



## CITY OF MOUNT VERNON, N.Y.

Mayor Office

**SHAWYN PATTERSON-HOWARD, MPA**  
*Mayor*

City Hall, One Roosevelt Square  
Mount Vernon, NY, 10550  
(914) 665-2362 – Fax: (914) 665-6173

**KRISTYN BRIEZ REED**  
*Chief of Staff*

### **Mount Vernon Police Department Launches New Wellness and Community Affairs Division and Wellness Precinct**

For Immediate Release: Mount Vernon, NY April 25, 2022

**Mount Vernon, NY**- On Tuesday, April 26, 2022 at 9am, the City of Mount Vernon will announce the creation of the Mount Vernon Police Department’s new Wellness and Community Affairs Division and the opening of its Wellness Precinct to create diversionary initiatives and recovery supports for the community’s most vulnerable in an attempt to build bridges to a safer and healthier city.

**Mayor Shawyn Patterson Howard said** “The City of Mount Vernon is excited to launch the Mount Vernon Police Department Wellness Division & Precinct which is the first of its kind in the region. This is much more than a co-response model but a comprehensive model to violence prevention, intervention and restorative justice. We must address the root causes of both violence and community disengagement like mental health, trauma, anger, addiction, homelessness, under education, underemployment, housing and a myriad of social and emotional issues if we expect to build a safer and thriving community. I look forward to working with a growing network of government, human service, business, faith and civic partners who are committed to ensuring that everyone from youth to elders feel safe and supported.”

The Wellness Precinct is a community wellness initiative which operates in an offsite substation apart from the police headquarters that consists of crisis intervention trained police officers, licensed clinicians, peer recovery specialists as well as housing and case management specialists working collaboratively with public health and human service providers to co-respond to police calls for service and/or provide post-crisis follow-up in the community.

In instances when the impacted resident is well known to us and/or follow up linkages could be helpful, the Wellness Division will engage in rigorous prevention techniques, including regular case conferences with community supports, to dispatch wraparound services intended to stabilize residents in the Mount Vernon community.

The Wellness Division will focus on improving the resource pathway for the following communities: Youth, persons with a mental health and/or substance abuse condition, individuals experiencing homelessness, the aging and elderly, Veterans and other persons who served our country in the armed forces, survivors of intimate partner violence and unhealthy domestic relationships as well as formerly incarcerated persons and persons with current and prior involvement in the criminal legal system.

The Wellness Division will also announce the rollout of the School-Community Safety Partnership with the Mount Vernon City School District for the remainder of the 2021-2022 academic year. The safety partnership will be piloted at Mount Vernon High School and include a restorative framework for

*“The Jewel of Westchester”*



## CITY OF MOUNT VERNON, N.Y.

Mayor Office

---

**SHAWYN PATTERSON-HOWARD, MPA**  
*Mayor*

City Hall, One Roosevelt Square  
Mount Vernon, NY, 10550  
(914) 665-2362 – Fax: (914) 665-6173

**KRISTYN BRIEZ REED**  
*Chief of Staff*

discipline support on Level III and IV code of conduct violations, behavioral health support integration to increase student's access to trauma services, the development of a learning community for students, parents and staff and a student re-entry and credit recovery model to support the successful re-entry of students returning to the Mount Vernon City School District from temporary out-of-district placement.

**George Latimer, Westchester County Executive** said “I applaud the City of Mount Vernon, Mayor Shawyn Patterson Howard and the Mount Vernon Police Department for launching the Wellness Division and Precinct. All too often violence is the outcome, but there was a path long before the outcome- and that is where the intervention needs to happen. There is a community approach, this is the base of building a safer community and a community that flourishes. Working together I know the youth of Mount Vernon will greatly benefit from this innovative program.”

**Deputy Commissioner Jennifer Lackard of The Mount Vernon Police Department** said “We believe that this partnership will provide an inclusive alliance to ensure the health, safety and equal protection of all of the City's school-aged students in the District. We are pleased of the school district's willingness to, not only, provide access and resources during the remainder of this school year but to find the resources to scale this initiative beyond Mount Vernon High School in the Fall 2022.”

**Judith Watson, Chief Executive Officer of the Mount Vernon Neighborhood Health Center** said Mount Vernon Neighborhood Health Center is pleased to partner with the City of Mount Vernon and The Mount Vernon Police Department to expand its current on-site operation at the Mount Vernon High School, to integrate trauma-informed behavioral health care into primary care. The delivery of integrated care is essential to improving health outcomes and we stand ready to offer health resources which meet the needs of our city's students.

**Tajae Gaynor, Director of Westchester Rockland Mediation Center CLUSTER Community Services** said “CLUSTER is excited to continue its partnership with the Mount Vernon Police Department through its newly minted Wellness Division to create programs that benefit Mount Vernon's youth. We look forward to bringing our expertise in Dispute Resolution and Restorative Justice to the forefront of every conversation focused on community wellness and the development of programs to serve our young people.”

**Dr. Waveline Bennett-Conroy, Assistant Superintendent of School Improvement, Mount Vernon City School District** said “The Mount Vernon City School District is delighted to partner with the Mount Vernon Police Department to provide the School-Community Safety Partnership @ Mount Vernon High School. We believe these types of partnerships demonstrates when everyone is working towards a clear goal, successful change is much easier to achieve.”

*“The Jewel of Westchester”*



## CITY OF MOUNT VERNON, N.Y.

Mayor Office

---

**SHAWYN PATTERSON-HOWARD, MPA**  
*Mayor*

City Hall, One Roosevelt Square  
Mount Vernon, NY, 10550  
(914) 665-2362 – Fax: (914) 665-6173

**KRISTYN BRIEZ REED**  
*Chief of Staff*

**Miriam E. Rocah, Westchester County District Attorney said** “ I commend the City of Mount Vernon for their innovative multi-disciplinary approach to preventing individuals from becoming enveloped in the criminal justice system through its new Wellness Division of the Mount Vernon Police Department. Our partnership is an important reminder and acknowledgement that the schools, parents and officials are responsible and accountable for the well-being of our children. As a partner, the DA’s office is committed to helping and supporting our young people and value our shared goals through the School-Community Safety Partnership to provide a safe environment for the students in Mount Vernon.

###

*“The Jewel of Westchester”*