



BOROUGH OF STATE COLLEGE

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MEDIA ALERT:

May 8, 2019

POLICE OFFICER SHOOTING DEATH OF OSAZE OSAGIE

Statement from the Borough of State College

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STATE COLLEGE, Pa – Earlier today Centre County District Attorney Bernie Cantorna announced the investigative findings and his determination that the March 20, 2019 shooting death of Osaze Osagie was justified.

“The Osagie family continues to be in the thoughts and prayers of the State College Borough. Our sincere sympathy goes out to the entire family during this difficult time. In addition to the Osagie family, we also recognize that this has impacted the broader State College community and many persons in our community are mourning the loss of Osaze’s life.

We also have the officers of the State College Police Department (SCPD), and their families, in our thoughts. While our officers have always had a strong relationship with the community, we have worked hard in recent years to enhance this relationship. As we move forward to strengthen our relationships and address issues of race, inclusion, diversity and mental health, we continue to be proud of our officers and service that they provide,” according to Borough Manager, Thomas J. Fountaine, II.

The State College Borough, including the SCPD, will continue to work with the community to enhance the response to both mental health and race related issues. At the April 15 Borough Council Meeting, it was announced that a task force will be appointed to address the community concerns that have been raised as a result of this shooting death.

Previously, in 2015, the Borough and Penn State University jointly appointed the Task Force on Policing Communities of Color to strengthen relationships between both the State College and Penn State-University Park police departments and persons of color in the State College community. The Task Force issued a report in August 2016, with specific recommendations and action steps.

The task force being appointed after this incident will focus on building from the findings from in the 2016 Task Force on Policing and Communities of Color Report. It will also address issues around mental health services in Centre County, inclusion, diversity and equity. The task force will also be asked provide recommendations to the Borough on the feasibility of establishing an office to address issues of equity and diversity within the Borough.

“We will continue to collaborate with a wide variety of diverse, local partners to address community concerns as we seek strategies and programs designed to enhance the professional services provided by the women and men of the SCPD. We will also work closely with the task force being formed to identify ways of improving the response to mental health needs in Centre County as well as ways to enhance the relationships and increase trust between police and communities of color. Additional information about this task force will be released at a later date,” according to Mr. Fountaine.

Additional information is available at <https://www.statecollegepa.us/3077>

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If you would like more information about this topic contact Douglas Shontz by phone at 814-278-4723 or by e-mail at engage@statecollegepa.us.