

OVC NEWS & PROGRAM UPDATES

REACHING YOUNGER VICTIMS OF CRIME



December 2015

Increase in Crime Victims Fund Allotment

Each year, Congress determines the amount of funding that can be allocated from the Crime Victims Fund (Fund), a significant source of support for victim services throughout the United States. OVC is pleased that in fiscal year (FY) 2015, Congress raised the amount available in the Fund to approximately \$2.361 billion, the largest amount in the Fund's history.

The obligation limitation on the Fund was set at \$730 million in FY 2013 and \$745 million in FY 2014. The greatly increased amount available in FY 2015 will support efforts to move the victim services field forward into a new era of enhanced and innovative victim services.

Established by the Victims of Crime Act of 1984 (VOCA), the Fund consists primarily of fines, special assessments, and bond forfeitures from convicted federal offenders. Without relying on American tax dollars, the Fund serves as a unique, self-sufficient source of support for thousands of programs in each U.S. state, the District of Columbia, and the territories each year. These programs provide direct services to victims; support services designed to alleviate physical, psychological, emotional, and financial hardships; and help victims rebuild their lives.

With this additional funding, OVC is able to support capacity building around the Nation through research, innovation, technology, and training to more fully uphold victims' rights and provide assistance to victims, survivors, and communities. OVC uses Vision 21 (www.ovc.gov/vision21) as a framework to inform decisionmaking and maximize appropriation and discretionary funding through competitive solicitations that respond to continuing and emerging challenges facing victims and victim service providers.

2015 Initiatives

Much of the VOCA funding is administered to the states and territories to provide direct support to crime victims through compensation and assistance grants. State victim assistance and compensation programs are the lifeline services that help victims address their immediate needs, navigate the complex nature of the criminal justice system, and begin their path toward healing in the aftermath of crime.

Many 2015 initiatives were focused on reaching underserved populations such as communities of color, tribal communities, male survivors of violence, the Deaf community, victims with limited English proficiency, victims of human trafficking, survivors of sexual assault—including individuals who are incarcerated—and victims of elder abuse. OVC will focus on supporting programs to increase data collection efforts to identify and fill gaps and provide better services to all victims. OVC increased training and technical assistance funding for tribal grantees, which will help victim service providers, law enforcement, and judicial communities better

CONTINUED ON PG. 2

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



This issue of *News and Program Updates* focuses on children and youth, a vulnerable population that should be safeguarded. According to a 2009 study conducted by the Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), 60 percent of children

are exposed to violence, either directly or indirectly. This subjection to violence—in addition to maltreatment and emotional abuse in their homes, schools, and communities—often leads to long-term, even life-long problems. OVC is committed to continuing, strengthening, and initiating programs and projects to help child and youth victims of crime, and to fostering the contributions of younger generations to the victim services field.

One of OVC's newest initiatives is our program to provide services to boys and young men of color, which we have expanded this year. Recognizing that few victim service organizations possess the necessary expertise and resources to provide comprehensive services to these individuals, OVC has been funding two demonstration projects since 2012 that focus on providing services to these victims—particularly young African-American and Latino men—who are more likely to experience violent victimization than men of other ethnicities. These two programs have established innovative violence intervention projects: one, a hospital-based program focused on psychological trauma, and the other, a community-based violence interrupter program with a victim services component whose contributions are featured in an article in this newsletter. We look forward to these projects' continuing achievements.

To further serve the needs of these underserved populations, OVC, in partnership with OJJDP, has awarded nearly \$14 million to 12 sites across the country and to 1 training and technical assistance provider to create equal access to both system- and community-based service providers for

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

A Survivor's Perspective:	
A Compassionate Pathway to Healing.....	2
Getting to the Root of the Problem in Crown Heights.....	5
Federal and State Statutes Prohibit Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting.....	6

[Click here](#) to access previous issues of *OVC News & Program Updates* on topics such as responding to mass casualties, elder abuse, and serving children exposed to violence.

Increase in Crime Victims Fund Allotment •

CONTINUED FROM PG. 1

understand and respond to crime victims' needs and promote justice and healing for all victims of crime.

Other OVC areas of focus in 2015 include victims of impaired driving crashes; law enforcement's role in supporting crime victims' access to compensation; state strategic planning; and targeted outreach to state legislators on human trafficking, incarcerated survivors of sexual abuse, and increasing the pool of trainers on trauma and sexual assault. A substantial effort also is being made to expand legal assistance clinics that offer pro bono services to victims and help them navigate the judicial system.

For more detailed information about VOCA compensation and assistance, including the allocation process established by Congress, please refer to the Crime Victims Fund at www.ovc.gov/about/victimsfund.html. For more information on resources available in your state or territory, visit www.ovc.gov/map.html.

Through state assistance programs, OVC supports more than 4,000 local and state victim assistance programs throughout the United States and its territories each year. OVC also provides funding for—

- The Federal Victim Notification System, which provides federal victims with free automated information about their cases. This information can help victims heal and restore a sense of safety.
- Victim assistance specialists, at both the FBI and the Executive Office for United States Attorneys, who provide assistance and support to help victims cope with the crimes committed against them. These specialists often serve rural areas and offer services to both youth and adults that they would otherwise not be able to reach.

MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

male survivors of violence, particularly boys and young men of color. These innovative programs and practices should foster a better understanding among criminal and juvenile justice systems, and guide service providers regarding the rights and needs of these young people.

In this issue, we report on these important programs and other important projects and initiatives helping young victims. You will also read a moving article authored by a survivor who, as a young child, witnessed the murder of his mother and brother. We also offer an article describing OVC's launch of a National Crime Victims' Service Award this year that recognizes the younger generation's contributions to victim services. We hope that you find these articles informative, useful, and valuable to your efforts to support victims and survivors of crime.

—Joye Frost, Director
Office for Victims of Crime

Victims' Voices

A Survivor's Perspective: A Compassionate Pathway to Healing

By William Kellibrew

In the early hours of Monday, July 2, 1984, at age 10, I believed that my world had come to an end. Staring down the barrel of a gun and into a killer's eyes had completely altered my view of the world. What was once safe was no longer safe. What was once calm had turned into terror amid a hostage crisis that shook an entire community.

My mom, Jacqueline, and my 12-year-old brother, Tony, were both fighting for their lives on our living room floor. Mom didn't make a sound or move, but his gasps and hunched-over position indicated that Tony was holding on for dear life. "Please don't kill me! I'll do anything!" I rapidly uttered from my mouth. When there was no response, I quickly shifted my eyes and head to the ceiling with my hands together begging and pleading, "God, please don't let him kill me! I'll do anything."

The air around me had shifted. I felt movement. I brought my head down and opened my eyes, very afraid of what would be my visual of the room. Marshall, my mom's ex-boyfriend, who was an extremely nice guy when we first met him about 7 months earlier, had gone on a rampage. Not accepting my mom's decision to break the relationship off, he took matters into his own hands. If he could not have her, it seemed he felt that no one should.

Marshall had lifted the gun from my face and paced across the floor, in between my mom and Tony, appearing to consider his next steps, the decisions he had made, and the sounds that echoed in the room—unbearable and unimaginable. I sat shocked, horrified, and silenced waiting for Marshall's next moves—my eyes fixated.

"You can leave. Call the police," he softly mumbled. "Really? Did I hear him correctly?" I thought. Afraid to move, but almost sure of

CONTINUED ON PG. 3

Victims' Voices

CONTINUED FROM PG. 2

what he said, I gathered every ounce of strength I had, lifted my rigid body and somehow mustered the courage to stand up, moving one millisecond at a time. I reached for the front door, which was roughly two feet away from where I was sitting, having been playing with my Matchbox and Hot Wheels cars just before Marshall loaded his weapon. I twisted the knob, opened the door, and put one foot outside. I turned back to Marshall and, emulating the manners mom had instilled in me, reluctantly gave my fragile voice a try: "Do you want me to lock the door?" One last glimpse at my mom and Tony provided me with images that haunted me in every way.

With no response from Marshall, I closed the door and walked away slowly past our living room window thinking there was still a chance for me to die. Dressed only in my little shorts, a tank-top that hugged my frail body and no shoes, I made it to the driveway and when I knew it was safe, I ran for my life yelling, "Call the police!" repeatedly. Three hours following my release, police forcefully entered our family home to find not only that Marshall had taken his own life, but also my mother's and Tony's.



Pictured L-R: Ambassador Norman Houston, Director of the Northern Ireland Bureau; Christine Pierre, Social Worker and Kellibrew's first childhood therapist; William Kellibrew, Kellibrew's father; William Kellibrew, IV, International Advocate, Trauma Survivor and Recipient of the 2015 U.S. Congressional Victims' Caucus Eva Murillo Unsung Hero Award; Delores Short, Kellibrew's grandmother; Lloyd 'Ted' Poe, Second District, TX, U.S. House of Representatives and Founder and Co-Chair of the U.S. Congressional Victims' Caucus; Josiah Gaither, Kellibrew's niece; James Manuel 'Jim' Costa, Sixteenth District, CA, U.S. House of Representatives and Founder and Co-Chair of the U.S. Congressional Victims' Caucus; and JuRon McMillan, Victim Advocate, The William Kellibrew Foundation. (Photo Credit: Courtesy of the William Kellibrew Foundation.)

The Healing Path, In William's Words...

Trauma is an individual experience. Although I witnessed the murders of my mother and brother, Tony, my surviving two brothers and sister were impacted with their own set of difficulties. My oldest brother, Rodney, used substances for over 25 years to avoid the pain, but today has changed his life to reflect the pathway to healing. My youngest brother, Da'Vone, also struggled and was convicted of 18 felony counts and sentenced to 97 years in federal prison. Like Da'Vone and Rodney, I battled the streets and the pressures of substance use, gang and domestic violence, and arrests related to negative behaviors and not understanding the cycle of violence. My sister, Manyka, after many revictimizations, including sexual assault and domestic violence, has emerged as a leader, speaker, and minister in her church. Her children witness her faith and determination—disconnecting the cycle of violence and poverty in the next generation of our family. Led by our grandmother, Delores, our family has a more trauma-informed understanding of the impact and warning signs of trauma experiences that stalled our healthy development and well-being.



Photo of William's siblings, courtesy of William Kellibrew. (Top L-R: Rodney, Anthony, William, Manyka, and Da'Vone—circa 1980)

While that day would haunt me each morning, every night, in my nightmares, and in my daydreams, it would make the days long and hard to bear. My grandmother provided me and my surviving siblings solace. We each faced difficulties as a result of this early childhood trauma, which would echo through our family.

I struggled in the fifth grade with concentration and focus. I struggled in the sixth grade with class interruption. Beyond anyone's knowledge, because our family strategy was to be silent and forget about it, I slowly lost touch with my soul, numb from the excruciating pain.

Only after a suicide attempt did anyone begin to acknowledge and understand the magnitude and impact of what had happened to me. Standing over that neighborhood bridge at age 13 on my way to school was the first day of the beginning of a new world for me. I was hospitalized for 30 days and following my release I was assigned to an outpatient therapist, Christine Pierre. Her compassion and her acknowledgement of my trauma would be a reflection of hope and resilience that I would not understand until adulthood. She listened. She cared. She ushered in voice and choice in every session. She watched me eat ice cream cones and pizza in the cafeteria—searching for what would make me happy—which I valued the most. It was the only place I felt safe to explore the deep feelings of hurt and despair. I had begun the long road to healing, rebuilding, and recovery yet didn't have an understanding of what those terms meant. Those lessons, however, stayed with me.

Today, those lessons provide me with a sense of compassion, having experienced it firsthand years ago. I now consider myself a beacon of hope for victims and survivors, like a light from a lighthouse guiding ships to safety. The self-worth and dignity I feel today can

CONTINUED ON PG. 4

About the author: William Kellibrew, IV, an alumnus of the University of the District of Columbia and the University of Sunderland in England, is an international advocate for human, civil, children's, and victims' rights, and a motivational speaker. He was recognized as a 2011 White House Champion of Change, working to end domestic violence and sexual assault. He was presented with SAMHSA's 2013 Voice Award for his work throughout the mental health field as a peer/consumer leader and, in 2015, he received the U.S. Congressional Victims' Rights Caucus Eva Murillo Unsung Hero Award as a survivor fostering a pathway to healing for victims and survivors of crime. For more information, visit the William Kellibrew Foundation at www.williamkellibrewfoundation.roundtablelive.org for more information.

Victims' Voices

CONTINUED FROM PG. 3

be attributed to the dedicated and compassionate individuals who gave me a chance—who didn't judge and give up on me because I had an attitude or because I didn't graduate from high school or could not concentrate. Along with Ms. Pierre, my grandmother and others made the difference. While I had awakened each day in the past struggling with focus, today I travel the world inspiring other survivors to not give up and to understand that although their traumatic experiences may present insurmountable barriers, it is our strength, courage, and hope that give us a different and positive view of our once-shattered lives. Picking up the pieces and healing is possible.

In my 41 years, I have come to realize that life is not the absence of problems and challenges but our ability to cope. By accessing

copied strategies and resources that support our well-being and development when we need them the most—perhaps when and if another crisis happens—we will garner the tools needed to continue the journey of resilience and gain the ability to bounce back. The difference now and from when I was age 10 is that then I had very few alternatives to cope and now I understand coping alternatives that were my portal to healing.

Trauma can be dehumanizing and make coping difficult, but when we foster an environment where compassion can blossom, we support the change needed to survive and thrive. Today, my passion as a humanitarian has finally given me the space in my own personal growth to experience ongoing inner peace and worth that stretches beyond the violence and trauma I once encountered.

Vision 21: Linking Systems of Care for Children and Youth

Child victimization and exposure to violence continue to occur at alarming rates. In the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's September 2015 *Children's Exposure to Violence, Crime, and Abuse: An Update* (www.ojjdp.gov/pubs/248547.pdf), researchers confirmed their earlier findings from the initial National Survey on Children's Exposure to Violence. They found that over the course of the past year, 3 in 5 children surveyed experienced at least one exposure to violence. The rates of direct victimization were just as disturbing—2 in 5 children experienced an assault, 1 in 10 were injured by an assault, 1 in 20 were sexually victimized, and 1 in 4 were victims of property crimes.

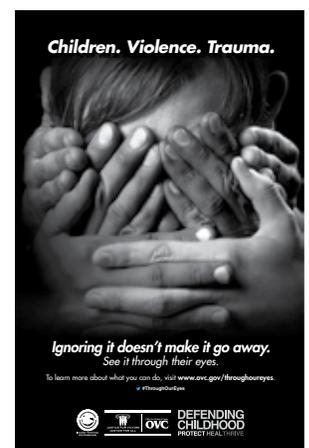
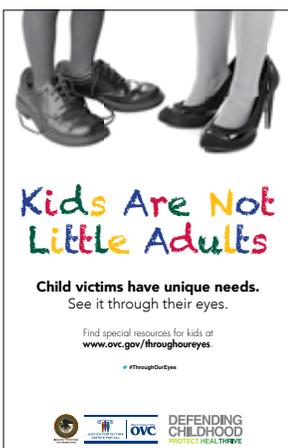
Imagine a Nation that embraces our youngest victims and aligns its resources to ensure

that every young person who experiences victimization receives timely and meaningful responses and services. Imagine a Nation that proactively identifies young victims, works integrally with their families and caregivers, and provides for their array of needs. Imagine a Nation that ensures these young victims and their families are set on a path to healing and achieving their full potential in life. Through a new program titled *Linking Systems of Care for Children and Youth*, OVC is trying to discover what it takes to achieve this vision. Visit http://ojp.gov/ovc/grants/pdf/FY14_V21_LinkingSystemsOfCare.pdf to learn more.

This year we began a multicomponent demonstration project that will span the next 5 years. This project involves two states (Montana and Virginia), a technical assistance provider (the National Council of Juvenile

and Family Court Judges), and an evaluation managed by the National Institute of Justice. OVC wants to learn what a streamlined and coordinated approach to child and youth victims looks like so that we can identify victims early and provide them the services they need before they find themselves in situations like inside the juvenile justice system or living on the streets as homeless or runaway youths. The findings can make all the difference to our youngest victims.

This program integrates information from similar efforts, such as the U.S. Department of Justice's Defending Childhood Initiative (www.justice.gov/defendingchildhood) demonstration projects and SAMHSA's Systems of Care framework (www.tapartnership.org/SOC/SOCintro.php).



Getting to the Root of the Problem in Crown Heights

The Crown Heights neighborhood in Brooklyn, New York, is rich in cultural history. It boasts a diverse population, with large communities of Lubavitch Hasidic Jewish, African-American, and African-Caribbean residents. This vibrant community, however, for years has suffered from racial and cultural tensions.

In 1991, a car driven by a Hasidic driver struck and killed a 7-year-old Caribbean boy, leading to 3 days of racial and religious riots. After the dust settled, the community realized it needed a safe, neutral place for community problem solving. Accordingly, the Crown Heights Community Mediation Center, a project of the Center for Court Innovation, opened in 1998.

Much like the community, the Mediation Center's work evolved after the deaths of many local residents due to gun violence. In 2009, the Center expanded violence interruption programming by focusing efforts on gun violence in the community through the Save Our Streets (S.O.S.) project, a replication of the Cure Violence program from Chicago. The S.O.S. program, funded by OVC since 2011, takes a public health approach to ending gun violence. Members of the community serve as credible messengers who can connect with other residents at the highest risk of engaging in and being directly impacted by gun violence. S.O.S. outreach workers and violence interrupters nurture their relationships in the community to reduce killings and shootings.

The Center for Court Innovation first received national field-generated funding from OVC in 2011. Additional OVC funding to expand the program was received in 2015 under the Supporting Male Victims of Violence Initiative.

S.O.S. provides crisis intervention and case management services for participants. Despite the wonderful interventions incorporated in their program, there is still a concern to help clients heal from their trauma. With OVC funding, S.O.S. developed a Make It Happen program that deals with the issue of healing for a population in crisis.

Make It Happen is for young men of color between the ages of 16 and 24 who have been negatively affected by community violence. The goal is to provide supportive services to young men of color who are dealing with trauma, yet are not in a position to acknowledge and process their trauma. Make It Happen is a trauma-informed and culturally competent program that provides mentorship, intensive case management, clinical interventions, and supportive workshops. Participants are challenged to think about how their definition of manhood is intertwined in trauma and gender roles. Through group and individual therapy, case management, mentorship, advocacy, and community



outreach, participating clients are able to recognize and process their own trauma.

The program engaged traditional victim service providers by convening a conference on April 10, 2015, called "Paving the Way to Healing and Recovery." This conference was the first of its kind, focused on addressing violence and its impact on young men of color. The day began with a panel titled "For Men of Color Living is a Radical Act—Why?," and then continued with 16 breakout sessions, which were attended by over 200 people. Due to the success of the conference and the interest to continue this conversation, they look forward to having another conference next year.

Crown Heights is an amazing and diverse community, with a rich history and wonderful and caring residents. The community is only as strong as the community members in crisis. The Crown Heights Mediation Center is committed to providing services to help the community heal from trauma and interrupt community violence for a more peaceful future.

Despite the efforts of the Mediation Center, the cycle of trauma and violence still echoes throughout this community. According to New York Police Department statistics, in 2014, there were 8 murders and 388 felony assaults reported in the 77th precinct. This information underscores the continued need for intervention to help the community heal and break the cycle of violence and trauma. Visit <http://crownheights.org/about-chcmc/our-programs> for more information.



Federal and State Statutes Prohibit Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting

Female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) is the cultural traditional practice of partially or totally removing the external female genitalia for nonmedical reasons. The severity of the procedure varies tremendously, although procedures are typically categorized as clitoridectomy, excision, infibulation, or other. The practice most frequently occurs between infancy and age 15, although it can be done at any point in a woman's life. FGM/C is internationally recognized as a violation of the human rights of children and women. No one should endure any type of torturous or inhumane acts against her life.

FGM/C is deeply rooted in many African and Islamic societies. The practice is most common in 29 countries in Africa and the Middle East (predominantly Egypt, Ethiopia, and Somalia) where cultural, religious, and social factors within families and communities serve to maintain the practice.

FGM/C is a practice deeply entwined in historical belief systems based on culture, religion, or both, that affect all ages and classes of women. It is associated with traditional ritual, a rite of passage that grants girls and women full social acceptability in their culture. Religiously, the practice is rooted in the ideas of modesty and virginity, high virtues designed to prevent promiscuity and premarital pregnancy and consequently to prevent women from bringing shame upon their families. Women's sexuality and reproductive functions are controlled in this way to preserve chastity until marriage in cultures in which women are dependent on men for survival. Families practice FGM/C for their daughters, not on their daughters.

Nonetheless, this gender-based form of violence has physical, medical, and psychological consequences. Short-term health consequences include bleeding and infection. Long-term health consequences include genital scarring, menstrual and urinary tract complications, increased complications in childbirth, and psychosexual dysfunction, to name but a few. The psychological impact can be as powerful as the physical.

However, the social pressure associated with this practice seems to outweigh the desire to avoid physical and psychological suffering.

The case of Fauziya Kassindja, who sought asylum in America to avoid FGM/C in Togo, greatly increased awareness of FGM/C as a health and human rights issue in the United States. FGM/C continued to garner attention in the United States because of an increase in the number of immigrants from countries where FGM/C is widely practiced. In 2013, it was estimated that over 500,000 women or girls living in the United States have experienced or are at risk of FGM/C.

Few Americans are aware that FGM/C of minors is illegal in this country. Nevertheless, Congress has enacted the Federal Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation Act of 1995 (18 U.S. Code § 116). The statute makes it a crime to perform FGM/C in the United States on any girl younger than 18 years of age, imposing a fine and/or 5 years of incarceration for performing FGM/C on a minor. Explicitly and intentionally, there are no exceptions for cultural or religious beliefs. The statute was revised in 2013 (Transport for Female Genital Mutilation Act) to prohibit transporting girls overseas to have the procedure performed (sometimes referred to as "vacation cutting"). The enactment of the federal statute was spurred by states that first adopted FGM/C statutes (currently 23 states), with some states imposing mandatory reporting of FGM/C.

These statutes send a clear and forceful message that people must abandon the practice of FGM/C in the United States. While there have only been three prosecutions in this country related to FGM/C, only one was successful and none resulted in a conviction for FGM/C. For example, in Georgia, a father was convicted of aggravated battery and cruelty to children after using scissors to cut off his 2-year-old daughter's clitoris.

The protection of girls against this practice in our country requires increased public awareness of the issue. If you suspect that someone might be a victim of FGM/C, you may anonymously contact Kathleen O'Connor, Human Rights and Special Protections, U.S. Department of Justice, at 800-813-5863 or hrstips@usdoj.gov. For information on FGM/C, contact the Office on Women's Health within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services at 800-994-9662. You may also visit Safe Hands for Girls (<http://safehandsforgirls.org>), a nonprofit advocacy organization for victims of FGM/C.

Recognizing Tomorrow's Leaders During the National Crime Victims' Rights Week—April 10–16, 2016

Every April since the first National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVRW) in 1981, local communities throughout the Nation have held public rallies, candlelight vigils, and a host of other events to promote crime victims' rights awareness. This year's NCVRW will be observed April 10–16, 2016, with the theme "Serving Victims. Building Trust. Restoring Hope," which speaks to the importance of providing early intervention and victim services. Establishing trust with victims

allows local leaders, organizations, and community partners to meet victims where they are and to restore hope throughout the healing process. Leveraging existing community resources enables everyone to better understand the needs of victims and expand their options for services as they heal.

During NCVRW, OVC will host the 2016 National Crime Victims' Service Awards Ceremony on Tuesday, April 12, 2016, in Washington,

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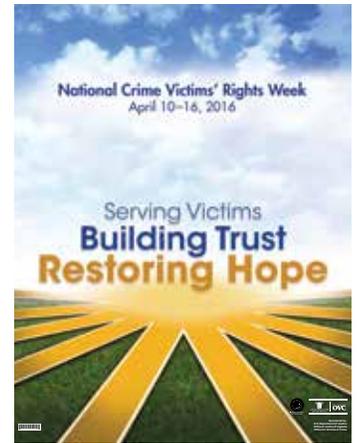
D.C. The awards ceremony honors those selected in a variety of categories for their exceptional service to victims of crime.

This year, OVC added an award category entitled “Tomorrow’s Leaders Award,” which honors a young person (up to 24 years old) dedicated to supporting victims of crime. OVC recognizes the need to empower the next generation of the workforce who give back to their communities and positively affect the lives of others. When we requested nominations for this award, we knew we would hear some great stories of leadership, innovation, and change. We were pleased with the field’s response to this new award category and were inspired to read the stories of many impressive nominees.

The nominees include outstanding young people who have taken a stand against bullying, peer pressure, domestic violence and teen dating violence, stalking, human trafficking, child abuse, and victimization of minority communities, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer or questioning persons. The young nominees have shown courage and leadership by raising awareness of crime victimization, highlighting a need to change policies and laws, organizing community and school events, developing and providing training, and providing

direct services for victims. We were encouraged to read all of their courageous stories.

The honored awardee in the Tomorrow’s Leaders Award category exhibits exemplary character, serves as a role model for future generations, has displayed extraordinary courage and initiative, and has made a significant contribution to the Nation’s understanding of youth crime victims’ issues. Visit www.ovc.gov/ncvrw for more information on the awards ceremony and NCVRW 2016. We hope you will join us in honoring tomorrow’s leaders for their outstanding work in serving victims of crime. Tune in to www.youtube.com/ojovc next April to learn more about this year’s honored awardee.



New Toolkit To Help Victims of Mass Violence and Terrorism

Too often, we hear the news and learn of a new mass violence event. Sadly, a growing number of communities have been affected by tragedies of mass violence and terrorism, and are often under- or unprepared to respond to both the short- and long-term needs of victims. Resources are available to help communities plan for and heal from incidents of mass violence and terrorism.

This summer, OVC released *Helping Victims of Mass Violence and Terrorism: Planning, Response, Recovery, and Resources*, in coordination with the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Office for Victim Assistance and the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of Justice for Victims of Overseas Terrorism. This victim-centered resource offers victim service providers a framework, strategies, and resources to ensure that victims receive the services they need following an incident of mass violence and terrorism. State Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) administrators, emergency managers, law enforcement, prosecutors, health care providers, victim service providers, and others can access the online toolkit to—

- develop robust victim assistance plans that address victims’ needs after incidents of mass violence, terrorism, natural disasters, and high-profile criminal events;
- bring key partners together to review existing emergency plans and ensure that they are comprehensive enough to prepare for and address incidents effectively;
- establish victim assistance procedures to strengthen the effectiveness of response and recovery efforts within a community; and



- learn protocols for immediate and long-term victim-centered responses after such incidents.

The toolkit was developed in consultation with many states, communities, and organizations throughout the country that provided input at numerous stakeholder forums. To ensure that victims’ needs are fully addressed after an incident, every state and community should develop a victim assistance plan. Although no community can be entirely prepared for mass violence or terrorism, this toolkit provides resources and strategies that can enhance effective planning, response, and recovery efforts for victims. Visit www.ovc.gov/pubs/mvt-toolkit/index.html to learn more.

To receive *OVC News & Program Updates*, register via the National Criminal Justice Reference Service and select "Victims" as a topic of interest. Once you have registered, you will also receive important information from OVC and other OJP agencies related to—

- new funding opportunities,
- recently released publications,
- upcoming trainings and conferences,
- program initiatives, and
- much more!



Youth-Focused Resources

Be sure to check out the following resources to empower individuals to begin healing from their victimization.

Publications:

The 2015 OVC Report to the Nation is now available online at www.ovc.gov/pubs/reporttonation2015. The full report, *Fiscal Years 2013-2014: Building Capacity Through Research, Innovation, Technology, and Training*, highlights innovative programs and victim-centered initiatives, summarizes financial support to states and U.S. territories, and provides insight into OVC's strategic efforts to address both emerging and enduring challenges in order to expand and enhance victim assistance throughout the Nation.

Pending release in fall 2015: OVC has helped fund the American Bar Association's publication entitled *Understanding Trauma, Polyvictimization and Their Impact on Child Clients*.

Video Resources:

A Circle of Healing for Native Children Endangered by Drugs is a seven-part video series that offers examples of successful programs and practices used to help drug-endangered Native youth heal from trauma. A companion resource guide accompanies

this product. Visit www.ovc.gov/library/videoclips.html#youthvict to read more about the product.

Through Our Eyes (www.ovc.gov/throughoureyes), an OVC DVD resource, presents a video series and related materials that discuss how crime, abuse, violence, and trauma affect children.

Learn About Additional Resources: Find a Local Program



Use the Online Directory of Crime Victim Services at <http://ovc.ncjrs.gov/findvictimservices> to locate nonemergency crime victim services provided by not-for-profit programs and public agencies.

Contact a Helpline

OVC offers a list of helplines of national organizations that provide services to crime victims, including the National Domestic Violence Hotline and Disaster Distress Helpline. Use the contact list of toll-free numbers and online hotlines at www.ovc.gov/help/tollfree.html to find additional information or to get help.

ABOUT THE OFFICE FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME

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

Led by 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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Access OVC TTAC



OVC TTAC offers comprehensive training and technical assistance resources to help victim service providers and allied professionals provide skilled victim-focused assistance to crime victims. For more information, visit their website at www.ovcttac.gov, contact the Center by phone at 866-682-8880, or email them at TTAC@ovcttac.org.



VAT Online (www.ovcttac.gov/vatonline) gives victim service providers and allied professionals the opportunity to acquire the essential skills and knowledge they need to more effectively assist victims of crime, through 4 sections and 38 modules of Web-based victim assistance training, covering topics like child abuse, victims' rights, and trauma-informed care, to name a few.