



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs

*Office for Victims of Crime*

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Washington, D.C. 20531

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Dear Colleagues and Friends:

The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) is pleased to provide you with the 2006 National Crime Victims' Rights Week Resource Guide. This year's commemoration is scheduled for April 23 to 29, 2006.

This year's theme—"Victims' Rights: Strength in Unity"—pays tribute to crime victims and survivors who, for many decades, have joined together in mutual support and advocacy to promote victims' rights and services. It also recognizes the ongoing efforts of countless victim service providers, justice professionals, and allied professionals and volunteers who selflessly dedicate their lives to helping victims of crime.

OVC's theme—"Putting Victims First"—is highlighted throughout the many components of the Resource Guide. Only when we work *together* to "put victims first" will we be successful in ensuring that *any victim* who needs assistance will receive it, and that *any victim* who needs help in exercising his or her rights will find guidance and support. This means engaging the support from *your entire community*, including justice professionals, civic leaders, interfaith communities, medical and mental health professionals, schools, and business leaders, among others.

Please take time to review this Resource Guide in its entirety so you can ensure maximum use of its many valuable victim and public awareness resources. It is also helpful to coordinate your efforts with crime victims and survivors, victim service providers, and justice and allied professionals in your community and state to commemorate 2006 National Crime Victims' Rights Week and truly promote "strength in unity."

I would also like to invite you to join our wonderful national-level activities to commemorate National Crime Victims' Rights Week in our Nation's capital. The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual National Observance and Candlelight Ceremony will be held on the evening of Thursday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, and the National Crime Victims' Rights Week Awards Ceremony will be held on the afternoon of Friday, April 21<sup>st</sup>. I hope you, your colleagues and the victims you serve can join us for these special events.

The Office for Victims of Crime is grateful to Justice Solutions, Inc. for developing the 2006 Resource Guide, a component of the National Public Awareness and Education Campaign coordinated by Justice Solutions with support from OVC.

The staff of OVC joins me in sending our best wishes to you and your colleagues as you plan and implement your 2006 National Crime Victims' Rights Week activities.

Sincerely,

  
John W. Gillis  
Director