, there was a low unemployment rate of 4.3% for the State of Illinois.

It is interesting that for the most part, summit participants focused on internal problems rather than external ones. Since the summit attendees focused on internal issues, it is worth considering how police departments traditionally recruit.

The Traditional Recruitment Model
How do police departments identify and recruit the best possible candidates? Traditional recruitment models focus on attracting the largest possible pool of candidates from which a few

candidates are eventually selected. The major concern of most departments is that the pool of candidates is shrinking. This "funnel" process of hiring has been so engrained in the police tradition, that administrators do not see the fallacy in their concern about falling numbers of applicants. In the funnel process, large numbers of applicants are screened with many applicants being eliminated due to any variety of factors. Among these are the following:

- Failure on the written examination

- Failure on the physical agility test

- Failure of a physical examination

- Failure of a psychological examination

- Failure of a lie detection test

- Failure of a drug test

- Failure of a background check

- Poor performance in an interview process

This winnowing process is difficult to manage and is expensive. Accepting large numbers of applicants translates into high testing costs. Taking a large number of applicants also requires that police agencies involve themselves in a complex logistical planning process to assure a fair and accessible testing outcome. The irony of the entire process is that there is still no guarantee that the final candidates will in fact be the best applicants.

Traditional Recruitment Techniques
In the tried and true tradition, most police departments continue to believe that the best method of reaching potential applicants is through advertisement in newspapers and law enforcement publications. According to a study conducted by the Los Angeles Police Department, this is no longer the case. According to this study, police officers, relatives, and friends are the best sources for recruiting. This reflects the belief that officers and their associates know the most about the job and can relate realistically to potential candidates (Bennett & Hess, 1996).

Other traditional methods being used by police agencies include the following:

- Brochures

- Advertisements on television or radio programs

- Mass mailings, faxes, and e-mails

- Focus on special interest groups such as neighborhoods, social groups, political groups, and minority groups

- Public service announcements on television and radio

- Participation in college career fairs

- Requests to college placement offices

- Referrals from current employees (Roberg & Kuykendall, 1997)

These methods are generally anonymous and distant. Current thought is that the recruitment must be personal and face-to-face.

Labor Market Trends in 2001
The industrial revolution brought about many changes in the labor/management mix. Organizations of this early era became more "paternalistic," taking care of their employees by providing such benefits as health insurance, retirement pensions; organizing social functions and activities; and providing other rewards for company loyalty, such as bonuses, watches, plaques, and dinners. Workers strongly believed that hard work and loyalty would be exchanged for promotions and job security (Pulley, 1997).

Private businesses, ever concerned with profit and a new technological revolution that values brains over brawn, have shattered these beliefs. During the 1980s and 1990s, private industry began terminating employees who were approaching retirement age rather than face the prospect of incurring retirement costs. Attitudes of employers and employees alike are changing. Hard work and loyalty are not the predominate interests of new generation employees (Generation X and Millennial) for a variety of reasons.

Much has been written about Generation X employees (born between the mid-1960s and the late 1970s). Of importance in this discussion is recognition that computers, music, movies, mass media, and television have influenced expectations. As discussed in the literature, they are generally self-reliant, informal, skeptical, independent, and casual in their approach to authority. Individuals in this generation do not expect to have a lifetime career and prefer jobs that are stimulating, challenging, and flexible. They do not like strict work environments.

While there has been less written of the Millennial or Net Generation (born between 1977 and 1997), we know that this cohort has been influenced by technology, especially computers. They know more about technology than their parents and bosses. They expect a high level of technological resources and support in the workplace. Some researchers have characterized this group as endlessly independent and focused on investigation (Green, 2000).

To complicate the changing demographics and associated attitudes of the new labor market is a labor market which is very dynamic. Job turnover rates are at an all-time high. According to the 2000-2001 edition of the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, the labor market of the future will become increasingly diverse and older. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported the following:

- The number of workers age 25-34 is expected to drop nine percent between 1996 and 2006.

- The number of workers 46-65 will rise 40%.

- By 2020, one in six Americans will be 65 or older, compared to one in eight today (Challenger, 2000).

- Jobs will require higher levels of education.

- An alarming number of young people will not be qualified for new jobs because they don't have the needed education or skills.

- Women and minorities will account for the largest proportion of the workforce.

- The number of women earning four-year college degrees surged 44% over the last two decades to 56% of all college graduates in 1999.

- The number of men earning four-year degrees fell six percent between 1993 to 1999.

- The average length of time an employee stays on the job will continue to decline.

- The employee market is shifting to self-employment, free agency, and temporary work (Green, 2000).

Other trends and predictions include the following:

- According to the American Society for Training and Development (1998), 99% of workers surveyed want more training from their supervisors.

- Employers will turn to "new employee benefit offers" that will provide for balance between office and personal time—telecommuting, alternative working hours, compressed weekends, flex time, shorter work weeks.

- The average person is likely to make more than ten job changes and five career changes in a lifetime.

Job seekers are moving into an employees' market. The total number of jobs will increase rapidly. The most rapid area of expansion will be in the service industry, which includes law enforcement. For young perspective employees, there will be more choice and variety in the labor market. It is anticipated that a career in law enforcement, as viewed from a traditional point of view, will become less attractive. Police work is considered "old fashioned," too restrictive, and conservative. Skills gained for police work are not transportable to other job markets. In addition, the times when our youth dreamed of military and paramilitary careers are over.

As Generation Xers began entering the labor market, they logically were in line to replace Baby Boomers; however, there are currently 78 million Boomers and only 58 million Xers. Complicating this already large disparity is another disturbing trend. In 1970, two of 1,000 adults were in prison or jail. By 1998, the number had increased to nine in 1,000 (Katz & Drueger, 1999). In terms of law enforcement careers, this means that there are less potential candidates because of criminal background problems. For example, in 1999 Detroit Police Department's recruiting drive yielded 287 viable candidates out of 1,200 applicants. The top disqualifier was prior conviction (Howard, O'Donnell, & Stevenson, 1999).

Labor Market Trends in Law Enforcement
According to the 2000-2001 edition of the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, employment of police officers and detectives is expected to increase 21 to 35% through 2008. A more security-conscious

society and concern about drug-related crimes should contribute to the increasing demand for police services. At the local and state levels, growth is likely to continue as long as public safety is a predominate issue. Some of the positive growth may be tempered by continuing budgetary constraints of local government. Still, as the hiring frenzy that came with federal dollars in the late 1960s and early 1970s, a large cadre of police officers will retire and will need to be replaced.

Factors Influencing Individuals in the Selection of a Law Enforcement Career
The following factors, influencing the selection of law enforcement as a job choice, listed from most frequently mentioned to least frequently mentioned were reported by Slater and Reiser in a 1988 study:

- Job variety (69.4%)

- High level of responsibility (51.6%)

- Public service (49%)

- Adventure (47.1%)

- Security (43.3%)

- Pay (43.3%)

- Benefits (35%)

- Advancement (32.5%)

- Retirement benefits (22.3%)

- Prestige (15.3%)

Other authors believe that the two main factors that play a key role in attracting individuals to law enforcement are: (1) the ability to help others and (2) a desire to serve the community (Campbell, 2000).

The perception of many police departments is that "we are not doing enough," or "we are doing something wrong." The reality is simple—for decades, police departments have not changed the way that they recruit. Today's prospective recruit looks at the job market differently than his or her parents did. Tried and true methods of the past may not be of value in recruiting today's candidate pool. Police departments have to think "outside the box" and beyond the traditional methods of recruiting.

New Models and Strategies for the 21st Century

A Smaller But Better Qualified Pool
Rather than continue the costly process of "funneling" candidates to find the best, departments should develop new models that target and nurture those candidates who possess identified desirable characteristics. The overall paradigm shift should be from taking on all applicants leftover

10

from private sector recruiting, to cultivating and breeding a new generation of candidates who are oriented toward a career in police work.

Traditional Recruitment: "Gathering from Social Fields"	Innovative Recruitment: "Cultivating and Breeding New Seeds"
Reactive – to recruit those who are responding	Proactive – cultivating and breeding candidates in many social groups by different strategies; at elementary, secondary, and high school levels to develop programs which will help young students to identify at early stages their own professional orientation toward criminal justice (Those graduating with excellence from "youth police academies" will receive priority in entering a police career.)
Passive – to wait for those who will apply	Aggressive – direct personal contact with potential candidates; active search for them. To meet those who may apply, or whom we'll convince to apply; to "domesticate," from early ages, kids who see themselves in a police career
General and formal requirements for targeting young candidates	Modifying applicant requirements; specific requirements to target potential groups from all social strata, gender, and age
Close, formal, and anonymous system of information	Open (Internet), personal (professional recruiters), informal system of information
Low level of preservice training	High level of preservice training, cultivating criminal justice programs in colleges and universities in the direction of "education-training" continuum; to develop analog of criminal justice courses/programs in secondary and high schools
Decentralized, department-specific recruitment efforts and procedures	Centralized, standardized procedures, recruitment centers (or units); regional or statewide consortiums, multigovernmental and departmental budgeting
No professional orientation in the schools and families	Professional orientation in the secondary and high schools; utilizing D.A.R.E. programs for the police department benefit; involving parents in "citizens police academies" to develop attractive and desirable image of the PD in families
Orientation to a lifetime career	Orientation to lifetime career in criminal justice sector of the society in general and short-term career in the law enforcement agencies; to sponsor university education among police officers with the purpose of helping them to climb into better social strata. Don't make them feel "handcuffed" with police officer career. Promote lateral movement.

Traditional Recruitment: "Gathering from Social Fields"	Innovative Recruitment: "Cultivating and Breeding New Seeds"
Full-time job orientation	Full-time plus (in or out law enforcement agency)/part-time (in or out law enforcement agency) job orientation; To stimulate outside PD employment through free of charge training (e.g., computer training)
Orientation on occupational career	Orientation on professional career in criminal justice system in general. Law enforcement career as "one of the steps" in lifetime "climb"
Few steps in career; rare and slow promotions	Many steps in career; to develop more structural steps and positions in the police agencies; system of quick promotions and alternative work assignment.
Training	Training and education—Encourage lifelong career advancement.
Oriented in "get rid of" those who do not fit	Oriented in finding and keeping the best
No plan	Develop both short- and long-term recruiting plans

New Strategies—Building Bridges with the Government

Police agencies need to initiate a police recruitment information campaign with local and state government. This campaign needs to bring attention to the recruitment problem with emphasis on the changes that law enforcement proposes. Such a campaign should include the publication of brochures, articles, posters, public service announcements, and reports. A subcommittee of the Summit participants recommended a statewide Police Recruitment Committee composed of law enforcement and government representatives including the following:

- Criminal justice dignitaries and practitioners

- Recruiters from various departments

- Veteran law enforcement officers

- Law enforcement executives

- Private citizens

- Representatives from hiring bodies

Other strategies include the following:
- Radio and television promotions

- Use of the World Wide Web for advertising

- Addressing the issue of recruiting problems through forums and focus groups

- Forming community partnerships with . . .

  - Youth groups

  - Minority representatives

  - Civil groups

  - Church groups

  - Political allies

- Encouraging police officers to teach at local colleges and universities (McKeever & Kranda, 2000).

- Using D.A.R.E. and school resource officers to launch a long-term recruitment ideology focused on school children

- Encouraging law enforcement executives to mention new recruiting ideologies whenever appropriate while giving public presentations

- Selling the law enforcement image

- Establishing Mobile, Selection and Recruiting and Training Units (MSRTUs)

- Recruiting and training recruiters

- Developing individual police department marketing-recruitment plans

- Developing social programs for police departments

- Streamlining application and employment processes

- Sponsoring higher education programs for future police officers

- Developing specific programs to recruit women and minorities

- Sponsoring departmental open houses and/or police citizen academies

- Internships

- Job fairs

- Cadet programs

- Recruiting through high schools

- Implementing Boy Scout Explorer programs in law enforcement through the high schools

- Implementing statewide testing with a central clearinghouse

- Providing incentives for veteran police officers to get involved in recruiting

- Providing incentives for joining a particular type of agency in need

- Developing special programs targeted toward youth

- Incentives for new recruits

  - Signing bonus

  - Tuition reimbursement

  - Child-care

  - Health club membership

  - Flex benefit packages

- Flex hours

- Job variety

- Specialized training

- Paid continuing education

The Importance of Good Recruiters
Although traditional advertisements and other recruiting tools bring perspective police officers to the department's attention, "individual attention and treatment" has proven to yield greater numbers in retention than impersonal processing of paperwork. A good look at military recruiting strategies should serve as an example for police agencies. Recruiters need to be bright, articulate, and energetic. Recruiters should reflect the type of applicant desired. Female and minority recruiters should be involved in the recruitment of these underrepresented groups. Recruiters should be well-educated and well-informed of departmental goals and objectives. They need to be able to sell your department. Incentives offered by the department, such as specialized training, diversified job choices, and advancement opportunities, need to be stressed. What makes your community and department different or better than others?
While professional recruiters are desirable, every department should recognize that each employee is a potential advertisement for the agency. Officers who do not represent the agency well may in fact discourage police applicants. On the other hand, the professional officer who takes pride in his or her livelihood, can be a very effective recruiting tool.

Strategies for Recruiting Women and Minorities
Summit participants were quick to point out that the terms "women" and "minorities" are not mutually exclusive. Recruiters should be actively recruiting all types of people; however, recruiters report that it is difficult to attract women or racial/ethnic minorities despite their "best efforts." The group went on to identify some possible reasons for this difficulty:

- Recruitment is not being conducted in the right places.

- The department may not be a good "fit."

- The "comfort level" necessary for successful recruitment may be missing.

Summit participants suggested that the right places to recruit minorities and women are in high schools and colleges (including traditionally minority and women's colleges). Use of the Internet and publications aimed at women and minorities also should be targeted. Cooperative ventures with organizations such as NOBLE, NAWLE, and NALEE are encouraged.

Summit participants also noted that even with the best recruiting efforts, the department needs to work for a "good fit." This factor also ties to the third issue—"comfort level." Communities that have not traditionally hired protected classes of people may find it difficult to encourage that one, first person to accept a position, and even if a minority is hired, the individual may not feel comfortable. Issues such as family comfort levels and feelings of safety are important to consider. Often the issue comes down to a simple question, "If you want me so badly, why do I not feel welcome?"

Solutions that might potentially alleviate these problems were also discussed. Police agencies must recognize and work with community resources. These resources may include churches, civic associations, women's groups, and ethnic associations. Targeting youth through programs at high schools that may include "career academies" and cadet programs will pay dividends.

In recognizing the problem of testing failures, summit participants suggested that "pre-test" programs be considered. These programs would help candidates by familiarizing them with testing procedures that may be unknown to them.

Finally, it was noted that police agencies *must* address negative images and perceptions created by allegations of racial profiling and biased enforcement. The only effective way of accomplishing this is to eliminate discriminatory practices both within the agency and in dealings with the public. Police recruiters should deal with traditional stereotypes and communicate openly about the department's intent in addressing these issues. In order to convince women and minorities to apply for police positions, recruiters must be able to ensure fairness in employment and enforcement practices.

The following points summarize much of the above and identify additional points for consideration by law enforcement executives and city policymakers:

- Conduct a self-assessment of your organization's climate (i.e., is it welcoming, supportive, and encouraging to employees who are different?).

- Establish personal and professional relationships with community-based organizations, ministerial alliances, neighborhood groups, churches, boys clubs, YWCA, etc.

- Solicit assistance from organizations such as Hispanic Illinois State Law Enforcement Association (HISLEA), National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE), Asian American Law Enforcement Association (AALEA), Association of Black Law Enforcement Officers (ABLE), National Association of Women Law Enforcement Officers (NAWLE), etc.

- "Hot Link" (your agency's website) to historically and predominantly black colleges and universities.

- Make recruitment visits to minority student centers at colleges and universities.

- Establish and/or diversify explorer posts.

- Sponsor career academies and/or career orientation at your police department.

- Utilize women and minority officers who are alumna of high schools, colleges, and universities to return to their alma mater (in uniform) to tell first hand about their career.

Some Examples of Best Practices
While a number of agencies have moved away from traditional recruiting and testing techniques, only a few will be discussed in this brief overview. The Rockford Police Department has developed a proactive recruiting process. They have established a single point of contact. Simple recruiting brochures clearly explain the Rockford recruitment process, and all tests (written and

physical) are conducted in a single day. Rockford has also developed ties with the community's ministerial alliance in an effort to attract more minority candidates.

Other communities like Palatine and Schaumburg are encouraging their officers to get involved in recruiting by offering a recruiting bonus of $500. Some communities have recognized that recruiting advertisements must reach 21st century standards and have made extensive use of the Internet. Elgin reports that as many as 15% of their applicants are now coming from their website. According to the Taylor study, 30% of Illinois departments surveyed are now using the Internet in some fashion. Elgin has also experimented successfully with the use of an "open house" during holiday seasons when college students are home. Waukegan Police Department utilizes its successful D.A.R.E. program to send recruiting materials home to parents. In addition, Waukegan has been successful in promoting its department through the use of on-campus testing of college students. Other agencies participate in university law enforcement/criminal justice internship programs that allow the student and the department an opportunity to get to know each other. The Springfield Police Department has developed a very successful Explorer Post, exposing young people to the police culture in their teen years. In addition, Springfield has also developed an outreach program to the military and attends their job fairs. Other initiatives in Springfield worth mentioning include the following:

- Lateral entry

- No residency requirement

- A public safety academy in the high school for juniors and seniors

- Continuous entry

- Mortgage assistance

The Illinois State Police is sending officers back to their alma maters to do onsite recruiting and testing. They have developed a CD for distribution, promoting the Illinois State Police organization. The State Police also makes good use of their own officers working with internal associations to attract qualified minority applicants. The agency has also developed an applicant follow-up process wherein field recruiters personally contact applicants.

Another initiative that has had some success in suburban areas is the recruitment consortium. Two consortium groups were represented at the summit: (1) Southwest Illinois Consortium and (2) the Northwestern Consortium. The consortium allows applicants to complete one application and testing process for employment in a number of communities. The Southwest Consortium represent five communities while the Northwestern Consortium represents 30 communities.

NOBLE was also a major contributor to the summit, presenting ideas concerning the recruitment of minorities. NOBLE representatives specifically discussed the importance of minority career fairs; co-op programs; and good, honest communication.

ILETSB's Current Activities and Possible Future Roles

ILETSB was encouraged by Summit participants to take an active leadership role in addressing statewide recruiting issues. ILETSB has already done so in the establishment of two new programs. The first is the Illinois Police Internship Program. The second is the Illinois Police Corps Project. The Internship Program allows qualified citizens to attend Basic Police Training at any of the participating Board Certified Basic Training Academies. The individuals are responsible for the costs associated with screening and testing and course tuition costs. The Police Corps is a federally funded program that provides scholarships to qualified individuals interested in pursuing a career in law enforcement. The Police Corps Academy is much longer than the traditional basic academies, 24 weeks compared to the required 10 weeks. All recruits are required to complete a bachelor's degree as well as the 24-week academy. These recruits must commit to four years of service with an Illinois police agency when they graduate.

While both initiatives are established, both are relatively new. The Police Corps program is only in its second year; however, the Corps currently has 33 active recruits. Fourteen will report for employment to Illinois police agencies in August 2001. The Internship program now in its third year has had limited response. There are few individuals who have chosen to pay their own way through an academy, when they can get hired in today's employee's market and have the hiring agency not only pay for the academy experience, but also pay their salary while in study. Options of shifting the costs back to the police agencies are being considered. In a recent ILETSB survey, over 33% of law enforcement executives indicated that they would be willing to support basic training costs for recruits if they could avoid the higher costs of paying salaries, benefits, and costs for officer replacements while in training (Taylor, 2001).

The Summit participants also encouraged ILETSB to consider the establishment of a statewide job database. Included in this concept was a belief that ILETSB should establish certain minimum standards, a standardized general application form, and standardized application testing. Dr. Steve Stanard demonstrated a model of such a computer-based system. The model included the ability to complete a standard application online as well as links to departments utilizing the state's job database.

Support for such a "universal certified eligibility list" also surfaced in a 2001 survey conducted by Kenneth Durkin. Durkin surveyed 235 recent graduates of Western Illinois University's Department of Law Enforcement and Justice Administration who had completed internships with a law enforcement agency. Fifty-eight percent of the respondents believed that the current police application process would be better served by implementing a universal hiring list, indicating that the applicant had completed a police written examination, POWER test, psychological examination, and polygraph test. Eighty percent felt that individual agencies should complete their own background checks of candidates. Sixty-eight percent reported that they supported a standardized State of Illinois police eligibility-hiring list.

The breakout panel on streamlining the employment process suggested the following ideas:

• Standardized application – one page submitted to ILETSB, available on the Internet

• Standardized written test – developed and maintained by ILETSB

- POWER test – conducted by ILETSB through their Mobile Training Units or at colleges and universities

- Hiring standards established statewide

- Establishment of a state-supported scholarship program to pay for testing and training of police interns

Legislative changes would be necessary to accommodate many of these proposals.

Conclusions
Rapid changes in demographics, the labor market, and technology have required police agencies to look at new methods of recruiting police officers. Old methods will no longer suffice. New programs and methods are required. As Thomas Repetto, President of the New York City Crime Commission said, "Rather than reducing standards marginally, the right direction is to try to attract more college graduates by selling policing as a human services occupation" (Purnick, 2000, p. B1). Law enforcement departments must pay officers what they are worth. Salaries must be competitive with other jobs. With a statewide average of $25,000, there is certainly much room for improvement. ILETSB, working in concert with local government and law enforcement agencies, will continue to seek new strategies and initiatives for recruiting and retaining quality personnel to serve in law enforcement. The summit deliberations yielded many possibilities for improvement. It is imperative that the law enforcement communities take the necessary steps to continue to develop and refine recruitment strategies contained herein. Working together, we can continue to cultivate professionalism, loyalty, and effective service delivery in policing.

Bibliography

Bennett, W. W., & Hess, K. M. (1996). *Management and supervision in law enforcement* (2nd ed.). Minneapolis: West Publishing.

Brandon, H. (2000, November). Surfing for success: Using the web to improve recruitment. *Police Chief, 67* (11), 37-41.

Campbell, D. (2000, November 30). Survey. *Law Enforcement News, 26* (544), 1-2.

Challenger, J. S. (2000, September). Workplace trends for the 21st century. *USA Today*, p. 6.

Charrier, K. (2000, December). Marketing strategies for attracting and retaining Generation X police officers, *Police Chief, 67* (12), 45-51.

Durkin, K. (2001, Spring). *LEJA alumni and senior students: Questionnaire on the police application process*. A paper presented at the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board's Statewide Summit on Police Recruitment.

Gausselin, R. (2001, April). *Shortage of police candidates in the United States: Causes and solutions* (Executive Management Series).

Green, M. E. (2000, Winter). Beware and prepare: The government workforce of the future. *Public Personnel Management, 29* (4), 436.

Hoover, L. (2001, Spring). *Police recruitment: Core issues*. A paper presented at the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board's Statewide Summit on Police Recruitment.

Howard, L., O'Donnell, P., & Stevenson, S. (1999, May 3). Cop out: The thinning blue line. *Newsweek, 133* (18), 8.

Katz, L. F., & Krueger, A. B. (1999). The high-pressure U.S. labor market of the 1990s. *Brookings Papers on Economic Activity, 1*.

Main, F. (2000, March 8). *Chicago Sun Times*.

McKeever, J., & Kranda, A. (2000, Summer). Recruitment and retention of qualified police personnel: A best practices guide. *Big Ideas for Smaller Police Departments, 1* (1).

Pulley, M. L. (1997). *Losing your job—Reclaiming your soul*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. p. 16.

Purnick, J. (2000, October 5). Rethinking police department recruitment. *New York Times*.

Roberg, R. R., & Kuykendall, J. (1997). *Police management*. Los Angeles: Roxbury Publishing.

Slater, H., & Reiser, M. (1998, September). A comparative study of factors influencing police recruitment. *Journal of Police Science and Administration*, 170.

Swope, C. (1999, November). The short blue line. *Governing*, 32-34.

Taylor, W. (2001). *Illinois law enforcement recruiting issues*. Macomb: Illinois Law Enforcement Executive Institute.

Panel Participants

Identifying Roadblocks to Effective Police Recruitment

Jeff Doherty	Carbondale City Manager
George Koertge	Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police
John Harris	Springfield Police Department
John Lange	Effingham Police Department
Robert Means	Illinois Board of Sheriffs' Merit Commission
Don Devine	Illinois Fire and Police Commissioners Association
John Sidbeck	Illinois Fire and Police Commissioners Association
Mark Donahue	Illinois Fraternal Order of Police
Ted Street	Illinois Fraternal Order of Police
Dave Wickster	Illinois Fraternal Order of Police
Irwin Bock	Illinois Municipal League
Harold Johnson	Illinois Sheriffs' Association
Sean Smoot	Policemen's Benevolent and Protective Association of Illinois

Identifying Effective Recruitment Strategies

Bob Moore	National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives
Jim Burns	Elgin Police Department
Will Taylor	Illinois Law Enforcement Executive Institute
Skip Nelson	Illinois State Police
Eric Larson	Northwest Municipal Conference
Jeff Nielsen	Rockford Police Department
Pam Funk	Southwestern Illinois Consortium
Roger Huber	Southwestern Illinois Consortium
John Harris	Springfield Police Department
Mitzy Vasconcelles	Springfield Police Department
William Biang	Waukegan Police Department
Lou Tessman	Waukegan Police Department
Kenneth Durkin	Western Illinois University
Stephen Reinhart	Western Illinois University

Thomas J. Jurkanin serves as the Executive Director of the Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board, a position he has held since 1992. He has 25 years experience in the policing field. Dr. Jurkanin holds a PhD from Southern Illinois University in Education and Social Justice. Dr. Jurkanin serves as Vice Chairman of the Governor's Law Enforcement Medal of Honor Committee.

Robert J. Fischer is Director of the Illinois Law Enforcement Executive Institute. Dr. Fischer earned his PhD. At the Southern Illinois University at Carbondale in 1981. He served as a police officer and detective. He has twenty-three years of teaching experience at Western Illinois University, over seventeen years of administrative experience. Published over thirty articles and five books.

Vladimir A. Sergevnin is a research associate for the Illinois Law Enforcement Executive Institute and professor at St. Petersburg University of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, Russia. He earned his PhD at the Moscow Institute of Popular Economy in 1986. He has 24 years of teaching experience at Illinois State University, Western Illinois University, St. Petersburg University, and Vladimir Juridical Institute (Russia). He has published over 40 articles and written six books.