

Paul Pazen:

I know that this is a hot topic across the country right now, and we certainly want to share any of the lessons learned that we have. We've actually been working on creating this STAR program for almost four years. And this was a partnership with community groups, at least community groups that have not always been the biggest fans of law enforcement. But we saw the value of this right off the bat. I mean, it just makes sense. You hear the basic mechanics of it and you're like, "Okay, yeah. Why aren't we doing that? Let's give it a try."

And really a couple of community groups and our team coming together to think of a new approach, and then we navigated that, trying to figure out how we could come up with the funding in order to do it. Our original launch date was actually scheduled for April 1 2020, but as we recall, that was really at the height of the pandemic. It was with a lot of unknowns, and so we pushed it back a couple of months, just in order to ensure that we could keep the team safe from the pandemic primarily, and launched it on June 1. But, as far as early successes, it's working with the community to get their support, to get their ideas in something like this, and it just has been win-win on every conceivable level for us so far.