



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

David J. Valesky

Senator David J. Valesky and Senate President Pro Tempore Malcolm A. Smith Present Funding for Operation SNUG

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SYRACUSE, N.Y. – In an effort to cut down on illegal guns and gang violence that plagues communities across the State of New York, Senate President Pro Tempore Malcolm A. Smith and Senator David J. Valesky (D-Oneida) announced that New Justice Conflict Resolution Services of Syracuse will be the administering organization for Syracuse's Operation SNUG, that will help local law enforcement and anti-violence community groups engage in innovative tactics to steer at-risk New Yorkers away from the culture of gangs and illegal guns.

The Senate secured \$4 million in the FY2009-10 State Budget for front-line anti-gun and gang violence prevention efforts that will benefit the hardest-hit communities across the state. As a result, Syracuse was able to receive \$500,000 of much-needed funding that will allow for better cooperation between police and prosecutors to keep our children safe and streets secure.

“The SNUG program will enhance efforts by organizations in Syracuse to address the serious issue of gun violence, focusing on prevention by engaging youth in the community,” Senator Valesky said. “I commend New Justice Services, the Syracuse Police Department and all of the community partners for their commitment to eradicating gun violence and helping to save lives.”

“Today marks a turning point in community safety,” said Senator Smith. “Gun violence affects us all- white or black, rich or poor, illegal guns terrorize neighborhoods and tear apart families. For too long, the deadly specter of illegal guns has gone unchecked. In cities across the state, our children are dying at the hands of gun violence, but through our commitment to SNUG, we can put a stop to that deadly trend now and return our streets to their rightful owners, the people of New York.”

“I see SNUG as a great opportunity to better serve the underserved people of our community through direct interaction and daily contact. SNUG will also give people an alternative to criminal activity,” said Chief Frank Fowler of the Syracuse Police Department.

“Through outreach, prevention and intervention techniques, Operation SNUG will pay specific attention to ways in which we can keep young New Yorkers aged 14 to 25 out of gang life and away from illegal guns,” John W. McCullough, Executive Director, New Justice Conflict Resolution Services, said.

New Justice Conflict Resolution Services will administer the Syracuse SNUG program in partnership with law enforcement and community groups.

This initiative developed is modeled after the highly successful Cease Fire Gun Violence Prevention Model currently used in Chicago. That program directs very targeted outreach and prevention efforts to “high risk” communities, and works through existing and experienced community-based organizations. Through coordinated efforts between police, counselors, and community outreach specialists, this model has helped cut violence in Chicago, and has reduced the risk of

“retaliation” murders, and helped students remain in schools and find jobs as they detach from gang life. Cease Fire will serve as a voluntary advisory to Operation SNUG-qualified programs.

Operation SNUG stands for:

S: Street intervention and stopping the violence

- violence interrupters and outreach to high-risk youth
- support for and coordination with police and law enforcement
- clearly communicating community values against shootings and violence
- engaging schools and educators as part of the solution

N: National, state and local funding support

- funding for all alternatives
- legislation to help implement solutions
- public and private support for intervention and prevention as part of the response

U: Use of centers and celebrities

- development of a comprehensive public relations effort, including celebrity PSAs and materials
- reopening and revitalization of existing community centers, creation of new bunkers and community “safe haven” for youth

G: Gangs, guns, gainful employment

- real-world gang awareness and prevention initiatives
- new efforts to stop the spread of illegal guns, including new law enforcement efforts targeting “middlemen” and gun running
- connections to employment and economic alternatives

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