



POLICE FOUNDATIONS

A CORPORATE-SPONSORED THREAT
TO DEMOCRACY AND BLACK LIVES

LittleSis ●

policefoundations.org

COLOR
OF
CHANGE

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| FOREWORD | 3 |
| EXECUTIVE SUMMARY | 6 |
| WHAT ARE POLICE FOUNDATIONS? | 12 |
| CORPORATE FUNDING OF POLICE FOUNDATIONS ENDANGERS BLACK LIVES AND UNDERMINES DEMOCRACY | 15 |
| » Corporations fund increasingly out-of-control police budgets | 15 |
| » Police foundations are a backdoor to fund unaccountable police | 16 |
| » Police foundations fund militarization that terrorizes Black communities and represses protest | 17 |
| » Police foundations pay to keep Black communities under watch | 18 |
| » Making Atlanta the most surveilled city in the U.S. | 20 |
| » “Nobody knew” about aerial surveillance in Baltimore | 22 |
| » Surveillance grows with gentrification in more cities | 24 |
| » “We pay for failures”: police foundations are a back door for controversial police experiments without oversight | 24 |
| » Police foundations spread “Copaganda” | 26 |
| » THE BIG CORPORATIONS BEHIND POLICE FOUNDATION BOARDS AND BUDGETS | 29 |
| » Police and big business at “a party you’re not invited to” | 34 |
| » Scrubbed and hidden: as protests grow, police foundations erase their donors | 36 |
| » Donating with one hand, profiting with the other | 38 |
| TALKING BLACK LIVES, ENABLING POLICE VIOLENCE | 41 |
| CONCLUSION | 44 |
| APPENDIX | 48 |
| Methodology | 49 |
| Charts | 51 |

FOREWORD

On June 12, 2020, with the nation and world still reeling from the police murders of Breonna Taylor and George Floyd, Atlanta police murdered Rayshard Brooks, a 27-year-old Black man. Days later, after the city's police chief resigned in shame and Brooks' murderer was charged, Atlanta police officers staged a "blue flu" protest and called in sick.

But this isn't the end of the story. On June 18, as Brooks' family made funeral arrangements for their loved one, the Atlanta Police Foundation announced it would give each Atlanta police officer a \$500 bonus. Again: One day after officers walked out on the job because charges were filed against their colleagues for the murder of Rayshard Brooks, the Atlanta Police Foundation rewarded police with a bonus.

IF YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF THE ATLANTA POLICE FOUNDATION, OR "POLICE FOUNDATIONS" IN GENERAL, YOU'RE NOT ALONE.

Police foundations are private organizations that funnel corporate money into policing, protecting corporate interests and enabling state-sanctioned violence against Black communities and communities of color. You might be more familiar with the Atlanta Police Foundation's sponsors: Amazon, Bank of America, Chick-fil-A, Coca-Cola¹, Delta Airlines, Home Depot, Waffle House, Wells Fargo, Uber and UPS, to name a few. These are the donors we know about. As calls for accountability increased in recent years, police foundations have taken additional steps to scrub their websites and hide donor information.

There is a police foundation in nearly every major American city, behind almost every police department, backed by wealthy donors and giant multinational corporations. In 2020, many police foundations' top corporate sponsors made public statements in support of Black Lives Matter, while providing a corporate slush fund for police.

THE CORPORATE HYPOCRISY IS CLEAR, BUT THE HARM POLICE FOUNDATIONS INFLICT ON BLACK COMMUNITIES ISN'T ALWAYS AS OBVIOUS.

As communities across the nation demand critical investments in what will actually keep us safe, healthy, and housed, police foundations exist to both funnel private money to policing and to secretly continue the militarization of large and small police departments across the country. As private entities, police foundations and their corporate sponsors protect corporate interests and increase huge police budgets outside of government oversight, with no accountability to the communities that police are sworn to serve. The identities of private donors whose money goes towards purchasing police equipment and funding police programs should be public information — especially if the donations are coming from powerful corporations.

By claiming to provide equipment and technology that massively-funded police departments "can't afford," police foundations pay for police violence, from SWAT equipment to lethal police dogs officers use to terrorize Black communities, repress protests and injure racial justice protesters. Corporations cannot claim to "stand with BLM protesters" on social media while funding violence against protesters and Black people behind closed doors.

THOUGH THEIR CORPORATE SPONSORS ARE HOUSEHOLD NAMES, POLICE FOUNDATIONS HAVE LARGELY FLOWN UNDER THE RADAR.

Dig deeper, and you'll discover part of what our report explains: Where there's a police department, there's likely a police foundation in its shadow, acting as a mouthpiece to provide PR spin in public, or hosting exclusive galas for the wealthy and well-connected to rub elbows with police brass in private. By design, police foundations are not required to disclose their donors.

¹After several conversations with Color Of Change and being made aware of police foundation harms, Coca-Cola stepped down from the Atlanta Police Foundation board in April 2021.

Police foundations also “hide” in plain sight, partnering with major sports teams for events, sponsoring “Crime Stoppers” tiplines, or installing CCTV cameras in heavily-trafficked, predominantly Black neighborhoods in Atlanta. In addition to expanding and normalizing surveillance, police foundations also test controversial weapons and equipment on Black communities and communities of color, including “predictive policing” software that embeds bias in technology and can make racist policing even worse.

CORPORATE MONEY FLOWS INTO CORPORATE PRIORITIES, SUCH AS HEAVILY POLICED AND SURVEILLED RETAIL AREAS AND GENTRIFIED NEIGHBORHOODS, WHILE VITAL COMMUNITY NEEDS ARE UNFUNDED. PUT SIMPLY, POLICE FOUNDATIONS ENSURE THAT THE POLICE PROTECT CORPORATE INTERESTS, NOT THE COMMUNITIES POLICE CLAIM TO “PROTECT AND SERVE.” IN DOING SO, POLICE FOUNDATIONS LAY BARE THE REAL PURPOSE OF POLICE: TO PROTECT POWER, PROPERTY, AND PRIVILEGE.

As Seth Stoughton, a former police officer and a law professor at the University of South Carolina noted, “It’s impossible to separate the world of policing from the world of money.” Police foundations entrench and institutionalize that reality beyond the control of elected officials and their constituents.

2021 MARKS THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THIS CONTROVERSIAL EXPERIMENT IN PRIVATIZED POLICING, WHICH BEGAN WITH THE FORMATION OF THE FIRST POLICE FOUNDATION IN NEW YORK CITY IN 1971.

Since 2014, in the wake of the uprisings in Ferguson, Missouri, and the Obama administration’s push to demilitarize police departments, dozens of police foundations sprung up to thwart reform and further militarization. According to publicly-available data, 55 Fortune 500 companies supported police foundations in 2020 and 2021.

In this report, Color Of Change and LittleSis have compiled the most extensive research to date on the links between police foundations and corporations, identifying over 1,200 corporate donations or executives serving as board members for 23 of the largest police foundations in the country. The report is also the first to discuss the harm police foundations inflict on Black and Brown communities nationwide.

Our conclusion: Any effort to demand safety and reduce the flow of public funds to police must also directly address the flow of private funds to police. Police foundations — policing’s secret weapon — are nothing without corporate donors, corporate partnerships, and the legitimization that follows. This report also explains how police accountability and corporate accountability are even more inextricably linked than they may appear. We cannot let corporations talk about “Black lives” on their Twitter feeds while also funding police violence on our streets.

AT ITS CORE, UNCHECKED CORPORATE POWER – WHETHER FROM POLICE FOUNDATION SPONSORS, MASSIVE RETAIL AND MEDIA COMPANIES, TECH MONOPOLIES, OR THE FOSSIL FUEL INDUSTRY AND BIG PHARMA – THREATENS THE SAFETY OF BLACK AND BROWN PEOPLE AND ENDANGERS EVERY PERSON ON THE PLANET.

WE HAVE A CHOICE TO MAKE.

We can choose a world where private police forces accountable only to their wealthy corporate backers enable state-sanctioned violence against Black communities and communities of color — a world in which it is impossible to separate the world of policing from the world of money.

Or we can demand that corporations divest from policing and that communities and policy makers hold them accountable. And we can choose, and co-create, a world with a transparent, inclusive and health-centered approach to public safety by building systems of care that are rooted in improving the well-being of our communities.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

"IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO SEPARATE THE WORLD OF POLICING FROM THE WORLD OF MONEY."

This dangerous truth has never been clearer. After the police murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Rayshard Brooks sparked the largest sustained mass mobilization in U.S. history in 2020, conversations about police accountability and police budgets moved from activist circles to the mainstream. At the same time, after years of deafening silence, some of the largest corporations in the world made public statements in support of Black Lives Matter.

Yet, beyond the black squares on Instagram and tweets demanding justice for Black people murdered by police, many of these same corporations have continued to fund the very systems that put Black lives in danger. In 2020, dozens of the largest American brands have continued to sponsor controversial police foundations — private organizations that funnel corporate money into policing, enabling state-sanctioned violence against Black communities and communities of color.

While communities across the nation demand critical investments in what actually keeps Black people safe, healthy, and housed, police foundations exist to both funnel private money to policing and to secretly continue the militarization of police departments nationwide. As private entities, police foundations and their corporate sponsors increase huge police budgets outside of government oversight, and with no accountability to the communities police are sworn to serve.

In fact, by claiming to provide equipment and technology that massively-funded police departments "can't afford," police foundations pay for police violence, from SWAT equipment to lethal police dogs that allow police forces to terrorize Black communities, repress protests and injure racial justice protesters. Corporations cannot claim to "stand with BLM protesters" on social media while also funding violence against protesters and Black people behind closed doors.

Though their corporate sponsors are household names, police foundations have largely flown under the radar for decades. Yet the reach of these foundations is vast — where there's a police department, there's likely a police foundation in its shadow, acting as a mouthpiece to provide PR spin in public, or hosting exclusive galas for the wealthy and well-connected to rub elbows with police brass in private.

There are hundreds of police foundations in the United States — one in nearly every major city. Many were formed in the last decade in the wake of calls to demilitarize the police — from Newark, NJ in 2012 and Chicago in 2014, to Wichita, KS in 2016 and Oxnard, California in 2021.²

Despite a year of sustained direct action demanding police accountability and justice for Black people murdered by police, new corporations have continued —or started— to support police foundations and new police foundations have been founded.³

Police foundations and their corporate donors and board members enable the ongoing militarization and expansion of policing and support the hyper-surveillance of Black, Brown, and Indigenous neighborhoods.



POLICE FOUNDATIONS

ADD TO BLOATED POLICE BUDGETS

As communities and advocates seek to reduce the size, scope, and power of police departments and increase investments in public education, housing, healthcare services, and community-led violence prevention programs, police foundations are a back-door route to undermine those efforts and funnel private money into policing.

FUND POLICE MILITARIZATION

Police foundations in Atlanta, Philadelphia, Houston and elsewhere have purchased SWAT equipment for police departments — from long guns and drones to ballistic helmets that allow militarized police forces to terrorize Black communities. Police foundations often purchase police dogs and horses for mounted patrols, both of which are used as tools to harm and maim Black people. As civil resistance to police violence grows, this equipment is also used to repress protest and injure protesters.

EXPAND SURVEILLANCE

Through police foundations, private donors and corporations fund expanded surveillance — and the coordination of public and private surveillance — that fuels gentrification and the criminalization of Black people. The Atlanta Police Foundation, for example, has funded a network of 11,000 surveillance cameras to monitor overpoliced Black Atlantans, making Atlanta the most surveilled city in the United States.⁴ Across the country, police have used recent protests as an excuse to unleash new surveillance technologies, including those funded by police foundations, on protesters.

TEST NEW WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT ON

BLACK COMMUNITIES AND COMMUNITIES

OF COLOR

Police foundations fund controversial programs with limited government oversight. From “predictive policing” software that embeds bias in technology and can make racist policing even worse, to global police exchanges with authoritarian regimes, police foundations have helped police departments roll out practices and technology without having to answer to communities or elected officials.

PROMOTE “COPAGANDA”

Through rewards tiplines like “Crime Stoppers,” advertising, special events, media relationships and more, police foundations drive publicity and messages that contribute to misconceptions about crime and the normalization of constant surveillance and ever-growing policing.





The history of police foundations is inextricably linked to the interests of the wealthy corporate backers that direct their operations and provide their funding. The first police foundation was formed in 1971 when a consortium of business leaders in New York City sought a way to privately fund the police. Fifty years later, corporations provide private funding for police forces through police foundations across the country.

As Sofia Jarrin Thomas put it, “The 1970s neoliberal ‘experiment’ of lifting the ‘burden of bureaucracy’ from local police has left us with an increasingly militarized police force that works under the mandate of unaccountable corporate donors.” Today, corporations privately fund police forces through police foundations in nearly every major city across the country and contribute to over policing, militarization, media bias, and a lack of accountability.

Contributions from Wall Street, real estate companies, universities, media conglomerates, and professional sports leagues tie police even more deeply to serving the corporate interests that make cities dangerous for Black and Brown people. Contributions from technology and communications companies, as well as security, law enforcement, military, and defense firms that contract with police departments to supply tools of surveillance and criminalization across the country, raise red flags for public contracting conflicts. Media and professional sports participation raises the potential for media bias, provides public relations cover, and enables the normalization of aggressive, racist policing.

This report examines police foundations in 23 cities⁵, and identified the corporate affiliations of over 1200 directors and sponsors, showing that 55 Fortune 500 companies from across the economy bankrolled police foundations in 2020 and 2021, including the following:

⁵Atlanta Police Foundation, Baltimore County Police Foundation, Boston Police Foundation, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Foundation, Chicago Police Foundation, Detroit Public Safety Foundation, Friends of the Dallas Police, Houston Police Foundation, Los Angeles Police Foundation, Louisville Metro Police Foundation, Memphis Police Foundation, New Orleans Police & Justice Foundation, NYC Police Foundation, Oakland Police Foundation, Palm Beach Police & Fire Foundation (Palm Beach Police Foundation until October 2019), Philadelphia Police Foundation, Saint Paul Police Foundation, San Diego Police Foundation, San Jose Police Foundation, Seattle Police Foundation, St. Louis Police Foundation, Washington D.C. Police Foundation.



WALL STREET

Many of the largest financial institutions in the United States play roles in police foundations. Every police foundation we reviewed has at least one board member or donor from finance.

BIG TECH

The largest companies in the tech sector are donors or are represented on police foundations boards.

FOSSIL FUELS

Fossil fuel and utility companies fund police foundations, and they have directly funded policing and proposed legislation to criminalize protest.

MEDIA

Many major media companies have police foundation ties. With increased attention on the role of media — both journalism and scripted content — in propping up policing, the donations raise additional concerns.

COMMUNICATIONS

Motorola, AT&T and Verizon play roles in numerous police foundations. Tech and communications companies also contract with police departments across the country, raising potential conflict of interest concerns.

REAL ESTATE

Companies in real estate, development and construction play roles in most police foundations — and their role in gentrification and increasing both property values and police budgets is inextricably linked to racist policing.

RETAIL & FOOD

Numerous well-known retail and food brands also fund policing foundations.

PROFESSIONAL SPORTS

Football, baseball and basketball franchises all fund police foundations. Even as players take courageous stands in the movement to protect Black lives, NBA, MLB and NFL franchises are involved in police foundations, funding the harm they inflict on Black communities.



Many of the largest corporations in the United States — across every major corporate sector — fund and direct police foundations. Police foundations fundraise millions each year with little transparency, to supplement already enormous police budgets, providing tax-deductions for donors and a corporate slush fund for the police. Most police foundations do not have to disclose their donors, so money flows between corporations and police foundations are hidden from accountability, oversight and disclosure. Beyond current conversations about hyper-militarized, unaccountable police, police foundations reinforce entrenched power structures, abuses of power and the wealth gap. These private organizations are filled with conflicts of interest and failures of transparency and oversight — connecting the wealthy and powerful directly to policing that exists to protect capital and prevent the redistribution of power and resources. **While police budgets are usually public documents that must be approved by local elected officials, police foundations funnel corporate cash and resources toward law enforcement in ways that prioritize corporations over communities.**

Corporate donations, boards filled with corporate leaders, and swanky galas all raise multiple potential conflicts and enable corruption — including donations from companies doing business or seeking to do business with the cities or departments involved, and the risks of preferential treatment for donors versus the general public. These foundations create a sanctioned way to funnel otherwise prohibited gifts to police departments.

Additionally, police foundations can hide their donors and activities from public view. While in the past, corporate and wealthy donors have publicized their funding of police foundations and their presence at foundation galas and on foundation boards, they're rapidly covering their tracks. In the face of scrutiny and public opposition, police foundations in New York, Seattle, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. scrubbed their websites in 2020, taking down information about their boards of directors and funders.⁶

As cities face unprecedented budget crises, people across the country are calling for investments in community-based violence prevention and programs to create thriving, safe communities. Police foundations are the antithesis of this goal. Police foundations are a dangerous pipeline of private corporate funding to increase policing, starving vital community services of resources, with little to no public accountability, transparency, or oversight. **To invest in what keeps our communities safe, healthy, and housed, we also have to address policing's secret weapon: police foundations.**

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS:

CORPORATIONS SHOULD
DIVEST IMMEDIATELY FROM
POLICE FOUNDATIONS

and they should resign from
and refuse positions on police
foundation boards.

POLICYMAKERS SHOULD MANDATE
DISCLOSURE OF DONORS AND
EXPENDITURES AND REQUIRE
PUBLIC APPROVAL

for expenditures from private
funding; they should hold
hearings to investigate
relationships and any possible
conflicts of interest.

COMMUNITY MEMBERS
CAN FIND OUT WHICH
CORPORATIONS CONTRIBUTE
TO POLICE FOUNDATIONS

and police in our communities, and find out if
corporations where we work and brands we engage
with are funding police foundations, and demand
that companies and policymakers take action.

As large corporations make pledges for racial equity and adopt new policies for diversity, equity and inclusion, they must also take action and divest from aggressive, racist policing. This requires divesting from police foundations, not participating in their boards, and ensuring that their brands are no longer used to fund and legitimize police violence against Black, Brown and Indigenous communities.

WHAT ARE POLICE FOUNDATIONS?

Police foundations are private non profit organizations that raise money for police departments and related activities. There are over 250 police foundations in the United States, with one in nearly every major city.⁷ These foundations allow corporations and private parties to contribute to police departments outside of public funds and oversight.⁸ Nearly 70% of police departments reported partnering with corporations, and 46% with police foundations, in a 2014 survey.⁹

What does this corporate funding buy? A Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department Foundation survey heard from 58 foundations. More than half (64%) reported funding K-9 or mounted units, while 14% funded weapons, 9% gun detection technology, and 76% “technology and equipment” including security equipment such as cameras, lighting, and license plate readers.¹⁰

How Police Foundations Use Funding

| Item | % funding |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| “Technology and equipment” | 76% |
| K-9 or Mounted Units | 64% |
| Weapons | 14% |
| Gun Detection Technology | 9% |

Source: “Positive Community-Police Engagement Report,” Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, February 2021, with survey of 58 police foundations.

The history of police foundations is one of powerful corporations shaping policing in their interests. The first modern police foundation was formed to financially back the largest police force in the country, the NYPD. The New York City Police Foundation was founded in 1971 in the wake of a police strike and city-wide revenue crisis by the Association for a Better New York, a business association led by a prominent real estate developer.¹¹ Two years later when the city administration considered privatizing the police department, the association promised an “open checkbook” to fund the initiative.¹² Now with an annual budget of \$11 million,



the New York City Police Foundation continues to funnel millions in private donations to the NYPD every year.¹³

During the 2020 New York City budget negotiations, the New York City Council added a budget requirement to report on how private police foundation funds are used by the NYPD. Thus far, despite the requirement, the NYPD has refused to disclose this information.¹⁴

“The 1970s neoliberal ‘experiment’ of lifting the ‘burden of bureaucracy’ from local police has left us with an increasingly militarized police force that works under the mandate of unaccountable corporate donors.”

—Sofia Jarrin-Thomas, *Nonprofit Quarterly*¹⁵

Although the NYC Police Foundation will turn 50 in 2021, most U.S. police foundations were founded after 2000 — and many were supported by the National Police Foundations Project, a partnership between Target and the U.S. Department of Justice.¹⁶ Nearly 40% of police foundations were founded between 2014 and 2016, creating a new source of funding for departments as the Obama Administration pushed to demilitarize police in the wake of the uprising in Ferguson, Missouri.

Police foundations pull in tens of millions of dollars in revenue each year. The table below shows selected major police foundations with over \$1 million in reported revenue in their latest available IRS filings. Together, these 13 police foundations took in nearly \$60 million.

US police foundations with

> \$1 million USD in reported revenue in 2018 or 2019

| FOUNDATION | 2018 REVENUE (MILLIONS) | 2019 REVENUE (MILLIONS) | % INCREASE |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------|
| NYC (June Fiscal Year End, FYE) | \$9,744,791 | \$11,885,187 | 22% |
| Atlanta | \$7,505,866 | \$10,848,654 | 45% |
| St. Louis | \$2,498,511 | \$10,378,796 | 315% |
| Los Angeles | \$5,519,887 | \$9,655,223 | 75% |
| Houston | \$2,513,996 | \$3,725,142 | 48% |
| Palm Beach (June FYE) | \$2,329,790 | \$3,164,192 | 36% |
| Detroit | \$1,879,622 | \$1,936,283 | 3% |
| New Orleans | \$1,492,842 | \$1,665,616 | 12% |
| Seattle | \$1,019,266 | \$1,332,138 | 31% |
| San Diego (June FYE) | \$1,219,654 | \$1,274,205 | 4% |
| Washington DC | \$1,001,571 | \$1,090,452 | 9% |
| Charlotte | \$862,732 | \$1,049,050 | 22% |
| Louisville (June FYE) | \$1,600,290 | \$892,606 | -44% |
| Total | \$39,188,818 | \$58,897,544 | 50% |

While city budgets are public documents negotiated and approved by elected officials, most police foundations are 501c(3) nonprofits and do not have to disclose their donors, so money flows between corporations and police foundations are hidden from accountability, oversight and disclosure.

Source: IRS 990 Data from <https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits>

Police foundation spending may also be hidden from local elected leadership. For example, when Kansas City, Missouri began examining the budget for the city's police force, city officials faced challenges assessing the various public and private revenue streams flowing into the Kansas City Police Department. In response, Kansas City Mayor Quinton Lucas admitted: "I know what is presented to us, both in the city council budget meetings and in the board of police commissioners, to the extent that there was information outside of that, I'm probably not deeply aware of it either. **Which I think by the way is a bit of a problem. It's vital to let people know what all is coming in. Whether it be from the police foundation, whether it be from our constituent counties.**"¹⁷

At the same time, while corporate donations to police foundations lack transparency or accountability, they are generally tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Many of the largest corporations in the United States — across every major corporate sector — fund and direct police foundations, creating tax-deductions for corporate donors, and a corporate slush fund for the police.

| SECTOR | SELECT COMPANIES | | | | |
|------------------------------|--|---|--|--|---|
| Real Estate and Construction |  CUSHMAN & WAKEFIELD |  CBRE | NEWMARK | | |
| Finance |  WELLS FARGO |  Goldman Sachs |  CHASE |  BLACKROCK |  Bank of America  citi |
| Retail and Food |  Starbucks |  Coca-Cola |  TARGET |  WAFFLE HOUSE |  White Castle  Wendy's  COSTCO  Walmart  Chick-fil-A  Kroger |
| Security |  SONITROL VERIFIED ELECTRONIC SECURITY |  AXON |  ALLIEDUNIVERSAL There for you. | | |
| Fossil Fuel and Utility |  Chevron |  Shell |  MARATHON |  Georgia Power | |
| Media and Entertainment |  VIACOMCBS | |  BET★ |  FOX NEWS channel |  Disney  COMCAST |
| Tech |  Microsoft |  facebook |  amazon |  Uber |  Google  lyft |
| Communications |  MOTOROLA |  verizon✓ |  AT&T | | |
| Professional Sports |  MAJOR LEAGUE BASEBALL |  NFL |  NBA | | |

Police foundations fundraise millions each year with little transparency, providing a tax-deductible, corporate slush fund for the police.

~~Corporate Funding~~ of Police Foundations endangers Black lives and undermines democracy

Police foundations feed the growth of police budgets and the expansion of policing, which devastates Black communities through criminalization and mass incarceration at the cost of Black lives. In particular, these foundations directly fund the ongoing militarization of policing and support the hyper-surveillance of Black, Brown, and Indigenous neighborhoods.

The kind of surveillance and militarized equipment funded by police foundations are increasingly used against protesters seeking to end policing's abuses in what the New York Times has called the largest sustained mobilization in U.S. history.¹⁹ While it is estimated that the majority of demonstrators are white, reviews of arrest records the weekend after George Floyd's murder, where

available, **show that those jailed were disproportionately Black: 70% in Chicago and 60% in Atlanta.**²⁰ Peaceful marchers in majority Black and Latinx neighborhoods such as the Bronx experienced violent arrests in ambushes by heavily armed police.²¹

Through seemingly innocuous community programming, events and collaborations with the media, police foundations help polish the image of police departments, normalize policing, and fuel narratives that enable continued expansion of policing, with disproportionate negative impacts on Black communities. Police foundations also facilitate profiteering and undermine government accountability to the communities they serve.

Corporations fund increasingly out-of-control police budgets

Police budgets have grown since the late 1970's, eclipsing vital social services — particularly in cities with large and growing Black communities — even as crime has dropped dramatically. While police budgets have grown unchecked, **city budgets for vital social services have been squeezed, closing hospitals and schools.**²² In the midst of the current economic crisis, funds for basic needs for children, health and elders are under threat. **Yet some cities allocate nearly half of their budget to police.**²³ Since the 1990's, police spending per capita has increased by 46% nationally. As a nation, **we spend upwards of \$100 billion per year on policing.**²⁴ This massive growth has fueled the expansion of arrests of Black people, even as crime rates drop.²⁵

An analysis by Politico examined what 2017 police spending in city budgets would have looked like if budgets had instead kept pace with homicide rates since the 1990s. The comparison was based on spending per homicide. If New York City had continued to spend the same amount, on policing per homicide as it did in 1994, adjusted for inflation, it would have spent less than a billion dollars in 2017. Instead, as of 2021, New York City spends nearly \$11 billion on policing.²⁶ Using the same methodology, Los Angeles would have spent just over \$500 million, an excess of \$2.5 billion of its \$3 billion. In 2020, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD)- budget accounted for 54% of all discretionary spending in Los Angeles.²⁷

In spite of bloated police budgets that eclipse the budgets of other essential city services, police foundations in New York City and Los Angeles still raised nearly \$10 million each in the most recent year of data available (2018 and 2019, respectively). In Atlanta, even though the police budget is a third of the city's \$700 million budget for 2022, the police foundation raised nearly \$11 million in 2019.²⁸ Meanwhile, police foundation websites are filled with claims that major police departments face financial strain and unmet needs.²⁹

Los Angeles, California

TOTAL BUDGET

\$5,304,500,000

POLICE BUDGET

\$2,778,400,000

52%



INFO FROM COSTOFPOLICE.ORG, ACRE

For a tool to see your city's spending, [visit https://costofpolice.org/](https://costofpolice.org/)

Police Foundations are a backdoor to fund

UNACCOUNTABLE POLICE



ASHLEY N. WHITMER - TIME.COM

While city budgets are public documents negotiated and approved by elected officials, police foundations function as a backchannel to funnel private money and resources toward law enforcement without transparent oversight.³⁰

Foundations claim to “support needs for which government funds are not readily available,” as the Denver Police Foundation website puts it, and to fundraise “all in support of the unbudgeted needs of the Philadelphia Police Department,” as the Philadelphia Police Foundation describes it.³¹ While police foundations are not intended to fund “core policing functions,” the lines are blurry: Foundations have funded mounted units, K-9 units, vests and more.³²

As elected representatives respond to community demands to stop prioritizing criminalization and over policing and instead invest in community-based violence prevention and other essential services, police foundations are a way for corporate and wealthy interests to keep funding police. Just six days after Rayshard Brooks was shot and killed by an Atlanta Police Department officer on June 12, 2020, the Atlanta Police Foundation paid \$500 bonuses to every police officer in the city. The bonuses were paid in the immediate wake of the resignation of the chief of police, the indictment of two officers on felony charges, and the widely publicized reaction by officers refusing to work or respond to calls and calling out sick in protest.³³ The officer who murdered Rayshard Brooks was reinstated, and the Atlanta Police Foundation and Buckhead Community Improvement District moved forward with additional bonuses for police officers in 2021.³⁴

Police foundations fund militarization that terrorizes Black communities and represses protest

Police foundations pay for the continued militarization of police. While billions of dollars of federal transfers of military equipment get most of the attention, the Washington Post reported that police foundations “grant funding so that police and sheriffs can purchase body armor, protective vehicles and surveillance equipment.

No entity tracks such funding, which means there’s no record of how much is distributed, which departments receive it or what equipment they purchase.”³⁵

Research has consistently found that the militarization of police targets Black communities and causes civilian deaths. In Maryland, researchers have found that police are more likely to deploy SWAT teams and militarized units in Black neighborhoods.³⁶

Police have also used recent protests as an excuse to unleash new surveillance technologies that raise serious civil liberties concerns, such as, flying U.S. Customs and Border Protection drones and helicopters over George Floyd protests in Minneapolis, and fossil fuel protests in northern Minnesota, endangering Black, Brown and Indigenous lives.³⁷

SWAT teams equipment is a frequent destination of foundation resources.³⁸ For example, the Philadelphia Police Foundation spent nearly \$1.5 million to fund equipment such as long guns, drones (unmanned aircraft systems), and ballistic helmets for the Philadelphia Police Department’s SWAT unit.³⁹

Similarly, the Louisville Metro Police Foundation has purchased SWAT team training and military grade equipment for Louisville Police.⁴⁰ On March 13, 2020, emergency medical technician Breonna Taylor was asleep

in her apartment when Louisville Police carried out a no-knock warrant and shot her five times, in what has been described as a botched, SWAT-style raid.⁴¹ The Louisville Metro Police Department responded by suggesting even more SWAT response in similar situations.⁴² There are concerns that Breonna Taylor’s murder was due to a Louisville Metro Police Department operation to clear out a block in western Louisville as part of a multi-million dollar gentrification effort, the Vision Russell Transformation Plan.⁴³



WOLFGANG SCHWAN - INQUIRER.COM

In the wake of the killing of Breonna Taylor, Louisville SWAT teams and equipment have been used for protest repression as police have continued to escalate their response against peaceful marchers.⁴⁴ In the protests, dozens of people have been arrested, a SWAT vehicle allegedly hit a protestor's car, and police hit a reporter and a cameraperson with pepper bullets / balls on live TV, and injured and arrested numerous peaceful protesters.⁴⁵

Notably, Louisville's police foundation has also provided direct funding to police officers and cosponsored a pro-police rally with the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) lodge, River City FOP.⁴⁶ Police union and association connections to police foundations raises potential conflicts of interest. The conflict of interest concerns intensify in cases like Philadelphia, where FOP leadership is on the board of the Philadelphia Police Foundation along with the Police Commissioner and numerous corporate representatives.

The pattern of increased militarization is true in other cities as well. The Houston Police Foundation has purchased SWAT equipment, long range acoustic devices (LRADs) and dogs for the K-9 unit, and it is currently raising money for a \$10 million training facility they call a "tactical village."⁴⁷ The Washington D.C. Police Foundation funded a similar tactical village. The Atlanta Police Foundation is footing \$60 million toward a proposed \$90 million for the controversial "Cop City," a massive "police training center" and tactical village built on protected forest land, ignoring outcry from Atlanta residents and environmental and climate activists. This would force Atlantans to pay \$30 million for the controversial "cop city," which could be better invested in vital community needs.⁴⁸ For more information, see <http://nocopcity.com/>.



Police foundations pay to keep Black communities under watch

Over and over, police foundations fund expanded video surveillance — blanketing business districts with cameras that connect private businesses to police. We found over 150 companies tied to real estate, development and construction funding police foundations, and nearly as many financial firms — sectors that drive and profit from the rising property values of gentrification and displacement. Increased surveillance and enforcement creates conditions for more police violence and criminalization, particularly in rapidly gentrifying cities, a likely factor in high-profile police killings from Eric Garner in New York City to Breonna Taylor in Louisville, Ky.⁵⁶ Harvard sociology professor Robert Sampson notes that there is "evidence that 311 and 911 calls are increasing in gentrifying areas, that makes for a potentially explosive atmosphere with regard to the police."⁵⁷

"[Gentrification] has created places where dangerous encounters frequently occur between Blacks and the police....Rayshard Brooks, George Floyd, Freddie Gray, Elijah McClain and Alton Sterling were all killed in gentrification pressure zones... This suggests that in the current system of policing, property values matter more than Black lives"

Henry-Louis Taylor Jr.,

Director of the University of Buffalo Center for Urban Studies⁵⁸

Beyond lethal military equipment and training facilities, police foundations frequently fund police dogs and horses, which serve as props for fundraising and pro-police propaganda, normalize policing, and can be lethal when used to suppress protests. This is true in large and small cities across the country. A majority of police foundations surveyed by the Las Vegas Police Foundation fund either K-9 or mounted units.⁴⁹



Police Dogs

Police dogs, also known as “K-9 units,” can be lethal. “Police dog bites sent roughly 3,600 Americans to emergency rooms every year from 2005 to 2013, according to a recent study published in the Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine. Almost all were male, and Black men were overrepresented,” reported the Pulitzer Prize-winning 2021 investigation of the dangers of canine units by the Marshall Project.⁵⁰ Police foundations in Los Angeles; Rochester, NY; Houston; Tampa; and Minneapolis and over half of police foundations surveyed fund potentially lethal police dogs and horses.⁵¹



Police Horses

Police Horses, also known as mounted units or mounted patrol, are used for crowd control. Photographs from a 2020 Black Lives Matter demonstration in Houston show police horses facing off against and trampling participants. The New York City Police Foundation has privately funded police horses for 20 years. Police horses have been funded by police foundations and private donors in a number of cities, including Rochester, NY; Baltimore; Philadelphia; Seattle; Houston; Minneapolis; Los Angeles; Tampa; and New Orleans. Atlanta’s police foundation proposed “cop city” includes clear-cutting protected forest land to build stables and pastures for police horses.

Robotic Policing

Massachusetts State Police were the first in the country to pilot a robotic police dog made by Boston Dynamics that observers from the Boston Globe to the UK Telegraph have called “terrifying.” (Boston Dynamics, a private corporation, loaned the robot to the police.) While we do not know whether any of these robotic police dogs will be weaponized, it is possible that they could be — and Dallas police used a non-military robot to kill in 2016. The NYPD also deployed a robotic dog, although we have not yet found clear police foundation links.⁵² NXT Robotics, which has ties to the San Diego Police Foundation, is piloting some robotic policing.⁵³ The New York City Police Foundation has funded bomb-detonating robots in the past,⁵⁴ and Louisville Metro Police Foundation purchased a \$26,000 Robotex Avatar III “tactical robot” in 2018.⁵⁵

Beyond linking policing to powerful corporate interests, especially in real estate and finance, and connecting gentrifiers with police, surveillance raises serious civil liberties and racial justice concerns. The ACLU has raised serious concerns over the “chilling” privacy and civil rights impacts of the growth of video surveillance.⁵⁹ Surveillance and facial recognition technologies have demonstrated racial bias, and led to wrongful arrests of Black men in New Jersey and Michigan.⁶⁰ San Francisco, Oakland, Boston, Jackson, Mississippi, and a handful of other cities in states from Oregon to Maine have banned facial recognition due to concerns about bias, with error

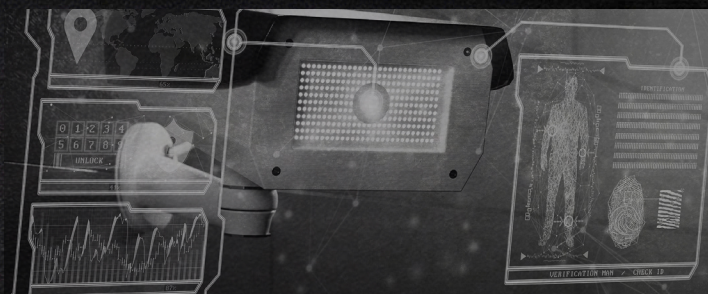
rates of up to 35% for women of color.⁶¹ California placed a temporary moratorium on its use by law enforcement. Massachusetts instituted a ban, and similar proposals have been considered in New York.⁶²

In some cases, the companies that support police foundations, particularly in Big Tech and communications, also profit from the sale of consumer surveillance technology, such as Amazon Ring, that links gentrifiers with police. In places like Louisville, these technologies have found additional ways to avoid procurement processes, billing as subscription services.⁶³

Making Atlanta the most surveilled city in the United States

The Atlanta Police Foundation funds “Operation Shield,” a citywide network of nearly 11,000 surveillance cameras and license plate readers that has only expanded the round-the-clock monitoring of Black Atlantans. The Atlanta Police Foundation spent more than \$2.6 million, nearly one-third of its reported 2017 expenses, on the Operation Shield surveillance program, eclipsing other expenses such as the “At-Promise Youth Initiative,” a youth center that puts Black children and their families in direct contact with law enforcement.⁶⁴ Both Operation Shield and the At-Promise Youth Initiative are part of the multi-million dollar “Westside Security Plan,” to increase police presence in the predominantly Black neighborhoods in Atlanta’s Westside, a “gentrification pressure area.”⁶⁵

A 2019 report by the technology research firm Comparitech ranked Atlanta as the most surveilled city in the United States in terms of cameras per capita.⁶⁶ The ACLU has raised concerns that “video surveillance has not been proven effective,” citing a study that noted that because of discriminatory targeting, “Black people were between one-and-a-half and two-and-a-half times more likely to be surveilled than one would expect from their presence in the population.”⁶⁷



Operation Shield relies on private funding and encourages private businesses to connect their cameras with police through a video surveillance hub that blankets Atlanta business districts.⁶⁸ Atlanta’s Police Foundation is also working with Atlanta Police Department (APD) on an expanded program called “Operation Aware,” — a predictive policing platform and criminal analytics software partnership with Microsoft — to link the Operation Shield surveillance network to databases of recently scanned license plates, vehicle registration records, and an individual’s criminal records to “start suggesting possible suspects almost automatically in a ‘real-time crime center.’”

Predictive crime algorithms make racially biased policing even worse. According to a 2017 study by Cornell University, “predictive policing” software may spark “feedback loops, where police are repeatedly sent back to the same neighborhoods regardless of the true crime rate.” Using surveillance and crime algorithms to “almost automatically identify suspects” increase unwarranted stops and searches, police presence in majority — Black neighborhoods, and police brutality against Black people.⁶⁹

By design, the Atlanta Police Foundation's Operation Shield and Operation Aware programs increase police presence and public space surveillance in already overpoliced communities. Instead of supporting community-based public safety initiatives that keep people safe, police foundations directly donate or help police departments pay for surveillance software and equipment, military weapons, SWAT team equipment, and other tools that are used to terrorize Black people.

By expanding police surveillance in Atlanta, the Atlanta Police Foundation has also expanded

operating costs for the city. The Atlanta Police Foundation paid for the cameras and the first three years of maintenance, leaving Atlanta on the hook for ongoing costs. This led to contracting and oversight issues. When the police department and city did not immediately cover subsequent billing and maintenance of the cameras, up to 250 cameras were left dead for months.⁷⁰ Corporate involvement in Atlanta policing has left communities two flawed options: harm from over-surveillance or a waste of taxpayer dollars, neither of which ensures public safety.

In 2021, the Atlanta City Council approved another corporation, Atlanta-based Flock, for additional cameras and license plate readers through the police foundation, and it proposed installing security cameras on all gas pumps in the city. Similarly Georgia Power helps sponsor Operation Shield.⁷¹

The Atlanta Police Foundation piloted further "surveillance innovations" at the expense of Black Atlantans, as some claim "political unrest and public protests...compounded the police department's need for a force multiplier."⁷² These controversial surveillance pilots contribute to over-policing and raise civil liberties concerns. Examples include mobile police surveillance units with automatic license plate readers (operated by Genetec), and ShotSpotter, an audio gunshot detection technology linked to racially disparate over policing and the police murder of Adam Toledo in Chicago.⁷³

Chicago police murdered Adam Toledo while responding to a ShotSpotter alert, which is disproportionately used in Black and Latinx neighborhoods in Chicago. Researchers found that no crime was reported by Chicago police after 86% of ShotSpotter gunfire alerts, meaning the vast majority of these alerts had the effect of driving over-policing in those neighborhoods. Per Jonathan Manes, MacArthur Justice Center attorney and police surveillance technology expert, "that illustrates for people in the city just how aggressively the police respond to ShotSpotter alerts and how dangerous these situations can become how quickly they can escalate...It tracks exactly with the racial divide in the city...If everybody in the city was dealing with that kind of police presence, they would be really concerned." In addition, new evidence suggests ShotSpotter's analysts frequently alter evidence at the request of police departments.⁷⁴

Buckhead: Privatized policing and expanded surveillance of Black Atlantans

Buckhead, a wealthy, majority-white and, politically conservative Atlanta neighborhood where Black Atlantans go to shop, brunch, and gather, has the city's lowest crime numbers.⁷⁵ Yet in 2021, the Atlanta Police Foundation, the city and private organizations launched the \$2.4 million Buckhead Security Plan to expand surveillance, criminalization and privatized policing in Buckhead. Buckhead demands to secede from Atlanta creates further flawed options: privately funded police accountable to corporations rather than the communities they are sworn to serve, or secession of majority white neighborhoods that would deprive the city of needed resources and tax revenue.⁷⁶

"Cop City"

Atlanta's police foundation pledged \$60 million for a proposed "cop city," a police training facility that would be built on 381 acres of protected forest land. Atlantans would be forced to pay an additional \$30 million for the facility, despite wide-reaching and vocal community opposition.⁷⁷

“Nobody knew” about aerial surveillance in Baltimore

After the Baltimore Police Foundation folded in the wake of a scandal, two funds at the Baltimore Community Foundation were used to continue to funnel private donations to police initiatives. In 2016 Houston billionaire John D. Arnold, a former Enron trader and hedge fund manager, funded at least six months of aerial surveillance through the Baltimore Community Foundation and a separate organization named the Police Foundation (renamed the National Police Foundation in 2018). Residents were not informed until Bloomberg reported on the program.⁷⁸ Developed for military use, the technology was first deployed in Iraq. In Los Angeles, the same technology was tested in Compton.⁷⁹ In April 2020, the ACLU filed a lawsuit to stop a new \$3.7 million surveillance contract, with the same company, Persistent Surveillance Systems LLC, underwritten by Arnold.⁸¹ In contrast, taxpayer-funded financial transactions over \$25,000 are subject to city approval.⁸²



**"THE FACT IS THAT SURVEILLANCE
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"IS THAT IT DIDN'T EVEN HAVE TO BE
DISCLOSED TO THE CITY'S
PURCHASING FOLKS AND THE MAYOR
DIDN'T KNOW, THE CITY COUNCIL
DIDN'T KNOW ... NOBODY KNEW. "**

David Rocah, senior staff attorney at the ACLU of Maryland⁸⁰

Surveillance grows with gentrification in more cities

Police foundations and other corporate police partnerships expand lethal surveillance in Black neighborhoods across the country. Surveillance and gentrification increase risk of police violence for Black communities, as seen in cases of high-profile police killings from Eric Garner and Breonna Taylor to Freddie Gray.

In Washington, D.C., Mayor Muriel Bowser launched a private security camera rebate program that has cost at least \$2 million from 2016-2019, with \$5 million additional spending planned as of 2019.⁸³ The program has funded nearly 18,000 private security cameras, largely in neighborhoods where gentrifiers are displacing Black residents, such as Columbia Heights, Petworth, Edgewood and Brookland.⁸⁴ A similar program exists in Chicago.⁸⁵

New Orleans uses its police foundation to expand surveillance and the integration of private security cameras with law enforcement, despite concerns raised by the ACLU, former New Orleans City Council President Jason Williams, and others about the potential for disparate racial impact in a city with a history of racism and abuse. The New Orleans Police Department stores its camera footage with Axon (formerly Taser) and also contracts with Palantir.⁸⁶ Target, the national retail chain, funded surveillance in Minneapolis despite privacy concerns.⁸⁷



“We pay for failures”: Police foundations are a back door for controversial police experiments without oversight

Police Foundations use private money to buy controversial technology or equipment or try out new police tactics outside of public scrutiny or budget oversight. The NYC Police Foundation explicitly embraces its role in expanding policing in ways that remove the ability of elected officials to oversee policing. “I say we pay for failures,” said then-Chair (and mega-real estate developer) Dale Hemmerdinger. “When the police department leadership wants to try something and we think it has value, then we give it a shot. We relieve the political pressure of trying things that might not work.”⁸⁸

The Atlanta Police Foundation puts it, **“through APF...APD explores unconventional methods and cutting-edge tactical products, while harvesting support and leadership from the business community.”**⁸⁹

In Los Angeles, when Bill Bratton, then-Chief of the LAPD, wanted access to Palantir surveillance technology, instead of going through public approval and government contracting processes, **he arranged for the Los Angeles Police Foundation to ask Target to contribute money to buy the software and donate it to the department.**⁹⁰ This is a clear example of police departments using police foundations to evade city budget and public contracting processes. Target has a long history of such engagements with police and police foundations.⁹¹

“When the police department leadership wants to try something and we think it has value, then we give it a shot. We relieve the political pressure of trying things that might not work.”⁸⁸

The Los Angeles Police Foundation also paid for other controversial technology that raises racial bias, conflict of interest and privacy concerns:

License plate readers spurred privacy litigation and an audit showing that Los Angeles—as well as Marin, Sacramento and Fresno—were not complying with privacy law.⁹²

Stingrays, or “cell-site simulators” track individual phones as well as collect data and communications from all mobile phones in an area. They may have recently been used by federal and local law enforcement to surveil Black Lives Matter protests.⁹³

Body cameras, despite mixed evidence about whether they improve policing, were tested by the police foundation, with a contract later awarded to Axon (formerly Taser), another major foundation donor.⁹⁴

Palantir

Palantir’s racist “predictive policing” or “probable offender” model creates a vicious cycle of disproportionately high arrests in Black and Brown communities. Palantir’s technology was developed with early investment by the CIA and is primarily used by the military.⁹⁵ In addition to Los Angeles, Palantir donated to the police foundation in New York City, where it has contracted with the NYPD without the City Council’s oversight, and where the use of facial recognition software has led to lawsuits.⁹⁶ The New York Daily News described Palantir’s business model as “contracting with

American police forces to secretly provide them with systems — designed for our wars of foreign occupation — that supposedly find criminals before they commit crimes.”⁹⁷ Per Wired Magazine, “the scale of Palantir’s implementation, the type, quantity and persistence of the data it processes, and the unprecedented access that many thousands of people have to that data all raise significant concerns about privacy, equity, racial justice, and civil rights.”⁹⁸ Sacramento and San Francisco law enforcement have also used Palantir software.

New York City’s police foundation also funds and helped create the **controversial International Liaison Program, which posts members of the NYPD’s Intelligence Bureau around the globe**—including Tel Aviv, Abu Dhabi, Madrid, Paris, Montreal, Toronto, London, and Sydney—to interact with local law enforcement.⁹⁹ Both the F.B.I. and C.I.A. have opposed the department’s overseas deployments.¹⁰⁰ In the United States, the NYPD Intelligence Bureau has been criticized for monitoring Muslim organizations in the Northeast and for sending undercover officers to an activist gathering in New Orleans in 2008, as well

as to Ferguson, Missouri, in 2014.¹⁰¹ **Critics have raised questions about the influence of the police foundation’s donors** (for example, the United Arab Emirates in 2012) over the department’s policies, and the absence of government oversight.¹⁰² As NYPD spokesperson Peter Donald said in 2017 of the city’s foundation,

“It funds things the city can’t fund ... [and] provides us flexibility to do things quickly.”¹⁰³

Police foundations spread “copaganda”

In the wake of police killings and sustained racial justice protests, journalists, studios and producers of scripted and reality TV and film are being confronted for their roles in “copaganda,” propagating misleading, racist, and damaging messages about crime and policing.¹⁰⁴ Meanwhile, police foundations continue to use their platforms to provide a forum and funds for activities that promote police departments, normalize policing, and provide “feel good” stories that whitewash and distract from the destructive impact of policing and mass incarceration on Black and Brown communities. The New York City Police Foundation, for its 50th anniversary in 2021, is engaging in pro-police propaganda events on a massive scale, featuring Grandmaster Caz and others.¹⁰⁵

Police foundations such as those in New York City and Atlanta fund and/or administer Crime Stoppers tip lines, often tied to rewards they fund, **which often heavily advertise and work with local news to promote misconceptions around crime and danger.** These programs encourage the kinds of reporting that have led to many racist incidents that endanger Black residents. Stories of alleged criminal activity capped by ubiquitous calls to provide information to police through police foundation tiplines promote over-policing and misperceptions about crime, and they encourage vigilantes like the murderers of Ahmaud Arbery and Trayvon Martin.¹⁰⁶ “Crime Stoppers” stories are a staple of local news coverage and help drive the gap between Americans’ perceptions of rising crime and lack of safety despite years of declining violent and property crime, which has long been used to support racist regressive criminalization and carceral policies and rising police budgets.¹⁰⁷ Yet police foundations from Denver and Seattle to El Paso and Atlanta tout funding for safety as a primary mission.¹⁰⁸

Major news outlets also play a role in police foundations in major cities. ViacomCBS, BET, Fox, and the New York Times, have all supported New York City’s police foundation. Scott Mills, president of ViacomCBS subsidiary BET & ViacomCBS director Charles Phillips are both on the NYC Police Foundation’s board, and Phillips was a 2019 gala co chair. In Philadelphia, Comcast and ABC 6 (a Disney subsidiary) sit on police foundation boards or

sponsor police foundations, as does KTRK (also an ABC / Disney subsidiary) in Houston. Comcast’s NBC subsidiary also sponsored the Rochester Police Foundation 2021 gala.¹⁰⁹ Media participation in police foundations may also raise questions about bias in coverage.¹¹⁰

Police foundations blur the lines between media and policing. Atlanta Police Foundation “Chiefs Circle” donors receive an “exclusive tour and training experience with the Atlanta Police Department.”¹¹¹ The NYC Police Foundation “Commanding Officer for the Evening” is a fundraising and public relations event held by the NYC Police Foundation that gives participants access to top-ranking NYPD officials along with opportunities to accompany officers. Participants have included chef Daniel Boulud, who was shown how to use a Taser gun; ViacomCBS anchor Dan Rather, who said he joined in a police search at a housing project and reportedly said “the experience had given him a greater appreciation” for the police; and numerous other representatives of the media including from the New York Times, Daily News, and El Diario. A decade ago, the New York Times reported that while the “Police Department and its officials are barred by law from fund-raising,” that 80% of then known donors to the NYC Police Foundation had been invited to participate in the program.¹¹²



Foundations also fund advertising and other activities that normalize policing and create public relations opportunities for police departments like celebrity ride-alongs and “Shop with a Cop” events. Other common programs include funding recruitment efforts, “adopt a cop” and “adopt a horse” events, scholarships, community and youth centers, back-to-school drives and more. These events provide glossy PR spin and “feel good” media coverage, particularly for police departments with a history of corruption, abuse and brutality.¹¹³

Police dogs (K-9s) are often used to fundraise. Despite their “lovable” public image, police dogs can be lethal. “Police dog bites sent roughly 3,600 Americans to emergency rooms every year from 2005 to 2013, according to a recent study published in the Journal of Forensic and Legal Medicine. Almost all were male, and Black men were overrepresented,” per the Marshall Project. Seattle’s police foundation has sponsored police dogs despite a history of violent attacks. The Seattle Police Department (SPD) even had a police dog named “Delta” — named for the

airline, which contributed to purchase the dog.¹¹⁴ The dog subsequently participated in a brutal attack that prompted SPD to reform its K-9 policy.¹¹⁵

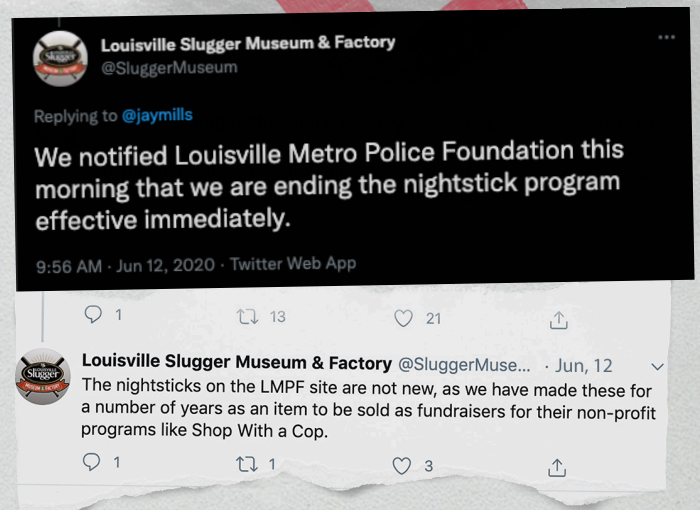
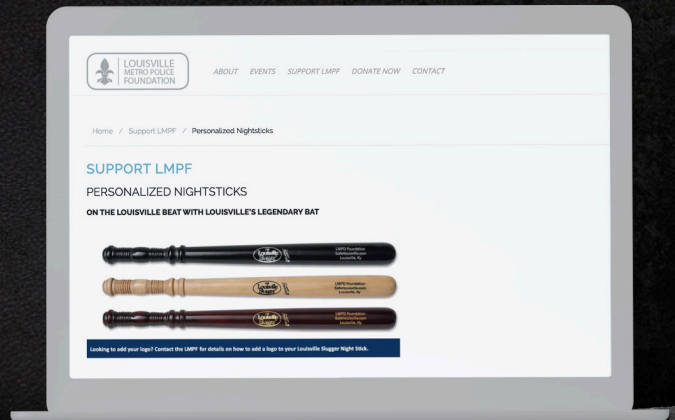
Youth programming and youth centers, when funded through police related initiatives, often serve only to bring Black children and their families into close contact with policing — reinforcing the “school-to-prison pipeline” — and to direct resources to police foundations that would be better utilized directly by frontline and grassroots community organizations.

Police foundations also sell products that **glamorize violence and the hyper militarization of police.**

The Los Angeles Police Foundation sells SWAT team merchandise.¹¹⁶ And, until they were pressured to stop in June 2020, the company that makes the famed Louisville Slugger bat produced personalized nightsticks as fundraisers for the Louisville Metro Police Foundation.¹¹⁷

“... We have publicly condemned racism. We condemn police brutality in any form...”

TWEET FROM @SLUGGERMUSEUM

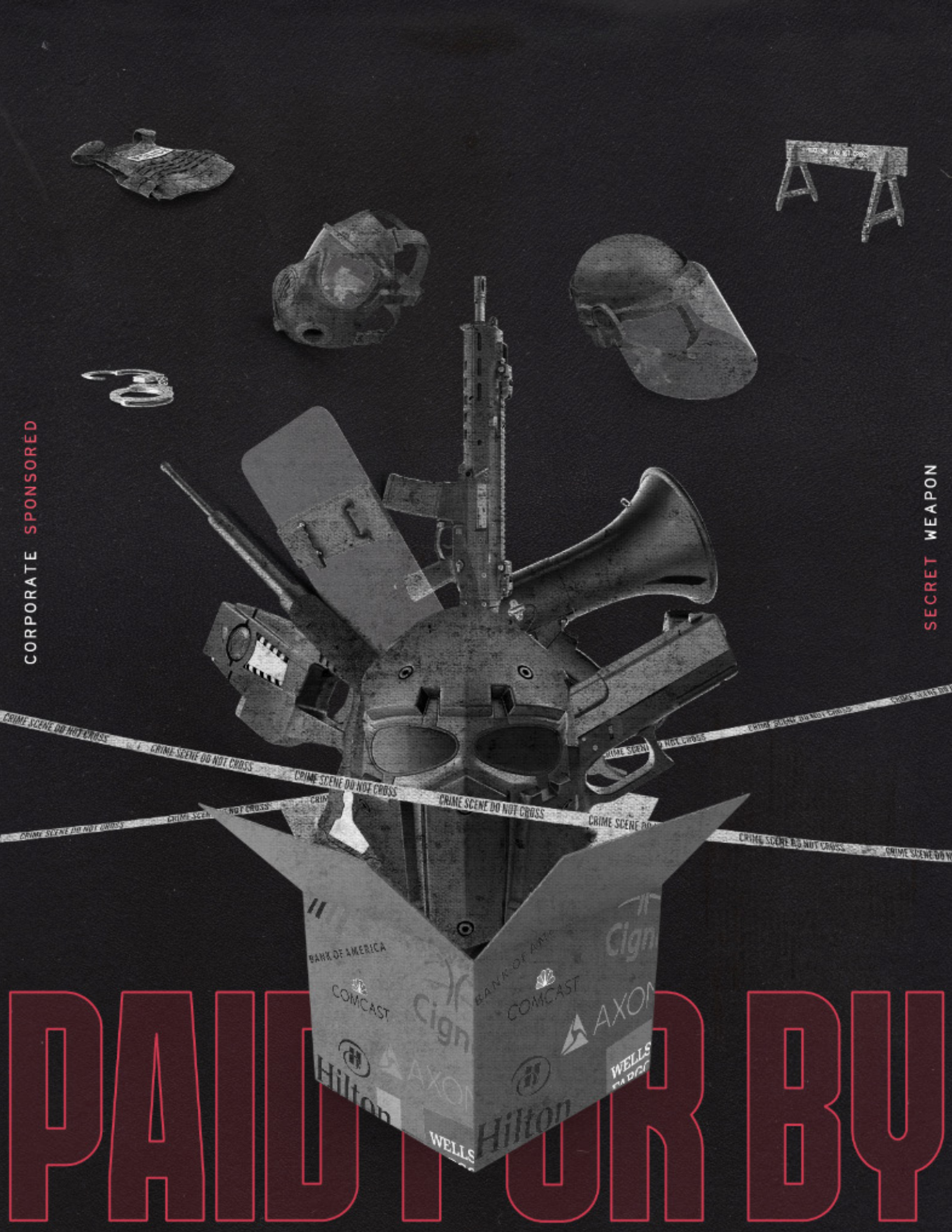


CORPORATE SPONSORED

SECRET WEAPON

CRIME SCENE DO NOT CROSS

PAID FOR BY



The big corporations behind police foundation boards and budgets

Every major U.S. corporate sector from Big Tech and Wall Street, to fossil fuels and fast food — and many of the most powerful companies within each of those sectors — has a hand in funding and directing police foundations. Police foundations “serv[e] as a voice of the private sector,”¹¹⁸ in the words of former NYC Police Foundation CEO and National Police Foundations Project director Pamela Delaney.

Corporate money flows into corporate priorities, such as heavily policed and surveilled retail areas and gentrified

neighborhoods, while vital community needs are unfunded. Until recently, big businesses often touted their connections to these foundations, with logos on police foundation websites, board members proudly listing their corporate affiliations and photos at foundation events.

We have compiled the most extensive dataset to date of the links between police foundations and corporations, identifying nearly 1,000 corporate donations or executives serving as board members at 22 of the largest police foundations across the country.

REAL ESTATE

Companies in real estate, development and construction play roles in police foundations, including Boston Properties, Brookfield, Cushman & Wakefield, Colliers International, Savills, Newmark Group (formerly Newmark Knight Frank) and CBRE. Their role in gentrification and increasing both property values and police budgets has been described by Francisco Pérez and Luis Feliz Leon as inextricably linked to racist policing.¹¹⁹

WALL STREET

Every police foundation reviewed has at least one finance player, and together, finance and real estate sectors drive the intersection of policing and gentrification in cities across the country. After real estate, financial corporations are the second largest sector in terms of police foundation participation, with over 140 companies identified. Bank of America sits on boards in NYC, Boston, Chicago, and Charlotte. Wells Fargo shows up on the boards of police foundations in Atlanta and Charlotte, and as a donor in Sacramento, Seattle, and St. Louis, though it has committed to pausing its contributions.¹²⁰ JP Morgan Chase in NYC and Truist (formerly SunTrust) in Atlanta have given millions to police foundations. Wall Street’s ties to police



foundations include BlackRock and former Goldman Sachs executive and former Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, who previously served on the Los Angeles Police Foundation board. Goldman Sachs funds several police foundations, including in Los Angeles, Salt Lake City, and more. Ally Financial, American Express, M&T Bank, Morgan Stanley, Northwestern Mutual, Securian Financial Group, T. Rowe Price, and TIAA also participate in police foundations.¹²¹ Citibank’s Ed Skyler will be “honored” at NYC Police Foundation 2021 50th Anniversary Gala.¹²²

BIG TECH

Amazon, Facebook, Google, and Microsoft are all partners and donors to the Seattle Police Foundation. IBM engages with police foundations in Sacramento and New York; Uber in Los Angeles and Atlanta; Lyft in Washington, D.C.; and Adobe, Apple and PayPal in San Jose.¹²³

COMMUNICATIONS

Motorola, Verizon and AT&T all play roles in police foundations. Motorola is particularly active, with ties to 10 of the foundations studied, the most of any company, while Verizon has ties to six. Both Big Tech and communications companies contract with police departments across the country, raising particular potential concerns around conflict of interest.

RETAIL AND FOOD INDUSTRIES

Target has long promoted and sponsored police foundations across the country, including helping create a National Police Foundation Association, and as of 2010 claiming to have funded 3000 law enforcement agencies.¹²⁴ Target is a sponsor and board member of the Washington DC Police Foundation; has supported police foundations in Atlanta, Seattle, San Jose, Sacramento, St. Louis, New York and Los Angeles; and runs a “Heroes and Helpers” program at its stores around the country.¹²⁵ Starbucks has been a board member and donor to the Seattle Police Foundation and runs a “Coffee with a Cop” program. Coca-Cola has donated millions to the Atlanta Police Foundation, and until April 2021, had a seat on the foundation’s board of trustees.¹²⁶ Chick-fil-A, Costco, Home Depot, Kroger, Macy’s, Publix, Sonic Automotive, Waffle House, Walmart, Wendy’s and White Castle, also play roles in police foundations.



FOSSIL FUEL AND UTILITY COMPANIES

Chevron, Shell, and Marathon Petroleum, some of the largest fossil fuel companies, are major funders of police foundations and policing. Marathon and DTE Energy have seats on the Detroit Public Safety Foundation board. Chevron and Hilcorp Energy have seats on the Houston Police Foundation board. Exelon, the largest utility company in the country, has funded police foundations in Baltimore, Philadelphia, Chicago and Washington DC. Georgia Power is a board member and major donor to the Atlanta Police Foundation.¹²⁷ Entergy, Duke Energy, Sempra Energy, General Electric, Ameren and CenterPoint Energy also play roles in police foundations. Fossil fuel companies also directly fund policing that supports their agenda. In Minnesota, fossil fuel company Enbridge created security plans for the Line 3 pipeline route and a \$250,000 Public Safety Fund for local police forces. The Beltrami County sheriff's office has invoiced \$190,000 in expenses to this account, including \$72,000 worth of riot gear and over \$10,000 worth of tear gas grenades, pepper spray, batons, and flash-bang devices. They labeled the weapons as "personal protective equipment." As of April 24, 2021, the escrow account distributed \$750,000 to law enforcement overall.¹²⁸ Beyond funding policing, fossil fuel companies support ALEC-

sponsored legislation to criminalize activists' right to protest at fossil fuel sites, or "critical infrastructure." Since George Floyd's murder, over 100 bills to criminalize protest have been introduced in state legislatures, many also supported by law enforcement organizations and police unions.¹²⁹

MEDIA

Many of the largest media companies in the country have ties to police foundations. ViacomCBS (and subsidiary BET), Fox, and the New York Times have all supported New York City's police foundation. Scott Mills, president of Viacom subsidiary BET and Charles Phillips, ViacomCBS director are both on the board. Phillips was a 2019 gala co-chair.¹³⁰ In Philadelphia, Comcast and ABC 6 (a Disney subsidiary), play a role in the police foundation, as does KTRK (also a Disney subsidiary) in Houston, and Comcast subsidiary WHEC News 10 in Rochester, NY.¹³¹ Participation of major media companies in police foundations raise concerns of potential for media bias or "narrative washing" of aggressive, racist policing.



PROFESSIONAL SPORTS

Football, baseball and basketball franchises all fund police foundations. Even as players take courageous stands in the movement to protect Black lives, many teams are involved in police foundations, including the NBA's Detroit Pistons, Charlotte Hornets, Dallas Mavericks, and the Indiana Pacers; MLB's Detroit Tigers, Philadelphia Phillies, New York Yankees, Seattle Mariners and St. Louis Cardinals; and the NFL's Atlanta Falcons, Carolina Panthers, Detroit Lions, Houston Texans, New York Giants, San Francisco 49ers and Seattle Seahawks.¹³²



In each city, police foundations also reflect local dominant industries and power structures — for example, tech in Seattle and San Jose, banking in Charlotte, and fossil fuels in Houston. Other Fortune 500 Companies that play a role in police foundations include Marriott International, State Farm Insurance, 3M, Boeing, Cigna, Humana, UPS, and multiple airlines (Delta, American, Southwest and United).

A role on the board of directors for nonprofits usually comes with the expectation that board members will use their role to fundraise. In addition to donating directly, either personally or through their corporation, directors are expected to tap into their personal and corporate networks to bring in donations for the foundation. This is likely true for police foundations as well.

Most of what we know about corporate funding of police foundations, we know because corporations have

Chicago Police Department
June 8, 2017

Thank you, @Cubs Kyle Schwarber @kschwarb12 for the donation of lifesaving LEMART kits and for visiting us! #NeighborhoodHeroes
Chicago Police Foundation



551

11 Comments 29 Shares

publicized their support. While we can get a snapshot of the corporations directing and supporting these foundations, the foundations are not legally required to provide information about who their donors are and how much they give. **This means that a thorough accounting of the flow of corporate money to these institutions is virtually impossible to calculate.**

Clues from websites and social media give a glimpse into which corporate entities are involved as annual donors and event sponsors. For example, the New Orleans Police & Justice Foundation has a ranked list of partners that includes Shell and Entergy as “Featured Partners,” but these rankings do not include details about the size of their donations or even donation ranges. Others, like the Seattle Police Foundation, list their “partners” by annual donation level. Facebook and Google are “partners” in the \$10,000 to \$24,999 range, while Motorola and Costco are in the \$25,000+ category.

Additional insight into corporate donors comes from corporations that give through official charitable arms that must disclose their donations in their annual IRS filings. For example:



Goldman Sachs, through its philanthropy fund, donated \$598,500 to police foundations in Los Angeles, New York City, Chicago, Boca Raton, San Diego, and Houston between 2017 and 2019.¹³³



Bank of America, through its charitable arm, donated nearly \$700,000 to police foundations in New York City, Atlanta, Los Angeles and beyond in 2017, 2018 and 2019.¹³⁴



SunTrust Bank (now Truist) donated \$3 million to the Atlanta Police Foundation through two of its charitable foundations in 2019, and \$12,000 to the Washington DC Police Foundation in 2015 and 2016. It also made other donations to other police foundations.¹³⁵



Motorola Solutions Foundation has donated about \$1 million per year to policing between 2017 and 2019, the most recent available data.¹³⁶

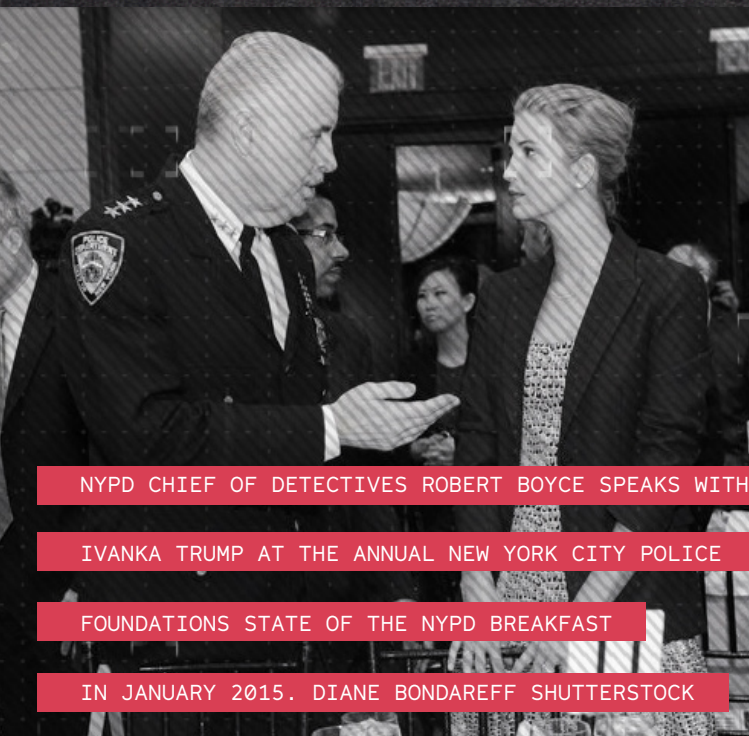
Not all corporate actors have philanthropic arms, and even those that do will sometimes opt to donate to these foundations directly and privately. In some instances large corporate gifts are publicized to gain media attention, such as the multi-million dollar donations from SunTrust and Coca-Cola to the Atlanta Police Foundation.¹³⁴ Other big donations, have only been brought to light through investigative reporting, such as ProPublica's unearthing of a \$200,000 donation from Target to the Los Angeles Police Foundation for the expressed purpose of purchasing controversial surveillance equipment for the LAPD.¹³⁸

Traditional foundation, nonprofit, and grant money that could be given directly to community organizations doing critical work is instead being funneled to police via police foundations. These police foundations fundraise millions each year with little transparency around where the money is from and how it is spent, providing a tax-deductible, corporate slush fund for the police.

Police and big business at “a party you’re not invited to”

Police foundation boards and galas are where titans of industry and political elites such as the Trump family rub shoulders with police leadership. As HuffPost and Gothamist put it, “The overwhelmingly white, wealthy board of the New York City Police Foundation”... “reads like an invite list for a party you’re not invited to.”¹³⁹

In addition to donor perks and special access to police, police foundations raise the possibility of corruption or preferential treatment when wealthy individuals who are police foundation board members and donors come into contact with police. For example, in Greenville, South Carolina, a businessman who was a donor to the police foundation received preferential treatment following a public intoxication charge, leading to an investigation and the resignation of the police chief. In response to this case, Seth Stoughton, a former police officer and a law professor at the University of South Carolina noted, “It’s impossible to separate the world of policing from the world of money.”¹⁴⁰



According to Politico, Ivanka Trump was on the board of the police foundation in NYC.¹⁴¹

The Donald J. Trump Foundation donated \$150,000 to the Palm Beach Police Foundation (now the Palm Beach Police and Fire Foundation) in 2009-2010 and profited by renting Mar-a-Lago for the event. Trump’s foundation came under scrutiny by the attorney general of New York.¹⁴²

As president of the United States, Trump made a “surprise visit” to the 2020 Palm Beach Policemen and Firemen’s Ball, held at Mar-a-Lago in Palm Beach, Florida.¹⁴³ Palm Beach is home to over 30 billionaires and even has a stretch of real estate known colloquially as “Billionaire’s Row.”¹⁴⁴

Billionaire supporters of the Palm Beach Police Foundation include former Interactive Brokers CEO and Trump donor Thomas Peterffy, who is listed as a Captain-level sponsor of the foundation’s ball, and billionaire founder of fossil fuel company Oxbow Carbon and twin brother of the late David Koch, William Koch, who sits on the board of directors.¹⁴⁵ William’s brothers Charles and David, via ALEC, were major architects of the “Stand Your Ground” Law invoked in the vigilante murder of Trayvon Martin as well as attacks on voting rights.¹⁴⁶ Nearby, the Jupiter Police Foundation was criticized for holding its first gala at Trump National Golf Club in January 2019.¹⁴⁷

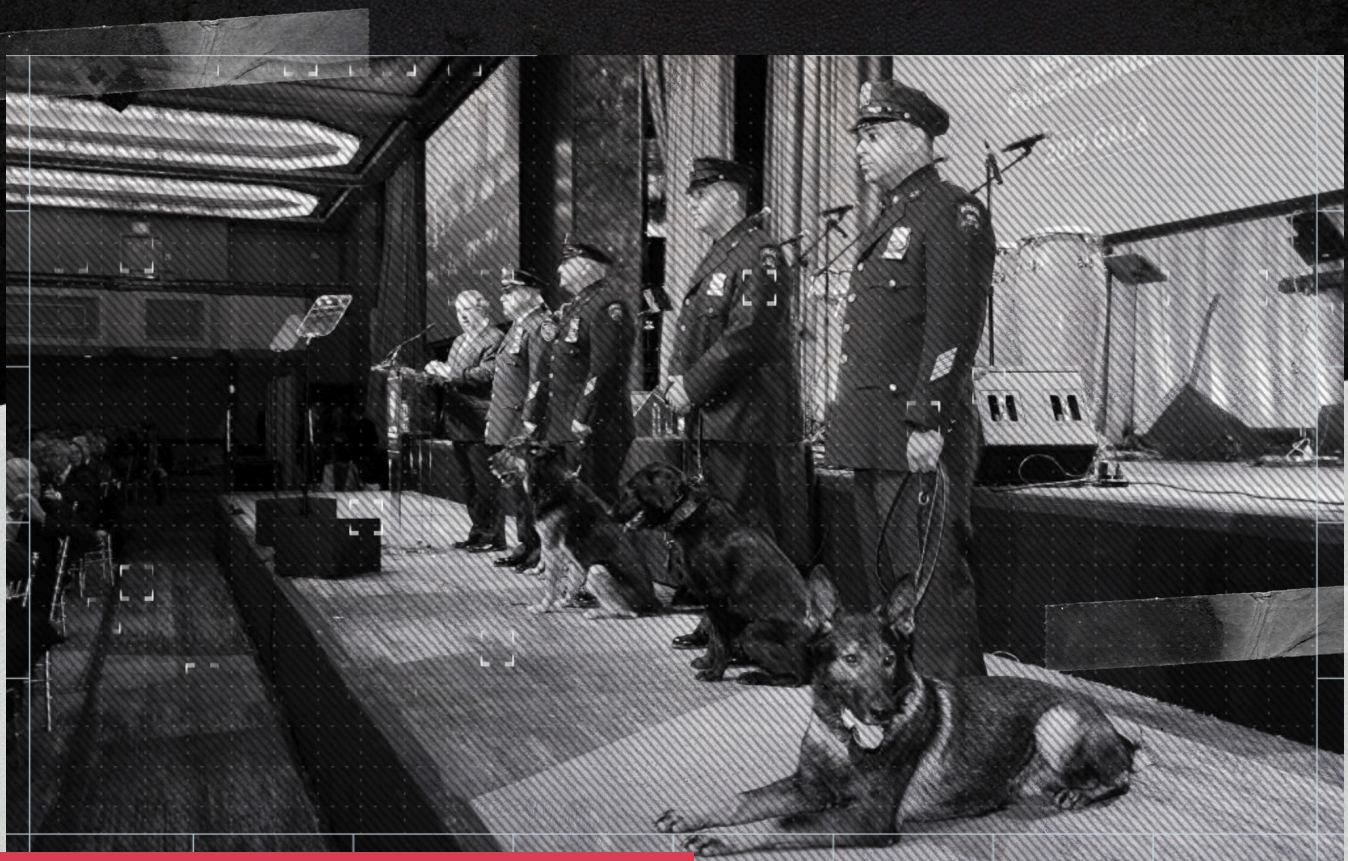
Police foundations often publish the sponsors of their numerous fundraising events and galas. **The Atlanta Police Foundation's "Link Up Against Crime" golf tournament requires a \$3,500 minimum donation for a four-person team and a \$20,000 donation to be a presenting sponsor.** St. Louis Police Foundation has tiered sponsorship levels that stretch from **\$2,500 to \$25,000 for its "Breakfast with the Chief" event.** The Philadelphia Police Foundation's sponsorship tiers for its annual gala range from **\$5,000 to \$25,000 for its corporate donors.**¹⁴⁸

These events are huge money makers for the foundations.

The NYC Police Foundation requires a \$100,000 donation for a platinum-level sponsorship of its annual gala; the 2019 NYC Police Foundation gala raised \$5.5 million from this single event.

Corporate "co-chairs" and "gala chairs" included Goldman Sachs, Blackstone, Viacom, Bank of America, Morgan Stanley, BlackRock, Fox Corporation, Tishman Speyer, UnitedHealthcare and Uniqlo.¹⁴⁹

In October 2021, the NYC Police Foundation's 50th Anniversary Gala will honor Citibank's Ed Skyler. Sponsorship level options include a platinum (\$100,000), gold (\$50,000) and silver (\$25,000).¹⁵⁰



NYPD GALA 2019 - NYCPOLICEFOUNDATION.ORG/2019-GALA

~~Scrubbed and hidden:~~ as protests grow, police foundations erase their donors

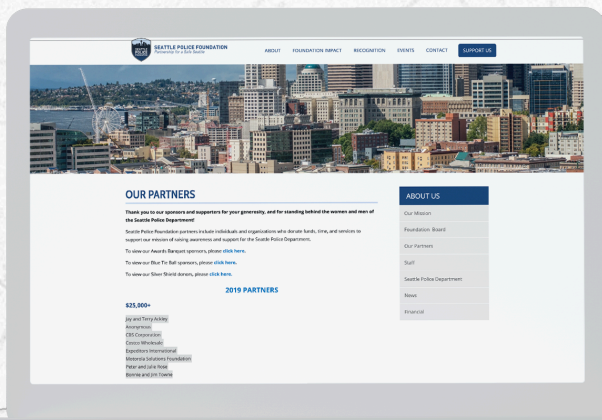


As public scrutiny of the role of police foundations intensified amidst the wave of nationwide protests following the killing of George Floyd, many foundations pivoted from promoting their sponsors with logos and special recognition to removing their corporate donors and board members from their websites.

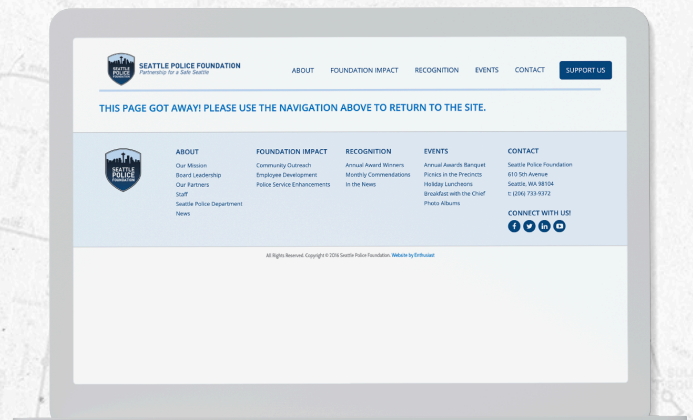
As first reported by investigative news outlet Sludge on June 30, 2020, police foundations that scrubbed their websites of information surrounding their corporate donors and board members included those in New York City; Washington D.C.; Seattle; and Philadelphia.¹⁵¹ For example:

Seattle Police Foundation removed information about its board members and partners sometime between June 10 and June 15, 2020. The foundation's 2019 "partners" page, saved by the Wayback Machine, previously had a list of donors, categorized by the size of their donations, which included Amazon, Starbucks, Microsoft, and hundreds more. Now it just reads: "This page got away! Please use the navigation above to return to the site."

BEFORE



NOW



THIS PAGE GOT AWAY!

New York City Police Foundation scrubbed the identities of its board of trustees which includes powerful figures from finance and real estate, such as Andrew Tisch (the foundation Chairman) and Benjamin Winter (the Vice-Chairman) between May 31 and June 5, 2020.



New York City Police Foundation



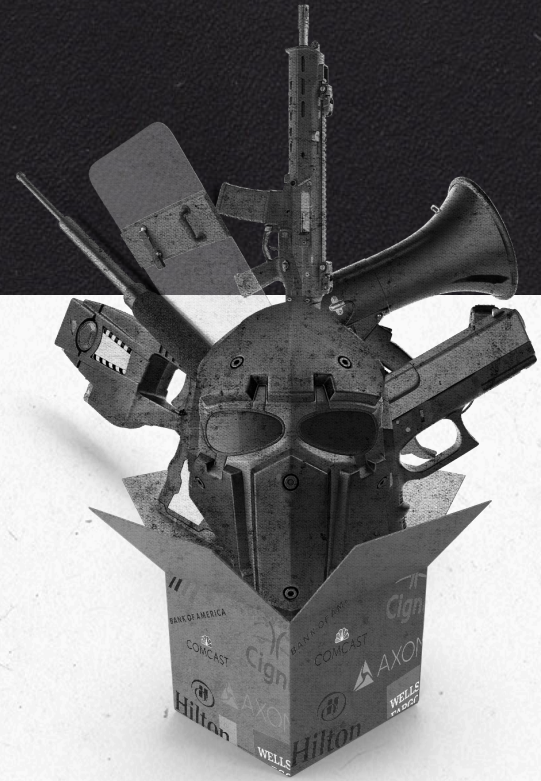
Philadelphia Police Foundation (PPF) removed nearly everything from its website as a highly-publicized campaign pressured several backers of the foundation — such as Temple University and the University of Pennsylvania — to break their ties with the PPF. In late 2019, for example, the foundation’s website listed its board of directors, which includes representation from Motorola, Allied Universal, Comcast, M&T Bank, and Brandywine Realty Trust and the controversial president of the Philadelphia Fraternal Order of Police, as well as its partners, such as Wawa, Independence Blue Cross, and others. As of the end of July 2020, the foundation’s website no longer contained board or partner information.¹⁵²

Other police foundations — including in Charlotte-Mecklenburg,¹⁵³ Louisville¹⁵⁴ and San Diego¹⁵⁵ — appear to have also scrubbed information on their board and sponsors from their websites.

THIS ERASURE RAISES A CRITICAL QUESTION:

Did any of these corporate backers of police foundations — many of whom own public-facing brands and have engaged in “Black Lives Matters” public relations gestures even as they help fund and direct police foundations — request that the foundations take the information down?

This removal lays bare a major problem with police foundations: the lack of transparency and public oversight regarding the corporate donations that are being used to privately purchase materials like firearms, surveillance tech, and tasers for police departments. As demands rise for more oversight over law enforcement, attempts to remove information surrounding the corporate backers of de facto slush funds are unacceptable for accountability. The identities of private donors whose money goes towards purchasing police equipment and funding police programs should be public information — especially if the donations are coming from powerful corporations.



Donating with one hand, ~~profiting with the other~~

Many corporations that have or seek existing contracts and relationships with police departments across the country also have representatives on the boards of police foundations, contribute money or donate their own products to those very police departments. This raises serious concerns over conflicts of interests. Being connected to a police foundation may give these corporations special backdoor access and influence over lucrative contracts. As one researcher put it, private corporate support for policing is a form of disreputable exchange: “they are permitted but laden with the potential for controversy.”¹⁵⁶ As Pamela Delaney, co-founder of the National Police Foundations Network, stated,

“Transparency is critical for police foundations. There’s always fear of corruption.”¹⁵⁷

And, as University of California Irvine Law School Dean Erwin Chemerinsky put it:

“I get very concerned that people who give money to these foundations get favoritism over people who don’t... The only way to prevent this — or the appearance of this — is to have a more transparent system that is regulated like campaign finance.”¹⁵⁸

This is especially problematic because, as Kevin Walby writes “without a foundation, police departments can accept donations from private entities but risk undermining the department’s integrity or breaking conflict of interest policies.”¹⁵⁹



Police foundation contributions and relationships ensure police serve the interests of corporations and the wealthy, responding to their calls, keeping their retail zones heavily policed, and responding to their priorities. As attorney and civil rights advocate Heidi Boghosian told HuffPo, “A lot of these wealthy donors ... have elite motivations” such as protecting property at the expense of Black communities.¹⁶⁰

For example, Coach, Major League Baseball and the Motion Picture Association used their donations to the NYC Police Foundation to fund the NYPD’s trademark infringement unit, which uses a Police Foundation account to fund undercover purchases of counterfeit CDs, DVDs, clothes and other goods.¹⁶¹ NYPD harassment and arrest of street vendors, often immigrants of color, has been well documented. Enforcement of street vendors was removed from NYPD purview in June 2020 following public outcry.¹⁶² Major real estate and entertainment producers have privately funded a Times Square NYPD substation through the foundation.

And, as Boghosian told Salon when JP Morgan Chase donated \$4.6 million to the New York City Police Police Foundation in 2011 in patrol car laptops, as well as security monitoring software, “This gift is especially disturbing to us because it creates the appearance that there is an entrenched dynamic of the police protecting corporate interests rather than protecting the First Amendment rights of the people.”¹⁶³

Further, donations, particularly of technology, can serve as an end run around public procurement processes that require open competitive bidding above a certain dollar threshold, public oversight, and — in places like New York City — prioritize contracting to companies owned by women and people of color.¹⁶⁴

AXON/TASER

The reality of how these conflicts of interest play out is clear in the case of Axon (formerly known as Taser International), the company that produces electroshock weapons, body cameras and other policing equipment that are widely used by police departments across the country.¹⁶⁵

While Axon touts Tasers as “non-lethal”, Reuters has documented how police have killed over 1000 people with Tasers since 2000. Nearly a third of those victims were Black, a disparity that the ACLU calls “horrifying,” and police often improperly used the weapons.¹⁶⁶ In the face of a rising death toll, some communities have begun to revise Taser use guidelines and call for moratoriums on their use; other police forces have continued to use Axon’s Tasers against Black Lives Matter demonstrators, and the City of Philadelphia moved to purchase Axon’s Tasers in November 2020 following the police murder of Walter Wallace Jr.¹⁶⁷ Even in Great Falls, Montana — population under 60,000 — the police foundation funded Tasers and gas masks.¹⁶⁸

In 2012 and 2013, Axon donated 80 of its stun guns to the Los Angeles Police Foundation in an effort to equip the LAPD with its products without a public oversight process. Taser was lauded as a sponsor of the police foundation and became a donor to the foundation. In 2014 when the LAPD was deciding which company to use for a body camera contract worth millions, it chose Taser, avoiding an open bidding process.¹⁶⁹

Axon has done the same in its recent campaign for adoption of body cameras. In some cases, like in New York, foundations have paid for body camera pilots and programs. As the Wall Street Journal put it, Axon has schooled cities on no-bid deals, in the hopes of securing a police body cam monopoly.¹⁷⁰



MOTOROLA, VERIZON AND AT&T

Concerns have been raised around the New York Police Foundation serving as an end run around contracting processes for Motorola and Verizon.¹⁷¹

Motorola, which produces a bevy of police equipment including radios, body cameras, and “command center software,” has representatives on the boards of police foundations in Seattle, Baltimore, Detroit, Philadelphia, and Washington, D.C., along with connections to several more. Verizon, which staffs a law enforcement / public safety team to hand over customer data to the police, has police foundation board seats in Atlanta and Detroit, and is a donor to others.¹⁶⁹ Former Los Angeles Police Chief Bernard Parks noted, “If you are taking money from Motorola and all of a sudden Motorola is providing you with your radios, those are major concerns...You should shy away from those relationships.”¹⁷³

Former LA police chief Bernard Parks noted,

“If you are taking money from Motorola and all of a sudden Motorola is providing you with your radios, those are major concerns...You should shy away from those relationships.”¹⁷³

AT&T’s FirstNet communications network for law enforcement and first responders raises similar concerns. AT&T signed an exclusive training alliance agreement with the Fraternal Order of Police, the nation’s largest police association, in May 2020.¹⁷⁴ AT&T has a relationship with the Atlanta Police Foundations (including chairing a fundraiser), has a seat on the Los Angeles Police Foundation board, and has donated to police foundations in Los Angeles, New York, San Diego, Kansas City, St. Louis, and beyond. It has also donated to Fraternal Order of Police Lodges in Oklahoma and Wixom, Michigan.¹⁷⁵

MICROSOFT AND AMAZON

Microsoft and Amazon both sell cloud services to law enforcement, and they are board members and funders of the police foundation in Seattle, where they are headquartered. Amazon also has connections to police foundations in New York City (Amazon board member Indra Nooyi), Los Angeles and Atlanta.

Amazon helps police foundations across the country fundraise through its AmazonSmile program. AmazonSmile is an official Amazon website that allows shoppers to purchase products and designate a non-profit to be the recipient of “0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products.” Through AmazonSmile, Amazon helps to fund police foundations across the country, including Los Angeles, Chicago, Seattle, Cleveland, and San Diego.¹⁷⁶

Amazon told Salon they follow guidance from the U.S. Office of Foreign Assets Control and the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) on what organizations meet AmazonSmile’s eligibility requirements. These requirements state that eligible organizations cannot “engage in, support, encourage, or promote ... intolerance, discrimination or discriminatory practices based on race.” However, SPLC has called racial bias in policing a “national security threat.”¹⁷⁷



Criminal Justice Information Services (CJIS)

The principle of least privilege is one of the most fundamental underpinnings of the CJIS Security Policy based on a “need-to-know, right-to-know” standard. AWS GovCloud (US) customers can enforce least privilege by securely encrypting their CJIS and limiting all access to the CJIS to only those with access to the encryption keys. By using AWS GovCloud (US), customers are provided AWS services, tools, and security assurance to enable their agencies and trusted partners to retain complete control and ownership over their own criminal justice data.

To learn more about how AWS services meet the CJIS Security Policy:

Watch the presentation

Read more about CJIS compliance on AWS

SOURCE: AMAZON.COM

<https://twitter.com/amazon/status/1267140211861073927>



Amazon also has a long, well documented history of partnering with the police, and it has been called “the invisible backbone of ICE’s immigration crackdown.”¹⁷⁸ Over 1,300 police agencies across the country have partnered with Amazon to access data from their Ring cameras.¹⁷⁹ Ring is used to send police footage, with some police even offering discounts or free Rings in exchange for an agreement to share footage. In addition to normalizing 24/7 surveillance, a review of user-submitted posts found that the majority of people reported as “suspicious” were people of color.¹⁸⁰

Beyond cameras, Amazon sells web hosting services to law enforcement agencies, as well as its facial recognition software Rekognition (though currently subject to a one year moratorium due to public outcry).¹⁸¹ Amazon has promoted using Rekognition in conjunction with

police body cameras in real time. Yet, as Business Insider noted, there are known issues with accuracy and without government oversight, Amazon is the sole arbiter of oversight into police use of the facial recognition technology it sells.¹⁸²

As police allegedly monitor Black Lives Matter protests with Ring doorbell data and drones, employees at Amazon are organizing and taking action to demand Amazon match its actions to public statements.¹⁸³

Similarly, Microsoft’s mass surveillance platform, the Domain Awareness System, is used in New York, Atlanta, Brazil, and Singapore.¹⁸⁴ In addition, Microsoft continues to develop other policing technologies through its Azure platform.

Talking Black lives, ~~enabling police violence~~

Millions of people took to the streets in 2020, asserting that Black Lives Matter in the face of police killings and violence and the racism that pervades policing. Giant corporations and top executives joined in on social media with statements against racism and police violence. Behind the scenes, they continued to donate to police foundations and sit on foundation boards, funding the continued expansion of policing that terrorizes communities and endangers Black lives.

For example, Larry Fink, the CEO of BlackRock, the world’s largest asset manager, wrote that he was “appalled” by the murders of George Floyd and Ahmaud Arbery, and called BlackRock a “firm committed to racial equality.”¹⁸⁵ Meanwhile, Fink was a co-chair of the annual gala of the New York City Police Foundation for four years beginning in 2016, and was honored by the foundation in 2015.¹⁸⁶ BlackRock is also a 11% owner of Axon (formerly Taser).¹⁸⁷



BEYOND THE STATEMENT

In the aftermath of the police murder of George Floyd, the fight for racial justice became a global movement. While it's critical that companies, brands, and celebrities take a stand against racism, tweets and statements alone won't change material conditions for Black people. Corporations must put their money where their mouth is and follow through on commitments to divest from violent policing and invest in Black communities and Black futures.

WHAT THEY SAY

THE *Coca-Cola* COMPANY

June 3rd, 2020

Building a better future means joining together as we move forward. We are donating to @100blackmen as a part of **the effort to end systemic racism and bring true equality to all. This is just a first step. #BlackLivesMatter**

WHAT THEY DO



After several conversations with Color Of Change and being made aware of police foundation harms, Coca-Cola stepped down from the Atlanta Police Foundation board in April 2021.

“...Delta’s VP Shawn Cole raises Black Lives Matter flag at Delta HQ...”

Delta was the chief sponsor of the Atlanta Police Foundation’s 2019 signature event, A Night in Blue

WHAT THEY SAY

**“We say their names”
Brian Cornell
Chairman and CEO
Target**

WHAT THEY DO

Target claims relationships with over 20 police departments and as of 2010 reported having given grants to 3,000 law enforcement agencies.¹⁸⁸

For more, see beyondthestatement.com.



PAID FOR BY

CONCLUSION

Public scrutiny of the role of police foundations has begun to intensify following high-profile cases of state-sanctioned violence, including the police murders of countless Black people: George Floyd, Daunte Wright, Ma'Khia Bryant, Andrew Brown Jr. and many others. Employees at Amazon, Google, Microsoft and Target are successfully organizing within their companies to demand their employers drop their support of policing.¹⁹⁰

After activist demands, direct action, and sustained public pressure, some cities are taking steps toward oversight, disclosure, and transparency:

New York City Council members added a budget requirement to report on how private police foundation funds are used by the NYPD. Commitments were made by the NYPD to disclose police foundation spending. To date, they have refused to do so.¹⁹¹

Los Angeles is also taking action to increase transparency and oversight of police foundations.¹⁹²

As public pressure increases in the sunlight of disclosure and vibrant organizing, some companies are beginning to go beyond the statement <https://beyondthestatement.com/> and match their public Black Lives Matter Statements to their private actions and divest from police foundations:

After several conversations with Color Of Change — and being made aware of the harm and violence police foundations support and enable — Coca-Cola stepped down from its Atlanta Police Foundation board seat in April 2021. Coca-Cola was still listed as a sponsor of three 2021 Atlanta Police Foundation events, but has indicated that it asked APF to redirect funds.¹⁹³

Wells Fargo announced that it will pause donations to police foundations in September 2020. However, we are unable to verify that it has done so, as we don't have updated donor data for Charlotte, Seattle or St. Louis, in part because police foundations scrubbed their websites. Wells Fargo is still on the board in Charlotte, which did update its website, though affiliations are no longer listed, and in Atlanta, Charlottesville and Denver.¹⁹⁴ This update begs the question: Were these directors exempted from any expectation of fundraising or are they contributing personal monies? If Wells Fargo has continued to contribute, how long did it pause its donations and based on what criteria did it restart?

In Seattle, PitchBook's COO Rod Diefendorf resigned from the city's police foundation's board and the company stopped its monetary support.¹⁹⁵ While as recently as May 2020, Sean Greenlee, manager of global social impact at Starbucks was listed on the board, in July 2020 a company spokesperson claimed this is no longer the case.¹⁹⁶

In Philadelphia, the University of Pennsylvania (Penn) and Temple University announced that they will stop funding the Philadelphia Police Foundation.

In Louisville, Slugger announced that it will stop making personalized nightsticks for the police foundation.



This is only the beginning. As we continue to take action, we can make sure organizations — from local businesses to universities and Fortune 500 companies — stop funding militarization and expansion of police who endanger our communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

~~CORPORATIONS~~

Divest immediately from police foundations and any law enforcement non-profits.

Cancel all current and future sponsorship deals with police foundations or law enforcement non-profits, including event partnerships, participation in galas or fundraisers, and in-kind donations of equipment, software, data, or technology.

Refuse any positions on police foundation boards.

Current employees — at all levels — who sit on a police foundation's board should immediately step down from those boards. Future employees should be banned from representing their employers on any police foundation board or in any law enforcement non-profit organization.

~~POLICY MAKERS~~

Hold hearings.

Investigate police department relationships, coordination and communications with police foundations, their boards and donors, as well as all uses of received foundation funds or donated equipment or services.

Mandate disclosure.

Ensure that all police foundations and entities that raise private funding for policing are subject to FOIA and any other state sunshine laws, as well as conflict of interest policies. The identities of private donors whose money goes towards purchasing police equipment and funding police programs should be public information.

Require public approval.

Where private funding is provided, cities should require public approval of expenditures to ensure that funding is not spent on controversial technology, as Springfield, Missouri has done.



Photograph: Jonathan Bachman/Reuters

~~COMMUNITY MEMBERS:~~

Examine your local police foundation.

Find out if your community has a private police foundation or partnerships that fund militarization and expansion of policing. Visit policefoundations.org for more info.

Use research guides to find out which corporations fund private police foundations in your community, and if your employer or favorite brands are involved.¹⁹⁷

Demand action.
Demand companies
and policymakers
TAKE ACTION.

APPENDIX

METHODOLOGY

We examined 23 police foundations for evidence of corporate donations, sponsorships, partners or other financial contributions and for corporate employees on foundation boards of directors. We investigated select major cities and foundations with annual budgets over \$1 million. Searches were conducted between July and August 2020, and data was updated to address any publicly available changes to board rosters and donor rolls, where available, in June 2021. No new information was available for foundations in a number of cities, which scrubbed their websites in June 2020, so there is limited updated data available. Updated director information was not available in Los Angeles, Louisville, New York City, Oakland, Philadelphia, St Paul, San Diego, Seattle and Washington, D.C. For four foundations—LA, San Diego, San Jose, and St. Louis—the most recent funder and sponsor data available is for 2019. Updated sponsor information was available for 2021 in Atlanta, Baltimore County, Boston, Dallas, Memphis, New Orleans and Palm Beach.

Foundations researched were:

Atlanta Police Foundation

<https://atlantapolicfoundation.org/about-us/board-members/>
<https://atlantapolicfoundation.org/annual-event-list/>
<https://atlantapolicfoundation.org/annual-event-list/atlantas-finest-5k-2021/>
<http://atlpdforms.wpengine.com/annual-event-list/crimeistoast2019/>
<http://atlpdforms.wpengine.com/annual-event-list/bluejeanball2019/>
<https://atlantapolicfoundation.org/annual-event-list/linkup2019/>

Baltimore County Police Foundation

<http://www.thebcpf.com/category/board/directors/>
<http://www.thebcpf.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/FINAL-2019-Sponsor-Sign.jpg>
<http://www.thebcpf.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/BCPF-Membership-Brochure-April-2021.pdf>

Boston Police Foundation

<https://bostonpolicefoundation.org/about-us/>
<https://bostonpolicefoundation.org/partners/>
<https://bostonpolicefoundation.org/event/2021-boston-marathon-team/>

Charlotte-Mecklenberg Police Foundation

<https://web.archive.org/web/20191125105312/http://charlottepolicefoundation.org/about-the-foundation/our-leadership.php>
<https://charlottepolicefoundation.org/about-the-foundation/our-leadership.php>
<https://web.archive.org/web/20200608145438/https://charlottepolicefoundation.org/about-the-foundation/our-leadership.php>
<https://web.archive.org/web/20191125071458/http://charlottepolicefoundation.org/sponsors.php>

Chicago Police Foundation

<https://web.archive.org/web/20200615125359/http://chicagopolicefoundation.org/board/>
<http://chicagopolicefoundation.org/board/>
<https://web.archive.org/web/20200626114725/http://chicagopolicefoundation.org/events/>

Detroit Public Safety Foundation

<https://www.detroitpublicsafety.org/board-of-trustees>
<https://www.detroitpublicsafety.org/events>
<https://www.detroitpublicsafety.org/above-beyond>
<https://www.detroitpublicsafety.org/women-in-blue>
<https://web.archive.org/web/20200731052943/https://www.detroitpublicsafety.org/women-in-blue>

Friends of the Dallas Police

<https://www.friendsofthedallaspolice.org/leadership/>
<https://web.archive.org/web/20210610122707/https://www.friendsofthedallaspolice.org/our-sponsors/>
<https://web.archive.org/web/20200603152413/https://www.friendsofthedallaspolice.org/our-sponsors/>

Houston Police Foundation

<https://web.archive.org/web/20190218153919/http://www.houstonpolicefoundation.org/about/leadership>
<https://www.houstonpolicefoundation.org/about/leadership>
<https://www.houstonpolicefoundation.org/funding>
<https://web.archive.org/web/20200603035731/https://www.houstonpolicefoundation.org/>

Los Angeles Police Foundation

<https://web.archive.org/web/20200603110423/https://www.supportlapd.org/who-we-are/leadership>
<http://lapd-assets.lapdonline.org/assets/pdf/2018%20Above%20%20Beyond%20Program%20Book.pdf>
<https://www.supportlapd.org/images/events/2019-above-beyond.pdf>

Louisville Metro Police Foundation

<https://web.archive.org/web/20200529081921/https://saferlouisville.org/about-the-lmpf/board-of-directors/>
<https://web.archive.org/web/20200618093117/https://saferlouisville.org/>

Memphis Police Foundation

<http://msclefoundation.org/about/>

<http://msclefoundation.org/>

https://issuu.com/wmopar1/docs/award2021?fbclid=IwAR3ApEVCrT8Z-K_4s7ULkDgHBxKt4utLdv-BmHA2vn4zmmFK5mxQ53EtPhOc

New Orleans Police & Justice Foundation

<https://nopjf.org/about-nopjf/>

<https://nopjf.org/sponsors/>

<https://nopjf.org/events/soj/>

NYC Police Foundation

<https://web.archive.org/web/2020040422232/http://www.nycpolice-foundation.org/about-us/board-of-trustees-staff/>

<http://www.nycpolicefoundation.org/2019-gala/>

Oakland Police Foundation

<https://oaklandpolicefoundation.com/about-us/>

<https://oaklandpolicefoundation.com/sponsors/>

Palm Beach Police & Fire Foundation (changed name in 2019 from Palm Beach Police Foundation)

<https://www.palmbeachpoliceandfirefoundation.org/board-of-directors>

<https://palmbeachpoliceandfirefoundation.org/board-of-directors/>

<https://www.palmbeachpoliceandfirefoundation.org/events-calendar>

<https://palmbeachpoliceandfirefoundation.org/golf-classic/>

<https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/285621ef/files/uploaded/Ball%201.pdf>

Philadelphia Police Foundation

<https://web.archive.org/web/20191213204651/https://phillypolicefoundation.org/about/>

<https://web.archive.org/web/20180408121948/https://phillypolicefoundation.org/blue/>

<https://www.inquirer.com/news/philadelphia-police-foundation-com-cast-wawa-independence-blue-cross-defund-20200719.html>

Rochester Police Foundation (Rochester, NY)

<https://www.rochesterpolicefoundation.org/about>

<https://www.rochesterpolicefoundation.org/board-of-directors>

<https://www.rochesterpolicefoundation.org/#home-section>

San Diego Police Foundation

<https://web.archive.org/web/20190722001755/https://sdpolicefoundation.org/about-us/>

<https://sdpolicefoundation.org/events/gold-shield-gala/>

San Jose Police Foundation

<http://sanjosepolicefoundation.org/about>

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| CORPORATION | INDUSTRY | FORTUNE 500 RANK | TOTAL FOUNDATIONS | CITY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------|-------------------|---------|------------------|--------|-----------|---------|------|--------|---------|---------|-------------|------------|---------|-------------|-----|---------|------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|----------|---------|-----------|----------|--|
| | | | | ATLANTA | BALTIMORE COUNTY | BOSTON | CHARLOTTE | CHICAGO | D.C. | DALLAS | DETROIT | HOUSTON | LOS ANGELES | LOUISVILLE | MEMPHIS | NEW ORLEANS | NYC | OAKLAND | PALM BEACH | PHILADELPHIA | ROCHESTER | SAN DIEGO | SAN JOSE | SEATTLE | ST. LOUIS | ST. PAUL | |
| 3M | Manufacturing | 96 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| Adobe | Tech | 234 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | |
| Allied Universal | Security | - | 3 | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| Ally Financial | Finance | 287 | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Amazon | Tech | 2 | 4 | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | | | |
| Ameren | Fossil Fuels & Utilities | 469 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| American Airlines | Airlines, Transportation & Logistics | 174 | 2 | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| American Express | Finance | 83 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Apple | Tech | 3 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | |
| AT&T | Communications | 11 | 3 | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | |
| Atmos Energy | Fossil Fuels & Utilities | 778 | 1 | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Axon | Security | - | 6 | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | |
| Bank of America | Finance | 29 | 11 | 2 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | 2 | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| BlackRock | Finance | 192 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Boeing | Manufacturing | 54 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| Boston Properties | Real Estate & Construction | 790 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Cadence Design Systems | Tech | 805 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | |
| CBRE | Real Estate & Construction | 122 | 2 | | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Centerpoint Energy | Fossil Fuels & Utilities | 342 | 1 | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Chevron | Fossil Fuels & Utilities | 27 | 2 | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Chicago Title | Insurance | - | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | | | |
| Cigna | Healthcare | 13 | 3 | | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Citigroup | Finance | 33 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Coca-Cola Company | Retail & Grocery | 93 | 3 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Colliers International | Real Estate & Construction | - | 2 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Comcast | Media & Entertainment | 26 | 4 | | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| Comerica Bank | Finance | - | 2 | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Costco Wholesale | Retail & Grocery | 12 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| Cushman & Wakefield | Real Estate & Construction | - | 2 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Deloitte & Touche LLP | Accounting | - | 3 | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Delta Air Lines | Airlines, Transportation & Logistics | 178 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Departure | Consulting | - | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | | | | | | |
| Disney | Media & Entertainment | 50 | 4 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 2 | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| DTE Energy | Fossil Fuels & Utilities | 250 | 1 | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Duke Energy | Fossil Fuels & Utilities | 126 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Entercom | Media & Entertainment | - | 2 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| Entergy | Fossil Fuels & Utilities | 300 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| Enterprise Holdings | Airlines, Transportation & Logistics | - | 2 | | | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| Equifax | Finance | 608 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Exelon | Fossil Fuels & Utilities | 92 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Facebook | Tech | 34 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| Fox | Media & Entertainment | 247 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| GardaWorld | Security | - | 2 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| General Electric (GE) | Fossil Fuels & Utilities | 38 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Georgia Pacific | Manufacturing | - | 2 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| Goldman Sachs | Finance | 59 | 4 | | | | | | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | 1 | | |
| Google Inc. | Tech | 9 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| Granite Construction | Real Estate & Construction | 663 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| Hilton | Hospitality | - | 3 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |
| Home Depot | Retail & Grocery | 18 | 2 | 1 | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| HUMANA | Healthcare | 41 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| Iberia Bank | Finance | - | 2 | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | |
| Johnson Controls Security | Security | - | 2 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | |
| JPMorgan Chase | Finance | 19 | 2 | | | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| KPMG | Accounting | - | 2 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Kroger | Retail & Grocery | 17 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| LiDestri Food and Drink | Hospitality | - | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 3 | |
| Lyft | Tech | 875 | 1 | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| M&T Bank | Finance | 444 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 1 | |
| Macy's | Retail & Grocery | 164 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Marathon Petroleum | Fossil Fuels & Utilities | 32 | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| Marriott International | Hospitality | 293 | 2 | | | | | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | |
| Microsoft | Tech | 15 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| Morgan Stanley | Finance | 61 | 3 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| Motorola | Communications | - | 12 | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | 2 |
| Mutual of America | Finance | - | 2 | | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | |
| Northwestern Mutual | Finance | 90 | 4 | | | 1 | | | | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | |
| PayPal Holdings | Tech | 134 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 |
| PNC Bank | Finance | - | 4 | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| PricewaterhouseCoopers | Accounting | - | 4 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | | 1 |
| Publix Super Markets | Retail & Grocery | 69 | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Qualcomm | Communications | 124 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | |

To identify corporate connections on boards of directors (sometimes referred to as board of trustees, or advisory boards) we relied on police foundation websites wherever available to access the most up-to-date information on board makeup and corporate affiliation for board members. In many cases archived versions of the websites from earlier in 2020 or 2019 were needed. If a foundation did not disclose its board on its website and an archived version was not available we used the foundation's most recently filed Form 990, as linked above. In the case of Form 990s where only individual names were listed, we confirmed corporate connections through internet searches, using news searches and professional social media sites such as LinkedIn. If an individual's corporate affiliation could not be confirmed they were not included in the dataset.

Corporate sponsors, partners and funders were primarily sourced from police foundation websites, including lists of partners on the websites and event sponsors on event notices. We reviewed the current websites of each foundation and, where necessary, archived versions of those websites using archive.org. For our dataset, we included only funding partnerships and sponsorships from 2019 or later. Additional corporate donations were identified through accessing the 2018 Form 990s filed by foundations or charitable entities associated with corporations. For the purpose of analysis, donations from philanthropic or charitable entities associated with corporations were recorded under the name of the corporation. Additional donation information was sourced from news searches and corporate disclosures.

Donations and board service referenced in the report from prior to 2018, or from police foundations not listed above were not included in the dataset and are not included in any calculations or analysis of it.

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