

# Motivating Officers to Apply for the Job

Leisha DeHart-Davis, UNC School  
of Government

Celisa Lehew, Police Chief, Town of  
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Mitch McKinney, Police Chief, City  
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Moderated by Jeff Welty, UNC  
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Sponsored by the UNC School of Government and the NC Association of Police Chiefs

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# Overview

- The Police Recruitment Project
- Using Indeed for Police Recruitment
- City of Mebane Recruitment Efforts
- Town of Chapel Hill Recruitment Efforts
- Questions and Discussion

# But First... A Public Service Announcement

- 2025 USDOJ Cops Hiring Program Solicitation Is Out
- Will fund hiring officers in resource-strapped jurisdictions
- Can involve partners to “analyze and assess problems”
- Let Jeff Welty ([welty@sog.unc.edu](mailto:welty@sog.unc.edu)) or Leisha DeHart-Davis ([ldd@unc.edu](mailto:ldd@unc.edu)) know if you are interested in potentially partnering

# Research on Police Recruitment

# Research on Police Recruitment

- Four qualities needed for effective recruitment (Wojslawowicz 2024)
  - Responsiveness
  - Communication
  - Personal Connection
  - Timeliness
- Job ads that focus on career benefits and job challenges get more applicants ***among the general population*** (Linos 2019)
- Job ad language affects the diversity of the applicant pool (Taniguchi 2023)

# The Police Recruitment Project

# The Research Team

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Government

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Paolo Belardinelli (Indiana University)

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# The Police Recruitment Project

Testing different  
motivational messages in  
job ads on officer applicant  
quality and quantity

Inaugural project partners

- City of Mebane
- Town of Chapel Hill

# How We Did the Research

**Used Indeed's Resume Search to identify and contact candidates**

**Randomly assigned one of two messages**

- Prosocial: serving the community
- Organizational identification: pride in the profession

**1,219 officers on Indeed**

- 41% responded
- 20% interested
- 21% declined

## Results

- Prosocial ads attract higher interest
- Org ID ads attract more experienced candidates
- No difference in gender, resume quality or education



# Using Indeed Resume Search

- Search & contact applicants by current title, experience, education, etc.
- Requires dedicated staff who reach out to candidates
- For best results, be responsive to candidate questions and interest
- Follow up with nonrespondents
- Best for the long game
- Better for officers than leaders



# Cost-Effectiveness of Indeed Resume Search

- \$4 per contact
- \$20 per interested contact (assuming 20% interest)
- Note: not all interested contacts apply
- Better for officers than leaders



# What Mebane and Chapel Hill PDs Are Doing

Questions?