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## **Former NBA basketball player, Matt Barnes makes an appearance at Advance Peace Fresno**

Former NBA Basketball Player Matt Barnes made an appearance yesterday at Advance Peace Fresno. Barnes discussed with staff his passion for building safer and healthier communities through community empowerment.

**Click [here](#) to view and download a video interview with B-Roll from Barnes' visit.**

“It’s wonderful to have a strong advocate and supporter of the work we are doing in Fresno,” said Isaiah Green, Program Manager of Advance Peace Fresno said. “Barnes is someone who has a heart for lifting communities in times of need, and his spirit is a testament to his servant leadership. We are happy to have him on our team.”

The Fresno visit provided Barnes with an overview of the program and shed light on local challenges and key players. It was just last month, Barnes joined Advance Peace as the National Director of Social Advocacy. In this role, Barnes meets with Advance Peace programs and identifies how the model can be used in other cities impacted by gun violence.

After years of community calls for investments in new, bold, and proven models to combat violence, Fresno EOC received Advance Peace Fresno funding in Sept. 2020. The program serves individuals affected by gun violence by providing transformational opportunities and fellowship, with an ultimate goal of reducing gun violence in the city of Fresno by 10%. If the program reduces the number of shootings by just 11 incidences, it will save the city \$9,509,742.

This program uses the nationwide Advance Peace model, sparked by an independent study, shown to dramatically reduce gun violence by 55% in Richmond, CA. This model was later expanded to other California cities, including Sacramento and Stockton. Fresno’s longstanding history of gun violence is largely due to the lack of resources and investments in areas with concentrated poverty.

**About Fresno EOC** Established in 1965, Fresno EOC is a non-profit Community Action Agency that provides opportunities, strengthens self-sufficiency, and offers support for all people. We listen to the needs of the communities we serve to create effective programs and services. Fresno EOC is at the forefront, continuing the war on poverty with over 35 programs dedicated to getting people the help they need to achieve their goals. Advance Peace Fresno was created as a community based public health and safety strategy that aims to transform lives and build healthier, safer, and more just communities by putting an end to cyclical and retaliatory gun violence in urban neighborhoods.

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