

## Department of Safety Newsletter 08/08

On August 4, during the National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA) National Forum in Louisville, KY, the Cincinnati Initiative to Reduce Violence (CIRV) Program received the 2008 NCJA Outstanding Criminal Justice Program Award for the Midwest Region. CIRV is a multi-agency and community collaborative effort that was initiated in April 2007, and is partially funded by OCJS, a division within ODPS, through a Justice Assistance Grant (JAG). The program is designed to quickly and dramatically reduce gun violence with sustained reductions over time.

The initiative is a focused deterrence strategy loosely modeled after the Boston Gun Project in the mid-1990s. The cornerstone is a partnership among multiple law enforcement agencies (local, state and federal), social service providers and the community that systematically gather information from multiple sources to identify and target violent street groups that continue to engage in violence. The group then delivers a clear and unified no violence message to these violent groups. The message explains that violence will bring law enforcement attention to the entire group, offers alternatives and articulates community norms against violence. The anti-violence message is powerfully communicated through call-in sessions, direct contact and community outreach. Initial assessments of the effort indicate a 55 percent reduction in group member-involved homicides over an eight-month period, with appx. 20 percent of the target population self-selecting CIRV services and dramatically improved police-community relations.

OCJS Executive Director Karlton Moore had the following comment about CIRV: The success of CIRV is a testament to what can be accomplished when a community stands together to reduce gang violence. I cannot say enough about the hard work, dedication and innovative leadership of the CIRV team. At the end of the day, they are accomplishing what everyone in the criminal justice system strives to do—reduce crime, prevent violence and save lives. Because of the CIRV teams hard work, Cincinnati is safer and our entire state is enriched.