

Community partnerships with Portland police pay off and offer more security.

by Brian Hughes, Neighborhood Response Team Officer, Portland Police

Well, 2008 is off to a busy start here at the Portland Police Bureau's SW Neighborhood Response Team Office. In this article, I'd like to discuss an investigation that actually began towards the end of 2007 and is continuing into 2008. Like so many of our investigations in this office, this one also had its origins in partnerships with the community.

Portland Community College has a very strong relationship with the Portland Police Bureau and also has a very professional security staff that keeps students safe at all three of their Portland metropolitan area campuses. One officer in particular is Nikki Barone, who regularly stays in touch with this office. She began an investigation into a series of locker

room thefts at the Sylvania campus and obtained surveillance video of a person who was later identified as Dustin Torres leaving the locker room with items stolen from the locker room.

At first, the identity of the suspect was unknown. Officer Barone created a flyer with the suspect's photo and emailed it to all the area campuses, as well as to the administrator of the Washington County Sheriffs innovative "Can you ID me" website. As luck would have it, our suspect was also busy at work in the locker rooms of Portland State University and one of their security officers, Officer Baker, was eventually able to positively ID our locker room burglar as 36-year-old Dustin Torres. The connection

was made based in part on Officer Barone's excellent communications efforts.

Currently, Torres's has felony warrants for his arrest stemming from yet another locker room theft and subsequent stolen car at the SW Community Center. Some of you might remember reading about that story in the local news, as there was a dog inside the car when it was stolen! Yes, the dog was returned safely.

Torres current location is unknown, and we are anxiously awaiting his capture.

This case, like so many other cases, really showcases what the strong partnerships between the police bureau and the community can accomplish. With our officer numbers at an all-time low, we really need the help!

