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***Mayor Fulop & Public Safety Officials to Host
National Night Out: America’s Night Out Against Crime as Fulop
Administration Continues to Expand Public Safety Initiatives***

Community Members to Engage With Police Officers Including Newest Members of the Force; PAL Youth Explorers to be Recognized by Mayor Fulop as Diversity Recruitment Initiatives Expand

JERSEY CITY – Mayor Steven M. Fulop, the Jersey City Police Department, the Police Officers’ Benevolent Association (P.O.B.A.), the Jersey City Police Superior Officers’ Association (P.S.O.A.), the Jersey City Police Foundation, are hosting the annual National Night Out Against Crime event for residents and police officers at four city parks on Tuesday, August 4th, 2015, as the Fulop Administration continues to expand public safety citywide.

The annual event, now in its 32nd year, will feature activities for children and adults and is an opportunity for residents to get to know veteran officers and new recruits as the Police Department continues to strengthen community relations.

“Relationships between law enforcement and community members are important to enhancing public safety,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “In Jersey City, we have made an effort to build a police department that both reflects and understands the community it serves. National Night Out is an opportunity for our residents and police officers to come together and strengthen the relationship in order to improve all of our communities.”

Residents are invited to attend one of the four city parks hosting National Night Out events from **6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.** on **Tuesday, August 4, 2015** at **Audubon Park, Pershing Field, Arlington Park and Hamilton Park**. At each park, there will be moon bounces, balloon sculpturing, a dunk tank, popcorn, hot dogs, giveaways and more. Various community and service organizations will be on hand to provide information to the public, and neighborhood group leaders will be recognized for their contributions to the community.

“Our officers are working the streets and getting to know residents and business owners each and every day and events like National Night Out are an added chance for us to meet with the community and discuss any issues or ideas they may have,” said **Public Safety Director James Shea**. “Anytime we can positively engage with the community we serve, we are strengthening the dialogue between police and the community that helps us do the best job possible for our residents.”

The Police Department’s Community Relations officers are assigned to improving the effectiveness of the Jersey City Police Department by facilitating a cooperative effort between the police and the community through various citywide programs and services. **National Night Out** is one of the Department’s most notable events as it heightens crime-prevention awareness and generates support for anti-crime programs.

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“National Night Out is a great opportunity for residents to get to know their neighbors and the officers who patrol their community, as well as the police leadership,” said **Florence Holmes, an active member of the Friends of Arlington Park**. “We are grateful for events like this that strengthen the relationships we have with the Police Department as we all work together to improve public safety in our city.”

Since taking office in July of 2013, Mayor Fulop has hired 122 new police officers, and another 17 officers are currently in the police academy graduating in October. An additional class of 40 officers is scheduled to enter the police academy in the fall. The Fulop Administration has also redeployed dozens of police officers from special units and administrative posts to patrol, increasing the number of officers interfacing directly with the community.

All of the 32 new officers who joined the force this summer have been assigned in teams with veteran officers to walking posts in the south and the west districts. Several of the officers will be on hand at Arlington and Audubon Parks to meet with community members. Additionally, 20 Jersey City teens who participated in a week-long Police Activity League (PAL) Explorer Cadet Program to learn about careers in law enforcement will be on hand to interact with the community and receive recognition from Mayor Fulop.

As a result of Fulop Administration public safety initiatives, for a second year in a row, **nearly all major crime categories are on the decline making Jersey City the safest big city in New Jersey**. This year, both shootings and homicides are lower than last year for the same time period, and the **majority of crime categories are currently reporting double-digit decreases**.

“As officers we know that National Night Out is one of the best events for us each year, because it gives us the ability to speak with the community in a more informal setting,” said **Police Chief Philip Zacche**. “It’s also a time for us to interact with children and teenagers to show them that police can be a positive in their lives and that a career in law enforcement is a path that can help them give back and improve their community.”

Mayor Fulop has expanded the **Police Diversity Recruitment** initiative since taking office, holding a diversity recruitment session and deploying a Marine Corps model that operates in the community to work with interested applicants throughout the recruitment process, encouraging them and providing necessary resources such as academic and physical training. The new recruitment office, which now has two full-time officers assigned, is strategically located at the HUB on Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive. As a result of the Fulop Administration efforts, **of the new officers hired since 2013, about 70 percent have been minorities, including 15 African American, 58 Hispanic and 10 Asian officers**.

National Night Out, “America’s Night Out Against Crime”, began in 1984 as an effort to promote involvement in crime prevention activities, police-community partnerships, neighborhood camaraderie and send a message to criminals letting them know that neighborhoods are organized and fighting back. National Night Out is held annually on the first Tuesday of August, and now involves more than 37.8 million people and 16,124 communities from all fifty states, U.S. Territories, Canadian cities, and military bases worldwide.

At **9 p.m.**, Jersey City residents are encouraged to participate in **National Night Out by turning on their home or porch lights**. Churches are asked to **ring their bells** as a gesture of unity to support and promote safety in their neighborhoods.

Additional sponsors for the event include: the **Department of Health and Human Services**, the **Office of Cultural Affairs**, the **Department of Recreation**, the **Department of Public Works**, **BJ’s Wholesale**, **Sysco**, **Aramark**, **Best Foods**, and **Target**.

All media inquiries should be directed to Jennifer Morrill, Press Secretary to Mayor Steven M. Fulop at 201-547-4836 or 201-376-0699.////