



Lafayette Police Department

May 2, 2017

Daylight Justice
4200 park Boulevard, #108
Oakland, CA 94602

Shanti and Christy -

I just want to start this letter by saying thank-you for the community presentation that you did for the City of Lafayette on April 18, 2017. Having been in law enforcement for nearly thirty years and having instructed hundreds of hours of law enforcement training, I was very impressed with your presentation. I can think of few programs that would be as perilous to facilitate as a community presentation on Racial Bias and Procedural Justice. But you not only did it, you did it very well. In baseball parlance, you hit a home run and the presentation is still the talk of the town.

I found your program to be thought provoking for all those who attended, officers and members of our community alike. You used an excellent method to draw the audience into the topic and to introduce concepts of the program. You helped each of the attendees to better understand the role that bias may play in their lives, whether it be consciously or unconsciously. Most impressive to me was that your facilitation skills encouraged members of the audience to participate. Members of the audience shared their experiences and beliefs, some of which were the extremes of the core issue - unknowingly showing their bias. That you were able to bring this out in a public meeting is a credit to your facilitation skills. The revelations made by these individuals reinforced the concept that bias exists to other members of the audience. If I did not know them, I would have sworn you had planted them in the audience. You made people feel comfortable, both the officers and the members of the public.

My experience has been that few topics create the tension that race does within our society. I've been to the meetings where chairs have been broken, epithets have been screamed, and where a good idea has gone terribly bad. During your presentation, a heated dialogue between a few participants began. You managed the two parties, you calmed the situation, and you brought the heated discussion back to the original topic - proving your thesis to those who understood. After the meeting I had the chance to speak to our residents and our officers. Both groups were very appreciative of the program and your performance. The lasting concept of the presentation was we all needed to have a better understanding of each other - which is a great outcome. I now find myself being asked if there will be additional presentations on similar topics within the community. You know you're a hit when they ask for more.

I recently had the opportunity to speak about the presentation, both of your performance, and the foundation that you two have set within our community with our County Chief of Police Association. As I told the gathered group, I would be challenged to find anyone who could have done this as well as you two did. I encouraged each of them to consider similar meetings within their communities - to build

better relationships between their officers and their communities. We trusted you to broach a difficult subject and I could not have envisioned a better outcome.

As I started this letter, I want to say thank-you for your work and what you've done for our entire community. You've started us talking about a difficult subject as a group. Since the presentation, I've spoken to many community members who have heard about the presentation and were sorry they missed it. I've also been approached by several who cannot wait for the next episode. I don't think there is any way we cannot continue this conversation within our community - thanks to your efforts. My feelings have been echoed by the members of our Crime Prevention Commission.

I have to admit that I rarely give recommendations, as I believe each recommendation I give carries some liability. It's without reservation that I would recommend your program to other communities and law enforcement agencies. It's a difficult and dangerous topic, but you started us all thinking just a little differently. As an ambassador of the City of Lafayette, I hope I have adequately expressed our appreciation of your work.

I am sure we will be working together again in the future.

Sincerely,



Eric Christensen, Chief of Police
City of Lafayette