

Georgetown Campus Plan Testimony
Monday, May 16, 2011
Cory Peterson

Good Evening. My name is Cory Peterson and I'm an Area Coordinator in the Office of Residence Life at Georgetown University. As an Area Coordinator, one of my many roles is to supervise 3 full time professional Hall Directors who manage our University owned apartment and townhouse areas. In addition to this, I also manage the Village A apartment complex and am one of 13 professional staff members who live on campus in University owned housing. I've worked at Georgetown for almost 5 years and have assisted with SNAP for the last 3 or so years.

Tonight, I'd like to discuss SNAP and our working relationship with our campus police and the Metropolitan Police Department. On Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights from 11 pm – 4 am, the University employs 3 off duty MPD officers, known as the reimbursable detail, to work with our campus police and SNAP. The reimbursable detail is in addition to any other officers assigned our PSA within District 2. Typically, the reimbursable officers patrol the neighborhoods and assist SNAP and campus police when needed. In the past, the reimbursable officers have patrolled in marked cars, unmarked cars, foot and bike. The goal is to be visible to those in the neighborhood and also assist when needed. Each reimbursable officer carries with them their city wide police radio and a radio for Georgetown's campus police. By carrying a University radio it allows for a much quicker response time than if calling the city. On occasion, while out patrolling through the neighborhoods the reimbursable detail will point out activity to SNAP that needs to be addressed or vice versa. It's truly a collaborative effort between SNAP, MPD and our campus police ensuring we're keeping the neighborhood safe.

To help build our relationship among SNAP, MPD and DPS there is a nightly meeting while on shift for 10 or 15 minutes to share details and information with one another that may be useful for that particular night. These meetings have been invaluable as it allows SNAP and the reimbursable officers to meet one another and build relationships.

Personally speaking, I have called MPD on numerous occasions for assistance. These have included strangers in the neighborhood, audible alarms at neighboring houses, large parties, suspicious persons/cars, suspicious activity, car accidents, and people breaking into stores on Wisconsin or just to ask for advice with how to respond to a situation.

It amazes me how much SNAP is able to see as it patrols around the neighborhood and the good that has come from our work on SNAP. As I reflect on the past three years, when I first began SNAP it was only one car three nights a week, no decals on the cars, a small flashing yellow light (generally on the dash of the car) and it was difficult to cover both neighborhoods effectively. Now, three years later there are two cars each night, both have reflective magnets identifying our cars with the phone number that people can call which rings right into the car, LED flashing lights on top of the vehicle, a strong partnership with MPD and the reimbursable officers and a vests/coats that act as our uniform so to speak identifying who we are when we're out of our SNAP vehicle walking around. I believe the continual work and expansion of SNAP program over the past three years has definitely made a difference. Students both on and off campus are more accustomed to seeing us in the neighborhood

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and will flag us down if they need assistance. Additionally students are more receptive than ever with SNAP's requests when we stop to address a potential code of conduct violation and I truly believe there are fewer loud parties and general disturbances than three years ago when I first started.

Not only does SNAP proactively address potential student conduct issues and respond promptly to neighbors' concerns about student behavior and not infrequently to issues at residences where no students reside, but SNAP also serves a vital safety function in the neighborhoods. As I mentioned, when we as the SNAP team observe suspicious activity or persons, we are able to get quick police response and assistance. Finally, I believe that SNAP's presence in the neighborhood – in the private security cars with yellow flashing lights and decals – deters criminal acts; in other words, I believe individuals who might be planning criminal or other mischievous behavior will be put off by cars with flashing lights driving around the neighborhoods during weekend nights.