

Denver Police Museum

Annual Report



2022

Founded in 2008, the Denver Police Museum is a designated 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a mission to promote social impact by building bridges between citizens and the law enforcement of Denver. We accomplish our mission by creating opportunities for community understanding and engagement, strengthening the city's relationship with the community, and educating youth to inspire community involvement, responsibility, and a future generation of law enforcement professionals.



Shown on the cover of this report is the front of the new 2023 challenge coin which honors the long and distinguished service of the horses that serve as part of the Denver Police Department's Mounted Patrol. Horses were in use from the earliest days of the Department. By the late 1800s, the Mounted Patrol was established to patrol the Denver Stockyards and open spaces in Denver. By 1932, motorcycles and automobiles put the Mounted Patrol out of business and most of the horses were sold at auction, with the exception of a couple which were kept for use by the Parks Police, but even those were gone by 1935. In the early 1980s, an "ad-hoc" Mounted Patrol was put together by volunteers for a special event, and it was such a success that it was brought back by 1985 and is still in use today. In 2019, for the first time in history, the Denver Police Department swore in a horse named "Maverick" as part of the Mounted Patrol Unit.

Shown on this page is the back of the 2023 challenge coin. This year's challenge coin also honors the heritage and continued service of the brave police dogs who have served alongside the Denver Police since 1922 as "man's best friend, and a cop's best partner." Law enforcement agencies have used dogs to assist in a variety of tasks since the 1800s. These highly trained canines help police officers do their jobs safer and faster. In 2021, Shelby, a 15-month-old black English Labrador retriever, joined the Denver Police Department as the first therapy dog in the department's pilot pup program.



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Actively Creating Community Conversations

It is with great pride that I can share the many ways that 2022 was another banner year for the Denver Police Museum. With our community emerging from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Museum was able to dramatically increase the number of youth-oriented programs offered to students. Designed to provide youth with the opportunity to interact with law enforcement in a positive and fun setting, the Museum's programs have helped students meet science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) requirements and have created career pathways for job opportunities in criminal justice, public safety, and law enforcement. These programs are essential to our mission at the Museum as we work to strengthen police-community relations.

The Museum is dedicated to actively creating community conversations where citizens can hear, see, feel, participate, understand, and appreciate the value of police in our lives. Led by a dedicated board along with approximately 50 volunteers, the Museum reached approximately 4,150 individuals in 2022, including families and youth. Our hands-on learning and events teach youth and communities about STEM, criminal justice, history, safety, and policing in our city.

The Denver Police Museum's innovative programs inspire, empower, and inform. Our current programs include:

1. **History Programs, Tours, and Field Trips:** We offer free public programs, guided tours, and field trips that help to connect visitors and students to the rich and diverse stories of Colorado's past. Notable programs include Black History Month, oral histories, historic tours of Lower Downtown Denver, and field trips for Denver-area schools.
2. **Forensic Science:** We host programs in partnership with the Denver Crime Lab that create opportunities for the public to learn about the role of forensic science in crime scene investigation.
3. **Fallen Officer Project:** Through our ongoing Memorial Services, the Museum celebrates and honors the lives of fallen Denver law enforcement officers who have died in the line of duty. We work to commemorate their courage, dedication, and unwavering commitment to preserving our safety and our way of life.
4. **STEM & Civics Enrichment Program:** Delivering age-appropriate content with a focus on diversity and representation, the Museum's STEM & Civics Enrichment program ignites an interest in STEM and creates pathways for Denver Public Schools students in grades 7 and 8 to explore careers in criminal justice, law enforcement, and STEM-related fields.

With generous support from The Anschutz Foundation and the E-470 Public Highway Authority Transportation Safety Foundation in 2022, the Museum successfully scaled its STEM & Civics Enrichment Program and piloted a youth-focused Traffic Safety program. The aim of the Museum's STEM & Civics Enrichment Program is to create pathways for career exploration in criminal justice, law enforcement, and science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM). The goal of the Teen Traffic Safety Program is to prevent deaths and serious injuries on Denver's roadways by educating young drivers about traffic safety and traffic laws, including the risks of distracted and impaired driving, what to do if you are pulled over by a police officer, and how to report an accident. Both programs provide unique and fun educational opportunities to Denver-area students while enabling trust-building between law enforcement and youth.

This past year the Museum again provided the greatest number of volunteer hours for any of the Denver Police related organizations, and I want to express our gratitude to our terrific volunteers for this achievement. We are also very proud of the fact that over 800 active officers continue to support the Museum financially with payroll deductions. We also want

to thank our many retirees for their ongoing support of our mission. Notably, we increased the number of Museum memberships in 2022 over 2021.

On behalf of the board of the Denver Police Museum, thank you for your continued support.

With gratitude,



Michael Hesse, President, *Denver Police Museum*

May 1, 2023

Greetings,

Time and time again, Denver has been named by national publications as one of the best places in the nation to reside, raise a family and retire. Millennials and entrepreneurs alike can find successful careers in Denver. As for the important issues facing our residents every day, we continue to find innovative and creative solutions to give back to a city that gives so much.

As a great city, we must retain our history, and we must remain active, accessible and inclusive of all our residents. We must provide equality and safety for all our neighborhoods so Denver can continue to be a guiding light for the rest of the United States.

The Denver Police Museum is actively creating community conversations through programming for all ages, so our residents can see, hear, participate, understand and appreciate the value of police officers in our lives. This is the kind of open engagement we need to ensure that all have a voice in closing the gap between residents and police as has happened in other parts of the country.

That is why I am so excited to support the Denver Police Museum's efforts to build a state of the art museum to create a community experience unlike any other, one that will provide crime prevention education that targets key issues in the community and fosters constructive conversations with police officers. This will be a key effort not only in the police department's strategies to address crime and ensure the safety of Denver residents, but it will also be at the center of crime prevention education involving youth, adults and older adults – because everyone deserves to be safe. The Denver Police Museum is ready to take the lead in bringing the community and the police department together with the above goals in mind.

Please join me in supporting the Denver Police Museum in this noble endeavor.

Respectfully,



Michael B. Hancock, Mayor





May 1, 2023

Greetings,

Please enjoy the Denver Police Museum's annual report which highlights its work in preserving the legacy of the Denver Police Department and demonstrates the commitment of its members and volunteers to our community. The Denver Police Museum, founded in 2008 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, is instrumental in documenting and preserving the history of law enforcement in Denver and honoring those who have served before us.

This annual report details the many activities the Museum has undertaken in 2022. This includes hosting numerous activities to honor fallen officers, recognizing service, engaging our young people, and preserving the law enforcement history of our community.

Several youth enrichment activities hosted by the Denver Police Museum in 2022 were well attended, garnering significant positive feedback from students and their teachers. DPD is pleased to know the Denver Police Museum continues developing plans to further engage our community through programming for all ages so our residents can see, hear, understand, and appreciate the value and mission of law enforcement. It is through efforts like these that relationships are strengthened between the DPD and those we serve.

The Denver Police Department values our partnership with the Denver Police Museum and appreciates their preservation of our history, honoring those who serve and increasing positive interactions with Denver's community.

If you would like more information about the history of the Denver Police Department or would like to volunteer with the Denver Police Museum, please visit www.denverpolicemuseum.org

Sincerely,

Ron Thomas, Chief of Denver Police



Students Participate in Fun, Hands-On Learning

We are proud to report that the Museum's 2022 youth programs were a great success.

In collaboration with our strategic partners, the Museum hosted nine full scale programs and four field trips, reaching a

record number of youth in 2022—more than 550 students.

The Museum's youth programs help to spark curiosity in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) and civics while creating pathways for career

exploration and providing opportunities for trust-building between youth and law enforcement through positive and fun interactions with police officers. We would like to express our sincere gratitude to our partners at the Denver Police Department, Denver 911, Denver Crime Lab, Denver District Attorney's office, Denver Public Schools, and DPS Spark Industry Introduction for your support in making these programs possible.

Importantly, the Museum was able to expand our STEM & Civics Enrichment Program in 2022 due to the generous support of The Anschutz Foundation. In addition, we piloted our new Teen Traffic Safety Program with the support of the E-470 Public Highway Authority Transportation Safety Foundation. The Museum's new Teen Traffic Safety Program provides an opportunity for high school students to interact with Denver Police Department Traffic Officers while learning what to do in an emergency and how to perform a traffic stop in a way that keeps themselves and others safe on the road. This program is unique in that it teaches young drivers how to safely interact with police during a traffic stop. We would like to thank Retired Officer and Museum volunteer, Barbara Cisneros, for her leadership in designing this program.

For each of the Museum's programs, we conduct a pre- and post-evaluation to measure students' knowledge of the subject matter as well as their sentiments regarding their trust in law enforcement and their career aspirations. I am happy to report that we have moved the needle in a positive direction for each of our key performance indicators.

The remarks captured from student evaluations after attending our programs clearly indicates the positive impact of our youth programs:

- Thank you for sharing and giving us your time!
- We had fun! Can we come again?
- I liked the museum, cars and bomb squad
- I really liked the robot, cars and officers



- I enjoyed visiting the Denver Police Museum today, I loved discovering everything here
- I would like to be someone who protects people
- I got to learn new things
- How do you become SWAT?
- I liked when I went to explore police cars
- I liked the crime solving
- Thank you for [taking] me and my class here to learn about the police and thank you for your time

The Museum is committed to continuing and expanding our programs in the coming years to provide more opportunities for positive interactions between our youth and officers.

Respectfully,
April Overman
*Treasurer and Programming
Committee Chair*



History Continues to Drive Participation

On the historical front the Museum continues to honor our fallen officers with memorial signs placed at the locations where the officers lost their lives.

In 2022, we held a special program with the Black Officers Organization honoring the tenth anniversary of the sacrifice of fallen Denver Police Officer Celena Hollis in June 2022. Officer Hollis is the first Black woman to die in the line of duty in the department's 163-year history. She was the second woman (with Kathleen Garcia being the first) and the second Black officer (with Willie Steam's death in 1921 being the first) to die in the line of duty. The Museum was honored to have Celena's daughter Amyre, her 6-month-old granddaughter Chanel, and Celena's sister, Candice, attend the memorial.

Thanks to the research of volunteer Jeffrey Burke, we were able to locate the family of Richie Rose. Officer Rose was killed in the line of duty on October 31, 1922. Museum volunteer, Bill Finch, provided the necessary research to help us understand the historical context of this tragic event. Officer Rose's murder was never officially solved but it is widely believed that he was a victim of a mafia hit. His last words were "... mafia, mafia, mafia." The Museum placed a memorial sign exactly 100 years to the day at the location where Officer Rose lost his life. We were joined by his great grandson and other members of his family. A special service was also held at his grave site earlier in the day.

On November 5, 2022, the Denver Police Museum partnered with the Denver Firefighters Museum and Visit Denver for Night at



the Museums. The Denver Police Museum put together a special bus tour highlighting and honoring the service of Denver Police Officers Paul Major, Shawn Leinen, James Wier, and David Roberts. Attendees were also invited to tour the firehouse and see historic fire engines and historic Denver Police cars. A special thanks to Bill Nagle and Bill Finch for providing the important narrative for these stories and to the Denver Police Department for the buses necessary for transportation.

We are happy to report that the tour buses were filled to capacity and overall attendance at the event was over 200 people. Participants came from around the world, including Ukraine, India, and Afghanistan as well as several new Colorado residents from communities throughout the United States. This event helped to raise awareness of the Museum's mission and provided the opportunity to share the stories of our fallen Denver Officers with our fellow citizens.





By the Numbers

The Museum is dedicated to remembering, preserving, and understanding the history of the Denver Police Department. With an extensive collection of more than 8,223 artifacts, objects, and oral histories, the Museum bears the responsibility of preserving thousands of important and historical law enforcement-related items.

Objects:	1,642
Photos:	4,270
Archives:	2,099
Library:	219
Accessions:	279

A special thank you to Gail Samson for her second donation of police memorabilia from the collection of her late husband Sgt. Ron Samson. The Museum was honored to receive many one of a kind historic badges and other police artifacts. We express our gratitude to Ron's family for contributing this important collection to the Denver Police Museum.



Highlights

Police Week 2022

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy declared May 15 as Peace Officers' Memorial Day and this week as National Police Week. The purpose of the proclamation was to pay tribute to the law enforcement officers who have made the ultimate sacrifice for our country and to voice our appreciation for all those who currently serve on the front lines of the battle against crime. In 2022, the Museum received permission from the Denver Office of Special Events to light the City and County Building blue in recognition of our 77 fallen officers and the nearly 8,000 individual officers who have served our city since its founding in 1859.

The Museum partnered with the Denver Area Chapter of the Boy Scouts of America in 2022 to honor our fallen officers. Families, museum volunteers, and scouts visited the gravesites of the officers to place fallen officer flags and wreaths. A special tribute outlining the individual sacrifice of each officer was read at their grave.

The Museum also held a remembrance ceremony acknowledging the 25th anniversary of the sacrifice of Denver Police Officer Bruce Vanderjagt. The ceremony was attended by Bruce's widow, Anna Vanderjagt, and his many friends and fellow officers. 9News also ran a special segment recognizing Officer Vanderjagt's family.

Denver Police Sgt. Dean Christopherson completed historical research that identified four Denver Police Officers for addition to both the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington, DC and the



Denver Police Fallen Officer Memorial Wall whose names were added to the wall during Police Week 2022, including Officer Andrew Sandburg who died in 1912, Officers Frank Potestio and Peter Walsh who died in 1918 from the Spanish Flu, and Officer Robert Sandoval who died in 2020 from injuries suffered when he was shot in the line of duty in 1969.

The Rocky Mountain Law Enforcement Credit Union also partnered with the Denver Police Museum to host a dinner honoring our fallen officer's survivors at the Denver Country Club. This event was the largest gathering of surviving family members from Denver in history, with over 25 fallen officers being represented by their families. We were honored to have Denver Mayor Michael Hancock and Chief Paul Pazen join us for this historic event. The oldest survivor was Cody Robinson, widow of Fallen Officer Darrell Suer, at ninety-nine and the youngest being Celina Hollis's granddaughter at six months.



A special thanks to Tom Green of Channel 9 for serving as the Master of Ceremonies for the Memorial lunch.



Black History Month

In 2022, the Denver Police Museum partnered with the Denver Police Department, Denver Black Officers Organization, and the Blair Caldwell African American Library to honor and recognize retired Denver Police Lt. Charles “CT” Smith with the Trail Blazer Award. CT served the Citizens of the City and County of Denver from 1959 to 1995. In addition to delivering several babies on the way to the hospital during his career, CT is most widely recognized for his efforts in the creation of the Crime Stoppers Program in the 1970s. CT was the public face of Crime Stoppers appearing on Denver Channel 7 during the height of the program. Crime Stoppers is credited with solving and providing leads with a number of serious crimes that occurred in Denver. CT was the fourth black officer to serve as a Division Chief for the Denver Police Department.



Women's History Month

The Denver Police Museum honored retired Denver Police Officer Margaret Chavez in 2022 for her many years of service to the citizens of Denver. Margaret joined the department in 1985 serving in a variety of roles during her tenure, including with the D.A.R.E. program and the department's community outreach efforts with the Denver Police TV show called “Blue and You.” Margaret served as a Sergeant on the department and later retired in 2005.





Financial Snapshot

Cash Assets	\$293,243	Grants	\$12,500
Donations	\$101,993	Program Expenses	\$92,936
Other Revenue	\$5,895	Other Expenses	\$27,576

Youth Advisory Council Provides Input

Representing Denver area high school students, the members of our Youth Advisory Council (YAC) were recommended by Parker Groves, the College Bound Manager at the Breakthrough at Kent Denver. YAC members help to shape the Museum's youth programming by providing input and sharing their experiences. In 2022, YAC members reviewed and advised the Museum on how to improve the new Teen Traffic Safety Program.

The Council was established in 2021 as a way for the Museum to gather feedback from teens to ensure that our youth programs are thoughtful, compelling, and relevant. By adding their voices to the Museum's programming strategy, the Council members benefit from a unique community

service experience that will provide a meaningful extracurricular activity to add to their resumes and/or college applications as well as an opportunity to support their personal and professional development goals.

We would like to express our gratitude to our Youth Advisory Council members:

- [Anthony Barros](#)
- [Sandra Garcia](#)
- [Machanddoku Koti](#)
- [Omar Sanchez](#)
- [Ifeoma Ugeh](#)

Sincerely,
Linda Remley
Secretary and Head of the Youth Advisory Council

Did You Know?

The Denver Police Museum's collection includes more than 4,000 objects that tell the story of Denver's law enforcement history and illuminate the broader cultural history of the city. These objects include historic police badges, equipment, call boxes, radios, uniforms, photographs, historic police records, and many other law enforcement-related artifacts. One particularly interesting object in the Museum's collection is a fragment of United Airlines Flight 629 that was destroyed by a bomb in 1955.

On November 1, 1955, at 6:52 pm, United Airlines Flight 629 departed from Stapleton Airfield in Denver. Eleven minutes later the plane exploded, killing all 44 people onboard and scattering debris over Longmont, Colorado. The Rocky Mountain News described the night as a "scene of death and horror under flickering flames." The plane fragment, preserved by the Museum, displays what is thought to be a shrapnel hole from the cargo hold explosion beneath the passenger cabin of the plane.

It was later learned that John "Jack" Gilbert Graham had built a homemade bomb using 25 sticks of dynamite and slipped the bomb into his mother's suitcase, who was on the

flight. The FBI investigated the bombing but handed over the case to Denver District Attorney Bert Keating, who charged Graham with murder. The case went to court in April 1956 and the trial was the first in U.S. history to be televised. On May 5, 1956, the jury deliberated for 69 minutes and found Graham guilty. Graham was executed in the gas chamber at the Colorado State Penitentiary on January 11, 1957.

The fragment is a symbol of the first confirmed case of sabotage against a U.S. commercial airliner. The bombing of Flight 629 led to an early example of the successful cooperation of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, as each supported the other in the investigation of this crime.

The plane fragment was included as one of Colorado's Most Significant Artifacts in 2015. The program, sponsored by History Colorado, highlights the importance of historic and cultural heritage and honors and recognizes all the organizations in Colorado that care for and preserve photographs, documents, rare books and manuscripts, audio recordings, film, digital materials, art, and historic, archaeological and natural science specimens.



Looking Ahead

Through interactive, culturally responsive, and socially relevant programming, the Denver Police Museum is redefining educational and community impact experiences utilizing a blend of history, civics, public safety, and STEM to shape the future of Denver and beyond. The Museum is dedicated to actively creating community conversations where citizens can hear, see, feel, participate, understand, and appreciate the value of police in our lives.

The Museum is preparing to build a full-scale, state-of-the-art museum and educational facility located at 4700 Brighton Blvd, Denver, CO 80216 in Denver's Elyria-Swansea neighborhood that will feature a permanent collection on display paired with a broad range of interactive and stakeholder-informed programming designed to strengthen communities, increase access to career exploration, and improve police-community relations.

As we ready to build a robust educational and community resource, we are actively

seeking to deepen relationships within our community and understand how the Museum can best serve our communities and create opportunities for engaging experiences. Our vision for the Museum's new facility is to:

- Educate and preserve the history of Denver's transition from a "wild west cow town" to a modern cosmopolitan city—from its roots as a log village with an elected Marshal to a leading-edge police department. The new Museum will serve to tell the stories of policing in Denver, both good and bad, and will create a space for community voices and critical dialogue.
- Develop a unique museum model, with immersive exhibits featuring forensic science, police technology and vehicles, K-9 unit and mounted patrol, safety, and more.
- Increase access to youth development programming and career exploration, including the various careers in criminal justice and law enforcement.



A very special thank you

to each and every donor.

We are so grateful for your continued support.

**To the
Denver Police Museum Volunteers**

Your commitment, hard work and dedication
is greatly appreciated.

You have participated in programming,
sign ceremonies, as a researcher,
emceed events, fundraising,
given tours, assisted in the office,
traveled to other museums to study
their programming and their successes,
provided solace to grieving families,
and generally given of your time and energy.

Once again, you gave
more than 5,000 hours of your time
to the Denver Police Museum.

Thank you so very much!



DENVER POLICE
MUSEUM

2022 Denver Police Museum Executive Committee

Michael Hesse, President
Linda Remley, Recording Secretary
April Overman, Treasurer

2022 Denver Police Museum Board of Directors

Sgt. Dean Christopherson
Nicole Galluzzo
Paul Schauer
Rosie Siemer
Lamar Sims

Thank you to:
Jon LaFloe, Graphic Designer