



2025-26 Youth Programs Impact Report

Analysis by Lindsey Horvat

July 10, 2025

Helping to create safer, stronger, and more vibrant communities in Denver and beyond.

An important part of the Denver Police Museum's mission is to ignite curiosity, inspire learning, and pave the way for bright futures for our Denver youth. The Museum's programs offer an exciting gateway into the worlds of criminal justice, law enforcement, and forensic science. Through engaging, hands-on experiences, we blend the thrill of discovery with programs that provide essential opportunities for career exploration, trust-building, and safety education.

At the heart of our Career Exploration and Safety Programs is our commitment to:

- **Exploration:** Sparking curiosity and creating pathways for career exploration in criminal justice, law enforcement, and forensic science.
- **Connection:** Building trust and fostering positive relationships between youth and law enforcement.
- **Education:** Equipping youth with the best skills, knowledge, and experiences to stay safe and avoid criminal behavior.

In 2025-26, the Denver Police Museum served 487 students across 20 programs, including eleven core programs that focus on career exploration and seven high school field trips that highlight the dangers of Fentanyl. In addition, the Museum hosted two Traffic Safety programs. In the Traffic Safety program, students learn about what to do if they are involved in an accident, participate in mock traffic stops with the DPD traffic officers, and experience impairment with DUI goggles.

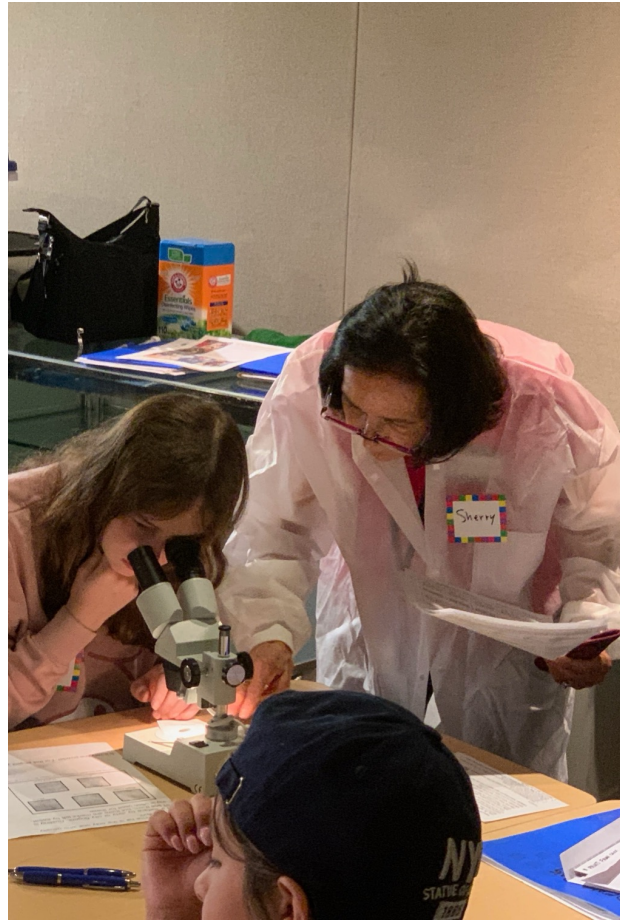
Surveys from 176 students were reviewed to provide the following information concerning the pre-program and post-program opinions towards law enforcement. In all, 252 post-program responses were received, but not all were included in this review due to the inability to pair a pre- and post-program response (an overall 69.8% response rate). Additional surveys were included when determining whether or not the students enjoyed/had fun with the classes.

Crucially, perceptions of law enforcement and the programs had a net positive increase across all questions asked.

Overall, the programs showed positive gains in all five questions asked including (1) strongly agreeing that being a law enforcement officer is an important job (28.1% increase), (2) that students strongly agree that they would call the police if they need help (24.7% increase), (3) students strongly believe police keep the community safe (13.3% increase), (4) students agreed or strongly agreed to be interested in law enforcement as a career (30.1% increase), and (5) students strongly agreed they were interested in a career in public service/criminal justice (60.0% increase).



**Highlights From 2025-26
DPM Career Exploration & Safety Programs**



CSI Forensic Science

2025-26 DPM Career Exploration & Safety Programs



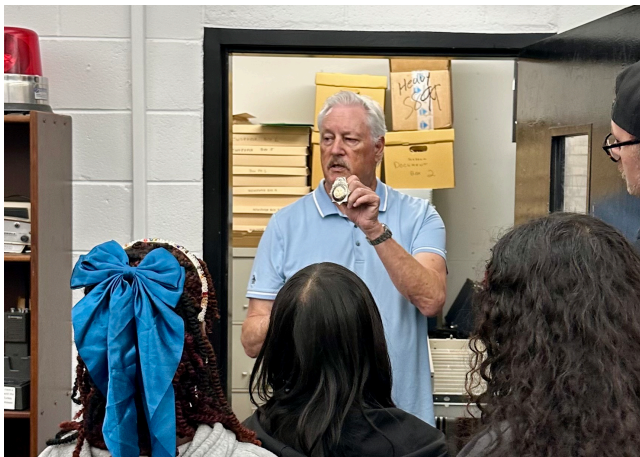
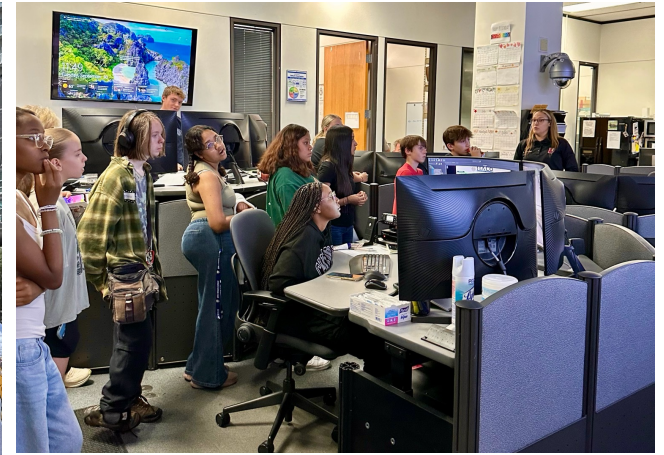
METRO/SWAT

2025-26 DPM Career Exploration & Safety Programs



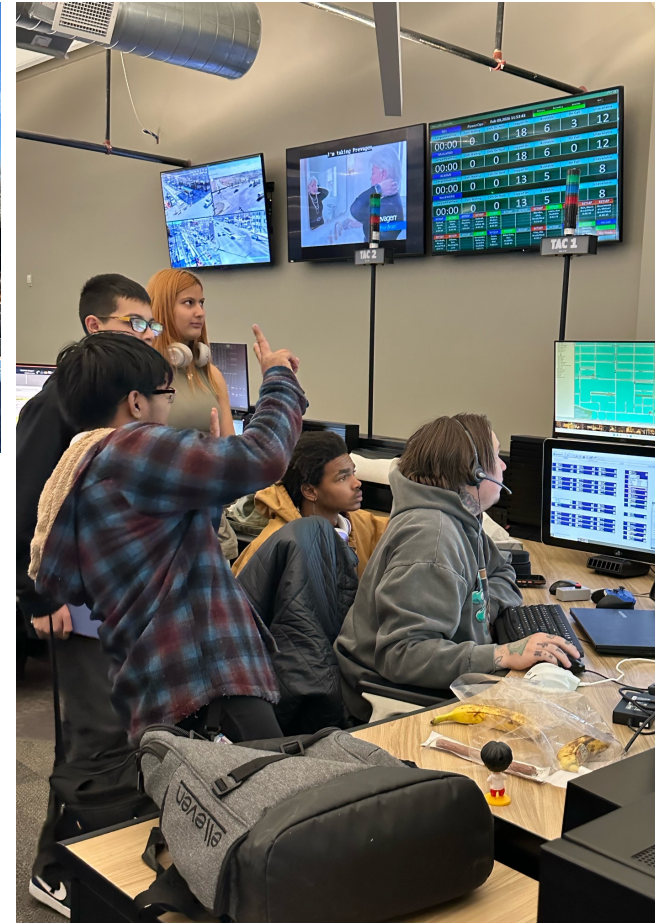
Traffic Safety

2025-26 DPM Career Exploration & Safety Programs



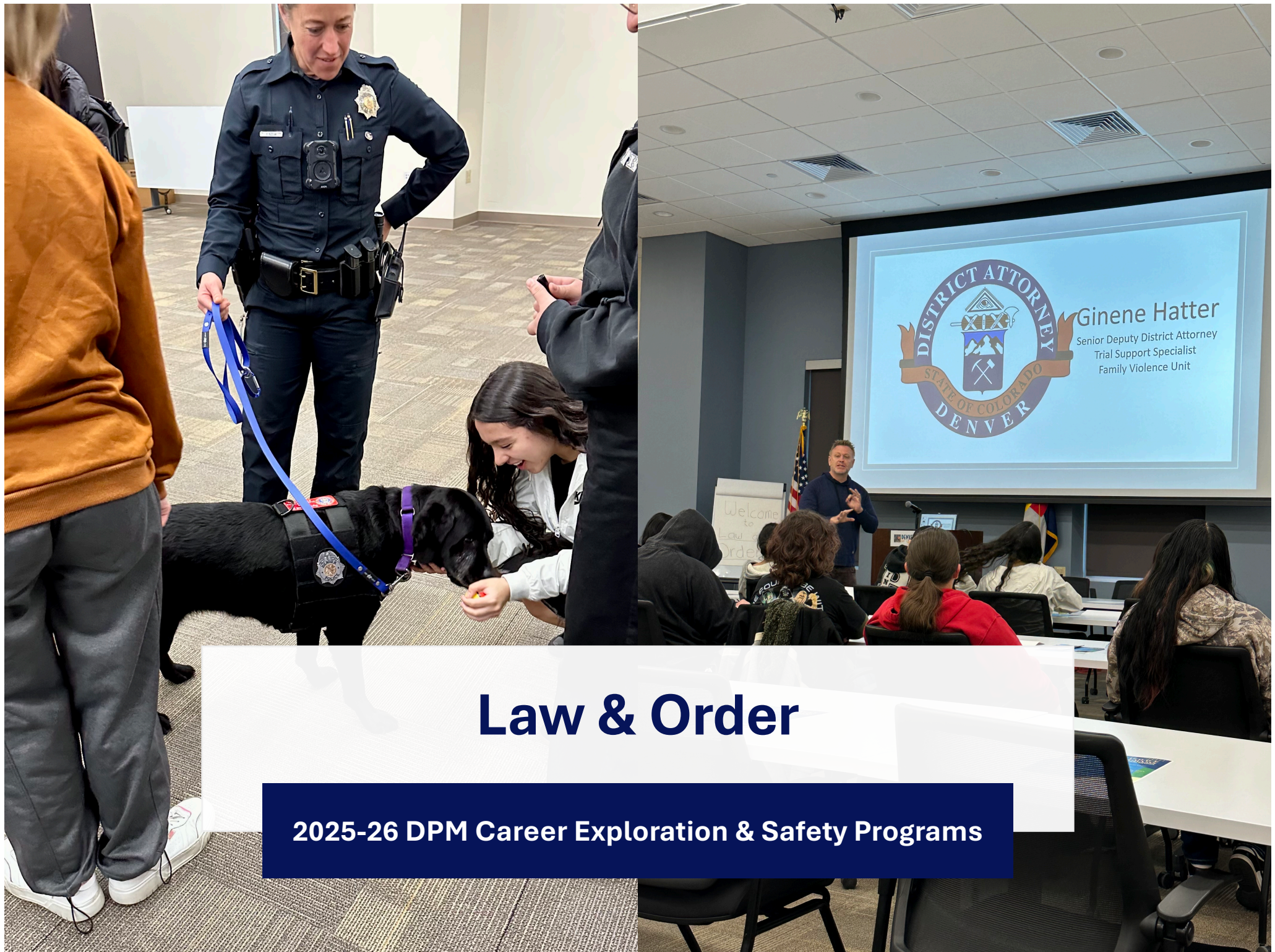
Police Tech

2025-26 DPM Career Exploration & Safety Programs



911 & Police Communications

2025-26 DPM Career Exploration & Safety Programs



Law & Order

2025-26 DPM Career Exploration & Safety Programs



On average, students were neutral when considering a career in law enforcement or criminal justice, which slightly increased by 2.2% after the programs. That said, the numbers of students interested is much higher than last year. In the 2024-25 school year of 200 students surveyed, 50.0% agreed or strongly agreed to consider in law enforcement as a career prior to the presentations. In the 2025-26 school year, 95 of the 164 respondents who answered this question had this favorable opinion (57.9%). As with last year, there were several students who asked in the follow up to be either contacted on next steps to becoming a law enforcement officer or joining the Explorer or Cadet program, especially in the Law and Order program.

Students, on average, entered the classroom with a favorable opinion of law enforcement (96.6% strongly or somewhat strongly believes law enforcement to be an important job), but the interactions throughout the day moved these opinions towards the “strongly agree” opinion on law enforcement (28.1% increase in strongly agree responses, or 32 students changing from neutral or agree to strongly agree). 79.6% of the students (152 of 191 respondents) greatly enjoyed interacting with law enforcement during the program.

Overwhelmingly, the participants appreciated the cars, the dogs, and interacting with the various professionals throughout the day.

Below are selections of comments from the students on what they liked most from the day as well as the “Anything else you’d like to share” questions.

Police Technology Class

- [I liked] All of the police old stuff from the 90s
- [I liked] Being able to see what the police dressed like in the 80s
- [I liked] Being able to tour and learn history
- I like how they (sic) the people's name's that died
- I liked learning about the fallen officers and how they lived
- I liked the 88 pounds of Bomb and the robot and the food
- I liked the conversation with the Bomb Squad
- I loved how interactive it was! It was so fun to be able to look and touch
- I mostly liked the Bomb Crew because it was so cool
- [I liked] Learning about the police
- [I liked] Looking at the cop cars and the history behind them
- [I liked] Rooster the K-9
- [I liked] That it taught us a lot about police history
- [I liked] The old police cars and things
- [I liked] The tommy gun
- [I liked that] They showed me things I never knew about
- I had a great time!
- I had fun
- I liked interacting with the officers
- I want to be an explorer
- it was cool today



- It was fun and I was hoping to get a ride in the police car
- It was very fun today
- Thank you so much!!! I had a lot of fun today
- This was so fun and they should do that again

The top results were:

- 1) The Bomb Squad (13 mentions)
- 2) The Police Cars (13 mentions)
- 3) The museum itself (8 mentions)
- 4) The dogs (5 mentions)
- 5) The robot (4 mentions – although some did say “Robot dog” so this might be more!

Forensics Class (translated from Spanish, forgive any errors/assumptions)

Notable: when asked what students liked the least, the response was overwhelmingly “nothing” or “I liked it all!”.

- I like things related to identifying criminals
- [I liked] That we were investigating (4 students mentioned this)
- To be able to learn about the crime scene
- Vanessa Sanchez
- About being able to learn more about this, and other things too

911 Dispatch Class

When asked is there anything else we should know, one student responded: “Can I come back tomorrow?”

- [I liked] Getting to see how all the calls go through and practice ourselves
- [I liked] How the police cars work
- I learned a lot I did not know
- I like seeing how they took the calls
- I like how the tours explained everything so simple
- I liked how they show the people that are working
- I liked when we got to be on the computers
- I loved seeing the real time emergency
- It was super cool to get a chance to see everything
- [I liked] Learning more about 911
- [I liked] The interactive parts and looking around the different places
- The tour was very interesting and informative

As with the Police Technology class, students overwhelmingly enjoyed looking at the cars (10 students mentioned this).

SWAT

- My day was great and exiting to learn so much about the SWAT team and I have a brother-in-law that worked for the military.
- Bear cat was lowkey the best, it was so cool!
- I like the gym part how you guys take a test will hard thing
- I liked exploring the equipment trucks. See pic, too.
- I liked the part of us trying the gym materials. I liked every part of this field trip.
- I liked the part where we got to learn about the dogs and gyms, especially that guy that was in a band.
- I want to join the Navy or Air Force!
- It was terrific meeting the officers and being able to get hands-on with each activity
- Learning about the SWAT and police
- Meeting the dogs
- Most favorite thing was K9 and least favorite thing was nothing
- My favorite part of the day was everything but mostly the canine dogs and the gym
- My favorite part was definitely the dog but I also enjoyed the gym/proving my strength :)
- My favorite part was getting to see their stuff and least favorite is the cold
- My favorite part was seeing the dog and learning more about them and their skills.
- My favorite part was the equipment truck, the process of training dogs, along with the gym
- My favorite part was the green cat. My least favorite was the K9
- My favorite part was the gym because it was fun and my least favorite was none it was all enjoyable
- My favorite part was when we were at the gym and guessing ages. My almost least favorite part was the dog because I'm scared of them
- See the picture below; this student also said, "I liked exploring the equipment trucks."





Law & Order

Several of the students in these classes were interested in the Explorers program as well as any internship opportunities.

- Everything was fun and interesting
- Getting to know what others do and their stories
- Hearing 911 and detective speak
- Hearing from many perspectives
- How each person described what they do
- How the people talked about what their job was
- I enjoyed talking about law enforcement as it is a career I look forward to in my future
- I enjoyed the real life example from the detective
- I enjoyed when the dispatchers were talking about dispatching
- I had a very good time learning about the system and I believe each part is vital in saving lives. Honorable work & I would love to be apart of it one day.
- I learned a lot more & gained an insider perspective
- I like how in depth the presentations were
- I liked all the different speakers!
- I liked being able to hear about the different positions there are and how they decided what they really wanted to be
- I liked everything
- I liked hearing about everyone's career, what each station fragment does, overall a great experience
- I liked how you set the presentations in the order of how things happen in the criminal justice system
- I liked learning about the DA
- I liked learning about the different pathways & what they deal with
- I liked learning about the dispatchers
- I liked learning more about what goes into saving lives and the process behind each system
- I liked seeing Shelby
- I liked that I got to hear from people in each field
- I liked the example of a detective job and the RTD photos
- I liked to learn about their experiences & opportunities they have to consider taking them
- I loved the diversity of everyone that talked to us! :) and Shelby
- I loved when the first homicide detective showed us a case study and gave us a look at real evidence/pictures from the case. Generally I liked hearing about all the opportunities in law enforcement
- I would like to know if any of your places of work offer internships - if yes, please contact me
- Learning about court and how it works
- Learning about the court case
- Learning about the other careers and what their day to day looks like
- Learning everyone's experience and learning about their steps to their career

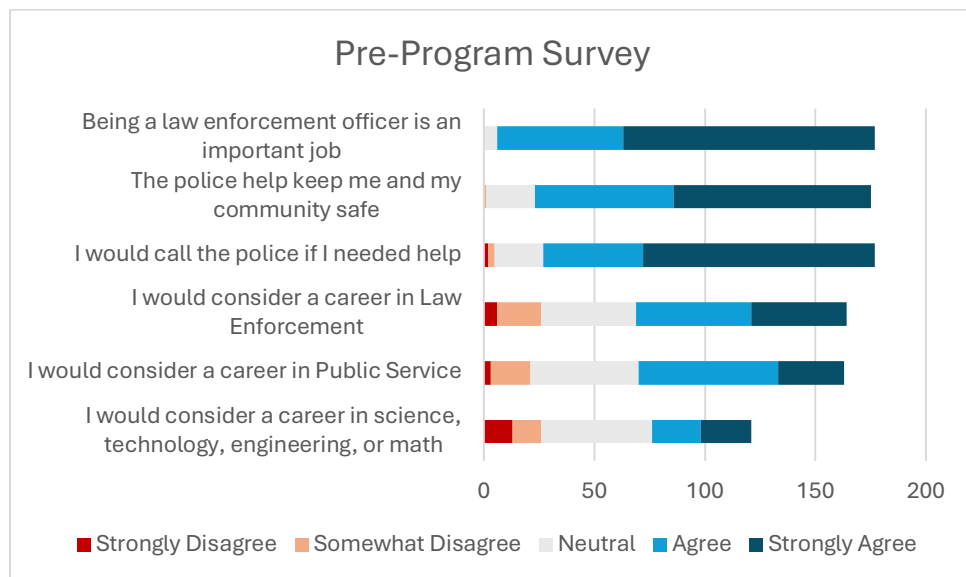


- Meeting Shelby and hearing of more options for careers
- Talking to different people with different careers
- Thank you for putting this together for us!
- The conversation and hearing about everyone's different experiences
- The different perspectives of how the system works

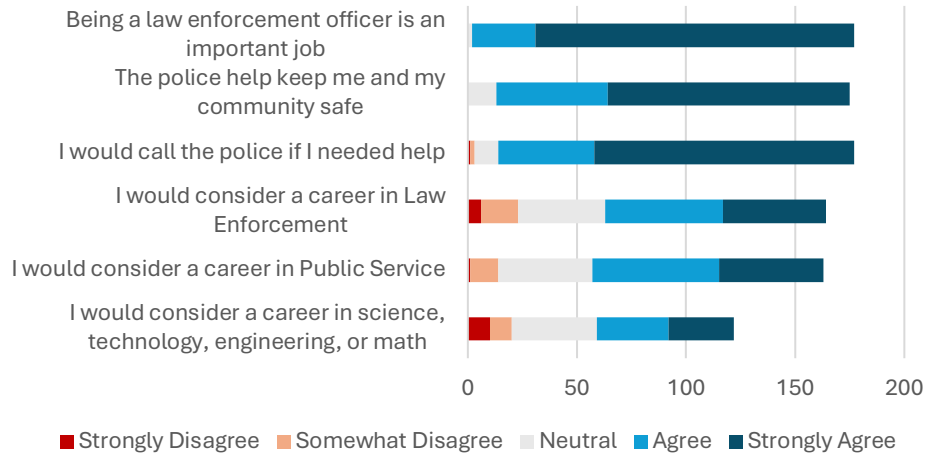
Traffic Safety Comments:

- Anything interactive was great, fun, and informative
- How educational it was and the demonstrations
- Talking to the officers
- Experience was so cool so everything
- Know more about police and safety personnel

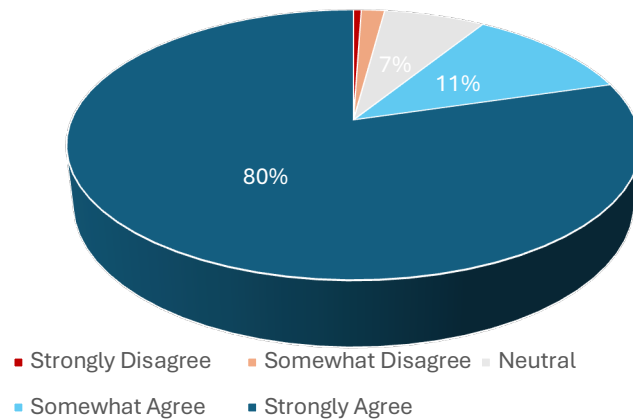
As with prior years, the Drunk Goggles/DUI stop was the most enjoyed activity (17 of the 34 students mentioned them).



Post-Program Survey



I had fun interacting with Law Enforcement Professionals Today



Change	Strongly Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Neutral		Somewhat Agree		Strongly Agree	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
I think being a law enforcement officer is an important job.	0	N/A	0	N/A	-4	-200.0%	-28	-96.6%	32	28.1%
I would call the police if I needed help.	0	N/A	-1	N/A	-9	-69.2%	-12	-23.5%	22	24.7%
I believe the police help keep me and my community safe.	-1	-100.0%	-1	-50.0%	-11	-100.0%	-1	-2.3%	14	13.3%
I would consider a career in law enforcement.	0	0.0%	-3	-17.6%	-3	-7.5%	2	3.7%	4	9.3%
I would consider a career in criminal justice.	-2	-200.0%	-5	-38.5%	-6	-14.0%	-5	-8.6%	18	60.0%

Average of Responses	Pre-Program Average	Post-Program Average	# Change	% Change
I think being a law enforcement officer is an important job.	4.61	4.81	36	4.4%
I would call the police if I needed help.	4.37	4.56	33	4.3%
I believe the police help keep me and my community safe.	4.40	4.57	30	3.9%
I would consider a career in law enforcement.	3.65	3.73	13	2.2%
I would consider a career in criminal justice.	3.61	3.85	40	6.8%

Key:

- 1 is Strongly Disagree
- 2 is Somewhat Disagree
- 3 is Neutral
- 4 is Somewhat Agree
- 5 is Strongly Agree



Methodology

DPM's data analyst paired student names as best as possible. Those names that could not be paired were not included in the report. Instances where a pre-survey was not completed were only captured for comments and responses did not contribute to the overall calculations, except for whether or not the students enjoyed the course.