

# DULUTH POLICE DEPARTMENT

2019 Annual Report



“Each interaction with a member of the Duluth Police Department should end with a greater sense of trust and appreciation of their commitment to their community.”



## MISSION:

To provide a safe Duluth for all by strengthening relationships and serving in a respectful, caring, and selfless manner.

## CORE BELIEFS:

- We recognize that our authority comes from our social contract with the community.
- People will believe that we are there to serve them if we are kind, caring and compassionate, and our actions match our words.
- People will trust us if they believe we are protecting their rights.
- Every interaction leaves a lasting impression.
- The safety of both our community and officers are paramount.



**VALUES:** **F**air  
**A**ccountable  
**C**aring  
**T**ransparent



## FROM THE CHIEF

MIKE TUSKEN



Mike Tusken, Chief of Police

In 2019, we took another step toward living the mission we developed with community and staff input in 2016. Our mission: To provide a safe Duluth for all by strengthening relationships and serving in a respectful, caring, and selfless manner.

Creating safety and quality of life in our spaces and places begins with what I like to call the three P's: Partnerships, Problem Solving, and Prevention. While our staff are an important factor in community safety, we could not move the needle to the extent we have if we weren't in this together. Our citizens are our eyes and ears. The community engages us to direct our attention and resources to the neighborhood concerns they see and experience, and we work together to solve them. Sometimes the community participates in policy development to ensure our department response demonstrates our shared community values. Still other times, we engage in partnerships knowing that no single individual or entity has the all the answers, but collectively, our work will lift people up.

This year, we logged over 1500 intentional community engagement activities. This is the most critical work we do - get to know one another. This is an opportunity for us to hear you, and our time with you helps build relationships centered upon trust.

One of our most meaningful accomplishments is the number of lives saved using naloxone to reverse opioid overdoses. Since 2016, DPD has saved 123 lives by administering this life-saving antidote. Our community response to the opioid crisis is one in which we use equal parts of enforcement, education/prevention, and treatment. Our partners, along with our opioid technician, are saving and improving lives by not only treating addiction, but working to get those suffering from addiction the treatment they desperately need and want. The Lake Superior Violent Crimes Task Force executed 265 search warrants and seized 75 firearms. There is no question these efforts saved lives and enhanced safety. We also worked with the DEA to be recognized as a designated High-Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) so we could receive funding and resources to respond to the epidemic of opioid addiction.

DPD sent the message to human traffickers that we are watching and will work relentlessly to advocate for those who are exploited and victimized. This year our Investigative Unit learned about three local massage therapy businesses engaged in the sex trafficking of foreign nationals who were being held against their will. We worked tirelessly to investigate, arrest, and convict the owners of these establishments. More importantly, we were able to save the exploited victims and bring them to safety.

Our mental health unit, pairing two police officers with two social workers, is designed to decriminalize mental illness and substance abuse, and has been doing remarkable work. Their efforts in identifying people who struggle the most in our community and offering them resources and therapy are improving lives. Each year, we have new stories to share about the meaningful impacts this program is making for people who had been living on the margins and are now being lifted up by dedicated, caring, and compassionate community caregivers. This is an excellent example of innovation in policing that works!

We look forward to the next year to work on continuous improvement so we can better serve together with you! It is an honor to serve you!

Mike Tusken  
Chief of Police



# A SAFE DULUTH

People will believe that we are there to serve them if we are kind, caring, and compassionate, and our actions match our words.



## PATROL

Our police department is made up of several individual units working together to provide the citizens of Duluth with the best possible services to keep them safe. The Duluth Police Department's patrol division provides boots on the ground support for our community. They are the officers who respond to everything from a hit and run to a domestic situation to a shots fired call. As the most visible division of a police department, they are often times most responsible for community perception of the police department as a whole. That's why every patrol officer takes part in community engagement activities - like visiting after school programs, attending community meetings, or taking a minute to chat with members of our community.

All of our officers not only meet Minnesota Peace Officer Standards, but have additional training such as de-escalation, crisis intervention, and fair and impartial policing.

### Partnerships, Prevention, and Problem Solving

These core tenants of community policing are the foundation for this successful outcome.

In April of 2019, officers were dispatched to a male suspect making threats to an area school, but it wasn't clear which one. Our School Resource Officers (SRO) received this information and quickly began working with school staff to ensure student and faculty safety, which included putting the schools in lock down. A short time later it was learned that the male suspect was inside Duluth East High School. The SRO worked quickly to get all students and staff to safe locations while, at the same time, trying to locate the male suspect. Other officers arrived on scene and developed a plan to locate the suspect. Within three minutes of being notified the suspect was at East High School, officers located the suspect and took him into custody.

## VICTIM-CENTERED SERVICES

We place the victim-survivor at the center of all decision-making, restore their dignity and sense of control, and increase their understanding of the criminal justice system. The victim-survivor sets the pace of their journey toward justice and healing.

# 2019 STATS

**100,766**  
Calls for service.

**158**  
Sworn Personnel – *this is the first time  
DPD has been at full strength since 1999!*

**2.7%**  
Decrease in part 1 crimes from  
2017 – 2019. Part 1 crimes  
include: aggravated assault, arson,  
auto theft, burglary, homicide,  
rape, theft, and robbery.

**1516**  
Community engagement activities.

**9.5%**  
Decrease in burglaries  
from 2016-2019.

**5%**  
Decrease in vehicle  
thefts from 2017-2019.

**123**  
Lives saved since DPD began  
carrying NARCAN in 2016.

## INVESTIGATIONS

The second largest sworn group in the Duluth Police Department is the Investigative Division.

Investigators follow up with detailed examinations of crimes referred to them by the patrol division. They work closely with victims to bring criminals to justice. Within the investigative division there are several units and each unit provides



specialized investigative expertise. Investigators receive additional training to better serve the citizens they come in contact with. Each unit also partners with local agencies to offer cohesive services to victim-survivors.

### Investigative Units

- Sex Crimes Abuse and Neglect
- Domestic Violence Response Team
- Violent Crimes
- Crime Scene Investigation
- Crash Investigations
- Juvenile Investigations
- Administration
- Training & Licensing
- Organized Crimes
- Financial and Property Crimes

### Specialized Investigations

As of 2019, DPD has the first investigator in Northern Minnesota that is fully deputized and formally included in the FBI Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation Task Force.

In 2019, an auto theft grant provided funding for an auto theft investigator dedicated to reducing the number of auto thefts and car break-ins.

2019 also saw a sexual assault kit investigator hired. The primary focus of this position is to work on cold case sexual assaults and current sexual assaults where a sexual assault exam kit has been collected by the department.

### Partnerships, Prevention, and Problem Solving

Investigators began looking into three local massage parlors on the report of sex trafficking. Following a year and a half long investigation which included numerous interviews and hours of surveillance, the suspects were arrested. Two suspects were charged with Sex Trafficking and Racketeering, and subsequently pled guilty. The investigation not only held the suspects accountable for their crimes, investigators rescued three of their exploited victims and provided them with resources following their victimization.

## SEXUAL ASSAULT KIT INITIATIVE

DPD was awarded a 2019 SAKI grant in the amount of \$727,651. With the 2019 SAKI grant, DPD will continue to partner with Program for Aid to Victims of Sexual Assault and the St. Louis County Attorney's Office to provide victim notification and the option to re-open investigations to each victim-survivor.

# LAKE SUPERIOR DRUG & VIOLENT CRIMES TASK FORCE

The Department continues to support those addicted to drugs by offering treatment options, education/prevention, and enforcement.

In 2019 we were awarded the COAP grant in the amount of \$897,596. This grant allows for the continued funding of our opioid technician as well as a diversion officer to work alongside this position. The goal of these positions is prevention, education, and treatment.

## In 2019 we:

- Made contact with over 100 opioid-involved individuals.
- Facilitated treatment entry for half of those individuals.
- Provided "Opioids 101" educational outreach.
- Provided Naloxone/opioid awareness training and distributed Naloxone kits to over two hundred officers across several law enforcement agencies.
- Developed relationships with community agencies and stakeholders.

Our task force works with several outside agencies to reduce the supply of narcotics to our area. One of those partnerships is with the DEA who will open a Post in the Duluth area. This will be the 11th DEA office in the five state Omaha Division.

We were also given HIDTA (*High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area*) designation. This will result in an increase of federal resources being dedicated to the Lake Superior Drug and Violent Crimes Task Force to reduce drug trafficking.



## Partnerships, Prevention, and Problem Solving

In May of 2019, after an extensive two-month investigation, investigators obtained search warrants for a house and suspect vehicles.

Inside the house, investigators recovered 4.5 pounds of heroin, 9 ounces of cocaine and \$92,321.00 in cash. Three suspects were arrested, one in possession of a loaded weapon and another with over \$2,000 in cash.

Both defendants were indicted on federal charges of Conspiracy to Distribute Heroin, Distribution of Heroin, Possession with Intent to Distribute Heroin, Possession with Intent to Distribute Cocaine, Felon in Possession of a Firearm, and Possession of a Firearm in Furtherance of a Drug Trafficking Crime. Additionally one of the suspects will be standing trial for murder.

# DRUG TASK FORCE STATS

The Duluth Police Department continues to address drug addiction with a multifaceted approach. We provide outreach and connect with the community. We educate and offer diversion and treatment to those suffering from addiction, and our Task Force continues to investigate and remove drugs and illegal firearms from our streets. This three-pronged approach has the ultimate goal of removing the demand of drugs in our community.

**2,348**  
Grams of heroin seized.

**227**  
Grams of Fentanyl seized.

**11,423**  
Grams of Meth seized.

**75**  
Firearms seized.

**265**  
Search warrants executed.

# MENTAL HEALTH UNIT

DPD's mental health unit has two embedded social workers who respond along with officers to help those experiencing a mental health crisis.

- The MHU has two dedicated mental health officers who personally get to know the people in our community.
- One social worker is employed by CADT and specializes in substance use disorders.
- One social worker is employed by St. Louis County and specializes in getting people the help they need in the moment.

In 2019, 233 individuals were referred to the MHU. That's 233 times we made contact with someone before they slipped through the cracks.

Referrals come from patrol officers, the St. Louis County Jail, Duluth Fire, Life Safety, and families of those in need of assistance.

## Partnerships, Prevention, and Problem Solving

Through repeated, proactive contacts, the Mental Health Unit was able to work with a man experiencing symptoms of schizophrenia to get him the level of care he required. This man had a long history of living outside in parking ramps and under bridges. He was well known to the business community as he often displayed symptoms of his mental illness (yelling at inanimate objects or passersby). During a 10-week period he generated 24 calls for service, was cited 11 times for trespass, and had been lodged twice in St. Louis County jail and once in Douglas County Jail.

Over time the MHU was able to build a relationship and understand his complex needs, strengths, and risks. That same relationship aided in articulating to physicians the risks of the persecutory delusions he was experiencing and allowed the MHU to transport him to the hospital to receive the care he needed.



## CIVILIAN SUPPORT

The civilians who work with the Duluth Police Department are the constants. They are the staff that generally work a consistent, daily schedule which allows for information to flow between patrol crews, investigations, and the public. Whether it's the court system or people from our community, our civilian staff is here to assist in providing information in a helpful and professional manner.

**Records** – 11,899 Transcriptions - *that's almost 400 hours of typing.*

**Evidence** – Over 8,000 pieces of evidence were submitted in 2019.

**Parking** – The City's Parking Services Unit supports essential public services in a variety of ways. In addition to our core values of promoting public safety and fair public access, a sizable monetary transfer is made each year from the parking fund into the City's General Fund, which is then distributed to other divisions to provide other important city services to the public.

**Analysts** – Crime and intelligence analysts gather data, which aids investigations across all units within our department.

**Budget/Grants** – We believe in being good stewards of tax payer money. Our budget and grants coordinator closely monitors our funds to ensure we stay within our budget allocation. We also apply for, and receive, numerous grants each year to help us provide our community with much needed services.



4,149

Mental health calls.

378

People referred since March 2017.

433

Proactive mental health calls.

38%

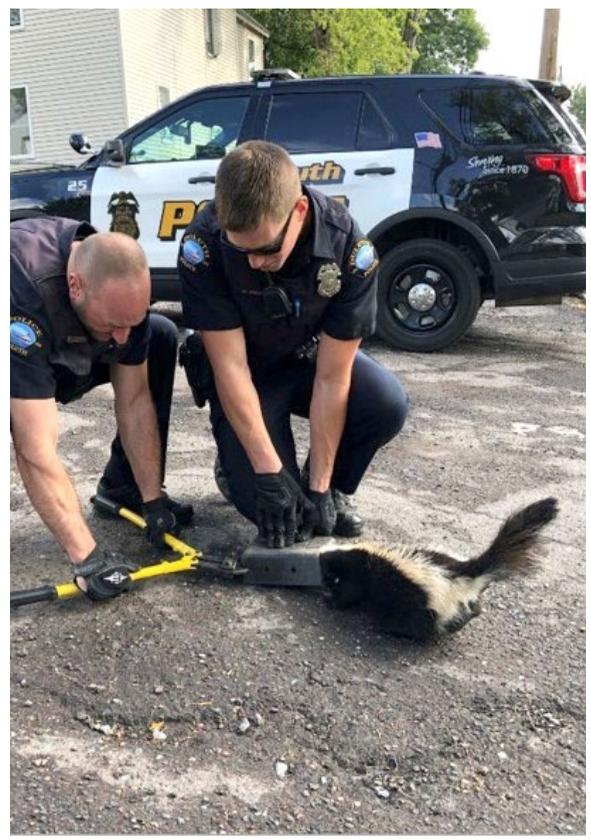
Decrease in emergency holds 2017 – 2019.



# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENTS

We are everywhere! As a police department we try to have as much positive contact with our community as possible. We want everyone to know we'll be with them through the good times and the bad, and that we are here to serve.

It is our honor to be included in the many community events we attend. We know that getting to know us before you need us is invaluable.



# RESPECTFUL & CARING

Every interaction leaves a lasting impression. We want everyone who comes in contact with us to feel safe, heard, and respected.



## WHAT OUR CITIZENS SAY



*"Two officers helped my mom and me out a couple weeks ago. They showed us such courtesy and respect when talking with us. They helped make things easier emotionally and gave us as much information as they could. Thank you for having such talent on the department!"*

*"Thanks to the two officers who stopped by our home. Their calm and professional approach to the possibility of an unknown person in a dark garage was noteworthy. Please pass along my thanks and note my positive remarks in their files. We probably too seldom think to pass along words of kindness and recognition for a job well done."*

*"I just wanted to take a moment to let you and your police department know how good of a job is being done. Earlier this evening I was pulled over. I was so impressed with the kindness and professionalism your officer displayed. Keep up the good work!"*

*"My two boys and I were recently visiting my brother from out of state. We are on a first name basis with most of the police officers in our town. My son asked if policemen in a city are friendly. I said all police officers are nice, but in a big city they might not have as much time to say hi or do fun stuff with kids like the police in our small town do. I was very wrong. We went to the playground and a Duluth officer and police dog were beginning a demonstration for a camp. My boys loved it and became really excited. I wanted to let you know this was a great experience and left a great impression on my boys!!"*



# TRANSPARENT

We recognize that our authority comes from our social contract with the community.

Our community must believe in its police department in order for us to work effectively. We pledge to be partners with our community in our efforts to keep Duluth a safe place to live, work, and play.

## ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT

Policing is an ever-changing and evolving profession, and DPD strives to be the best at what we do. In 2019 we decided to evaluate our operations in order to aid the Department and community in future planning. We contracted with BerryDunn to conduct an organizational assessment. This assessment was a full operational analysis and studied all aspects of the department including policies, staffing, scheduling, and call loads. As part of the process, BarryDunn gathered extensive data from staff and the community, and held two separate forums in the City. Areas of discussion included:

- **The Policing Environment**
- **Organizational Culture and Leadership**
- **Operations and Staffing**
- **Patrol Services**

- **Community Engagement**
- **Juvenile and Youth Engagement**
- **Dispatch/Communications**
- **Investigation Services**
- **Operational Policies**
- **Data, Technology, and Equipment**
- **Training and Education Recruitment, Retention, and Promotion**
- **Internal Affairs**

In October 2019, the completed Organizational Assessment report was presented to the City administration and the Department (a complete copy can be found on our website). As a result of the assessment, numerous recommendations were made that would benefit the community as well as our staff. In early 2020 we will begin acting on several high-priority recommendations.



# ACCOUNTABILITY

People will trust us if they believe we are protecting their rights.



## Recruitment Tools:

- **Community Service Officers** – Law enforcement students who have been hired to acquire hands-on job experience by staffing our front desk, collecting evidence, assisting with administrative tasks, and when fully trained, taking basic patrol calls.
- **Reserves** – Our volunteer unit that helps with traffic control during large events.
- **Park Rangers** – From May through September this group of potential recruits patrol our parks and the Canal Park area working with the public to build relationships.
- **Explorers** – High school students who are interested in the law enforcement profession participate in this group to gain an understanding of what this job entails.
- **Recruitment Workshops** – Our officers attend workshops at universities and high schools to talk with students about our department and careers available.

## Training:

- **De-escalation** – Teaches officers to slow down, be compassionate, and use discretion, which may include walking away from a situation.

- **MILO Scenario** – Real life scenarios to reinforce de-escalation and use of force techniques.
- **Procedural Justice** - Procedural justice is the fairness of processes used by those in positions of authority. Citizens want to be treated fairly, have their voices heard, transparency, and impartially.



- **Fair and Impartial Policing** - Discusses how implicit biases can impact well-intentioned individuals outside their conscious awareness. Teaches officers the skills they need to reduce and manage their biases.
- **Crisis Intervention Training** – Uses actors to role-play scenarios to educate officers on best ways to deal with those experiencing a mental health crisis.

## CRISIS INTERVENTION TRAINING

Our officers have been trained in this innovative model to help persons with mental disorders and/or addictions access medical treatment rather than place them in the criminal justice system.

