Exploring programs are offered under the guidance and oversight of Learning for Life, an independent subsidiary of the Boy Scouts of America. Learning for Life is a school based integrated academic and character education program while Exploring remains a career interest and orientation program.

Exploring Programs are offered in a variety of different professions. Explorer Posts are established by a participating agency within a career field and partner with Learning for Life for the betterment of the Explorers. All Exploring Programs are based on five areas of emphasis: Career Opportunities, Life Skills, Service Learning, Character Education, and Leadership Experience.

Law Enforcement Exploring is a career orientation and experience program for youths who are interested in a career in law enforcement or other areas within the criminal justice system. Explorer Programs provide education training for these youths on the purposes, missions, and objectives of law enforcement. The mission of Law Enforcement Exploring is to provide participants with knowledge in the field of criminal justice through training, practical experiences and other activities. Law Enforcement Exploring has served as a platform from which participants have started a successful career with federal, state, county and local law enforcement agencies.

The Culver City Police Department established its Explorer Program in August 2014. The program was designed to provide the young men and women of Culver City, and its surrounding areas, with life skills, character education and leadership experience to become a productive member of society in addition to having the opportunity to start a future career in law enforcement. Culver City Police Explorers receive the highest level of law enforcement instruction and hands-on experience such as participating in ride-alongs, special events, and assisting Culver City Police Officers with their duties.

Culver City Police Explorers are required to meet the following criteria:

* Must be between the ages of 14-19
* Maintain at least a “C” average in school (GPA: 2.0 or better)
* Have good moral character without any serious arrest record
* Be in good physical health
* Pass a background investigation
* Pass an oral interview

Upon acceptance into the Culver City Police Explorer Program, Explorer Recruits must successfully complete a Basic Explorer Academy to become a Police Explorer. Two Explorer Academies are held locally at the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department STARS Center in Whittier and the South Bay Explorer Academy at El Camino College. Both academies are primarily run by other Police Explorers every Saturday for 18 weeks and cover various law enforcement related subjects.

Culver City PoliceExplorers attend monthly meetings year round that are designed to continue the Explorer’s development in life skills, character education and leadership experience. The meetings consist of lectures, demonstrations, physical training, teamwork, and leadership development activities related to law enforcement. The Explorers also train in law enforcement tactics to compete against other Explorer Posts in various national and local competitions.

Upon completion of the Basic Explorer Academy, Explorers have the opportunity to work alongside Culver City Police Officers during special events, assist with duties around the station, participate in ride-alongs, field trips, and earn community service credit. The Culver City Police Explorers also coordinate and host the department’s Bicycle Registration Program in which they register bicycles with the Culver City Police Department and advocate bicycle safety to community members.

Since the inception of the Explorer Program at the Culver City Police Department, six Explorers have successfully completed the Basic Explorer Academy and have begun undertaking the above described duties. All the Explorers continue to demonstrate a strong commitment to their duties and the program while attending high school and participating in extracurricular activities. Currently, there is a substantial amount of interest in joining the Explorer Program for the next Academy class in the fall.

The Culver City Police Explorers have been involved in numerous events and activities with several others in the planning stages. Since January 2015, the Explorers have hosted the Culver City Police Department’s Bicycle Registration Program and also participated in the George Barris Annual Car Show, and the YMCA Healthy Kids 5K Family Walk/Run at West Los Angeles College. The Explorer Program receives a vast amount of requests from community members and organizations to participate in their events. Some of those events include the Culver City Unified School District Summer Lunch Program, the La Ballona Festival, the 4th of July Fireworks Show, Ciclavia, the Culver City Police Department Open House, Culver City Bicycle Coalition Bike and Pedestrian Count, and Vox Femina’s Song Cycle 2015.

The program is looking to enhance the Explorer’s character building with the inclusion of field trips. One such field trip involves a partnership with Fulcrum Adventures, a youth development program that actively engages participants with hands-on opportunities to lead, solve problems, make decisions and take on “perceived risks”, both individually and as a team, to discover their leadership potential. The program uses ground activities and a high ropes course. These activities safely engage the Explorer with challenges, risks and a method to overcome fear with trust, communication, and accountability.

In April 2015, three Explorers were honored by the Culver City Rotary Club and the Culver City Exchange Club for the dedication and commitment to the City of Culver City. The Explorers continue to be well received by the community for their achievements, community involvement, sound character, good citizenship, and strong leadership. Although teenagers, the Explorers promote the Culver City Police Department by their maturity and demonstrating that they are “the best and brightest”.

The Culver City Police Department Special Victims Unit actively recruits interested participants for the Explorer Program from various local organizations and social media. Some of these organizations include the YMCA, Culver City Middle School, Culver City High School, and the Culver City Teen Center.

The Explorer Program permits an opportunity for Culver City Police Officers to provide training and knowledge for a job/career opportunity to community youths. Since these youths are residents of the City of Culver City and its surrounding areas, they retain a vested interest in the improvement of their hometown community. Additionally, these youths are parented into the culture of not only the law enforcement family, but the demand for excellence of the Culver City Police Department. They become immersed in the Culver City Police Department family and our practices of being proactive, professional, proud, passionate and working in partnership with the community.

Since its inception, the Explorer Program has been completely funded by the annual budget. The cost to participate as an Explorer is less than $250. Each Explorer Recruit is responsible for paying their Basic Explorer Academy fee ($55), Learning for Life Membership ($34 annually), and the associated costs for uniforms. The program is headed by sworn law enforcement officers who are also required to pay the Learning for Life Membership fee. Other costs include the time allotted for recruiting new participants, chaperoning the Explorers at activities and special events, attending the monthly meetings, and other duties associated with coordination and hosting of the Culver City Police Department Bicycle Registration Program.