

## **Foundation Funds Provided For Police Mini- Stations**

The Milton S. Eisenhower Foundation has provided grants for the operation of police mini-stations at public housing projects based on a Japanese community policing concept combined with safe havens for youth who live at these developments.

The foundation announced November 21 that nonprofit groups in Baltimore, Columbia, S.C., Little Rock, Memphis, and Newark, N.J., have received grants to establish "kobans," police mini-stations at public housing projects from which officers can conduct neighborhood patrols.

A grant of \$45,000 was provided for each location with the exception of Baltimore, which received \$80,000 for two koban operations. The grants will help fund activities for 18 months.

In Japan, kobans are police mini-stations that are within a 15-minute walk of most urban residents. In Tokyo alone, there are about 1,200 kobans. Typically, one officer stays at the mini-station while a partner patrols on foot or bicycle. Patrol territory ranges from a few blocks to a few square miles, depending on the population.

Kobans funded by the Eisenhower grants are combined with safe havens operated by nonprofit grant recipients. In Baltimore, for example, the grant was awarded to the Boys and Girls Club. The nonprofit groups provide a place where young people can go for help with homework, mentoring, and other programs.

### **Evaluation Period**

Eddie W. Banks, director of the foundation's youth investment and community policing program, said one goal of the 18-month grant program is to evaluate how well kobans reduce crime in public housing.

"We hope to show that when people come together and combine resources and bridge the gaps between civilians and the police, a better sense of responsibility is created and people begin to care about the place where

they live," Banks said. The objective is to use funds for efforts that are "anti-violence, anti-gang, and anti-drugs," he explained.

The initiative replicates similar Eisenhower-funded programs in high-crime areas of Philadelphia, Boston, and San Juan, P.R. An evaluation conducted for the foundation found that from 1990 through 1994, criminal activity in neighborhoods in these cities which had a koban declined 24 to 20 percent.

### **Individual Projects**

In Baltimore, the city police department and the housing authority have supplied one officer each to the koban project at Flag House Courts. They will be responsible for coordinating a range of programs, including tutoring, mentoring, recreation, entrepreneurship, and some school-based programs.

The police department in Columbia, S.C., has assigned three officers to the koban project at Gonzales Gardens. Their activities will include community patrols, educational and training programs, youth drug prevention, summer youth programs, and recreation.

Two police officers have been assigned to the koban at Hollingsworth Grove in Little Rock. Koban staff will focus their efforts on truancy prevention, computer training for youth and adults, and collaborative efforts with the school board to develop skill-building programs.

The Memphis Police Department will have two officers at its koban project at Le Moyne Gardens. They will be involved with programs for physical fitness, crafts, computer science, and after-school homework supervision and assistance. Koban staff will establish new programs such as a youth employment service, a career club, and a savings club.

The San Juan koban is currently in its seventh year of operation and is considered the prototype for kobans that have been established in the U.S. The San Juan program is operated by Sister Isolina Ferre, a youth service organization which houses the koban. A new program goal will be to establish a koban in San Juan public housing, to conduct home visits, and to produce a video for training purposes.

*(For information about kobans, contact Eddie Banks, 202-429-0440)*