



NEWS RELEASE

RIVER FOREST POLICE DEPARTMENT

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River Forest – Oak Park Junior Citizen's Police Academy

River Forest, IL — Last week the River Forest and Oak Park Police Departments teamed up to offer their annual Junior Citizen's Police Academy. The academy consisted of over 30 cadets (10 – 15 years old) with multiple instructors from both police agencies.

"This is no ordinary summer camp," said Academy Director and R.F.P.D. School Resource Officer Ben Ransom. "Our cadets get a unique experience, influenced heavily by our officers' own highly specialized training. The camp provides local children with an opportunity to get a close up view of what police officers do and how they protect their communities."

The academy, which ran for 6 hours a day from August 2nd through August 6th was offered to residents and students from the River Forest and Oak Park communities. Both classroom topics and practical exercises ranged from scenario based decision-making, "Establishing Probable Cause and Crime Classifications" to special topics, "Crime Scenes and Forensics." Classroom instruction was combined with ample outdoor exercise routines similar to the real police academy and welcomed various guest speakers to deepen the academy experience.

The highlight of this year's academy was the result of ongoing collaboration with the Chicago Police Department (CPD). Midweek, the cadets took a field trip to see the Chicago Police Mounted Patrol Unit and Chicago Police Marine Unit at the lakefront. This experience was followed by a visit from the CPD/Cook County Sheriff's Police Helicopter Unit which landed in our own backyard at Keystone Park. The helicopter crew took about 2 hours to speak to the cadets and allow plenty of photo opportunities.

Finally, the cadets graduated after a pizza lunch and some well wishes from both River Forest Police Chief James O'Shea and Oak Park Police Chief LaDon Reynolds.

