

Increasing Awareness of and Access to Victims of Domestic Violence in Spanish-Speaking Migrant Communities



The theme of this issue of *OVC News & Program Updates* is how public awareness is a key component in providing services to all victims of crime. This is already demonstrated in the case of unserved and underserved victims of crime. Too often, language barriers or social and cultural isolation impede victims from seeking and receiving help. They may not know they are a victim of crime or may be unaware of the resources that are available to them before, during, or after their victimization.

The Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (FCADV) was awarded a grant aimed at closing the underserved gap within one population: victims of domestic violence in Spanish-speaking migrant communities. Obstacles exist that discourage these victims from seeking assistance. These include a lack of trust for law enforcement, a fear of deportation, or they may not know that it is against the law for a man to abuse his wife.

OVC encourages all public awareness and outreach grantees to establish an advisory group with other local service providers, businesses, and community/faith-based providers to assist in the development of culturally and linguistically appropriate campaigns. The FCADV developed and distributed *FotoNovelas* in Spanish-speaking migrant communities in 20 Florida counties. *FotoNovelas* are a comic book style of publication that conveys information through a story. FCADV's *FotoNovelas* describe domestic violence and informs victims of the toll free domestic violence crisis and legal hotline services, shelter services, victim advocacy, and

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Welcome to the inaugural edition of *OVC News & Program Updates*. We hope this will become a valuable tool for sharing information about OVC's initiatives, events, and other items of special interest. We invite you to join us in building an ongoing, lively information sharing among OVC, its grantees, service professionals, and others who share the mission of promoting justice and healing for victims.



You may have heard about Vision 21, an initiative that will ultimately chart a course for the future of victim services throughout the Nation. This edition features a summary of what we hope to accomplish through this exciting initiative, and an invitation for you to contribute your ideas about the program and the issues it addresses.

This edition of *OVC News & Program Updates* incorporates voices from the field as well, highlighting an innovative public awareness program of the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence. This OVC grantee disseminated *FotoNovelas* to reach out to victims of domestic violence in the community of Spanish-speaking migrant workers. A companion article offers an opportunity to assess your organization's outreach to underserved victims.

OVC News & Program Updates will be a truly successful communication vehicle only if the field is well represented in these pages. So read it, share it, and make it your own.

—Joye Frost, Acting Director
Office for Victims of Crime

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

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Are You Committed to Addressing Unserved, Underserved, and Inadequately Served Populations in Your Area?

That's the question the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) posed to the attendees during one of the plenary sessions at the OVC Discretionary Grantees' meeting in November 2010 in Washington, D.C. This plenary session, titled "Addressing Unserved, Underserved, and Inadequately Served Victims of Crime," focused on discussing the ongoing challenges of identifying and offering a comprehensive mix of outreach and direct victim services for new and emerging victim populations. Instead of a standard lecture session, an optional assignment gave attendees an opportunity to create their own personal social contract. This social contract was to serve as a reminder for individuals to reaffirm their commitment to excellence in service to their organization, community, and

the victims they serve. Attendees voluntarily completed their social contract, sealed it in a self-addressed stamped envelope, and gave them to OVC to hold for a few months while they explored new and emerging victim issues to be addressed. In February, OVC mailed 57 of these social contracts back to the individuals who participated in the activity. OVC invites you to complete one of your own. There are only three questions that take approximately 5 minutes to complete. Anyone can recommit themselves to identifying and serving an unserved, underserved, or inadequately served crime victim population whether they are the head of an organization or an advocate in the field. How will you respond?

(1) List three areas where you are doing well in terms of reaching underserved, unserved, and inadequately served populations. (2) List the three areas you can improve to better reach underserved, unserved, and inadequately served populations in the next month. (3) List three partnerships that you will explore in the next month.

We encourage those who have received their social contracts in the mail to share with us if you have been able to implement a new process, procedure, outreach effort, etc., as a result of completing the contract. We ask that you also share what effect it may have had on your program and the victims you serve. Contact Keely McCarthy by e-mail at Keely.McCarthy@ojp.usdoj.gov or by phone at 202-514-5652.

Increasing Awareness • CONTINUED FROM PG. 1

legal assistance available through domestic violence centers within their communities. FotoNovelas feature three stories. "The stories are realistic and show different things that are important: safety planning, abuse being more than physical, and information regarding assistance," said one reviewer of FotoNovelas.

Before distributing FotoNovelas, FCADV did several levels of evaluations in the community and with its partner agencies. The purpose of the community review was to ensure that every reader could easily identify an option for obtaining assistance, and that the stories were realistic and resonated with the readers.

According to this review, 90 percent of respondents believed the first story was realistic, 72 percent believed the second story was realistic, and 94 percent believed the third story was realistic. Reviewers were able to identify the resources where individuals could find help, and they were able to identify the motives in the stories. One reviewer stated that "the FotoNovelas illustrated that abuse is not just physical, that there are a lot of types of assistance that people don't know about."

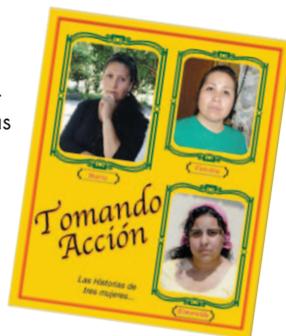
The purpose of the partner agency review was to evaluate the utility of the booklet, plans for distribution, and thoughts on the tool's potential impact. According to this review, 100 percent of respondents will

use FotoNovelas outside of their agencies, 86 percent do not have any concerns about FotoNovelas, 86 percent stated that FotoNovelas were realistic, and 79 percent believe that FotoNovelas will be useful in raising awareness about domestic violence services for Hispanic women in their area. The overall conclusion from these reviews is that the FotoNovelas are a useful public awareness tool.

Project partners printed and distributed 25,000 FotoNovelas to domestic violence centers, legal services organizations, and other agencies that work with Spanish-speaking migrant communities in the 20 targeted counties in Florida. An additional 12,000 were distributed to other agencies that provide services to the Spanish-speaking migrant communities throughout Florida. Agencies distributed FotoNovelas in various community locations, including schools, victim advocate offices, doctor's offices, police stations, restaurants, churches, Head Start programs, the Latino Expo, and health fairs.

Based on the distribution of the FotoNovelas, 15 programs reported an increase in collaborative partners, and 14 domestic violence centers reported an increase in collaboration with agencies serving Spanish-speaking migrant communities. The number of callers from Spanish-speaking communities in the 20 targeted counties who contacted the FCADV/Florida Legal Services Legal Hotline increased from 4 callers in 2007 to 259 callers in 2009.

If you would like to view the FotoNovelas, please visit www.fcadv.org/legal-department and click on the "fotonovela layout.pdf."



The FotoNovela illustrated that abuse is not just physical, that there are a lot of types of assistance that people don't know about.

Victims' Voices

Reshaping the Future, Honoring the Past

Written by: Ellen Halbert, Director, Victim Services
Travis County District Attorney, Austin, Texas

Thanks to OVC for the opportunity to write the first "Victims' Voices" column for the debut of OVC News & Program Updates.

In 1986, I lived in a beautiful home overlooking the city of Austin. I never worried about crime. I read about it, of course, but it was never personal.

On Labor Day weekend of that year, it became personal. A teenage boy broke into my home and spent the night in my attic. He surprised me the next morning in my bathroom dressed in a ninja suit, with everything covered but his eyes. During the next two hours, I was raped, beaten in the head with a hammer, and stabbed repeatedly in my chest and neck. Then he hammered a knife into my skull.

Later that day, the offender was captured at my bank while trying to cash a check he forced me to write. He went through the court system and a jury sentenced him to life in prison.

I didn't think it was possible to recover from such violence; I had been ripped inside out in every way possible: physically, sexually, emotionally, and spiritually. But I wanted to heal so I reached out to every available resource. I took their advice to heart and I was relentless in working on my recovery. Little did I know then that healing was a process that would continue for the rest of my life.

Soon I began speaking out about what victims needed from the community and the criminal justice system. Eventually, I caught the attention of Governor Ann Richards and in 1991 she appointed me to be the first crime victim to serve on the Texas Board of Criminal Justice. I served a 6-year term from 1991 to 1997.

As a member of the Board, I turned an "unpaid part time position" into an "unpaid full time position." I wanted to learn all I could about the criminal justice system and what it did for victims of crime. I didn't find much, but I was thankful to be in a position to help create programs that would be more responsive to victims' needs.

Little did I know then that healing was a process that would continue for the rest of my life.

—Ellen Halbert



In my 25-year journey as a crime victim and advocate, I have learned that nothing in the criminal justice system stays the same.

—Ellen Halbert

As part of educating myself I became open to any new idea, program, or process that would advance victims' rights and contribute to their healing. One of the ideas I embraced was restorative justice, a victim-centered approach that focuses on victim healing and offender accountability. As I participated in numerous workshops, I found myself valuing the principles of restorative justice even more. As this interest grew, I took 100-plus hours of mediator training offered by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Victim Services Division.

For the past 14 years, I have served as Director of Victim Services, Travis County District Attorney's Office, using many of the ideas from that training to facilitate "conversations" between victims and offenders. These "conversations" give victims the chance to ask the questions that plague them and offenders the opportunity to say they're sorry. They aren't for every victim or every case, but when they happen, it's a special experience for both victim and offender. The best way I can describe it is "magic happens."

In my 25-year journey as a crime victim and advocate, I have learned that nothing in the criminal justice system stays the same. Priorities change. Through all the changes I've witnessed, I've come to see how important it is to look back as well as forward, in order to be responsive to what is new and what is emerging that needs attention. When I saw that the theme for the 2011 National Crime Victims' Rights Week was "Reshaping the Future. Honoring the Past," I was thrilled. What a wonderful theme!

The Victims' Voices column will be a recurring feature of OVC News & Program Updates. Let us know if you or someone you know would like to share a story with the field about the journey from crime victimization. Our hope is that hearing directly from victims themselves will educate and inspire others. Victims' Voices contributors may choose to remain anonymous. Contact William Petty at William.Petty@usdoj.gov for more information.

National Crime Victims' Rights Week

April 10–16, 2011

About NCVRW . . .

Ronald Reagan proclaimed the first National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVRW) in 1981. Since then, NCVRW has challenged the Nation to reshape the future of crime victims by seeking the rights, resources, and protections they need to rebuild their lives. Every year, we also honor the past by celebrating decades of hard-earned progress and renewing our commitment to overcoming the harm caused by crime.

This year's theme—*Reshaping the Future, Honoring the Past*—pays tribute to the millions of crime victims over the decades who have summoned the strength to rebuild their shattered lives, families, and communities, one step at a time. Similarly, it honors the victim service community, whose members have walked alongside these victims, responding to their courage with unwavering commitment and skillful guidance.

Each year, OVC develops a Resource Guide. The 2011 NCVRW Resource Guide includes a wide array of user-friendly outreach tools, current statistics on victimization, information on the history of victims' rights in the United States, and concrete, practical ideas on how to involve your community in reshaping the future and honoring the past on behalf of all crime victims. You can explore and adapt these resources as you plan your public awareness campaign for National Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 10–16, 2011.

The past is behind, learn from it. The future is ahead, prepare for it. The present is here, live it.

—American Bishop Thomas S. Monson

NCVRW Video

Crime Victims' Rights: Fairness. Dignity. Respect. is part of the 2010 NCVRW Resource Guide. This 6-minute DVD reminds victims, service providers, allied professionals, and the public that crime victims deserve to be treated with fairness, dignity, and respect. OVC encourages the use of this DVD at public awareness, education, and training events to promote and advance crime victims' rights; to reach out to victims in your community; and to inspire local media to cover NCVRW events and topics. This year's DVD also includes a customizable 30-second television public service announcement.

Click on the links to access the video:

Quicktime version

Windows Media version

NEW THIS YEAR!

In effort to assist communities with raising public awareness during NCVRW, OVC has developed a Spanish Language Resource Guide.

Looking for NCVRW event ideas for your community? OVC has resources that can help you plan public events, write speeches and proclamations, and show why victims' rights matter to everyone.

RESHAPING THE FUTURE

HONORING THE PAST

Each year the National Crime Victims' Rights Week prelude events honor all crime victims and the remarkable individuals and organizations that significantly contribute to crime victim services.

PRELUDE EVENTS

NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK — SAVE THE DATE

Thursday — April 7, 2011
NATIONAL OBSERVANCE AND CANDLELIGHT CEREMONY
Time: 6:30 – 7:30 pm
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
1615 H Street, NW
Washington, DC

Featured Speaker: Judy Shepard
Mother of Hate Crime Victim
and President and Co-Founder
of Matthew Shepard Foundation

Friday — April 8, 2011
NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' SERVICE AWARDS RECOGNITION CEREMONY
Washington, DC

Details to Follow

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
For registration information, visit www.ncvrw.org

Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Accessibility: Designated seating near video presentation with captioning and ASL interpreters will be provided.

Office for Victims of Crime
OVC
"Putting Victims First"

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS
OFFICE FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME

OVC Announces Vision 21 Initiative

OVC is pleased to introduce the Vision 21: Transforming Victim Services initiative, an exciting and innovative effort to chart a course for the future of the victim services field in the United States.

The goal of the Vision 21: Transforming Victim Services initiative, supported by the Office for Victims of Crime, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice, is to expand the vision and impact of the crime victim services field. Vision 21 (formerly known as HOPE III) projects will examine the current framework of the crime victims field in the United States. Literature reviews will provide a foundation for the examination. Stakeholders from traditional and nontraditional arenas will convene to make recommendations for effectively transforming the field. A final report will synthesize the recommendations and set forth a strategy to redesign the victim services framework. This is an opportunity for real change in the role victim services plays in the Nation's overall efforts to ensure the safety and well-being of communities.

The focus areas:

- The role of the crime victims field in the overall response to crime and delinquency in the United States.

- Building capacity in the crime victims field to better serve victims of crime.
- Enduring challenges in the crime victims field that still are not being addressed.
- Emerging challenges the crime victims field has yet to address.

A final synthesis report will analyze the information from the four issue-specific projects described above and present a cohesive and comprehensive assessment of the current state of the victim services field in the United States. Additionally, the document will showcase a set of recommendations, and a blueprint for a national demonstration project (or multiple demonstration projects) to implement recommendations in the report. This final report will also address ways to overcome the political, policy, and philosophical perspectives and challenges in the field; what actions federal, national, state, local, and tribal entities will need to take to address the recommendations; and what role OVC has in fostering the implementation of the recommendations.



vision 21 Transforming Victim Services

Vision 21 presents a rare opportunity for people in the field to make a significant contribution to improving the field. We need your input. Share your vision through the "Share Your Vision" link on the Vision 21 Web site <http://www.ovc.gov/vision21>.

MEET THE PROJECT DIRECTORS



Angela Begle
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National Crime Victims
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Project Director
National Center for
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VERA Institute
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Julie Landrum
Project Director
National Crime
Victim Law Institute

Jennifer Shewmake
Project Director
OVC TTAC

12th National Indian Nations Conference a Huge Success

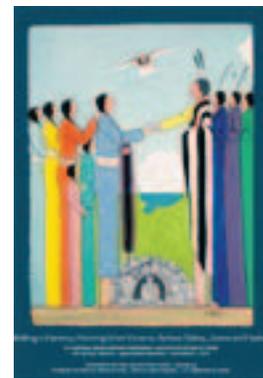
On December 9–11, 2010, the Office for Victims of Crime, in collaboration with the Tribal Law and Policy Institute, held the 12th National Indian Nations Conference: Justice for Victims of Crime, on the Agua Caliente Reservation, California. The event drew more than 900 participants from around Indian Country, as well as federal, state, and local agencies. A wide variety of disciplines attended this unique conference, including advocates working in Indian Country; tribal, state, and federal law enforcement and court personnel; social workers; tribal community members; tribal government officials; and others devoted to working with victims of crime in Indian Country. More than 160 workshop and plenary presenters and 300 scholarship recipients from tribal communities nationwide participated in the conference.

The conference theme, *Walking in Harmony: Honoring Victim Voices to Achieve Safety, Justice and Healing*, was reflected in 65 workshops on topics such as multidisciplinary approaches to assisting victims, culturally based responses to crime, federal-state-tribal collaboration, and traditional healing and wellness. This year's event saw unprecedented

collaboration from federal agencies and generous contributions from Indian Country. The conference keynote speaker was Attorney General Eric Holder, who spoke on the role of the Federal Government in honoring victims' voices. This unique event focused not just on educating and training those in the field, but it also provided a healing space for those who have experienced victimization and have survived. The conference included traditional ceremonies to honor survivors and remember those who have passed.

Results from conference evaluations, as well as the buzz after the conference, all point to a hugely successful event. Several participants noted that OVC's 12th National Indian Nations Conference was the best all-around conference they had ever attended.

For more event highlights including links to video clips of Attorney General Eric Holder's speech and closing keynote address delivered by Larry Echo Hawk, Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, as well as additional photos, click [here](#).



Joye E. Frost, OVC Acting Director, welcomes attendees of the 12th National Indian Nations conference on December 9, 2010



Larry Echo Hawk, Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of the Interior, delivers his keynote address



Jim Clairmont addresses the crowd during the closing ceremonies on December 12, 2010.

Photos courtesy of Matt Deserly on behalf of the Tribal Law and Policy Institute



U.S. Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr. addresses attendees of the 12th National Indian Nations conference on December 9, 2010



U.S. Attorney General Eric H. Holder, Jr., receiving the honor blanket from Abby Abinanti, Superior Court Commissioner in California and Chief Judge at Yurok, (shown in photo to the right), and LaVonne Peck, Tribal Chair for the La Jolla Band of Luiseno Indians

Work With OVC in Alaska

Apply for the Tribal Victim Assistance in Alaska Fellowship Program

The Tribal Victim Assistance in Alaska Fellowship position will support OVC and the Department's Alaska Native Action Team (ANAT) in improving the quality of life for Alaska Natives in rural and remote villages. The focus of the fellowship will be on the public safety, justice, and victim service needs and challenges these communities face. Serving crime victims in Alaska presents daunting challenges as many rural, remote Alaska Native communities are impoverished, isolated, and lack victim assistance services.

The Tribal Victim Assistance Alaska Native fellow will also support OVC and ANAT in their efforts to foster collaborative partnerships with allied state agencies and organizations, and enhance technical assistance and outreach efforts to tribal victims of crime in remote and rural Alaska Native villages.

A successful candidate will live and work in Alaska; have knowledge of and experience working with American Indians and Alaska Natives; and help OVC and ANAT in their commitment to leveraging, making accessible, and improving public and private programs and services to victims of crime in these remote communities.

The award amount is up to \$175,000 (depending on professional experience, salary history, and proposed travel costs).

The solicitation and instructions on how to apply for the **OVC FY 11 Tribal Victim Assistance in Alaska Fellowship Program** are now posted on www.grants.gov. Click here to open the solicitation. If you have questions, contact Kathleen Gless, Victim Justice Program Specialist, at 202-307-6049 or by e-mail kathleen.gless@usdoj.gov.



Training and Publications

UPCOMING EVENTS

National Crime Victims' Rights Week

April 10–16, 2011

NCVRW Information

6th National Sexual Assault Response Team Training Conference

May 25–27, 2011

Austin, Texas

SART Conference Registration

National Center for Victims of Crime 2011 National Conference

June 20–22, 2011

Washington, D.C.

NCVC National Conference

For more training opportunities click here for OVC's National Training calendar or here to visit the OVC Training and Technical Assistance Center's Web site.



STAY TUNED . . .

In the next issue of *OVC News & Program Updates* you'll learn—

- How Binghamton, New York, accessed OVC resources to help with the recovery process after an incident of mass violence, and how your jurisdiction can get help, too.
- What ITVERP is, and why you need to know.

ABOUT THE OFFICE FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME

The Office for Victims of Crime is one of seven components within the Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice.

Led by Acting Director Joye E. Frost, OVC is committed to enhancing the Nation's capacity to assist crime victims and to providing leadership in changing attitudes, policies, and practices to promote justice and healing for all victims of crime.

Established in 1988 through an amendment to the Victims of Crime Act of 1984, OVC is charged by Congress with administering the Crime Victims Fund. Through OVC, the Fund supports a broad array of programs and services that focus on helping victims in the immediate aftermath of crime and continuing to support them as they rebuild their lives. Millions of dollars are invested annually in victim compensation and assistance in every U.S. state and territory, as well as for training, technical assistance, and other capacity-building programs designed to enhance service providers' ability to support victims of crime in communities across the Nation.

For more information, visit www.ovc.gov.

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