

**Join Our Team – St. Lucie County Sheriff’s Office Recruitment Video**  
**Division C: Digital Tools of Public Relations – Category 6: Institutional**

**RESEARCH/SITUATION ANALYSIS:** February 14, 2018 is a day that changed America forever. It’s the day that an armed man walked into Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida and opened fire, killing seventeen students and injuring seventeen others. It was the deadliest shooting at a high school in United States history, and the tragic events of that day left many Florida families feeling unsure about the safety of their children while at school. In St. Lucie County, the Sheriff’s Office has a long history of protecting, serving and partnering with the local school district. Since 1985, the Sheriff’s Office has been the primary law enforcement agency to provide officers in St. Lucie County schools, but prior to Parkland only had deputies in middle, K-8 and high schools. With a growing county population of more than 315,000 residents - and almost 10% of those being students enrolled in one of 40 school centers - the need to provide a safe and secure educational setting at all schools was never more important. In the wake of the Parkland shooting and with the population continuing to rise, St. Lucie County Sheriff Ken Mascara decided to expand that coverage to include elementary and charter schools. He tasked his communication team with launching an aggressive and dynamic recruitment initiative to hire 14 additional deputies to fill this need. Prior recruitment efforts included job fairs, website postings and Facebook posts and heeded mediocre results with an average of 7 to 10 applications being received per posting. It was determined that a more appealing, engaging approach was needed to set the agency apart from others in the area also seeking to hire new employees and to attract higher caliber candidates to the open positions.

**OBJECTIVES:** During a two month timeline from March 1 – May 1, to the Sheriff’s Office communication team set out to: 1) develop a video (2 minutes or less) that would highlight the exciting aspects of working for the largest law enforcement agency on Florida’s Treasure Coast, 2) gain maximum exposure with the video by sharing it with more than 38,000 followers on the agency’s Facebook page, uploading to YouTube, the agency’s website, sharing with law enforcement training centers around the state and the local public access cable channel, 3) receive 50 applications for employment, and 4) hire 14 new employees.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** 1) The agency public information officer researched and selected a video production company to assist with the creation of the recruitment video. A contract was signed with 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue Studios and two planning meetings were held with the videographer/director and public information officer to compile a storyboard for the project (including what departments/aspects to cover in the video, which employees would best represent each area and be available/willing to participate, as well as specific locations for each shoot). A production schedule

was established and over the course of a four-day period, 28 scenes were staged and shot for the video. On April 2, one month ahead of schedule, the final production was approved. The 1:55 video featured a diverse mix of employees and departments, dramatic music to capture the audience, a mixture of real-time and slow-motion scenes to keep the viewer engaged, along with a personal message from Sheriff Mascara to close the piece with the call to action. 2) On April 2, the approved video was officially released and uploaded to the agency's Facebook page and YouTube channel, a link was posted on the agency homepage and links were shared with law enforcement training centers and the local public access channel. 3) Throughout the period of April 2 through May 31, applications began flooding the Sheriff's Office Human Resources department, where staff combed through the 164 received to narrow the pool down to 73 qualified applicants. 4) Of the 73 applicants, 14 highly qualified new employees were hired.

**EVALUATION:** 1) The final video product successfully conveyed the message Sheriff Mascara sought to share. The use of an array of employees coupled with slow motion shots, dramatic music and a wide variety of departments and locations culminated to create a compelling video that captivated viewers and provoked action in interested candidates. 2) In the recruitment period of April 2 through May 31, the most significant response came from the Facebook post, which reached more than 42,000 users, 19,592 unique views, was shared 352 times and had 448 likes and comments. In addition, the job description page on the agency website experienced 2,401 unique pageviews. 3) Of those engagements, 8,085 people clicked through to the job description landing page posted in the link. A total of 164 interested candidates applied, the pool was narrowed to 73 qualified candidates, which was 45% above the goal of 50. 4) By May 31, the Sheriff's Office met the goal of hiring 14 qualified deputies to fill the need of providing resource officers for every school in St. Lucie County. The video continues to be utilized for ongoing recruitment purposes, being posted to the agency's Facebook page and website and shown at career fairs.

**BUDGET:** The total budget for the project was \$3,000, with \$2,500 allocated to 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue Studios for video production services. The remainder of the budget (\$500) covered the staff time (23 hours) of the public information officer to meet with the videographer/director, plan, schedule and oversee shoots and video revisions. To maintain as low a cost as possible, all personnel in the video were filmed during normal work hours, not requiring any additional cost to the project.