

FROM CADET TO OFFICER: CAN THE POLICE ACTIVITIES LEAGUE CADET  
PROGRAM BE USED AS A RECRUITING TOOL FOR THE  
SAN FRANCISCO POLICE DEPARTMENT?

A Thesis

Presented to the faculty of the Department of Public Policy and Administration  
California State University, Sacramento

Submitted in partial satisfaction of  
the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF PUBLIC POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION

by

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SPRING  
2013

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Abstract  
of  
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Can the San Francisco Police Department use the Police Activities League cadet program as a recruiting tool? The San Francisco Police Department has had difficulty in recruiting qualified police officer candidates with a hiring success rate of four to ten percent. In this thesis, I evaluate the PAL cadet program by reviewing the qualifications and program experiences associated with the program. I identify and categorize qualities of a successful police applicant and challenges police agencies face finding these applicants. Finally, I conduct interviews in an attempt to gather additional data. With further collaboration between the SFPD and the PAL, and following certain recommendations, the PAL Cadet program is a potential recruitment resource for the SFPD.

\_\_\_\_\_, Committee Chair  
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my family, especially my parents Carolyn and Glenn Kabanuck: Thank you for your encouragement and support in all aspects of my life. The confidence you instilled in me helped me to achieve all of my greatest life goals.

To my husband, Miguel Gonzalez: Finishing my thesis during one of the most important times in our lives was extremely difficult. Thank you for your love and patience and for your willingness to sacrifice our time together so I could stay focused.

To my best friend, Heidi Logan: If it were not for this program, we never would have met! Thank you for being there to listen when I needed to vent and for your support and encouragement along the way.

To my brothers and sisters in blue of the San Francisco Police Department, especially Captain Louis Cassanego and Captain Daniel Mahoney and those who served as former PAL cadets: Without your support and contributions, this thesis would not have been possible.

To the cadets of the Police Activities League: Your dedication to the cadet program is inspiring. You are all truly exceptional young people.

To Mary Kirlin, Peter Detwiler, Suzi Byrd, and the rest of the Public Policy and Administration Department. Thank you for your patience and advice through the emails, phone calls, and frustrating starts and stops along the way.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ACT	American College Test
COPS	Community Oriented Policing Services
DOJ	Department of Justice
GED	General Equivalency Degree
LAPD	Los Angeles Police Department
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
NYPD	New York Police Department
OCPD	Ocean City Police Department
PAL	Police Activities League
PERF	Police Executive Research Forum
PD	Police Department
POA	Police Officers Association
POST	Peace Officers Standards and Training
SAT	Scholastic Aptitude Test
SFPD	San Francisco Police Department
SJPD	San Jose Police Department
SWAT	Special Weapons and Tactics

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **CADETS AND THE SFPD**

#### **Introduction**

Police agencies saw a 37 percent decrease from 1989 to 2002 in the number of applicants they received. Police departments hired just 43 percent of these applicants. (Taylor et al., 2005). Part of the reason for fewer applicants is a decreasing applicant pool. One cause for this decrease is that the population of people between the ages of 21 and 35 has dropped. These ages are the most sought after for police officer positions. This decline is because of the decrease in the number of children that people have coupled with the aging population of the baby boomer generation (McBride, et al., 2009). Other possibilities include competition among other police agencies, budgetary problems, and competitive career opportunities in the private sector (Yearwood, 2003). This decrease is also because the number of people between 15 and 29 years of age arrested for crimes that disqualify them from police related fields has increased (Shusta, et al., 2005).

The quality of police applicants is also a problem that most police agencies face. The San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) has had difficulty in recruiting qualified candidates for vacant police officer positions. The president of the Police Officers Association (POA) in San Francisco states that the SFPD hires just four officers out of every 100 applicants (Nevius, 2007). In 2012, Mayor Edwin M. Lee of San Francisco budgeted for 300 new police hires over a two-year period (Lee, 2012). To hire 300 new

officers, the SFPD accepted 2,500 applicants beginning in August 2011 (ABC7 News, 2013).

### **The Question**

The SFPD has a working partnership with a non-profit agency called the Police Activities League (PAL). San Francisco police officers established the PAL over 50 years ago to foster better relationships between community youth and police officers. PAL programs include mostly sports related activities, such as football, baseball, and basketball. The PAL also has a law enforcement cadet program, which allows kids an opportunity for an in-depth look at life as a police officer.

In 2008, the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) conducted an organizational study of the San Francisco Police Department. PERF recommended that a SFPD lieutenant work with the PAL cadet program, stating that the cadet program can “help them [cadets] see the SFPD as a sound career choice (Forum, 2008).” Because of the relationship between the SFPD and the PAL and on the above recommendation, in this thesis I further explore the question of whether the PAL cadet program can be a viable recruiting tool for the San Francisco Police Department.

### **The San Francisco Police Department**

The San Francisco Police Department has been operating more than 200 officers under the mandate established by city charter to have 1,971 sworn officers, with approximately 1,762 officers currently employed. Voters mandated the 1,971 number during a peak in the city’s crime rate in 1994. (Peak, 2012) In 2000, women accounted for 15.5 percent of the SFPD and 40.1 percent were of some minority background

(Reaves & Hickman, 2002). In 2004, women made up 16.4 percent of the SFPD, while minorities made up about 46 percent. About 1 percent of officers as of 2008 considered themselves members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender (LGBT) community (PERF).

The current staffing level is an 8 percent decrease from 2009, when the SFPD had 1,916 employed officers. (Carlton, 2012) The SFPD also faces additional staffing shortages because of an aging workforce. In 2008, 24.8 percent of the San Francisco Police force was eligible to retire (Forum, 2008). Today, the SFPD faces the possibility of at least 400 officer retirements over the next three years (Peak, 2012).

**Figure 1: Shrinking Staff**



Source: The Wall Street Journal (May, 2012)

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303916904577376324131477402.html>

In February 2008, the SFPD tried to lessen the impact of police shortages by retaining officers for a few extra years. The voters passed Proposition B (2008) that allowed qualified officers the ability to work for three years while earning their regular salaries in addition to their pension benefits, which accumulated in an account. Officers received a four percent return on investment and could collect from the account at the end

of the three-year period. The city required that the officer was at least 50 years old and had 25 years of service. After a closer look at the program, studies suggested the city was actually losing money by encouraging officers to retire earlier, and that hiring new recruits would prove more financially viable (Peak, 2012).

### **Recruitment**

A qualified applicant for the San Francisco Police Department must meet the following minimum standards: be at least 20 years old to take the written examination and at least 21 years of age to enter the police academy; be a U.S. citizen; have a high school diploma or GED; have a valid driver's license; have no felony convictions. A qualified applicant must then proceed with a series of examinations and endure a full background assessment (Department S. F., Background Unit and Current Candidate Information, 2013).

The San Francisco Police Department practices several methods of recruiting for new officers. According to a lieutenant who once worked in the SFPD recruitment unit, these methods include attending events such as career and job fairs, reaching out to community colleges and universities, attending public relation and community events, and advertising to military bases (Wearing, 2013). Officers from the recruiting unit attend anywhere from 25 to 42 events per month (Forum, 2008). In the most recent hiring campaign, the SFPD planned to recruit from colleges with criminal justice programs (Peak, 2012).

A 2008 survey revealed that 46 percent of applicants applied by using the SFPD website, or the San Francisco city website (Forum, 2008). Website links keep potential

applicants up to date with current job postings and testing dates, and they provide specific details regarding the hiring process. The PERF report also revealed that 27 percent of applicants found out about hiring by word of mouth, mostly through officers already employed by the SFPD (2008).

The San Francisco Police Department also provides incentives such as higher pay for bilingual applicants, a down payment program for a home purchase if the applicant purchases a home in San Francisco, and referral bonuses for officers in the department (Forum, 2008). To encourage officers from other agencies, the SFPD offers signing bonuses for lateral officers who transfer, and a shortened academy time of 8 weeks, rather than a typical 30-week academy (Department S. F., San Francisco Police Department, 2013).

The SFPD also targets sectors of the community that it did not recruit in the past. For example, the SFPD recruitment unit sends officers to the Gay Pride Festival to attract LGBT applicants, the Kwanza Festival to attract black applicants, the Cherry Blossom Festival to attract Asian applicants, and the Women's Expo to attract female applicants. By attending a variety of events from different sectors of the community, the SFPD seeks to contact a diverse applicant pool. In 2007, the San Francisco Police Department published its announcements of police vacancies and hiring in multiple languages to attract minorities from many different backgrounds (Forum, 2008).

Until 2008, the SFPD administered the written entrance exam in mass numbers. According to SFPD Lt. Wearing who worked in the recruitment unit in 2007 and 2008, the SFPD used to allow 15,000 applicants to sign up for the written exam. The



department rented a venue large enough to test hundreds of these applicants at a time. What the SFPD found, however, was that nearly half of those who signed up for the exam would not show up to take it, costing the city thousands of dollars each time it administered an exam. The department changed this recruitment method and it now tests smaller applicant groups at a time (Wearing, 2013).

Another discontinued practice by the SFPD was a pre-academy program facilitated by San Francisco City College. This program tested participants in reading and writing abilities to assess their readiness for the written exam. There was also a physical ability practice test administered to prepare the participants for the physical exam. Although not a credited course, the participants were exposed to what an applicant must endure to be hired with the SFPD. The city discontinued this program because of budget problems (Forum, 2008). Currently, the SFPD offers unpaid internships to college students enrolled full-time while maintaining a 2.0 grade point average. Interns must work at least 12 hours a week in assigned PD units, yet the department does not guarantee college credit (Department S. F., San Francisco Police Department, 2013).

According to San Francisco Police Chief Greg Suhr, the SFPD currently only accepts applications once each year for police officer positions, typically in November. This recruitment method began approximately two years ago. The challenge, he said, is that those who apply in November do not take the written exam until March the following year. Chief Suhr believes this delay curbs the level of enthusiasm enough that many of the applicants do not show up to test or are lost to other police departments who hire these applicants before they test for the SFPD. Overall, Chief Suhr believes

recruitment is getting better, but still estimates that only about ten percent of those who apply to be a police officer make it in to an academy class (Suhr, 2013). The Chief's number contradicts the POA, which stated in 2007 that the success rate of an applicant was about four percent. However, as the Chief suggests, recruitment practices have changed since then.

### **The Police Activities League Cadet Program**

#### **Current Mission**

The Police Activities League says that it builds community by organizing youth sports and healthy activities that develop personal character and foster positive relationships among police officers, youth, and dedicated volunteers (League, 2013). The PAL's goal for the cadet program are to develop career and job related skills, experience leadership from adults and learn the skills to be leaders themselves, learn in a supportive and caring environment, and gain knowledge about career opportunities in law enforcement or other areas of public service (League, 2013). According to Lorraine Woodruff-Long, the executive director of PAL, the main goal of the cadet program is to develop leadership skills for teens and young adults that would be useful for a career in law enforcement or in public service (2013).

#### **Requirements**

The Police Activities League cadet program in San Francisco provides kids an opportunity to participate in police officer roles, particularly those that involve community events. In addition to age requirements, cadets must also live or be enrolled in a high school or college in San Francisco, ensuring that cadets are receiving their

education and are living within the city in which they might work. Other requirements include maintaining a 2.0 GPA, committing to at least one year in the program and passing a criminal background check (League, 2013).

### **Academy Class**

In 2010, the PAL and the SFPD sponsored the first ever PAL Cadet Academy Class. For four weeks, enrolled cadets experienced firsthand what it is like to be a real police recruit. Cadets endured rigorous physical training, interacted with some of the SFPD's specialized units such as K-9 dog unit and SWAT, and learned some of the basics of police training, such as memorizing radio codes. Following the cadet academy, cadets participated in internships in one of two San Francisco police stations, working alongside police officers. (Tucker, 2010)

Cadets had to complete internship hours in addition to other duties, such as working community events and attending weekly academic meetings. These activities continue until the cadet reaches the age of 21. At the age of 21, a cadet "ages out" and is no longer eligible for the cadet program. The age of 21 coincides with the age required to become a police officer in San Francisco, and most other police departments (League, 2013).

### **Recruitment**

The PAL cadet program currently recruits through several outlets. First, it has established a website detailing the cadet program, the requirements for a future cadet to apply, and the process to apply. The PAL also advertises by publishing fliers passed out by cadets or current SFPD officers at local San Francisco high schools and colleges. The

PAL encourages current cadets to recruit future cadets by promoting the program to their classmates and friends. Finally, the cadets can reach out to potential applicants during community events by representing the program at SFPD information booths (League, 2013).

## **Conclusion**

In chapter two, I will conduct a literature review to determine common practices in police recruitment and discuss what makes a police applicant successful. I will also identify the challenges by police agencies that make recruiting for new officers difficult. Finally, I will discuss in more detail how the San Francisco Police Department recruits for new police officers and address the challenges that the SFPD faces in recruitment.

In chapter three, I describe the methodology I used for this thesis including the analysis of the PAL cadet program. I will use the analysis to determine what would be necessary to make a cadet a qualified candidate for the SFPD. Additionally, I will discuss the purpose of interviews with police officers in the SFPD and cadets in the PAL program that I will conduct to gather additional information regarding what might work for the cadet program going forward in order to be a recruiting tool. I will discuss these interviews in detail, including the characteristics of the participants and the questions asked of the participants.

In chapter four, I will present the results from my analysis of the PAL cadet program, detailing the components of the program. Additionally, I will discuss the results from my interview data and identify any trends from results. I will use the

information from the interviews to supplement any information that I could not gather through the analysis of the PAL cadet program.

Finally, in chapter five I will analyze whether the PAL cadet program has the potential to be a recruiting tool for the SFPD. Further, I will make recommendations to the SFPD and the PAL regarding any changes that the SFPD and the PAL could make to the PAL cadet program to use the program as a recruiting tool. Chapter five will also address the opportunity for future research that might be helpful to the SFPD and PAL for future consideration.

## CHAPTER 2

### RECRUITMENT IN POLICE DEPARTMENTS

The U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) has recognized the lack of data about staffing trends in police departments. It attributes this problem to the fact that most data collected regarding police staffing is during census years, instead of annually. This problem causes a delay in the presentation of the data because of the time between census years, and the time needed to prepare and present the data. By the time new data emerge, they argue, the challenges that police agencies may face could shift or change (Services, 2011).

However, as police agencies face retirements at a faster pace than hiring efforts, the discussion of recruitment has become more common. The increase in newspaper articles discussing the issue, in addition to more recent and consistent studies on police recruitment efforts emerging suggest that police agencies recognize challenges in recruitment (Carlton, 2012; DeLord, 2009; Corps, 2012; Hubbard, 2013; Hunter, 2012; Jurkanin, Fischer & Sergevnin, 2001; Koper, 2004; Lee, 2012; Maguire & King, 2004; Matrofski, 2007; Matthies, 2011; COPS, 2009, 2011; Peak, 2012; Reaves & Hickman, 2002; Scrivner, 2010; Wilson et. al, 2010; Yearwood, 2003).

#### **The Police Applicant**

Traditionally, a qualified police applicant's most important characteristics include good physical health, the ability to mentally endure the background process and a police academy, personal character and behavior, a clean criminal history, and a basic academic background (Frost, 1955; Mirich, 1959). A desirable candidate must also possess the

knowledge and acceptance of working outdoors in a sometime dangerous environment and good interpersonal skills (Raymond, et. al, 2005).

The Peace Officer Standards and Training Commission (POST) established the following basic requirements to become a police officer in California based on the California Government Code sections 1029 and 1031 (Training, 2013):

- Minimum age of 18
- U.S. citizen or permanent resident alien who has applied for citizenship
- A high school diploma or GED
- A reading and writing assessment
- Oral interview
- No felony convictions confirmed through a fingerprint check
- Background questionnaire to assess moral character
- Medical and psychological screening

The exam given by POST to assess an applicant's basic reading and writing skills result in a score, called a T score. This score reflects a mid-point of 50 with a ten-point standard deviation, meaning scores below 40 are below average, and scores above 60 are above average (Training, 2013). POST allows individual departments to set their own standard of T score, but states that for each point over 42 that an applicant scores, the more likely the applicant is to successfully complete the police academy (2013). POST established this threshold after it conducted a study analyzing the scores of recruits that passed the police academy (Weiner, 1994).

As shown in Table 1, requirements for T scores greatly vary according to department:

**Table 1: T-Score Requirements**

Police Department	T Score	Source
Oakland	45	<a href="http://www.opdjobs.com/faq.asp">http://www.opdjobs.com/faq.asp</a>
San Francisco	46	<a href="http://www.jobaps.com/sf/sup/BulPreview.asp?R1=CCT&amp;R2=Q002&amp;R3=059729">http://www.jobaps.com/sf/sup/BulPreview.asp?R1=CCT&amp;R2=Q002&amp;R3=059729</a>
BART	47	<a href="http://www.bart.gov/docs/OfficerSelection.pdf">http://www.bart.gov/docs/OfficerSelection.pdf</a>
Richmond	48	<a href="http://agency.governmentjobs.com/richmondca/">http://agency.governmentjobs.com/richmondca/</a>
San Jose	50	<a href="http://www.sjpd.org/joinsjpdblue/BecomingAPoliceOfficer.html">http://www.sjpd.org/joinsjpdblue/BecomingAPoliceOfficer.html</a>
Riverside	52	<a href="http://www.riversideca.gov/rpd/employment/hirepolice/steps.asp">http://www.riversideca.gov/rpd/employment/hirepolice/steps.asp</a>
Long Beach	60	<a href="http://www.longbeach.gov/police/join/full_time/">http://www.longbeach.gov/police/join/full_time/</a>

POST has a standardized physical ability test given to a recruit prior to graduation from the academy. However, POST does not require a police applicant to pass the test during the application process (Training, 2013). Most agencies administer their own physical exams instead. For example, the Oakland Police Department requires an applicant to pass a test that includes running through a maze, jumping a fence and over a ditch, dragging a dummy and a handcuffing a subject (Department O. P., 2013).

Once an applicant has passed the physical test, the police agency interviews the applicant. The goal of the interview is to assess an applicant's problem solving and communication skills, personal interests and motivations and community engagement. The final two steps for an applicant include the background investigation and medical and psychological screening (Training, 2013).

### **Applicant Characteristics**

Women and minorities currently make up the largest share of the current workforce (Jurkanin, Fischer & Sergevnin, 2001). Because of this, police agencies have changed their recruitment strategies to attract a more ethnically and gender diverse set of applicants. Diversity recruitment also includes requirements of higher education, with police departments seeking out college-educated candidates. Much of this recruitment



reflects that police agencies are trying to mirror in their police officers the communities in which they serve (McKay, 1996).

A survey conducted by COPS found that 75 percent of agencies with more than 1,000 full-time sworn officers reported that diversity in recruitment is extremely important, and 15 percent found it of moderately high importance. Demographics in diversity recruitment in this particular study included Black, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian or Alaskan Native, and women (McBride, et al., Law Enforcement Recruitment Toolkit, 2009).

Looking for minority and women applicants initially increased the applicant pool used by law enforcement agencies compared to a pool that traditionally included just white males (Raymond, et. al, 2005). With this increase, the percentage of minority police officers rose from 15 percent in 1987 to 24 percent in 2003, while women represented 11 percent of police officers, up from eight percent in 1987 (McBride, Morabito, Walker, & Bostrom, Law Enforcement Recruitment Toolkit, 2009).

Police agencies have shifted to a more community based policing approach to solve crimes considered unsolvable by traditional policing methods (Moore, 1992). Community policing favors communication rather than hardline enforcement and requires a skill set that includes awareness of culture (particularly of the community that an officer serves), negotiation, and the ability to solve problems (Raymond, et. al, 2005). Lonsway and her colleagues believe that women police officers are more likely to diffuse conflict through verbal skills, rather than escalating to physical violence. They cite a

study conducted in seven large police departments that found just 5 percent of complaints due to excessive force were against women officers (2003).

Police department personnel have increasingly become more educated. As early as the 1970s, the idea of a better-educated police force became more prominent in recruiting practices. The President's Crime Commission recognized that being a police officer involved more than physical aptitude and the ability to make common sense decisions (Brandstatter, 1970). The number of police officers with a college degree has increased. Police officers with a college degree consisted of about 32 percent of the police force in 2000, as opposed to ten percent in 1990 (Maguire & King, 2004). Police applicants need not just have a background in criminal justice. Studies suggest that students with an educational background in fields other than criminal justice offer a more diverse knowledge set (Corps, 2012).

Despite the increase in educated police officers, Yearwood's survey data revealed 69 percent of agencies required a high school diploma or equivalent, while 20 percent required some work experience in addition to a high school diploma. Further, just nine percent of police agencies required a two-year degree (2003). However, conflicting data by Maguire and King found that 14 percent of police agencies require some college or a two-year degree, although 83 percent require completion of high school (2004). Failing to attract applicants with four-year college degrees, the Plano Police Department changed its requirement to two years of college, or three years of military experience to apply (Johnson, 2006). This change suggests that it is more difficult for police agencies to attract four-year college graduates.

## **Recruitment Methods**

Most police agencies recognize the importance of finding the most qualified candidate for vacant police officer positions through efficient recruitment, rather than simply filling the vacancies with whoever applies (McBride, et al., Law Enforcement Recruitment Toolkit, 2009). Even while recognizing the need for qualified candidates, DeLord argued that the way police agencies present themselves during recruitment campaigns is false advertisement, with ads luring potential applicants with promises of excitement and special assignments (2009). Scrivner referred to this presentation as “adventure orientation,” where police agencies emphasize parts of a police career that are more exciting like catching criminals and getting into pursuits in their recruitment campaigns. She argues that these types of recruitment practices are outdated and are no longer working to attract quality candidates for the job (Scrivner, 2009).

Traditional recruitment methods are quite consistent throughout most police agencies. Some methods for police recruitment are word of mouth from current law enforcement officers, newspaper or magazine job announcements, and job fairs (Yearwood, 2003). One study on the Los Angeles Police Department in 1986 found that officers, through themselves and friends and relatives, were the most important way to recruit new officers (McKay, 1996). Other traditional methods of recruitment attempt to target groups that include minorities or other special interest groups like political or social circles (Jurkanin, Fischer & Sergevnin, 2001).

The Internet is now one of the most successful methods for police agencies to acquire new applicants. In Oakland, California, the police department not only

established a website in its recruiting efforts, but also opened a recruiting hotline (Walter, 2012). Scrivner found that 70 percent of applicants found out about police agency hiring through the Internet. Yet, Scrivner pointed out that there are no data to support those applicants recruited from the Internet rather than from other traditional recruitment methods were more likely to get hired (2009).

Some departments have employed new tactics to attract certain demographic groups. For example, the Sacramento PD developed a program to assist female applicants in the background process. This program allows female candidates to work with a personal trainer to develop better physical skills needed to pass the physical ability test. The goal of the Sacramento PD is to help more female candidates through the process (Foster, 2006). According to the department's 2006 annual report, the Sacramento PD had 114 female officers (Department S. P., 2011). As of 2011, the Sacramento PD had 127 female officers. The 2011 annual report pointed out that the SPD has had no new police officer hires since 2009, and had 24 unfilled police officer positions due because of budget setbacks (Department S. P., 2011).

New recruitment strategies are beginning to emerge with the goal of giving a police applicant a more realistic view of what a career in law enforcement actually entails, preventing the falsehoods often advertised as previously suggested by DeLord and Scrivner. Some police agencies require an applicant to complete a series of police ride-alongs before the department offers employment (Orrick, 2008). Volunteers already working within a police agency see the realities of police work. It is possible that a police agency can reduce the costs associated with hiring, such as time and resources

needed to process applicants, if the applicant is already a part of the police organization he or she is applying (Wilson, et. al., 2010).

One survey conducted from 2008 to 2009 of new police recruits asked for the reasons why the recruits applied to become police officers. The data found that job security and public service were the most important to the recruits. The public service aspect meant that the recruits were attracted to helping members of the community (Castaneda & Ridgeway, 2009). The attraction to community work relates back to the community based approach to policing. A strong relationship with the community is more likely if the applicant already has established ties to the community in which the applicant will ultimately serve as a police officer (Comeau & Klofas, 2010).

“Hiring in the Spirit of Service” (HSS) was an idea enlisted by COPS to attract police candidates likely to develop personal relationships with the community to promote the idea of community policing. COPS chose five law enforcement agencies to implement the HSS strategy based on the departments’ willingness to implement community-policing tactics, including involving community members in their recruitment strategies. Additionally, the police department must have been actively recruiting for open police officer positions (Scrivner, 2010).

For example, the Sacramento PD established a program called “Community Recruiter Program” designed to train citizens active in community relations to recruit from churches, schools, neighborhood associations and other community groups. (Scrivner, 2010) These citizens attend a training program that covers federal and local law, the background process for a police applicant, and the academy requirements for a

police recruit. Once trained, the citizen partners with a police department recruiter and assists the recruiter throughout the recruitment and hiring process (Foster, 2006).

Because of budget cuts, the Sacramento PD hired few officers since 2006, and none since 2009, so it not yet known what affects this program has on recruitment.

In May 2012, Detroit Police Chief Ralph Godbee changed recruitment practices for his department because of budget problems that eliminated 380 police officer positions in the 2012-13 budget year. Godbee required any new police applicant to serve as a police reserve to supplement the shortage in his police staff. He argued that the police department could determine whether the applicant was fit for a career in law enforcement based on his or her performance as a reserve (Hunter, 2012). Reserves are volunteer officers with duties that include some patrolling and other police related functions (Raymond, et. al, 2005). Because Godbee implemented the reserve requirement in July 2012 for the new budget year and because the Detroit PD is not currently hiring, the success of this hiring strategy is still unknown.

### **Youth Recruitment**

Some police agencies target a younger group for future recruitment. COPS suggested that reaching out to the younger population will not only help build a positive view of the police by youth, but can also foster a new generation of future police officers (McBride, Morabito, Walker, & Bostrom, Law Enforcement Recruitment Toolkit, 2009). Cadet programs facilitated through police activities leagues are quite common. Most law enforcement agencies in California have a cadet program, including the police departments in Los Angeles, Oakland, Richmond, Riverside, Sacramento, and Stockton.

A data search on the Internet revealed links to police agencies in numerous jurisdictions that employ cadet programs.

A police department in Milwaukee, Wisconsin established the first cadet program in 1952 (Devore, 1989). Police departments recruited cadets for “The Police Aide Program” where cadets trained in clerical roles within the police department (Seares, 1954). One study overwhelmingly cited recruiting purposes as the main reason for facilitating a cadet program (Osterburg, Trubitt & Myren, 1967). In the Los Angeles PD, the Topanga station has a cadet program that clearly defines its goal as preparing youth for a career in law enforcement (Topanga Police Youth Board, 2013).

Cadet duties include conducting presentations to fellow students, putting up fliers, and being present at community events (Osterburg, Trubitt & Myren, 1967). Because of limited police related activities in earlier cadet programs, many cadets pursued other career options rather than those in the law enforcement field (Devore, 1989). Over time, a cadet’s role changed and they took on more police related functions, such as general traffic control, some foot patrol, and community outreach projects (Osterburg, Trubitt & Myren, 1967).

Cadet programs aim to keep a cadet’s interest in law enforcement until he or she is old enough to apply to that particular police department (Flaughner, 1956). In New York, the NYPD rewards its cadets to become police officers by forgiving two years of college loans if they become police officers and serve at least two years in the department (Purnick, 2000). The San Jose Police Department established a program in 2002, where high school aged kids participate in a classroom academy setting designed after a real

police academy for half a day, and then attend regular high school for the second half of their day (Shusta, et. al, 2005).

Data collected from 92 different police agencies across the country found that just six percent of the police force consisted of former cadets during the period of their research, or just 734 officers out of 12,230. Cadets instead enlisted in the military, or resigned to attend college or because of disciplinary problems while a cadet (Osterburg, Trubitt & Myren, 1967). A more recent study of the Fullerton Police Department revealed that cadet programs were successful as a recruitment tool citing an 86.7 percent retention rate of cadets who became police officers as compared to 45.8 percent of applicants with civilian backgrounds who became police officers (Devore, 1989). Data regarding the success of cadet programs in police recruitment are outdated and rare, making it difficult to ascertain an accurate conclusion regarding the impact of cadet programs on recruitment efforts.

### **Challenges in Police Recruitment**

Several factors make recruiting for police officers more difficult, including decreasing applicant pools, the expense of recruitment campaigns, generational attitudes and behavior, competition from similar career fields, and the need for a more ethnically and gender diverse workforce (Jurkanin, Fischer & Sergevnin, 2001).

A poor applicant field can be extremely detrimental. The Fullerton Police Department only accepted 2 of 100 tested applicants during one of its hiring campaigns (DaVore, 1989). Koper suggested that a strong economy actually pulled experienced and more educated applicants to other careers that were better paying (2004). When faced



with a limited number of applicants, police agencies employ incentives that are costly. For example, police departments may offer signing bonuses and facilitate mentor programs, using department time and resources (Castaneda & Ridgeway, 2009).

A weaker economy might attract more applicants, but it can also severely restrict personnel responsible for recruitment and hiring. For example, in 2009 the Los Angeles Police Department faced a 60 percent cut in its advertising budget and experienced furlough days for employees that were responsible for hiring (Matthies, 2011).

Wilson and his colleagues warn that even at times when police agencies do attract hundreds of applicants, many of these applicants are of a younger generation that has the tendency to switch careers more frequently (2010). While these applicants might seek out a job in law enforcement, there is concern that these applicants do not intend to commit to a lifetime career in law enforcement (DeLord, 2009). These types of applicants can be a waste of time and resources that the police agencies have expended throughout the hiring process and training (Wilson, et. al, 2010).

Changes in the behavior within the current population of young people have also affected the applicant pool. Many young people now admit to experimenting with or consistently using illegal substances such as marijuana. Also, rates of obesity have steadily increased over the past two decades, with a rate of 15.5 percent of 12 to 20 year olds considered overweight (Raymond, et. al., 2005). These traits make it more difficult to qualify as a police recruit.

Those applicants that do meet the requirements of a police recruit often find careers in similar fields, such as the military, fire department, security and federal police

agencies (e.g., the Federal Bureau of Investigations) (Raymond, et. al., 2005). These applicants find alternative careers during the long, extensive hiring process. Sometimes it can take a year for a police department to hire an applicant. To address this wait, some police departments shortened their hiring process to just two days from the application stage to the offer of a job (McBride, Morabito, Walker, & Bostrom, Law Enforcement Recruitment Toolkit, 2009).

There had been a decrease in the percentage of women in larger police agencies, from 14.3 percent in 1999 to 12.7 percent in 2001 (Lonsway, et. al, 2003). But San Francisco PD had experienced an increase in women police officers from 15.5 percent in 2000 (Reaves & Hickman, 2002) to 16.4 percent in 2004 (Forum, 2008). Also, in certain communities, there are fewer Asian officers as a percentage compared to the percentage of Asian citizens in the same communities. For example, a study conducted of law enforcement agencies in Los Angeles and Orange counties found that Asians made up 11 percent of the population, but just 2.5 percent of the police officers in these counties were of Asian descent (Schroedel, Frisch, August, Kalogris, & Perkins, 1994).

### **The SFPD Applicant**

The San Francisco Police Department's minimum qualifications for a police officer applicant mirror those that POST requires. The T-score requirement on the written exam for the SFPD is 46, under what POST considered the mean. Education standards are at a minimum, requiring a high school diploma or equivalent. The SFPD administers its own version of a physical ability test.

The SFPD encourages lateral officers, or officers that have served in other police jurisdictions, to apply by offering signing bonuses. Other incentive programs include a 3 percent increase on base salary if the applicant is proficient in another language. The SFPD website posts the requirements for a police applicant (Department S. F., Background Unit and Current Candidate Information, 2013).

### **Conclusion**

Qualified police applicants must possess more than the basic requirements established by POST. They also must fit the needs of the community in which they serve. This requirement includes possessing the characteristics found within the community, such as ethnicity, gender, language, and a sense of the community's culture. Most recently, police agencies have recognized the importance of attracting candidates that represent their communities. Yet, recruiting practices have remained mostly unchanged over the past few decades.

In San Francisco, much of the recruitment methods are traditional methods. Although the Department has tried different tactics in the past, such as the testing of thousands of applicants at once, it continues to have poor success rates from the applicant to hiring stage of the process. Faced with inevitably staffing shrinkages from upcoming retirements and already operating under the city mandate, the San Francisco Police Department needs new recruitment practices to solve these problems.

## CHAPTER 3

### MEASURING THE CADET PROGRAM

#### **Methodology**

To evaluate the cadet program, I review the minimum qualifications and program experiences associated with the program and evaluate these qualifications against those required for an individual to be a qualified police applicant for the San Francisco Police Department. I identify each requirement and highlight the similarities and differences to determine whether there are additional qualifications that a cadet applicant must fulfill to apply to become a police officer. Also important are the experiences a cadet has in the program and whether these experiences help make an individual a qualified police applicant.

The literature revealed several themes regarding important common characteristics sought by police agencies during recruitment. These characteristics are not requirements, but the literature suggests they are important qualities of a successful police applicant. Using these themes, I later compare the elements of the PAL cadet program to determine whether the program is successful in attracting cadets that possess the qualities necessary to be a successful police applicant. The following are my criteria for this assessment:

➤ **Exposure to police duties**

**Description:** Exposure to real world elements of a police career is important for a police applicant because it allows the applicant to determine if a career in law enforcement is suited for them prior to enduring the lengthy police hiring process. Exposure to these elements can be achieved through ride-alongs with police officers while on patrol, station level internships, and an understanding of appearance (uniform) requirements, time commitments (10 hours shifts,

overtime, holiday shifts, etc.) and paramilitary standards (line-up, saluting, chain of command).

**Relevant findings within the literature:** Recruitment campaigns are false advertisement luring potential applicants with promises of excitement (DeLord, 2009). “Adventure orientation” where police agencies emphasize the more exciting aspects of a police career are outdated recruitment practices (Scrivner, 2010). Recent trends suggest that police agencies are beginning to require real world exposure and experience of a career in law enforcement as a prerequisite to applying for a police officer position (Orrick, 2008).

➤ **Educational background**

**Description:** It is necessary for a police applicant to have sufficient reading and writing skills to pass the written POST exam required to apply to the San Francisco Police Department. The literature suggests that requiring some kind of college degree or college units has become increasingly more common in recent years. If this trend continues, education will be an important characteristic of a police applicant.

**Relevant findings within the literature:** Becoming a police officer requires more than physical aptitude and the ability to act upon common sense (Brandstetter, 1970). The number of police officers with a college degree has increased from 10 percent in 1990 to 32 percent in 2010 (Maguire & King, 2004). Studies suggest that police officer applicants with a college background, particularly those other than criminal justice, offer a more diverse knowledge set (Corps, 2012).

➤ **Community involvement**

**Description:** Volunteer service in the community is important for a police applicant to learn skills necessary to help an applicant communicate better with the public in which they will later serve. This experience will prepare a police applicant to act within the parameters set forth by community policing methods currently used in police agencies, including the SFPD. Communication skills will also prove beneficial to a police applicant during the oral interview phase of the hiring process.

**Relevant findings in the literature:** Police agencies have shifted to a more community based policing approach to solve crimes considered unsolvable by traditional policing methods (Moore, 1992). This approach promotes communication to solve problems instead of traditional enforcement measures (Raymond et. al, 2005).

➤ **Ethnic and gender diversity**

**Description:** Shifts in the workforce have changed the ethnic and gender characteristics of police applicant pools. Applicants from different ethnic backgrounds will better reflect the communities in which the SFPD serves.

**Relevant findings in the literature:** Women and minorities currently make up the largest share of the current workforce (Jurkanin, Fischer & Sergevnin, 2001). A survey conducted by COPS found that 75 percent of agencies with 1,000 full-time sworn officers reported diversity in recruitment extremely important, and 15 percent found it of moderately high importance (McBride, Morabito, Walker, & Bostrom, Law Enforcement Recruitment Toolkit, 2009).

In addition to the characteristics of a qualified police applicant, the literature also highlighted several challenges faced by police agencies when trying to recruit for applicants. I will determine if elements of the cadet program address the major challenges faced by police agencies during recruitment efforts. These challenges are a decreasing applicant pool of qualified applicants, the expense of recruitment campaigns, generational attitudes and behavior, and competition from similar career fields.

Finally, I created a set of interview questions for different groups of interviewees in an attempt to add data that I could not otherwise find in my literature review, or through an assessment of the cadet program. Because data regarding the influence of a cadet program on an individual's decision to become a police officer are outdated, I asked questions such as "Did the cadet program influence your decision to apply to become a police officer?" I have attached the interview questions in Appendix A.

The interviewees included current officers in the SFPD who were former cadets, current officers in the SFPD who were not former cadets, one officer who has worked in the SFPD recruitment unit, current cadets in the PAL cadet program, two former PAL cadets and one civilian representative from the PAL. I made initial contact with

interview subjects through phone calls, emails, and in person. Following University rules, each participant signed an informed consent form, attached in Appendix B. I offered all participants confidentiality. Table 2 indicates how many interviewees I contacted in each group, characterized the interviewee by their years of service either in the police department or as a cadet.

**Table 2: Interviewee Characteristics**

Years of Service	Officer (Former Cadet)	Officer (Not former cadet)	Recruitment Officer (Former or current)	PAL Cadet	Former PAL Cadet	PAL Rep (Civilian)
<b>0-5</b>	1	1		8	2	
<b>5-10</b>	2	1				
<b>10-15</b>	1	1				
<b>15-20</b>	1	1				
<b>20 +</b>	1	3				
<b>N/A</b>			1			1

Because there are no data about which officers were in the cadet program, I asked the Department to identify former cadets. I then chose current officers who were former cadets with years of service ranging from 5 years to 20 or more years. These respondents include two patrol officers, two sergeants, one lieutenant, and one captain. I chose these officers because they were cadets at different times during their enrollment in the cadet program. I wanted to find out whether there has been consistency in the structure of the cadet program over the years that these officers were in the program. These officers applied to the SFPD and were successful in the background process. Additionally, these officers represent almost every level of employment available in the SFPD, meaning they have had the ability to promote through the ranks of the department. These officers also

have knowledge of the recruitment process because of their years of service, and are aware of the staffing issues the department currently faces.

Interview respondents who are current officers in the SFPD but not former cadets include four patrol officers, one inspector, one sergeant and the Chief of Police. Years of service for these respondents range from 5 years to 20 or more. I chose officers whom I know personally, and who were available for an interview. These officers have limited experience with the PAL cadet program, and their responses are from limited knowledge of the program, rather than from direct experience. I chose these officers because they were successful in the background process. Because these officers have served at least 5 years in the SFPD, they have some knowledge of the recruitment practices within the SFPD, but are also familiar with the staffing challenges the department currently faces.

Cadet respondents' years of service ranged from 9 months to 4 years. I chose cadets who are currently 18 years or older because they are approaching the application requirement age of 20. The cadets currently enrolled in the cadet program can provide information based on their direct experience in the program in its current state. These respondents have a valuable and unique perspective that police officers may not have. Based on the responses from the cadets, I can analyze the cadet program's ability to attract qualified applicants.

Although tracking down former cadets was difficult, I located two participants to interview. Both of these former cadets stayed in the cadet program until they aged out, or became old enough to apply to become police officers. The information I intend to find from these two respondent's is whether the program has influenced their decision to



become a police officer in the SFPD, and why or why not. Their perspective on the cadet program will reveal whether the cadet program's components have stayed consistent from when they aged out as compared to now.

I conducted an interview with a Lieutenant who was formally a part of the recruitment unit. This respondent's information will be useful to determine the state of the SFPD's recruitment practices several years ago, as compared to today's practices. I will obtain further recruitment information from interviewing the SFPD's Chief of Police, and through relevant literature.

Finally, I will interview the civilian representative from the Police Activities League. This respondent has served as the Executive Director since 2009. The information I intend to find through this interview is the view of the PAL on using the cadet program as a recruiting tool for the SFPD. I will also confirm the mission of the PAL, in addition to the goal of the cadet program. I intend to learn about the goals of the cadet program, and the current components of the cadet program. Based on this information, I will determine if the components of the PAL cadet program are conducive to attracting kids into a career in law enforcement in the SFPD.

### **Challenges and Limitations of Research**

The first challenge I faced in my research was that much of the literature regarding police recruitment was dated. Some more recent research is available but it appears that this research is in its beginning stages and that more will follow as police departments continue to struggle filling vacancies within their agencies.

Second, the sample size of my interviews was limited. The cadet interviewees were limited because of the small number of current cadets who are above the age of 18 and are approaching the required applicant age of 21. Currently, the SFPD does not track whether applicants who become police officers were former PAL cadets and therefore, the actual number of current SFPD officers who were former cadets is unknown. The sample size of current officers who were former cadets is limited because of this fact. Former cadet officers were located through word of mouth referrals from a current SFPD Captain who was a former cadet. There is just one officer in the SFPD who currently runs the cadet program, although a second officer who formerly ran the program was also available for an interview. Finally, just one civilian manages the PAL as the executive director and has direct oversight of the PAL program.

Selection bias was a factor in the interviews as well. This is because others knew the officers that had served as former cadets in the PAL cadet program. Because I was only able to locate these officers for my interviews, they may have had good experiences in the cadet program. This bias might skew the evaluation of the cadet program more favorably. However, the interview of these subjects was important to the analysis of the cadet program.

Resources are further limited within the recruitment unit because of current staffing shortages in the SFPD. The current officer in charge in recruitment has been assigned to the unit for less than one year and had limited knowledge of past applicant trends. Additionally, several attempts to obtain information on applicant success rates during the background process were unsuccessful. Officers within the SFPD with

experience in the PAL cadet program are also limited. One group particularly underrepresented in my interviews is former cadets that did not become police officers. Unfortunately, most cadet programs do not track the status of cadets after they leave their program, including the PAL program.

Despite limitations in the research and interviews, the information obtained in the following pages of analysis will be a useful tool for the San Francisco Police Department in considering using the cadet program as a new method of recruitment. This is especially important at a time when the success rate for most applicants is at best about 10 percent. The SFPD can only benefit from a new approach of recruitment that produces qualified applicants. This research can at least begin the discussion of how to attract these applicants, and whether the cadet program might just be a good resource to do so.

## CHAPTER 4

### CADET PROGRAM ANALYSIS

Both the Police Activities League cadet program and the San Francisco Police Department have established minimum qualifications for an applicant (Department S.F., Background Unit and Current Candidate Information; League, 2013). I have listed these qualifications in Table 3.

**Table 3: Minimum Qualifications**

Minimum Qualifications	San Francisco Police Applicant	PAL Cadet Applicant
<b>Age</b>	20 at application; 21 by the start of the academy	14 years of age and a freshman in high school to 21 years of age
<b>Education</b>	Minimum high school diploma or GED	Enrolled in high school or college full time with a minimum 2.0 grade point average in San Francisco
<b>Citizenship Requirement</b>	U.S. Citizen or permanent resident alien	N/A
<b>Residency Requirement</b>	N/A	Must live in San Francisco
<b>Criminal Record</b>	Must not have a felony record	Must not have a felony record
<b>Driver's license</b>	Must have a valid driver's license	Must have a clean driving record if the applicant has a driver's license
<b>Application</b>	Complete application	Complete application
<b>Letters of recommendation</b>	2 letters of recommendation	2 letters of recommendation
<b>Written exam</b>	POST written exam with minimum T score of 46	N/A
<b>Physical ability</b>	Pass physical ability test	N/A
<b>Interview</b>	Successfully complete oral interview	N/A
<b>Background questionnaire</b>	Complete background questionnaire	N/A
<b>Medical screening</b>	Pass screening in good health	N/A
<b>Psychiatric Exam</b>	Psychiatric written exam and interview	N/A
<b>Lie Detector</b>	Sufficiently pass lie detector exam	N/A

PAL cadet and SFPD applicants do have similar qualifications such as age and education requirements, a clean driving and criminal background, and a completed

application including letters of recommendation. The differences between the two are that a PAL candidate must live or go to school in San Francisco, while a SFPD candidate can live anywhere but must be a U.S. citizen. Other differences include stringent requirements for a SFPD applicant such as a written exam, physical ability exam, an oral interview, completion of a background questionnaire, a medical and psychiatric screening, and a lie detector exam (Department S.F., Background Unit and Current Candidate Information; League, 2013). The latter requirements make for a lengthy hiring process as compared to a PAL candidate.

### **The PAL Cadet Program**

The PAL cadet program consists of four main components: a four-week summer academy, a year-round internship program at San Francisco PD stations, training, and community service. Cadet internships include ride-alongs with San Francisco police officers (League, 2013). An SFPD officer assigned as the Cadet Coordinator oversees the cadet program. She confirmed these components and added that the cadets also meet on a weekly basis for on-going training in police policy, procedure, and tactics throughout the school year (Coordinator, 2013).

The PAL cadet summer academy has elements consistent with a SFPD recruit academy program. The cadets receive a manual that establishes a set of rules and regulations, similar to that given to a regular recruit class. As a condition of their participation in the summer academy and continuation and the program following the summer, a cadet must sign the manual agreeing to the rules. The rules outlined in the manual include behavioral standards, academic criteria, and appearance (uniform)

requirements. Cadets face consequences such as probation or possible dismissal for failing to adhere to these rules. (Cadet Manual, 2013; Woodruff-Long, 2013)

Although the PAL website maintains that cadets must be in good physical health, few elements of the cadet program promote physical activity. In fact, according to some of the cadets currently enrolled in the program, the cadets do not participate in much physical activity (Rosales, 2013; Monger, 2013). Most of the physical activity occurs during the summer cadet academy but is limited once the cadets begin their weekly meetings throughout the school year (Rosales, 2013).

### **Criteria for Success**

The literature defined four main themes that would aid in the success of a potential police officer applicant. These themes are exposure to police duties, an educational background, community involvement, and ethnic and gender diversity.

#### **Exposure to Police Duties**

As the literature explained, many times when police agencies recruit, they show the most exciting parts of police work such as police car chases or working with specialized units like K-9 or SWAT. The average citizen also sees these exciting scenes on television or in the movies. However, these scenes do not represent an accurate depiction of a career in law enforcement. As Orrick (2008) suggested, exposure to the actual elements of a job can give a potential applicant a more realistic view of what the job of a police officer entails.

The PAL cadet program provides cadets with the opportunity to see what a police officer does on a day-to-day basis. The first opportunity to see police work is through the

station internships offered to the cadets. These internships expose the cadets to police work at the station level. According to Woodruff-Long, the station internships are one of the biggest draws of the cadet program (2013). Cadets also participate in ride-alongs as part of their station internships, shadowing an officer in the course of his or her patrol duties. Cadet Soto said that his experience in the program has given him a clearer idea of what the job of a police officer entails (Soto, 2013). A sergeant in the SFPD who served as a cadet in 1994-99 said, “If I wasn’t a police cadet, I wouldn’t know what police work was all about. I wouldn’t know if I would enjoy it or if it was meant for me” (Gasanyan, 2013).

### **Educational Background**

Although a college degree is not a requirement to get into the SFPD, Chief Suhr has said that he would like to implement a department policy that requires an officer to have educational units to be eligible for a promotion (2013). The PAL cadet program requires a cadet to attend high school or college full-time, while maintaining a minimum of a 2.0 grade point average. A written manual rule requires that when a cadet receives a copy of his or her report card, they are to submit it to the cadet coordinator to ensure the cadet maintains the required 2.0 grade point average (Cadet Manual, 2013).

A 2.0 grade point average would make it difficult for a cadet to be competitive when applying to some colleges. The University of California system requires a 3.0 grade point average minimum for admission into a UC campus (California, Eligibility and Selection, 2013). Applicants to the state university system must meet the minimum eligibility index, which requires applicants with a lower grade point average to score

higher on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or American College Test (ACT) scores. For example, an applicant with a 2.0 grade point average must score a 1300 on the SAT exam and a 30 on the ACT exam, as compared to 510 and 10 respectively with a grade point average of 2.99 (University C. S., 2013)

The curricula for the weekly cadet meetings are not formalized (Coordinator, 2013). Meetings consist of a variety of topics, such as vehicle stops, crime scene investigations, and juvenile crimes, but there is little emphasis on education (Rosales, 2013). A cadet who recently aged out of the program in October 2012 says that in her five years of service as a cadet, the cadet classes consisted mostly of the fun stuff. “The cadet program should be about learning and actually knowing the material that will be useful. It is not just about having fun all the time” (Anonymous, Former Cadet, 2013). A former PAL cadet currently in the background process to become a police officer with the SFPD agreed with his counterpart. He said that the cadet program should have more of an emphasis on reading and writing, which he found was the hardest element during the background process (Anonymous, Former Cadet, 2013).

### **Community Involvement**

Movement towards a more community-policing based approach in law enforcement requires specific skills to better deal with the public. Communication, leadership, and negotiation skills are all important in promoting a community-policing environment. Cadets can learn these skills by participating in community service events around San Francisco, the community in which they would ultimately serve as SFPD officers.



The PAL website explains that cadets must complete six to eight hours of community service each month (League, 2013). According to the Cadet Coordinator, community service is one of the most important components of the cadet program (Coordinator, 2013). The hours that the cadets complete are on a volunteer basis because there is currently no financial incentive to participate. Cadets complete community service hours by working at neighborhood festivals, city events such as parades, and fundraising events such as the Make a Wish fundraiser (Woodruff-Long, 2013).

A drawback to the community service requirement is the lack of accountability for those cadets who do not participate in events. According to Rosales, the same few cadets participate at most community events, but many do not participate at all. The cadets who do not participate in the required number of community service hours do not face disciplinary action. Meanwhile, those cadets that do participate do not receive recognition for their service (2013). It is difficult to assess whether the cadets are benefiting from performing community service hours because there is no system in place to measure if cadets learn from their experience.

### **Ethnic and Gender Diversity**

Diversity of gender and ethnic backgrounds has become increasingly important to police agencies, particularly because police departments want their police force to mirror the community in which they serve. While diversity is not a stated goal of the PAL program, Lorraine Woodruff-Long says that it is important. “We want to represent the diversity of San Francisco by using the ‘grow your own concept’ from the PERF [2008] study. This concept means that the police department should be growing a police force

from the community that they are serving. One of our goals is to seek out kids from the communities that the SFPD currently serves, and not the community that the department has traditionally recruited from.” Woodruff-Long continues to say that the cadets currently enrolled in the program come from many different ethnic backgrounds and speak a variety of languages (2013). There is also a good representation of female cadets in the program. According to the cadet coordinator, there are 10 female cadets and 28 male cadets, or 26 percent of the program is female (Coordinator, 2013).

### **Recruitment Challenges**

In the literature, there were several challenges that make recruiting for qualified applicants more difficult for police agencies. These challenges included a decreasing applicant pool, the expense of recruitment campaigns, generational attitudes and behavior, and competition from similar career fields.

### **Decreasing Applicant Pools**

The PAL cadet program provides the San Francisco Police Department with an additional pool of potential applicants. The PAL program currently has 38 cadets enrolled in the program (Cadet Coordinator, 2013) and is currently advertising for additional kids to attend the 2013 summer academy class (League, 2013). The number of cadets approaching the minimum applicant age at one time can vary, but currently five cadets are 20 years of age and eight are 18 to 19 years old (Coordinator, 2013). The summer class could potentially add an additional 25 to 30 cadets into the program of various ages (Woodruff-Long, 2013). The number of cadets approaching application age could result in dozens of potential applicants for the police department over the course of

several years as cadets age out of the cadet program and reach eligibility age for the SFPD.

### **Recruitment Expense**

Incentivizing a police applicant by offering signing bonuses has been a practice for the SFPD when trying to attract lateral officers from other police agencies (Department S. F., San Francisco Police Department, 2013). At one time, the department also offered referral bonuses to current police officers within the department who found qualified applicants (Forum, 2008). These practices are expensive and not always sustainable depending on the economic climate. Recruiting practices have changed in the past two years in an attempt to cut costs. Instead of the practice of quarterly testing where the SFPD accepted thousands of applications causing the department to lose thousands of dollars in the process, Chief Suhr says the SFPD now accepts applications once per year, and tests once per year (2013).

Because the PAL is the main facilitator of the cadet program at this time, its funding mostly relies on the non-profit agency, rather than the SFPD. The PAL funds recruitment, the application process, and some uniform requirements. The SFPD contributes financially as well. A full-time police officer facilitates the program. Cadets attend weekly meetings at the SPFD academy, utilizing classroom space. SFPD officers, typically on-duty, teach cadets during the summer academy and weekly meetings (Woodruff-Long, 2013, Cadet Coordinator, 2013). Despite the use of SFPD money and resources, the majority of the financial burden lies with the PAL. Therefore, recruitment costs would be minimal to the SFPD.

### **Generational Attitudes and Behavior**

Generational attitudes and behavior have changed over the years. These changes have resulted in younger people experimenting with narcotics, particularly marijuana, which potentially disqualifies them as police applicants. Additionally, the obesity rate has been on the rise, which also affects the potential for a police candidate to complete the physical ability challenges of the background process. Another factor that can disqualify a young person is an arrest record.

The cadets must pass a criminal history check, ensuring that they do not have a criminal record (League, 2013). They must also maintain good behavior while enrolled as a cadet, including staying enrolled full-time in high school or college, maintaining a good driving record and avoiding police contact. Violations of these requirements could result in the cadet's dismissal from the cadet program (Cadet Coordinator, 2013). An officer who was the Cadet Coordinator for the PAL in 2004-06 said that if the kids were not following the rules, she would dismiss them from the program or give them the opportunity to resign. "It [the cadet program] was a commitment. If it didn't fit, I would encourage them to find something else. They usually did not come back after I would talk to them" (Inspector, 2013).

Discipline was a component that several officers described as being important to the success of the cadet program. "There are consequences to breaking the rules and we should be exposing them [cadets] to this. If law enforcement is something they are seriously looking into, self-discipline needs to start early" (Anonymous, Officer, 2013). A former cadet recalled the strict nature of the program. "They were strict in having to

be on time. We would always have inspection and we would get disciplined if our uniform wasn't right" (Anonymous, Officer, 2013). Another SFPD officer who was a former cadet agreed. "I knew I had to follow the rules and be clean. If you messed up, you were out" (Anonymous, Sergeant, 2013). Another current SFPD officer echoed the latter sentiment, saying that the cadet program has to have guidelines, rules, and discipline in order for the cadet program to be successful in recruiting good candidates for the police department (SFPD Officer, Personal interview, February 26, 2013).

According to much of the interview data, enforcement of the rules and discipline that were once a priority for the cadet program does not exist at the level it once did. A former cadet who was enrolled from 2003-06 and is now a police officer explains his experience. "There were requirements that you had to meet, but some of the kids didn't care. None of them were ever dismissed. It was hard to get some kids involved and it was always the same kids working at community events" (SFPD Officer, Personal interview, March 10, 2013). A recently aged out cadet agreed. She believed that the program needed to be willing to dismiss cadets who are not following the rules, but dismissals rarely occurred (Former cadet, Personal interview, February 25, 2013).

Current cadets in the PAL program offered a similar perspective. Liu said many of the cadets do not take the program seriously, but that the cadet program "isn't set up to get rid of kids like that" (Liu, 2013). Rosales further explained that she follows the rules and puts in the work that many other cadets do not, but they remain in the program and receive the same recognition that she receives (2013). These comments suggest that in

recent years, the PAL cadet program has experienced a shift away from a disciplined-based program.

The physical ability of a police candidate is important not only for the application process but for academy preparation. The physical requirements can be challenging to a generation with high obesity rates. As the literature stated, a police applicant must pass some type of physical exam during the background process. In San Francisco, the police department has developed its own exam consisting of the following: obstacle course run, trigger pull, sit-ups, arm lift to test strength of muscles, and pedaling on a bicycle (Department S. F., Background Unit and Current Candidate Information, 2013).

The PAL cadet program claims to have a physical component of the summer academy program. On its website, PAL suggests to hopeful cadets that they should physically train prior to the summer academy due to “significant physical training” during the academy (League, 2013). The PAL website has a link to a video that displays cadets from the 2010 summer academy class engaged in physical activity (League, 2013). It is unclear, however, how often the cadets engage in physical activity and if they are prepared to pass a physical ability test required by the SFPD for police applicants. Current cadet Monger said that his experience in the cadet program would be better if it was more like a real academy in terms of the physical aspect. In his opinion, the cadets have done very little physically since the summer academy (Monger, 2013).

### **Competition from Similar Careers**

As the literature explained, the application and background process for a police applicant can take nearly a year. During this time, qualified applicants might instead seek

a similar career that has a shorter hiring process, such as the military or fire department. This loss to other career fields means that police agencies are potentially losing applicants that would otherwise be a good fit for the police department.

The cadet program requires a year-long commitment, but a PAL cadet can potentially be enrolled in the program for seven years, from the age of 14 through the age of 21 (League, 2013). This long-term commitment has the potential to keep a cadet engaged and interested in law enforcement until the time they are eligible to apply to become a police officer in San Francisco. However, the PAL does not track or record the number of years a cadet serves in the program, the reasons for a cadet resigning, or whether a cadet applies to become a police officer once they age out of the program.

### **Additional Interview Data**

Although the interviews provided anecdotal results based on the small number of interviewees, the PAL cadet program has been successful in attracting cadets who are interested in a law enforcement career and influenced cadets in pursuing a career in law enforcement in the SFPD. Further, the majority of officers interviewed supported the idea of the SFPD using the cadet program as a recruiting tool.

### **Current PAL Cadets**

The cadets currently enrolled in the program were enthusiastic about a law enforcement career. Six of eight cadets said they joined the cadet program because they wanted to be a police officer or had some interest in law enforcement, while six of eight said being a cadet has influenced their decision to apply for a police officer position in San Francisco (Cadet, 2013; Chow, 2013; Jensen, 2013; Monger, 2013; Rosales, 2013;

Soto, 2013). The remaining cadets that did not find the program influential explained that they had already made up their mind to apply to become a police officer prior to becoming a cadet (Liu, 2013; Escobar-Guerrero, 2013). All eight of the cadets interviewed expressed their intention of applying to become a police officer in San Francisco.

### **Former Cadets/Current SFPD Officers**

The San Francisco Police officers who were former PAL cadets spoke highly of the cadet program. Five of six officers enrolled in the cadet program because they wanted to be a police officer or had an interest in law enforcement (Anonymous, Officer, 2013; Anonymous, Officer, 2013; Anonymous, Officer, 2013; Anonymous, Officer, 2013; Gasanyan, 2013). These same five officers said that the cadet program influenced their decision to become a police officer. The remaining officer enrolled as a cadet because he thought the program looked like a fun opportunity and explained that the cadet program did not influence his decision to become a police officer (Anonymous, Officer, 2013).

Five out of six officers of the above officers believe that the SFPD can use the cadet program as a recruiting tool (Anonymous, Officer, 2013; Anonymous, Officer, 2013; Anonymous, Officer, 2013; Anonymous, Captain, 2013; Gasanyan, 2013). The remaining officer who served as a cadet most recently (2003-2006) said that the cadet program would not be a good recruiting option for the department (Anonymous, Officer, 2013). Of the officers who had never served as a cadet, all eight believed that the SFPD could use the cadet program as a recruiting method (Anonymous, 2013; Anonymous,



Inspector, 2013; Anonymous, Officer, 2013; Anonymous, Officer, 2013; Cadet Coordinator, 2013; Cavanaugh, 2013; Fulgado, 2013; Suhr, 2013).

### **Former Cadets (Not SFPD Officers)**

The former cadets interviewed both served in the program for four years until they aged out of the program at 21 years old. Both former cadets expressed that they enrolled in the program because they were interested in a career in law enforcement. The former cadets said that the cadet program influenced their decision to apply to become a police officer in San Francisco. One of these individuals has applied to the SFPD and is currently in the background process (Anonymous, Former Cadet, 2013) . The other expressed her intention to apply to the SFPD following the completion of paramedic school (Anonymous, Former Cadet, 2013).

Despite the cadet program's influence on former and current cadets when it comes to applying to the SFPD, the interviews led me to observe that there have been fewer cadets in the last eight years who became officers in the SFPD as compared to years before. One officer explained, "I was the only one [cadet] in my class that became a police officer. I saw one of my classmates once on the street and she was surprised that I became a police officer" (Anonymous, Officer, 2013). However, the SFPD does not currently record whether a police applicant was a former cadet so there is no substantiated evidence to support the perceived decrease in former cadets becoming SFPD officers.

One major concern evident from the interview data was the removal of funding from the cadet internship program. In past years, cadets worked station internships and

received a stipend at the end of a six-week period. The cadets earned internship positions by meeting academic, attendance, and community service requirements throughout the school year, and served the internships during summer weeks (Anonymous, Captain, 2013). There were limited internship positions, so the cadets with the highest number of community service hours, grade point averages, and attendance percentages received a position (Anonymous, Officer, 2013).

Cadets currently participate in unpaid internships throughout the school year. The internships require a cadet to complete service hours while also attending school, community events, and weekly cadet meetings. Any cadet can participate in a station internship, regardless of their achievements in other areas of the program (Cadet Coordinator, 2013). This is a change from the previous internship programs, which required cadets to meet certain criteria to receive an internship position.

Other concerns raised during interviews are lack of discipline, uncommitted cadets, the age difference between the youngest and oldest cadets, lack of criteria for success, focus on underprivileged kids, the importance of the consistent and appropriate program leadership, and the potential for conflicting goals between the SFPD and the PAL. The concerns cited from interview data require further exploration because the limited pool of interviewees. Table 4 summarizes these concerns.

**Table 4: Cadet Program Concerns**

Concern	Description
<b>Lack of discipline</b>	Disciplinary action against cadets who are not following rules is currently non-existent, but considered an important element of the program. Current officers reported discipline as a major element of the program during their tenure as a cadet.
<b>Uncommitted cadets</b>	Current cadets cited the lack of commitment by fellow cadets as a major problem. Commitment included community service hours, maintaining required test scores and grade point averages, participating in weekly training meetings, and following uniform and appearance guidelines.
<b>Age difference</b>	Concern with the difference in ages between the youngest of cadets, aged 14, to the oldest of cadets, aged 20. Respondents cited the difference in maturity levels between the ages, plus mixing adults with minors in classroom settings as a problem.
<b>Lack of criteria for success</b>	There is no measurement for success or level of progress a cadet has achieved in regards to service hours completed or academic achievement.
<b>Focus on underprivileged kids</b>	Interviewees from each group cited concerns about the level of focus on recruiting kids from underprivileged sectors of the community while ignoring kids from other community groups, particularly private schools and JROTC programs.
<b>Importance of consistent and appropriate program leadership</b>	According to officers who have been cadets or have worked with the cadet program in the past, the officer put in charge of facilitating the cadet program makes a tremendous difference in the success of the program. There have been at least four officers put in charge of the program over the past five years.
<b>Potentially conflicting goals of non-profit and police agency</b>	Current police officers suggest that the facilitation of the cadet program by a non-profit can actually be preventing better results of recruiting from the cadet program. The main reason cited is that the goals of a non-profit differ greatly from the goals of a law enforcement agency, therefore creating conflict.

Source: Personal interviews, February 17-March 11, 2013

### Future Research and Considerations

Further research is required to determine the success of the cadet program as a recruiting tool for the SFPD. Proper documentation is important in collecting future data to determine the impact of the cadet program on police recruitment. The SFPD recruitment unit should ask police applicants whether they have served as cadets in the PAL program in San Francisco. This will help to measure the number of cadets that are becoming police officers after serving as a PAL cadet. Without this documentation, the impact of the cadet program on recruitment will continue to be an unknown.

The PAL must also participate in documentation. The PAL should be responsible for documenting when a cadet resigns or is dismissed from the cadet program. The PAL should make every effort possible to conduct exit interviews to determine what factors influenced a cadet's resignation or forced a dismissal. Further, the cadets should complete quarterly surveys to identify any potential problems that may be occurring in the program that are otherwise not recognized.

Another approach to collecting further data on the success of the cadet program in recruiting future officers is to contact former PAL cadets via surveys to determine what career field they have chosen and why. Surveys would produce more quantitative data and provide a different perspective on the results of the cadet program compared to those that have been present in this thesis. I would encourage future research for the SFPD and the PAL on the cadet program.

## CHAPTER 5

### FINAL THOUGHTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The PAL cadet program has the potential to be a recruiting tool for the San Francisco Police Department. The current structure of the cadet program consists of many characteristics required for a SFPD police applicant. However, as currently structured, the cadet program is not an effective recruiting tool. Very little data exists regarding cadet programs and their ability to influence a young person's decision to become a police officer. The PAL and the SFPD have also failed to track the number of cadets that have become police officers in the SFPD.

#### **Summary of Findings and Recommendations**

The minimum qualifications for a PAL cadet are similar to those for a SFPD applicant except for the written exam, physical ability, interview, background questionnaire, the medical screening, psychiatric exam, and lie detector. The cadets can practice some of these qualifications such as the written exam, physical ability test, interview, and background questionnaire. The PAL should ensure that cadet training includes practice in the above elements so that the cadet experiences these testing components during the hiring process. This practice will allow the cadets an opportunity to decide whether applying to be a police officer is definitely what he or she wishes to do in the future.

The criteria for success established in Chapter 3 included the following: exposure to police duties, an educational background, community involvement, and ethnic and gender diversity. The PAL cadet program does a sufficient job exposing cadets to the job

of a police officer through the station internships and ride-alongs. Cadets are heavily involved with the community and earn many hours of volunteer service through community events. The cadets also represent many ethnic backgrounds and consist of a good percentage of females.

The current rules and regulations established by the Cadet Program Manual (2013) address the challenge of generational attitudes and behavior by establishing standards for cadet conduct, yet the implementation of these rules is in question. Cadets need to be accountable to the rules of the program. If not, the rules serve no purpose and structure of the program is in jeopardy.

The final challenge discussed was the possibility of losing police applicants to similar career fields during the lengthy hiring process. This challenge is probably what the cadet program addresses most sufficiently. Because cadets can serve in the program from the age of 14 through the age of 20, the potential to keep a cadet engaged and interested in a career in law enforcement is very likely. However, changes to the program's structure are necessary to keep cadets engaged and to ensure their tenure in the program for as long as possible.

The data from the literature suggest that police departments are in need of new, innovative ways to recruit successful applicants and to address the challenges discussed above. Although the cadet program does serve as a means to address some of these criteria, internal and structural changes are necessary in order to ensure commitment to the goal of recruitment and to program leadership. Internal changes include curriculum changes, enforcing discipline, and instituting a merit-based system to reward committed

cadets. The following are recommendations for internal-based changes for the cadet program.

*Recommendation #1-Adjust the Curriculum*

Because the cadet program does little to address several of the requirements necessary to be a successful police applicant for the SFPD, the curriculum should include practice exams. Successful police applicants must be able to pass written and oral examinations to move forward in the hiring process. To prepare the cadets for this process, the facilitator of the cadet program should implement written practice exams into the curriculum, in addition to mock interview sessions to sharpen the cadet's interview and communication skills.

*Recommendation #2-Implement Physical Activity*

The physical ability test is a requirement for a SFPD applicant following the written examination. The cadet program should incorporate physical activity into weekly cadet meetings and facilitate physical ability testing similar to the test given by the SFPD during the hiring process. This activity will increase the likelihood of cadets being in sufficient physical shape to pass the physical ability test. Physical conditioning also decreases the propensity for younger adults to be overweight.

*Recommendation #3-Emphasize Education*

The PAL cadet program facilitator should emphasize the importance of an education by enforcing the cadet manual rule requiring cadets to produce a progress or report card upon issuance of grades while in the cadet program. The minimum grade

point average required of cadets should be a 2.5 rather than a 2.0 so that the cadets are more competitive when applying to college.

The program facilitator should collaborate with local colleges, such as City College of San Francisco, San Francisco State University, and the University of San Francisco to assist cadets in preparation for college enrollment and college level courses. This will set a cadet on a path of completing at least some college credits prior to applying to the police department. Exposure to college level studies will assist in the cadet's ability to pass the written examination required during the hiring process. This exposure will also address the requirement of a police officer having at least some college units to be eligible for a promotion currently considered by SF Police Chief Greg Suhr (2013).

*Recommendation #4-Enforce Good Standing*

The cadet program offers enrolled cadets the opportunity to participate in ride-alongs and station internships. In order to address behavior and commitment problems, the program must enforce the standards and requirements detailed in the Cadet Manual. The manual details disciplinary action for violations of the cadet rules including but not limited to warnings, physical conditioning, written essays, suspension, probation, and dismissal from the program (2013). The cadet program facilitator must ensure that cadets are in good standing prior to assigning ride-along and internship opportunities.

*Recommendation #5-Reinstate the Paid Internship Program*

The SFPD should reinstate the paid internship program for the cadets. As a starting point, the SFPD could offer a limited number of paid internships based on a set



of requirements. Cadets could earn an internship position by fulfilling community service hours and maintaining minimum attendance and academic requirements. The internships should be during summer weeks only, to avoid conflict with school related commitments, and last for a limited period, such as six or eight weeks at a time. Establishing criteria would require a cadet to be committed to the cadet program, addressing some of the concern noted from the interview data regarding the lack of commitment of some of the cadets.

### **Structural Changes**

Changes to the structure of the cadet program are also necessary to create an environment more favorable to the goal of recruitment for the SFPD. These changes include recruitment practices for the PAL, recognizing the importance of the leadership role of the program, addressing issues of the age gap of enrolled cadets, and considering the conflicting goals of the PAL and the SFPD.

#### *Recommendation #6-Expand PAL Recruitment Practices*

The Police Activities League should expand its recruitment efforts to include all eligible aged kids from private schools, military groups (JROTC), and other social groups (e.g. campus clubs or sports teams). This expansion would provide PAL with a much larger applicant pool where PAL and SFPD could be more selective in choosing cadets for the program. A larger applicant pool addresses concerns from the interviews that there is too much focus on underprivileged kids for the program because kids from all ethnicities, social status, and backgrounds would have the opportunity to become a cadet.

*Recommendation #7-Ensure Appropriate and Consistent Leadership*

The SFPD should ensure that the officer assigned to facilitate the cadet program as the cadet coordinator is dedicated to the ideals and goals of the program, particularly to the goal of using the cadet program as a recruiting tool. The department should require a minimum two-year commitment of any officer put in charge of the program. The PAL and the SFPD should establish specific criteria for the Cadet Coordinator position and the SFPD should evaluate the coordinator every six months. The criteria should include documentation of cadet progress (e.g. academic, attendance, or behavioral issues), enforcing cadet discipline, committing to the paramilitary ideals of the cadet program, and participating in recruitment with the PAL for new cadets. These criteria are critical to the cadet program's success.

*Recommendation #8-Create a Junior and Senior Cadet Program*

Some of the concern about the cadet program was regarding the difference in the eligible entrance age, 14, and the last age of eligibility, 20 years old. Concern in this area is legitimate considering the difference in maturity levels between 14 to 20 year olds. 20 years olds in general would have more education than 14 to 15 year olds would and might have the ability to learn at a faster pace than the younger cadets might. In addition, there is often sensitive material presented to cadets such as violent crimes and other topics that might be more appropriate for older cadets, but not for younger cadets.

In order to address this concern while also considering the goal of recruitment for the SFPD, the PAL should separate the cadet program into two divisions, the junior cadets for ages 14-17 and the senior cadets for ages 18-20. Curriculum for the junior

cadets could include topics such as graffiti, school bullying, and other non-violent crimes that are more appropriate for that age group. The junior cadets can also spend more time with specialized police units, such as K-9 or SWAT units, to keep the younger cadets interested in the fun aspects of law enforcement. Junior cadets should meet certain criteria to advance to the senior cadet program. The senior cadet curriculum should be more education focused and concentrate on report writing, communication skills, physical ability training, and preparation for the hiring process in the SFPD.

*Recommendation #9-Eliminate Conflict of Non-Profit and SFPD Goals*

The San Francisco Police Department and Police Activities League have different goals, particularly regarding recruitment. Facilitation of the cadet program by the non-profit agency has the potential to confuse the SFPD goals and the PAL goals. This confusion is a problem when police officers are put in the charge of the cadet program but have a non-profit dictating some of the programs functions. Civilians in a non-profit agency may not understand the dynamics of a law enforcement career and vice versa.

To eliminate this problem, the SFPD should continue to collaborate with the PAL to consider program changes that meet the needs of the SFPD and the PAL. If further collaboration fails to produce the results necessary to ensure both sides meet their goals, the SFPD could consider assigning the cadet program to the SFPD academy unit and taking over the program on a full-time basis without facilitation from the PAL. In this case, the cadet program structure and implementation would solely be the responsibility of the SFPD, requiring the department to take full ownership of the success of the program.

*Recommendation #10-Institute Priority Hiring for Former PAL Cadets*

The literature suggested that many police applicants move on to similar career fields because of the lengthy hiring process and the stringent requirements of becoming a police officer. The cadet program creates the opportunity for the SFPD to keep an individual's interest in law enforcement. To reinforce the commitment of the cadets while enrolled in the program, the SFPD should implement priority hiring for those police applicants who have served as cadets in San Francisco. Cadets should receive priority after fulfilling the following requirements: serve at least two consecutive years as a cadet, maintain a 90 percent average on all academic exams as required per the Cadet Manual during the same two year period, complete 200 hours of community service, complete one six-week (18 hours) internship in a district station, and participate in at least three ride-alongs in the second year of service.

**Table 5: Summary of Recommendations**

Recommendation	Description Summary
<b>Adjust the Curriculum</b>	Implement written practice exams into the curriculum, in addition to mock interview sessions to sharpen the cadet's interview and communication skills.
<b>Implement Physical Activity</b>	Incorporate physical activity into weekly cadet meetings and facilitate physical ability testing similar to the test given by the SFPD during the hiring process.
<b>Emphasize Education</b>	Continue to enforce the requirement of cadets to provide progress reports but raise the minimum grade point average to a 2.5. Encourage the cadets to attend college by collaborating with local city colleges to enroll cadets in college level courses.
<b>Enforce Good Standing</b>	Enforce disciplinary action against cadets who do not meet the minimum requirements and standards established by the 2013 Cadet Manual.
<b>Reinstate the Paid Internship Program</b>	The SFPD should offer paid internships on a limited basis based on a set of requirements. Cadets should earn an internship position by fulfilling community service hours and maintaining minimum attendance and academic requirements.
<b>Expand PAL Recruitment Practices</b>	Expand cadet recruitment to include all eligible aged applicants such as kids from private schools, military groups, and other social groups. This will target kids from all ethnicities and social status while still meeting diversity goals.
<b>Ensure Appropriate and Consistent Leadership</b>	The SFPD should ensure that the officer in charge of the cadet program is dedicated to the program and supports the department using the cadet program as a recruiting tool.
<b>Create a Junior and Senior Program</b>	Separate the cadet program into two levels, junior cadets for those aged 14-17, and senior cadets for those aged 18-20. Emphasize preparation for the application process with the senior cadets while the junior cadets can enjoy a less strenuous program.
<b>Eliminate Conflict of PAL and SFPD Goals</b>	Collaborate with the PAL to consider program changes that meet the needs of the SFPD and the PAL. If collaboration fails, the SFPD could consider assigning the cadet program to the SFPD academy unit and taking over the program on a full-time basis.
<b>Institute Priority Hiring for Former PAL Cadets</b>	Create priority hiring for applicants who have served as a cadet to encourage commitment to the program for those cadets that meet standardized criteria.

## **Conclusion**

The San Francisco Police Department and the Police Activities League have made commendable progress in the development of relationships between community youth and police officers. The PAL's reputation among San Francisco citizens is admirable, and the police department has made great efforts to continue its partnership with the PAL over the years. The partnership between the PAL and the SFPD is vital to ensure future success of the cadet program regardless of what the ultimate goal of the program might be.

The SFPD is facing future uncertainty in regards to staffing levels and the ability to hire a sufficient number of applicants to fill police officer vacancies. This uncertainty creates an incredible burden on current officers, particularly those who work in the recruitment and background units. The SFPD must find new, innovative methods of recruitment that will prove more successful than those methods employed in the past.

The PAL cadet program has the potential to attract qualified individuals who will later apply to the SFPD. Considering the challenges that the SFPD faces in recruitment, the cadet program has elements that address these challenges and alleviate the impact they might have on recruitment efforts. Although the current cadet program is not conducive to recruitment of new officers for the SFPD, the potential to be successful at using the program for recruitment is attainable.

The San Francisco Police Department should consider the above listed recommendations so that the cadet program can be a successful recruiting tool for the department. The Department will find an untapped resource in a new applicant pool,

with qualified applicants trained in and exposed to a career in law enforcement at minimal cost to the department. Implementing criteria then enforcing and meeting these criteria will ensure that cadets understand and are committed to a career in law enforcement. Implementing priority hiring for these cadets will surely provide the motivation necessary for the cadets to be successful police applicants. With these recommendations, the SFPD can potentially be more successful in finding the most qualified candidates for the department.

## **APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

### **CURRENT PAL CADETS**

- 1) Are you currently a cadet in the PAL cadet program?
- 2) How many years have you served as a cadet?
- 3) How did you hear about the cadet program?
- 4) What were the main reasons you became a cadet?
- 5) Has being a cadet influenced your decision to apply to become a police officer? If so, how?
- 6) Are you still currently in contact with any cadets that have left the program and are you able to provide contact information for these individuals?
- 7) Additional comments:

### **CURRENT SAN FRANCISCO POLICE OFFICERS (FORMER AND NON-FORMER CADETS)**

- 1) Are you currently a police officer in San Francisco? If so, what rank?
- 2) Were you a cadet in San Francisco? If so, how many years total did you serve as a cadet?
- 3) How did you hear about the cadet program?
- 4) What were the main reasons you became a cadet?
- 5) Did being a cadet influence your decision to become a police officer? If so, how?
- 6) Do you believe the cadet program could be used a recruiting tool for the department?
- 7) If so, what specific ways do you believe the cadet program would be beneficial as a recruiting tool?
- 8) Are you still in contact with any of your cadet classmates that did not become cadets? If so, would you be able to provide their contact information for future cadet program studies?
- 9) Additional comments:

### **FORMER CADETS (NOT POLICE OFFICERS)**

- 1) Were you ever enrolled as a cadet in the PAL cadet program? If so, how many years did you serve as a cadet?
- 2) How did you hear about the cadet program?
- 3) What were the main reasons you became a cadet?
- 4) Had being a cadet influenced your decision to apply to become a police officer? If so, how? If not, why not?
- 5) What changes would you make to the cadet program so that it might be used as a recruiting tool for the department?
- 6) Additional comments:

### **RECRUITING UNIT OFFICER (SAN FRANCISCO POLICE DEPARTMENT)**

- 1) Are you currently an officer working for the San Francisco Police Department?
- 2) Have you ever been a cadet in San Francisco?
- 3) What are the departments main recruiting methods currently being used?
- 4) Which recruiting methods do you think are the most effective for the department?
- 5) How often are recruiting campaigns enacted?
- 6) Over the last several years of accepting applications, how many initial applications were accepted?
- 7) Of those applications, how many moved forward to the written test?
- 8) Of those that took the written test, how many applicants passed and moved forward in the background process?
- 9) On average, what percentage of applicants who apply pass backgrounds and are eligible for an academy class?

- 10) Are you familiar with the PAL cadet program?
- 11) If so, do you believe that the PAL cadet program could be used as a recruiting tool for the SFPD?
- 12) What recruiting methods do you believe could be successfully implemented into the cadet program to promote recruitment of cadets?
- 13) Additional comments:

**PAL COORDINATOR (SAN FRANCISCO POLICE DEPARTMENT)**

- 1) Are you currently a police officer in San Francisco?
- 2) What is your position in the PAL cadet program?
- 3) How long have you been involved with the cadet program?
- 4) How many cadets are currently enrolled in the PAL cadet program?
- 5) What are the main components of the PAL cadet program?
- 6) Are you aware of the current recruiting methods of the SFPD?
- 7) Do you believe the cadet program could be used a recruiting tool for the department?
- 8) If so, what specific ways do you believe the cadet program would be beneficial as a recruiting tool?
- 9) Additional comments:

**PAL REPRESENTATIVE (CIVILIAN)**

- 1) Are you currently employed by the Police Activities League?
- 2) How many years have you been involved with the PAL?
- 3) Are you familiar with the PAL cadet program?
- 4) What is the current stated goal of the PAL cadet program?
- 5) Do you believe the cadet program could be used as a recruiting tool by the SFPD?
- 6) If so, what specific components of the cadet program do you believe would be successful in recruiting future police officers?
- 7) What changes do you think could be made to the PAL cadet program in order to make it a successful recruiting tool for the SFPD?
- 8) Do you believe that the cadet program would benefit if it was used a recruiting tool for the SFPD?
- 9) If so, how? If not, please explain.
- 10) Additional comments:



## APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

### Consent to Participate in Research

You are being asked to participate in research conducted by Amanda Kabanuck as a thesis requirement for the Master of Public Policy and Administration program at California State University, Sacramento.

**Purpose of research:** The purpose of the study is to determine if the Police Activities League cadet program in San Francisco can be used as a recruiting tool for the San Francisco Police Department.

**Funding:** The research will be funded in its entirety by the researcher.

**Research Procedures:** You will be asked a series of interview questions that relate to recruitment methods of the San Francisco Police Department, your knowledge of the cadet program, and your opinion on specific components within the cadet program. In addition, you might be asked questions relating to statistics relative to recruitment, if applicable to your professional position. The interview will take up to 45 minutes of your time.

**Compensation:** You will not receive compensation for participating in this study.

**Benefits:** The San Francisco Police Department and police officers within the department might benefit from identifying an additional recruiting method that will attract qualified applicants in the department. Since the SFPD is operating under city mandate levels, finding qualified applicants might lead to better success rates in hiring, and positively impact the number of police officers hired during hiring campaigns.

**Risks Involved:** The research will be published as a thesis and will be publicly accessible in digital and print formats. You may decline to answer any question if you wish. Your participation in the interview is entirely voluntary. Please refer to the section "Confidentiality" for information about risks associated with making public statements.

**Confidentiality:** Everything you say in the interview will remain confidential unless you grant explicit permission to be identified by name and/or organization in the final report. Please make your request known at the start of the interview and check the appropriate box below. You may change your request at any time during or after the interview.

"I wish to be identified by name in the written research report."

"I request that my name not be disclosed, but consent to being identified as a representative of the organization I represent. I consent to particular quotes from the interview to be attributed to my organization. I acknowledge that given the small number of people being interviewed, it may be possible for readers of the thesis to infer my identity even if I am not identified by name."

"I request that nothing I say be publicly attributed to me, my employer, or clients I represent. However, I acknowledge that given the small number of people being interviewed, it may be possible for readers of the thesis to infer my identity even if I am not identified by name."

If you have any questions about this research, you may contact me at (XXX) XXX-XXXX and xxxxxxxxxx@yahoo.com or you may contact my primary academic advisor in the Department of Public Policy and Administration at California State University, Sacramento: Mary Kirlin, (916) 278-4209 and [kirlin@csus.edu](mailto:kirlin@csus.edu).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Participant

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