

Dayton Police Chief Richard Biehl announced the [Dayton Police Department](#) is one of four winners of the [International Association of Chiefs of Police/Cisco Community Policing Award](#). The [award](#) recognizes outstanding community policing initiatives developed by law enforcement agencies around the world. Major David Wolford and Lieutenant Kenneth Beall of the Central Patrol Operations Division are being recognized for helping develop the [Downtown Engagement Project](#).

The Downtown Engagement Project began in 2013 with the Downtown Dayton Partnership, Montgomery County's Alcohol, Drug Addiction & Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board, Goodwill/Easter Seals of the Miami Valley, and Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) to address needs of the mentally ill and chronically homeless in downtown Dayton.

Dayton Police officers are able to identify potential service recipients and make referrals after an arrest. A social worker and peer specialist steps in next to form a relationship and steer the individual to the Goodwill/Easter Seals Miracle Clubhouse, a day shelter that offers food and clean clothes, along with access to training and even potential employment opportunities.

The impact of the Downtown Engagement Project is already evident: About half the people contacted by the social worker and peer specialist accept assistance. In the 18 months since the Downtown Engagement Project launched, the number of calls for service dealing with the mentally ill and homeless in Downtown Dayton has dropped nearly 20 percent, compared to the three years before the program was in existence.