



RAMSEY COUNTY
SHERIFF
Bob Fletcher, Sheriff

Press Release & Media Availability

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Sheriff's Office Youth Plus Program Hockey and Skating Season Kicks Off

***Hockey and skating activities aim to keep kids out of trouble
and build a stronger, more connected community***

Saint Paul, Minnesota: the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office Youth Plus Program started its hockey season on Monday, September 30. This year's season will run from September 30 through the end of October. Youth, ages 9 to 15 of diverse backgrounds, are learning the importance of preparation, goal setting, and teamwork. Youth who are participating in hockey also completed a summer literacy program and continue to connect with law enforcement in a positive manner.

"After a busy summer of reading and skill development, the kids are now looking forward to hockey and skating activities," said Chy Nou Lee, an Inspector with the Sheriff's Office who leads youth crime prevention services. "For many kids, this is the first time they are on the ice, as most youth are first generations from immigrant families."

The Youth Plus Program is made possible through public, private, and non-profit partnerships as well as community members. The Ramsey County Parks & Recreation Department provides in-kind ice time during off-peak hours. Equipment and supplies are provided by local businesses, including Strauss Sporting Goods, Revolution Sporting Goods, Bauer Hockey, and MATTER, as well as the Ramsey County Sheriff's Foundation. Community volunteers coach kids as they learn how to play hockey and skate. "Traditional hockey programs are very expensive," added Lee. "This can be a barrier, but as a result of our partnerships we can offer hockey and skating activities at no cost to these families. We want every kid to succeed."

In February of this year, the Sheriff's Office restored youth crime prevention programs. In doing so, the Youth Plus Program was established to serve as a crime prevention program for economically disadvantaged and under-served youth in neighborhoods across Ramsey County. Youth participants are introduced to athletics, outdoor activities, life skills, and literacy enhancement to improve reading skills. More importantly, this structured program helps prevent youth from becoming involved in criminal activity and helps them make more positive choices.

The Youth Plus Program is led by Chy Nou Lee, an Inspector with the Sheriff's Office. Lee has worked for the Sheriff's Office since 2001. Lee's family immigrated as refugees to the United States following the Vietnam War. As a child, he participated in the Sheriff's Office youth programming opportunities in the late 1990s and became an Eagle Scout. Lee is the first person of Hmong descent to serve as an Inspector in the Sheriff's Office. He is also the first Hmong American to serve on a senior leadership team of a law enforcement agency in Minnesota.

Donation to support the Youth Plus Program can be made to the Ramsey County Sheriff's Foundation (www.ramseysheriffsfoundation.org). Hockey and skating equipment can be dropped off at the Gustafson Phalen Ice Arena (1320 Walsh Street, Saint Paul) through October 31.

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