

# Pico Rivera Sheriff's Station Vandalism Enforcement Team

The Pico Rivera Sheriff's Station Vandalism Enforcement Team (VET) is a collaborative effort between the City of Pico Rivera, the County of Los Angeles, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, the Los Angeles County Probation Department, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, and Community-Based Organizations (CBO's). The team consists of four deputy sheriffs, a deputy district attorney, a deputy probation officer, and a sheriff's sergeant. Utilizing an internet-based graffiti tracker system, the VET focuses their efforts on the most prolific taggers and/or gang members who are committing acts of vandalism in the City of Pico Rivera and the unincorporated West Whittier area of Los Angeles County.

Since its inception in January 2008, the VET team has made over 300 arrests. They have experienced an unprecedented 100% filing rate with the District

Attorney's Office as well as a 100% conviction rate. In addition to arresting vandals and seizing vandalism paraphernalia, the VET has also seized several firearms and a significant quantity of illegal drugs, including methamphetamine and marijuana.

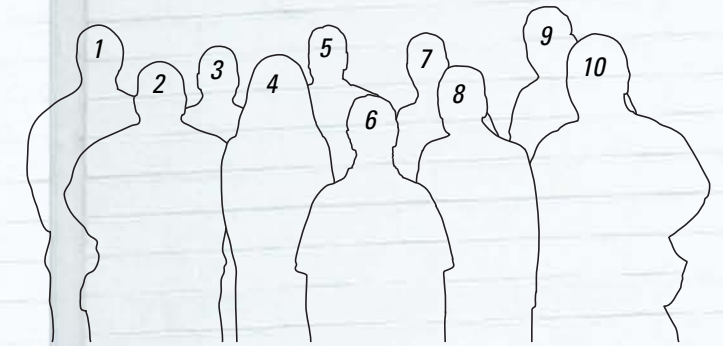
In addition, thus far, over \$100,000 in restitution has been ordered by the court to be paid to the City of Pico Rivera and the County of Los Angeles. Arresting perpetrators is only one prong in a two prong attack on graffiti vandalism. Realizing that solely

arresting juvenile offenders is not going to solve the growing problem of graffiti vandalism, the second prong of the VET strategy focuses on intervention. The VET utilizes a deputy probation officer to work with juvenile offenders and their parents, encouraging them

to enter into voluntary conditions of probation and to seek parenting and juvenile behavior classes in an attempt to change behavior before the first court appearance. Area Community Based Organizations (CBO's) provide free

parenting classes to parents and free anger management, peer group counseling, mental health, and career development classes for juvenile offenders. Nearly 40% of the juvenile offenders and/or their parents have voluntarily entered into these conditions of probation. None of those participants have been rearrested or have committed additional acts of vandalism.

The Vandalism Enforcement Team has been successful in not only reducing vandalism, arresting graffiti vandals, and holding parents accountable for the acts of their minor children, but they have also been credited with a significant decrease in violent crime in their targeted area. From January 2008 through September 2008, violent crime has decreased 15%, victims of gun violence have decreased 47%, aggravated assaults have decreased 9%, robbery has decreased 24%, and homicide has been reduced by 86%.



1. City of Pico Rivera Public Works Supervisor Eric Johnson  
2. Deputy Ray Castaneda  
3. Deputy Tim Shultz  
4. Deputy District Attorney Araceli Otero  
5. Deputy Mario Chairez

6. Deputy Probation Officer Julie Longoria  
7. Deputy Gil Dominguez  
8. Los Angeles County Public Works Program Manager Ari Telias  
9. Los Angeles County Public Works Richard Del Castillo  
10. Sergeant Tony Romo