IMMIGRANT ENGAGEMENT IN MANKATO, MN
TODD A. MILLER
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SAFETY
MANKATO MN DPS
Professional Experience

- Chief of Police Since 1976
- Chair – IACP Community Policing Committee 2006–2014
- Current Chair – IACP Community Policing Award Committee
- International Instructor and Speaker on Community Policing Issues
- Two Time Winner – IACP & CISCO Community Policing Award
Professional Education

- B.A. Criminal Justice – Univ. of Wisconsin – Platteville
- M.A. Management – Cardinal Stritch – Milwaukee, WI
- School of Police Staff and Command Northwestern University Traffic Institute
- 184th Session, FBI National Academy
MANKATO MINNESOTA

- MSA Population – 99,336
- Mankato City Population – 40,611
- #3 in the Nation in 2014 Forbes Best Small Places for Business and Careers
- #5 Best Small City in America 2015 by nerdwallet.com
- #19 in the Nation for Top College Towns under 250,000 by A.I.E.R.
26,000 College Students in 5 Institutes of Higher Education

Top 40 in Number of International Students in U.S.

36 Languages Spoken in K–12 School District

K–12 School District Ranks in top 17% Nationally
5,000+ Immigrants of Somali, Sudanese or Iraqi Descent

Many immigrants came directly from refugee camps in Africa

Almost no knowledge of American life

Very limited resources

Isolation a key issue

Isolation breeds disenfranchisement
Al Shabaab recruitment in Minnesota

- 30+ young Somali males recruited
- At least 2 became suicide bombers
- Trust is a major issue within population
- Desire for positional contact within Somali leadership is high
COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC CONCerns

- One Mosque – Owned by Palestinians
- Attendees Mostly Somali
- Concern For What Zakat Was Used For
- Local Control and Decision Making
- Assisted With Creation of Mankato Islamic Center
Increased Calls for Service (Disturbances, Nuisances, etc.)

Lease Infractions, Evictions, etc.

Family Displacement & Further Isolation

VISIOUS CIRCLE FOR IMMIGRANTS
Immigrant & Refugee Outreach

- East African, East European and Asian Immigrants
- Lack of Understanding of Community and Country Culture
- Problems with Youth, Housing, in Schools
- Public Safety Issues with Cooking Fires
- Isolation Issues
- Partnership with Immigrants, Housing Providers, MN Council of Churches, Department of Public Safety
TAPESTRY PROJECT

- Built on community policing philosophy of partnerships, problem solving, outreach
- Build trust through interaction
- Build strong community through education, mentorship, cross cultural communication
- Fully involved the refugee community as equal stakeholder
Tapestry Topics

- **Health** – Health Services in America, Differences between Urgent Care and Emergency Room, Preventative Care
- **Parenting** – Responsibilities, Discipline, Legal Requirements
- **Government Services** – How Local Government Works, Transit and Transportation, Volunteering, Entrepreneurial Opportunities
Tapestry Topics

- **Housing** – Landlord/Tenant Issues, Being a Good Neighbor, How to Use Washing Machines, Livability Issues, Bedbugs

- **Safety** – Food Safety and Refrigeration, Cooking Fires, Crime Prevention, Law Enforcement and Ordinances/Laws in America
TAPESTRY PROJECT

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q6Z39DsU3E
Tapestry Spin–Off’s

Topics Expanded to Include Sessions or Separate Classes on:

- Leadership – Developing Leaders Within the Immigrant Community; Business Owner Mentors
- Parenting Skills –
- Education
- Women’s Issues – Including food, traditions and craft sharing
- Employment – Preparing for Employment, Job Fairs, Resume Development, Employer Expectations, Banking systems
Refugee participants and community have provided information on criminal activity

Refugee participants and community have brought forth information on Al Shabaab recruitment or radicalization

Information would not have been forthcoming without trust building
COPS AND BOBBERS

- Mentoring Program for At-Risk Immigrant Youth
- Run by SRO and many volunteers
- Improves trust, creates relationships, builds skills
- Provides Nutritious Meal
EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT

- Somali Police Officer
- Somali Reserve Officer
- Arab Part-Time Police Officer
- Somali Female Outreach Worker
- VIPS/CERT Volunteers
THANK YOU

Todd A. Miller
Cell: 507-340-2804
tmiller@mankatomin.gov