FROM THE CHIEF

This report highlights the great work of our officers and introduces you to the future envisioned for your Baton Rouge Police Department. It began in 2018 with a six-point strategy addressing crime through: Analytics & Intelligence, Resources, Accountability & Transparency, Training, Technology, and Community Engagement.

Violent crime in Baton Rouge is perpetrated by a small group of people. Thanks to our local, state, and federal partnerships, we’re better able to identify those people through analytics, intelligence and community policing. Good data is critical; in 2018 we began building the East Baton Rouge Real-Time Crime Center, where we’ll work with other parish law enforcement agencies to share and analyze real-time data to reduce crime.

We worked with Mayor-President Broome and the Metro Council to secure funding for new vehicles. The best ideas come from officers. Listening to them, the department assigned some members who were working in an administrative capacity to prioritized positions like Uniformed Patrol and Detectives, and recreated a Prisoner Processing and Transportation Unit, reducing arrest times from 2 ½ hours to 45 minutes.

Following guidelines from the Department of Justice (DOJ), we adjusted policies to reflect current best practices, including changes to our Body Worn Camera Policy. There is new assistance for officers struggling with training issues, and a Critical Incident Stress Management Team now supports officers following significant emotional events.

Good police work begins with good training. In partnership with the DOJ, our academy staff received instruction in Procedural Justice Policing while supervisors expanded their learning of Community Policing. We incorporated these lessons into our police academy training. Thirty-four police officers graduated in 2018, and 32 highly motivated applicants started training in March 2019.

These efforts are already paying off. Our Uniform Crime Report shows crime, in almost every category, was down in 2018. For this, we thank our law enforcement partners and our own officers. But we must also thank our most important partner: you, the people we serve. Our success depends on a community willing to work with the Police. So in 2018, we participated in more than 300 community events. Building trust is a top priority in making the city safer—for both police and the citizens we serve.

We still have much work to do to meet your expectations. We believe that, this year, we are well on our way to a new era of policing, and we’re eager to prove it. Keep talking, Baton Rouge. We’ll never stop listening.

Chief Murphy Paul, Jr.
Baton Rouge Police Department

BRPD: BY THE NUMBERS

OVERALL CRIME

2018 14,186
2017 15,223

6.8%

VIOLENT CRIME

2018 2,068
2017 2,336

11.5%

PROPERTY CRIME

2018 12,118
2017 12,887

6%

USE OF FORCE BY OFFICERS

2018 276
Total
2017 1 per 916 calls
1 per 819 calls

“We still have much work to do to meet your expectations. We believe that, this year, we are well on our way to a new era of policing, and we’re eager to prove it.”
Verlander, who has overseen development of the
"This is about improved public safety," says Sgt. Jim
The nation’s first real-time crime centers opened
The automated alert system would tap into live footage
The automated gunshot alerts also will activate
The summer opening of EBR’s Real-Time Crime
"It’s a partnership," he says.
and sent to squad-car laptops as officers rush to the
Inside the RTCC itself, walls of video screens and
The department also will develop a voluntary list
RTCC since it was identified as a priority of BRPD
Chief Murphy Paul last year.
RTCC will automate and speed emergency-
RTCC technology will make police response to
criminal activity faster, safer and more effective in
from locations with potentially elevated risk.
The automated gunshot alerts also will activate cameras in the camera-share program within a
designated radius of the shots fired to relay live video footage to responding officers.
RTCC technology will also automatically flag service
calls from locations with potentially elevated risk.
The alerts will direct RTCC personnel to begin an
The alerts will direct RTCC personnel to begin an
Critical background information, in some cases even
immediate search of records about that location.
and the strategic use of existing staff. "It’s taking the
technology that we currently have and advancing it," Verlander says.
The automated gunshot alert system will have the
RTCC staff to monitor
the wall of video footage and live data on oversized
desktop screens.
Staff from the department’s crime information unit will
move to the RTCC, where new automated technology
will allow them to work with maximum efficiency.
An internship program and partnerships with the
parish district attorney’s office, other law-enforcement agencies and researchers from Louisiana State
University and Southern University will provide
additional staff support. Grants will cover the cost
of furniture and other equipment.
A focus on cost efficiency and maximum impact
likewise shaped plans for the department’s cameras-
share program, which should be operating in the next
six to eight months.
Instead of purchasing, installing and operating
security cameras across Baton Rouge, business
owners, residents and volunteer-led crime districts
will be invited to partner with the RTCC. "We want to
leverage existing cameras," Verlander says.
New Orleans, Detroit, Seattle, Louisville and Cincinnati
are among U.S. cities to report significant crime
reduction since opening real-time crime centers.
In Detroit, for instance, car jackings and illegal
dumping dropped sharply after the city established
a center. In New Orleans, officials point to the city’s
year-old real-time crime center for a much-improved
rate of cleared shootings. Crime is down sharply
across a host of categories.
From the beginning of the process, there has been
keen interest in the idea of an RTCC in Baton Rouge,
both inside and outside the department, Verlander
notes. What was lacking was a clear funding source—an
obstacle that was overcome with cost-effective
innovation on multiple fronts.
Additional software will allow RTCC staff to fully
use existing technology, Verlander notes. The center
itself will operate in available space at the towering
headquarters complex on Airline Highway.
Sgt. Tyrone Honore of the BRPD’s traffic division
oversaw construction of the elevated platform inside
and sent to squad-car laptops as officers rush to the
location of a call for service. "The officers would get
the information while en route," Verlander says.

**FORCE OF THE FUTURE**

East Baton Rouge’s Real-Time Crime Center

Thanks to the support of Mayor-President Broome
and the City Council, the Baton Rouge Police
Department will open a Real-Time Crime Center
that uses live data and state-of-the-art automation
to reduce and respond to crime in Baton Rouge.

The summer opening of EBR’s Real-Time Crime
Center (RTCC) at the department’s Airline Highway
headquarters will mark a transition to a proactive
approach to fighting crime that harnesses data
analytics to keep residents and officers safer.

RTCC operations will include a first-of-its-kind
public-private partnership anchored at the parish-
wide facility: a camera-share initiative that offers
unprecedented opportunity for community
participation in combatting crime in Baton Rouge.

The camera-share initiative, planned to start in late
2019, will invite business owners to join a network of
public facing cameras connected to the RTCC. An
automated alert system would tap into live footage
captured by the cameras in the vicinity of criminal
activity. The program will also invite residents to join
a directory to inform law enforcement of the location
of their exterior cameras in the event we need them
to solve crime.

“This is about improved public safety,” says Sgt. Jim
Verlander, who has overseen development of the

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PHOTO (opposite page): Baton Rouge Police Sgt. Jim Verlander
is in charge of creating the Real-Time Crime Center, which is
scheduled to open later this year at Airline Highway HQ.

PHOTO (right): High-tech crime centers, like this one in
Memphis, TN, have enabled officers to quickly respond to crime,
reducing incidents of all types in cities that have them.

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is in charge of creating the Real-Time Crime Center, which is
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PHOTO (right): High-tech crime centers, like this one in
Memphis, TN, have enabled officers to quickly respond to crime,
reducing incidents of all types in cities that have them.
María Juan-Guevara settled in Baton Rouge in 2009 after immigrating from a small town in Mexico. She came here with her mother and two older brothers. She was 14 when she started her freshman year at Belaire High School. She did not speak English.

Eight years after leaving Nado Buenavista Aculco, Estado, Mexico, she was sworn in as Officer María Juan-Guevara of the Baton Rouge Police Department. The 24-year-old officer protects the Second District as part of the uniform-patrol unit.

Her journey from shy teen to officer is a study in hard work.

A key part of the journey traces to the BetR Store near the Perkins Road Overpass. Juan-Guevara was 16 and had mastered two English phrases on her first day working the store’s register: “Hi, how are you?” and “Thank you, have a nice day.”

She cites two additional factors in her decision to become an officer. She has seen immigrants fearful of reporting crimes or taken advantage of by unscrupulous operators who figured language and worries over legal status would keep them from speaking out. She was pained by tension between the force and the community after the 2016 ambush that took the lives of officers Montrell Jackson and Matthew Gerald.

“‘We are here to protect and serve everyone in the community, all races, all people, and I thought maybe I could help people understand that.’”

Maria Juan-Guevara, 2nd District

Juan-Guevara began taking criminal-justice classes at Baton Rouge Community College after graduating from McKinley High School. She took on two more jobs to cover tuition: slicing apples, pineapple and other fruit for fruit platters at the Albertsons on College and working the ticket booth at the Greyhound station on Florida. Sometimes she got home at 3 a.m., then back out of bed at 6 a.m. to get ready for class.

She says. "Thank you, have a nice day."

HAND IN HAND

Community policing is more than talk

About 20 years ago, rookie officer Kyle Callihan got an unconventional order: get on a bike, ride into Melrose East and make friends.

Callihan did make friends in the neighborhood then called Mall City.

He also formed the Melrose East Hurricanes football team and a cheerleading squad for the sidelines. He helped kids with homework. He sketched budgets for parents worried about running out of money before payday.

In the process, he did something else: built community trust that is essential to effective policing. “The connections you make help solve murders,” says Callihan, now a sergeant with the Baton Rouge Police Department’s community-policing division. “Our ultimate goal is to make people safer and solve crimes.”

“‘My job is to change hearts and minds.’”

Kyle Callihan

Misleading and false social media posts make trust-building more important than ever. Last year, the force expanded outreach, sponsoring more than 350 community events, from bike safety classes to cook-offs.

It will exceed that number in 2019, Callihan says. “My job is to change hearts and minds.”

The stepped-up outreach is in sync with new training in procedural justice. The term describes a trust-building concept of growing focus in Baton Rouge and at police departments across the U.S.

In its simplest definition, procedural justice involves good manners and treating people with dignity and respect, an approach that already describes how most officers interact with the community, says Lt. Jeff Williams, who is helping to develop ongoing department-wide training that begins with this year’s police-academy class.

Training that bolsters a good relationship between the force and the community is part of good policework, Williams explains. “Interaction shapes the relationship with the community.”

The training will include effective police communication that stresses the same issues, like fairness and dignity that shape public interaction. The goal is improved officer morale—something that, in turn, will improve interaction between officers and members of the community.

A grant from the International Association of Chiefs of Police is helping the department develop the training, including first-hand observation of nationally recognized techniques in use by departments in Oakland and Stockton, California.

Meanwhile, a fence that once encircled Callihan’s Fourth District in Scotlandville is being dismantled, moved and rebuilt to stop balls from rolling into the street from a local park, and kids from chasing after them.

Community volunteers and police officers will work hand-in-hand to put up a chain-link fence around the park as well as a new privacy fence around the fourth district’s building. “The same fence that protected our officers is now going up to keep the kids safe,” Callihan says. “The narrative some people have is that we don’t care, but we work to counter that. We’re putting our arms around the community with this fence. There is a dual purpose here.”

PHOTO: RRJPD Community Policing Sgt. Belford Johnson, left, prepares jambalaya and white beans with cook Willie Harris during the NAACP Health and Wellness Fair at Shiloh Missionary Baptist Church.
PROTECT AND SERVE

Todd Thomas is high-tech at work, he helps schoolchildren when he’s not

Todd Thomas brings a mix of low-key demeanor and determined focus on the task at hand to his work as a detective in the Baton Rouge Police Department’s street-crimes division.

Thomas, 27, has wrapped tourniquets around the limbs of gunshot victims to stop them from bleeding to death. In his medical kit, he carries back-up packs of sticky chest seals for gunshot wounds to the chest. He’s located shell casings on the ground at night using a flashlight and software on his squad-car laptop that tells him where shots were fired, if more than one person was shooting and whether one of the firearms was a high-powered rifle.

The plate carrier Thomas pulls on over his shoulders weighs maybe 30 pounds when fully loaded with gear that includes a bulletproof chest plate, a two-way Motorola phone, a body-camera that activates with the push of a button or when he unholsters the Taser at his left hip. He carries a special metal tool that allows him to quickly cut through clothing to better provide emergency medical aid.

He communicates with fellow officers through a microphone affixed to the front of the plate carrier next to his body camera. Dispatchers and police supervisors speak to him through a tiny earpiece when he is at work on the streets of Baton Rouge.

Detective Thomas looms large—he is well over 6 feet tall. He patrolled the streets of Kandahar, Afghanistan, as a soldier in the U.S. Army soon after he graduated from Istrouma High School. He returned from military duty and joined the BRPD, where he has served for five years, staying close to his neighborhood. Example: he once put a chest seal on a gunshot victim who was a friend from his days at Istrouma High.

He brings a big heart to his work, then puts that big heart to work off the clock, too. Thomas, his firefighter brother and three friends who are like brothers grew up on Rice Drive in north Baton Rouge. They started the Rice Drive Foundation to help local children get ready to go back to school at the start of the school year.

Last year, the group gave out 250 school bags filled with school supplies. The foundation also provided a start-to-finish, back-to-school giveaway to a single parent that included a set of five school uniforms, new shoes, a backpack, school supplies and having the child’s hair cut or done for the first day of school.

“It’s just the five of us,” says Thomas, himself the father of two young daughters. “We grew up together. Now it’s our chance to give back.”

EARPIECE
Police supervisors and other officers speak directly into officer’s ear.

PLATE CARRIER
Bullet-proof, over-the-shoulder gear-holder weighs about 30 pounds when fully loaded with body camera, medical kits, two-way radio and other equipment.

AXON BODY CAMERA
Activated manually, by a squad-car button or when an officer removes his or her Taser from its holster.

MOTOROLA TWO-WAY RADIO
Provides communication between officers on the ground, dispatchers and supervisors.

STREAMLIGHT FLASHLIGHT
Handheld tactical flashlight with a brilliant strobe for searching dark places.

TASER
Less-lethal tool used to apprehend resistive and combative subjects.

TPG BLACK MEDICAL PACK
First-aid pouch includes chest seals for gunshot victims.

TOURNIQUET
Officers can stop bleeding from a limb in 30 seconds or so.

LAPTOP
Squad-car computers relay key information to officers on the ground. Officers use it to write and submit reports on arrests and other incidents.

SHOTSPOUTERS
Computer- or phone-based software app picks up on gunshot. ShotSpotter alerts tell an officer if more than one gun has been fired, location of shots and if a rifle was fired.

“"We grew up together. Now it’s our chance to give back.”
Todd Thomas, on his Rice Drive Foundation
“What if someone had tried to stop the bad blood from escalating into the violence that took her son? What if someone had picked up the phone and called someone to try to stop it?”

She is not asking people to do something she is unwilling to do. Kinchen called the police and turned in Deuce for armed robbery in 2016—not to hurt him, but to protect him.

“You can save a life when you speak up,” she says. She hopes people will change the way they think about sharing what they know to try to prevent gun violence or bring closure to a family touched by it.

“Speaking out isn’t being a coward,” Kinchen says. “Talk to your pastor in private, tell somebody else what you know. Talk to somebody.”

SPEAK UP FOR JUSTICE
A mother’s plea: share what you know about her son’s death

Tevin “Deuce” Gunter was home to celebrate his brother’s wedding and his mother’s birthday in the weeks before his death. He was working construction and lavished Christmas gifts on his children, now 8, 7 and 4 years old.

Getting their adult five children in one place at one time is a big deal for Tonia Kinchen and her husband, Eddie Kinchen Sr., a retired U.S. Marine who served in Kuwait.

Their daughter is stationed in Germany with the U.S. Air Force. One son works in logistics on an American military base in Africa. Deuce, the couple’s youngest son, had struggled with drugs since middle school. But the 25-year-old was working and feeling strong in early 2017, and his family was thrilled.

“I want people to know his family never gave up on him,” Kinchen says. “He was loved.”

The round-cheeked son she calls My Baby Boy played pee wee football. He got the nickname Deuce from an episode of “The Dukes of Hazzard.”

The Kinchens love gathering with friends and family for Saints games—a black fleur de lis on the kitchen floor signals their passion for the team. There is still laughter and food and love at such gatherings, but they are not the same since Deuce was killed in February 2017.

Deuce was caught up in a beef between other young men when he was shot to death in Brookstown two years ago. Kinchen wonders,

“What if someone had tried to stop the bad blood from escalating into the violence that took her son? What if someone had picked up the phone and called someone to try to stop it?”

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“Speaking out isn’t being a coward,” Kinchen says. “Talk to your pastor in private, tell somebody else what you know. Talk to somebody.”

“Love your neighbor as yourself by getting involved.”
Deputy Chief Herbert Anny
UNBROKEN: THE ROBINSONS
A war veteran is killed; his family asks for your help

At 2, Louis Robinson Jr. scampered around the house with a toy radio. At 4, he performed a rap adaptation of Humpty Dumpty at McKinley Head Start. By his teen years, he was winning sneakers in weekly rap battles at a local teen club.

“After Humpty Dumpty, he never stopped creating raps,” Elizabeth Robinson said of the oldest of her five children.

Fun-loving and quick to smile, the young man later spent six years with the U.S. Army in Korea and Iraq.

He returned to Baton Rouge and made a hit, “Let Me Thru Dis B,” that took him to clubs across Louisiana and outside the state. Southern University’s Human Jukebox performed the song, as did Grambling’s band. He recruited neighborhood kids as dancers and borrowed a bus to make a catchy music video directed in the Robinsons’ yard.

Louis loved cars—and saved enough working in his father’s janitorial business to buy two before he was 16. He had his 1955 Chevy Belaire, a gift from his father, shipped to Fort Hood when he was stationed in Texas.

The Robinsons are an “I love you” family. They never let Louis forget it. “We say it in the morning, in the afternoon, all the time,” says his father, Louis Robinson Sr.

His son was 29 when he was cut down by gunfire on Cadillac Street on May 2, 2018. A cabinet in the Robinsons’ living room holds his last watch, mementos from his Army days and photos they will share with the three children—all under 5—Louis left behind.

Elizabeth Robinson fills albums with memories. She watches her son’s videos on her phone. The sound of his voice sometimes seems to bring Louis back for a moment.

“He lived his dream, and we thank the Lord for that,” his father says

The Robinsons hold out hope that someone will share what they know about who killed their son. They want justice for Louis. They worry his killer will take another life. They believe someone is listening.

“Put the shoe on the other foot. Imagine if this was your child. Then talk to somebody.”

Elizabeth Robinson

Baton Rouge Police Chief Murphy Paul wants people to share information about unsolved crimes, whether that’s with his officers or someone they trust to pass along a tip to the department. “Keep talking, Baton Rouge. We’ll never stop listening.”

Murray “Coach” Tate

THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE
His son is dead; he just wants someone to share a tip

Murray “Coach” Tate’s youngest child and his wife’s only child was cut down by gunfire August 23, 2018.

There has not been an arrest in the murder of Jamison Murray Tate, who was shot down in a breezeway of the Port Royal apartments off Airline Highway.

Combating gun violence in Baton Rouge—stopping killings and bringing killers to justice—requires speaking up, Tate says. “Information is important, no matter how small. Talk to a fireman. Talk to a postman. Talk to somebody you trust. If you withhold information, we can’t get this done.”

You can see Tate’s sorrow, but he also remembers the happy occasions with Jamison. There was the time his diapered toddler son charged down the driveway after him, insisting on climbing into his delivery truck and riding beside him. He recalls 2-year-old Jamison unimpressed with a toy train set and picking up his basketball to head outside after the engine circled the tracks just once.

The outgoing boy who wore No. 9 on Coach Tate’s Showtime youth basketball team went by the nickname “Fox” and liked good food. Coach Tate recalls Jamison at 8 or 9 slipping out of the buffet restaurant where the team had gathered for dinner to walk to an Outback Steakhouse next door and order the dinner he really wanted.

Jamison liked nice clothes, singing at church, a toy talking Toucan. He sung the Fat Albert theme song and took first place in a talent show during Bring Your Child To Work Day at Cox Communications, where his mother worked for 23 years. As a child, he was fascinated by insects. He was thinking about going back to school to study entomology when he was killed in August.

Jamison left behind a daughter, Ja’ Mirei, now 2. She is an early talker, intelligent, curious and always moving. “Just like her father,” Coach Tate says.

He can’t make sense of humans killing each other. But he’s also confident that detectives, in time, will solve the case. He’s waiting for someone to tell detectives what they know about the crime, no matter how small the detail.

“A person who kills somebody is a coward, but if you have information and you withhold it, you are a coward, too,” he says.

“Information is important, no matter how small. Talk to a fireman. Talk to a postman. Talk to somebody you trust.”

Murray “Coach” Tate
LaDarrius Rawls dressed up as a police officer for trick or treating every Halloween of his childhood in Bossier Parish. “I think I might have even done it in high school, too,” says Rawls, 26, a uniform-patrol officer with the Baton Rouge Police Department’s 2nd District since 2018.

Law enforcement is a Rawls family tradition. He is close to an uncle who spent three decades as a Bossier sheriff’s deputy before retiring a couple years ago. Some of his cousins are police officers, including one who took criminal-justice classes with him at Southern University.

The youngest of six siblings, Rawls was a three-sport athlete at Bossier High, where he ran track and played basketball and football. He might have enjoyed playing a cross section of sports, but he was locked in on police work as far back as he can remember. “I always wanted to do it.”

He hasn’t forgotten the thrill of meeting real-world firefighters and police officers when he was a small boy. Being able to help somebody out, kids especially, is the favorite part of his work and one that gives him a chance to make meaningful connections.

“He is an effective use of manpower,” says Sgt. Caan Castleberry, part of the department’s new Prisoner Processing and Transport Unit.

Started in October 2018, a new unit was dedicated to prisoner intake. It was reintroduced under Chief Murphy Paul after feedback from uniform patrol and street-crime officers. Before, arresting officers were involved in every step of the prisoner intake, from fingerprinting and inventory of personal property to completing paper work. Those tasks took officers off the street for three hours with each arrest.

“‘We are taking on time-consuming things that the arresting officer no longer has to do.’

Sgt. Caan Castleberry

Prisoner intake still takes place at the department’s First District on Plank Road, as it has for many years. But the new 24/7 process means officers can drop off a prisoner and return to the street in as little as 10 minutes, Castleberry says.

Officers assigned to the new unit work rotating 12-hour shifts, two officers at a time. That allows for another big time-saver: One officer can transport several prisoners at a time to parish prison while the other remains on duty at First District, Castleberry says.

“We are taking on time-consuming things that the arresting officer no longer has to do,” Castleberry says.

PHOTO: Baton Rouge Police Sgt. Caan Castleberry works with Cpl. Travis Norman to process a prisoner under a new system that gets officers back on the streets in a shorter period of time.

“‘We’re normal people behind the badge. We can sit around and laugh just like other people.’

LaDarrius Rawls, 2nd District

He has something to share about the job he always wanted. “This is a great job. That’s something I hear all the time from other officers who came through the academy with me.” Rawls says. “I love my job.”

“‘There is something about seeing a smile—it’s a good feeling,’” Rawls says.

He does have a life outside the uniform. On his days off, he hits the gym or jogs around the LSU lakes. He loves looking out over water to just chill. He often drives to New Orleans to walk around the city, get something to eat and listen to live music—jazz, rap, R&B. “If it catches me, I listen to it,” he says.

Rawls loves gumbo, fried shrimp and pizza—thin crust, piled high with meat. He is learning his way around the kitchen at home and has mastered salmon and pasta alfredo. “I try to stick to things I won’t mess up.”

Rawls is laid back, easygoing. He would like the community to know this about him and other members of the police force: “We’re normal people behind the badge. We can sit around and laugh just like other people.”

FACES OF THE FORCE

NAME
LaDarrius Rawls

AGE
26

INTERESTS
Running the lakes, music, cooking
REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN OFFICERS
Rest in Heaven.

Chief J. B. Hare
Officer Salvadore J. Merino
Chief of Detectives Frank E. Schoonmaker
Lieutenant George W. Bannister
Sergeant Joseph Sanchez
Officer J. D. Blackwell
Officer Thomas R. Fancher
Officer Dennis R. Heap
Officer Karl F. Bourgoyne
Officer Linda A. Lawrence
Lieutenant Carl Robert Dabadie

Officer Charles David Stegall
Sergeant Warren Joseph Broussard
Corporal Betty Dunn Smothers
Lieutenant Vickie Salassi Wax
Detective Terry Lee Melancon, Jr.
Corporal Christopher Michael Metternich
Officer Mark A. Beck
Corporal Montrell Lyle Jackson
Officer Matthew Lane Gerald
Corporal Shane Michael Totty
K-9 Philos