



Department of Justice



Office of Justice Programs

ATTORNEY GENERAL HOLDER RECOGNIZES SEVEN INDIVIDUALS, THREE ORGANIZATIONS FOR OUTSTANDING SERVICE TO CRIME VICTIMS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WASHINGTON –Attorney General Eric Holder today at an awards ceremony hosted by the Department of Justice recognized seven individuals and three organizations for outstanding work on behalf of crime victims.

The Attorney General’s Annual Victims’ Service Awards are presented as a prelude to the nation’s observance of National Crime Victims’ Rights Week, April 10-16, 2011. This year’s theme –“Reshaping the Future, Honoring the Past” – highlights the importance of crime victims’ rights and recognizes individuals and organizations that demonstrate a commitment to this effort.

“Each of the leaders, legal advocates, public servants and concerned citizens here today are part of a powerful, national movement—one that inspired the passage of the historic 1984 Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) that created the Crime Victims Fund, as well as the 1994 crime bill and the Violence Against Women Act,” said Attorney General Holder. “We commend these individuals and service providers who, when faced with emerging challenges, seek out new ways to protect our communities, and to more effectively assist and empower crime victims.”

“Today’s Justice Department is working with medical and law enforcement professionals, service providers and crime victim advocates to reach those victims most in need of help,” said Attorney General Holder. “We’re also evolving to meet new challenges and emerging threats. As criminals adapt to an inter-connected world, – in partnership with law enforcement – we are working hard to serve victims of youth violence, cybercrime, identify theft, human trafficking and fraud.”

The award presentation, along with the Candlelight Observance held yesterday in Washington, D.C., was organized by the Department of Justice’s Office of Justice Programs (OJP) and its Office for Victims of Crime (OVC). In addition to the attorney general, others participating in today’s awards ceremony were Assistant Attorney General for OJP Laurie O. Robinson and OVC Acting Director Joye E. Frost.

The recipients of today’s awards were nominated by their colleagues in the victim service and criminal justice fields. These awards recognize their courageous responses in the aftermath of a crime; their professional efforts to better serve the needs of victims of human trafficking, identity theft and elder abuse; and their assurance that victims receive the compensation and other services available to them at the state and local level. The following awards were presented by the attorney general:

National Crime Victim Service Award: Honors extraordinary efforts in direct service to crime victims.

Recipient: House of Ruth Maryland (HRM), for assisting victims of domestic violence and serving as the state’s first shelter for battered women and their children. HRM is one of the most comprehensive domestic violence centers in the country. Its services include emergency shelter services, transitional house, a 24-hour crisis hotline, counseling for victims

and their children, legal advocacy, a legal clinic and a variety of outreach and education programs to change beliefs and attitudes towards domestic violence in the community.

Award for Professional Innovation in Victim Services: Recognizes a program, organization or individual that has helped expand the reach of victims' rights and services.

Recipient: Elder Abuse Forensic Center (EAFC), Orange County, Calif., for providing direct services for the prevention, assessment and treatment of elder abuse and neglect. EAFC addresses cases of elder abuse and neglect using a multidisciplinary collaboration of area agencies. EAFC takes all of the resources available from existing elder advocacy agencies and channels them to combat and prosecute elder mistreatment.

Volunteer for Victims Award: Honors individuals for their uncompensated efforts to reach out to victims.

Recipient: Pamela Faith Young McCarter, M.D., York, Penn., for providing invaluable assistance to two victims of human trafficking, as well as information to federal authorities that led to the conviction of three human traffickers. Dr. McCarter became an important advocate for the two victims and has continued to help them rebuild their lives and obtain appropriate services.

Special Courage Award: Recognizes individuals who have demonstrated extraordinary bravery in the aftermath of a crime or who have performed a courageous act on behalf of a crime victim.

Recipient: Nicole M. Robinson, Clinton, Md., for being an outspoken advocate for the victims of identity theft and its devastating impacts. Almost immediately following her victimization, Ms. Robinson testified before the Federal Trade Commission on a victim impact panel. Her willingness to share her experience was an act of courage that has resulted in significant strides in the government and business community's response to identity theft.

Allied Professional Award: Recognizes an individual or an organization outside the victim assistance field for services or contributions to the victims' field.

Recipient: The Honorable Ronald Reinstein, Phoenix, for diligently enforcing Arizona's Victims' Bill of Rights and ensuring that crime victims' voices were heard in the courtroom. Judge Reinstein is a strong proponent of improving the judiciary to address the concerns of crime victims. During his judicial career, Judge Reinstein established an ad hoc committee to review, modify and develop a more understandable and effective restitution process for victims in his county.

Recipient: Sarah Deer, St. Paul, Minn., for dedicating herself to addressing and ending the crime of sexual violence against Native American women. Her vast knowledge about issues related to addressing the epidemic levels of sexual violence against Native American women and jurisdiction issues was vital in the development of a series of comprehensive recommendations in Amnesty International's 2007 report *Maze of Injustice*. This report drew congressional attention to sexual violence against Native American women and contributed to the 2010 enactment of the Tribal Law and Order Act.

Ronald Wilson Reagan Public Policy Award: Honors an individual whose leadership, vision and innovation results in significant changes to public policy and practice benefiting crime victims.

Recipient: Brooks Douglass, Malibu, Calif., for serving victims of crime and changing state legislation to help guide victims through the criminal justice system. As an Oklahoma

State Senator, Mr. Douglas authored and worked to pass numerous crime rights' bills and laws, including the Oklahoma Victims' Bill of Rights, which dramatically changed the state criminal justice system. He also worked to pass laws regulating rights to restitution; confidentiality of victim information; rights of victims to attend all court proceedings; rights to be informed of case status; and right of victims to attend the execution of their loved one's convicted killer.

Federal Service Award: Honors exceptional contributions and extraordinary impact on behalf of victims in Indian Country, on military installations, in national parks or in other areas governed by federal jurisdiction.

Recipient: Robert S. Mueller III, Washington, D.C., for serving victims with unparalleled commitment as a federal prosecutor, Assistant Attorney General, U.S. Attorney, Acting Deputy Attorney General and Director of the FBI. Director Mueller assumed the leadership of the FBI one week before the September 11th attacks. Shortly after assuming his duties, Director Mueller signed an order establishing the Office for Victim Assistance (OVA). Since OVA was created, the FBI has demonstrated, both nationally and internationally, that victim assistance can be incorporated into the operational side of a law enforcement agency with dual benefits for investigations and victims.

Recipient: Charlotte Leigh Moerbe, Ph.D., Fort Sam Houston, Texas, for supporting several hundred military members recovering from sexual violence. In 2004, Dr. Moerbe created the Lackland Sexual Assault Prevention and Outreach (SAPO) program which is the largest Air Force sexual assault response and training program. Dr. Moerbe has created and oversees two additional volunteer trainer programs. The SAPO Representative Program includes more than 180 military personnel who provide sexual assault awareness and education for the general population located at Lackland, Texas. A second volunteer pool works primarily with the student population at Lackland.

Crime Victims Fund Award: Recognizes individuals or teams for their outstanding work in pursuing federal criminal offenders and imposing and collecting the criminal fines.

Recipient: Financial Litigation Unit, U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of Texas, Tyler, Texas, for its efforts to maximize fine collections on behalf of the Crime Victims Fund and the restitution payments to victims of crime. The Financial Litigation Unit (FLU) assures defendants meet their responsibilities to victims in restitution cases, by coordinating with prosecutors and investigating agencies to prevent fraudulent asset transfers, or the hiding of assets, by defendants.