



**Pedro E. Segarra**  
Mayor

## **MAYOR SEGARRA ADDRESSES POLICE CADET GRADUATES**

### **---NEWS AND COMMUNITY RELEASE---**

**(July 2, 2010)--- Mayor Pedro E. Segarra addressed the graduating class of 35 cadets today, 31 of whom will join the Hartford Police Department. This is a copy of his speech--- his first public appearance as Mayor--- to the packed audience at the Aetna Auditorium in the City's Asylum Hill neighborhood.**

Good Afternoon: actually it is really a great afternoon. My words of congratulations go out to Chief Roberts, our Police leadership, and most especially our graduating cadets and their families. I welcome you as members of the family of public servants and more importantly protectors and defenders of this great city. My life, our community's life is in your hands.

You are here today for as a result of two decisions: Your decision to become an officer of the law, and our policy decision that we need you. I know that your decision was made on a sincere devotion to serve and protect. In our post 9-11 era, and given the challenges that you will face in modern day urban policing, no one should doubt that primary motivation to serve is premised on public service and not personal gain. You see the level of sacrifice to do your jobs and do it well, exceeds any compensation we can extend. The sacrifices that your families will also make may go uncompensated but are acknowledged by me this day. There will nights of fear and days of joy as you prosper in your respective careers. I thank your families for the sacrifices that they are making and our city will be eternally grateful. Your being here also sends a strong message to our communities and our surrounding community that we do care and that our City Council and the Mayor have pledged a strong commitment to maintain a staffing level to deal with policing needs and our community needs. It sends a strong message to our visitors and businesses that our City is taking steps to make us all safer.

At least one or more of you made your decision to become a police officer while you were a child. I want to take a minute to talk to you about our city's children. OUR CHILDREN NEED YOU, I cannot express to you how much it meant to me as a child in the South Bronx and here in Hartford, to have an officer do such simple things as giving me a smile or a hello, and I will never forget the day when an officer, at age 8 spoke to a group of us, on a street corner, we were curious about his gun. He took the time to explain to us in words we understood what guns are and not for. You see my father died at nineteen as a result of gun violence, a problem which more severely impacts our youth in today's urban centers. I often wonder what my life would have been like if my father would have been around. So I can personally appreciate relate to the significance of your jobs and the impact that it can have on people's lives.

In the one week that I have been in office I have begun a serious dialogue with Chief Roberts and city departments, such as Mayors Offices for Youth Services and Young Children about actions and ideas that we can implement short term and long to impact the lives of these children so that we

can continue the path of reducing crime. I believe that you will have a large role to play in this strategy.

We need to continue to support you by offering the best training and career opportunities so that you can reach your potential in ways that have never been reached before. A police officer today needs to be equipped with a set of skills that is unprecedented. Your roles go just beyond traditional policing roles. There is opportunity, seize it. Our community will benefit and so will you. And as we implement a community policing strategy that is aimed at building bridges of trust and respect between you and the community, I highly encourage you to become a part of that community. I ask you to look to all that our city has to offer. And this is that part of my remarks that sounds a little like that be all that you can be ad for the military: Take a stroll through our beautiful Rose Garden at Elizabeth Park to relieve stress, Play golf at one of our great golf courses, take your kids to our great museums, the science center is great, keep healthy and eat at our great restaurants “Andreas, O’ Porto’s, Ichiban, Dish, and if you find it within your hearts and your schedule permits, please, please reach out and mentor a boy or girl. That small chat about what guns are for and are not for could make a difference between life and death.

Again, my congratulations, my support and May God Bless you and protect you, I look forward to many years of your service.