

Eisenhower People: New Hampshire - Anthony Triano

By Paul Shepard

A burly, barrel-chested native of the tough streets of Elizabeth New Jersey, Rochester Police Department Patrolman Anthony F. Triano had little worries for his own safety when he decided to move into his community's meanest public housing complex. It was bringing with him his wife and young daughter of 13 to the Cold Spring Manor project that made him think hard about the move.

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Sure, the \$50 monthly rent would mean his family could afford to buy the home they really wanted after living in Cold Spring for just a year. But the high crime rate, broken windows and broken dreams evidenced in the faces of some residents there didn't provide the kind of environment he wanted for his family. "My wife said she was willing," Triano recalled. "But we both said that if our daughter didn't want to go, we wouldn't do it. But she said it would be a good challenge so we decided as a family to go."

Triano brushed aside his concerns and became the first Rochester officer to take part in an innovative program designed to bring police officers and the people they are sworn to protect who live in the toughest areas in the city a little closer. Triano is resource officer for the Rochester Youth Safe Haven program organized by the Eisenhower Foundation.

The Eisenhower program has given Triano and scores of police officers around the country, in big cities and small communities like Rochester, training in mentoring, neighborhood patrolling and other interventions that have helped reduce crime nationwide. Triano said the program turned out to provide a win-win situation for himself and Cold Spring residents. "We saw the residents were really no different than ourselves," Triano said. "They wanted a better life for themselves like all people do but they had some people in the complex who were making that tough for them. I think the residents got to see me and how I and my wife interacted with my daughter, talked to her about school and homework and saw you had to be involved with children to help them grow up right," Triano said.



That's not to say the move was without its anxious moments. One came in the first week when Triano had to make a domestic violence arrest at Cold Spring. "After the people learned I lived there, I was hoping they wouldn't scratch the side of my car with a key or flatten my tires or have someone pick a fight with my daughter," Triano said. Triano said a well-meaning neighbor offered him an earthy bit of advice-and was only half joking when he gave it. "He said I should buy myself a welcome basket for moving in and make sure it had a tube of Preparation H and headache pills," Triano said. He said I would need them both since I moved in." Luckily, neither the Preparation H nor the aspirin tablets were



ever needed in the year Triano lived there. "Nothing we ever worried about ever happened. We didn't have any problems," he said.

The Triano family is scheduled to move out of Cold Spring Manor at the end of May. He said he plans on buying his own home since he was able to live virtually rent-free for the past year. Triano said he will look back at his year at Cold Spring fondly and offered a warning for those who might think the time is right to act up at the complex because the policeman and his family is moving out. "Another officer has signed up for the program," Triano said. "And he's with the canine unit."

[[Back](#)]