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San Francisco Police Department Highlights Year-End Demographics and Ongoing Recruitment Strategies 19-143

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Amid an increasingly challenging landscape for new recruitment, the San Francisco Police Department in the last decade has increased diversity and developed new strategies to attract prospective law enforcement officers.

“We have made tremendous strides toward recruiting, hiring, developing careers and providing equal opportunities for our sworn and non-sworn members, all with an eye toward making sure our workforce is culturally competent and reflects our diverse communities,” said Police Chief William Scott. “The U.S. Department of Justice Collaborative Reform Initiative Assessment commended SFPD for our diversity in overall staffing. Though we know we have more work ahead, we enter the new decade encouraged by our progress.”

As of November 1, 2019:

- SFPD sworn staff consists of 2,266 members;

- Between 2008 and 2019, the category of sworn members who are people of color expanded from 46 percent to 51 percent;
- Approximately 415 SFPD officers are certified bilingual in Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, Tagalog, and Russian;
- SFPD sworn staffing is 85 percent male and 15 percent female, a trend that has remained constant over the past 10 years (by comparison, women comprise less than 13 percent of law enforcement officers in agencies nationwide, according to Bureau of Justice Statistics);
- The number of female recruits entering SFPD's Academy increased 7 percent between 2018 and 2019.

SFPD - along with police departments around the Bay Area and the country- face tight competition for new recruits. Over the last several years, the department has taken proactive steps to further increase diversity, expand career development opportunities and address the gap between the number of male and female sworn police officers:

- Began development of a Diversity Strategic Plan as part of the department's Collaborative Reform efforts, in order to identify diversity recruiting priorities, activities, and targets and establish performance measures to track progress;
- Established a Staffing and Deployment Unit to collect and analyze personnel data in order to make strategic staffing decisions, monitor demographic trends and organizational diversity and identify barriers to employment;
- Stepped up recruitment efforts focused on female applicants via our "We Can Do It" and "Now's The Time" advertising campaigns highlighting the determination and strength of women in law enforcement;
- Launched a series of testing and application preparation events, including "boot camps" to help applicants prepare for the physical abilities test;
- Analyzed testing inequities that may inadvertently create barriers for entry for recruits;
- Through mentorships, job fairs, academic campus outreach, and test preparation seminars identified prospective recruits- including populations of women- who might consider a career in law enforcement;
- Created a Leadership Development Institute to provide professional and personal development to enhance leadership skills for sworn and civilian members.

SFPD's sworn demographics are available online.

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