



## PRESS RELEASE

### The Downey Police Department is hosting *Coffee with a Cop* on August 31, 2016

*Program offers opportunity to meet local officers and discuss community issues*

Downey, CA —On Wednesday, August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2016, officers from the Downey Police Department and community members will come together in an informal, neutral space to discuss community issues, build relationships, and drink coffee.

All community members are invited to attend. The event begins at 6:00 p.m. on August 31, 2016 at the Starbucks located at, 7954 Imperial Highway. Please contact Lieutenant Alex Irizabal with questions: (562) 904-2369, [airizabal@downeyca.org](mailto:airizabal@downeyca.org).

*Coffee with a Cop* provides a unique opportunity for community members to ask questions and learn more about the department's work in Downey's neighborhoods.

The majority of contacts law enforcement has with the public happen during emergencies, or emotional situations. Those situations are not always the most effective times for relationship building with the community, and some community members may feel that officers are unapproachable on the street. *Coffee with a Cop* breaks down barriers and allows for a relaxed, one-on-one interaction.

"We hope that community members will feel comfortable to ask questions, bring concerns, or simply get to know our officers," said Chief Carl Charles. "These interactions are the foundation of community partnerships. There has never been a more important time for *Coffee with a Cop* than right now. This program will bring our community together and help heal out nation and make us stronger."

"This is a great opportunity for residents to get to know and interact with our Police Department and to have a constructive dialogue about important issues," said Mayor Alex Saab.

*Coffee with a Cop* is a national initiative supported by The United States Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. Similar events are being held across the county, as local police departments strive to make lasting connections with the communities they serve.

The program aims to advance the practice of community policing through improving relationships between police officers and community members one cup of coffee at a time.

