

Ideas for NCVRW Special Events

Each year, communities throughout the country develop a variety of creative ways to commemorate National Crime Victims' Rights Week. From festivals to educational forums, art displays to tree plantings, marches to memorials to media outreach, diverse groups with a variety of experiences, knowledge, and skills create their own traditions to honor, engage, and advocate for victims. In anticipation of National Crime Victims' Rights Week, your organization has the opportunity to reach out to other local groups and coordinate events that honor crime victims and raise awareness of victim issues within the community.

To support these efforts, the Office for Victims of Crime, in conjunction with the National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators, offers funding assistance through its Community Awareness Projects (CAP) initiative. Each year, the awards are selected based on criteria including collaboration, innovation, community impact, media involvement, and experience with victims' issues. As you plan your 2017 activities, use this list of last year's events from communities around the country for inspiration on how to encourage strength, justice, and resilience in your community. (See <http://cap.navaa.org> for more information.)

Advertising Campaigns

- The **Crime Victim Assistance Division, Iowa Attorney General's Office**, in Des Moines exhibited billboards along two interstate highways that focused on victims in marginalized communities.
- The **City of Beatrice** in Nebraska sponsored billboards that included NCVRW artwork and local victim assistance contact information.
- The **North Dakota Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation** in Bismarck, North Dakota, exhibited four billboards regarding information about National Crime Victims' Rights Week.
- The **Korean American Family Service Center** in Flushing, New York, conducted an advertising campaign in English, Korean, Chinese, Spanish, and Arabic. Ads were placed in buses and bus stops, in addition to free Korean magazines.
- The **Mayerson Center for Safe and Healthy Children** in Cincinnati, Ohio, raised awareness about the effects of trauma on children and families, and shared empowering messages using 10 billboards throughout the state. The billboards were designed to be culturally relevant to the communities in which they were displayed.

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- The **Monroe County Community Health Access Committee** in Madisonville, Tennessee, highlighted crime victims' rights across four double-sided billboards in rural communities.

- **Aid to Domestic Abuse Victims (AVDA)** in Houston, Texas, created 15 billboards in different neighborhoods across the city in both English and Spanish.
- **Rural Resource Victim Services** in Colville, Washington, posted four billboards along main roadways to inform drivers of local victim services. They coordinated these efforts with a Facebook campaign.
- **Crisis Center of Magic Valley** in Twin Falls, Idaho, used social media and radio advertisements to spread the word about their “Crime Victims’ Rights Walk.”

Art Events and Musical Performances

- **YWCA of Western Massachusetts** in Springfield invited victims to speak about their experiences and learn to paint about happiness in an art class.
- The **South Carolina Department of Probation, Parole and Pardon Services** in Columbia invited victims and survivors to display their personal artwork, poetry, and essays at information fairs. The pieces were later displayed again in the agency’s offices.
- The **Del Mar College Foundation** in Corpus Christi, Texas, hosted an “Express Past the Pain” art exhibit that displayed students’ and community members’ artwork including photography, posters, videos, sculptures, and essays. These pieces focused on using healthy outlets as a way to express feelings and heal from trauma.
- **Network of Victim Assistance** in Jamison, Pennsylvania, created a “Tree of Hope” mosaic mural with their clients that represented hope and resilience.
- The **Shafer Center for Crisis Intervention** in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, held a live concert and handed out promotional materials about victims’ rights and services to attendees.

NATIONAL SERVICE AWARDS

Each year the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office for Victims of Crime, holds the National Crime Victims’ Service Awards Ceremony to honor individuals or programs whose outstanding work on behalf of crime victims merits the esteem of their colleagues in the victim services and criminal justice fields. The 2017 Awards Ceremony will be held April 7, 2017, in Washington, DC, and streamed live. For details, visit www.ovc.gov/ncvrw.

Award Ceremonies

- The **Iowa Organization for Victim Assistance** in Des Moines presented an award recognizing outstanding work on behalf of crime victims. The ceremony included speeches by victims and survivors regarding their experience and healing process.
- **Sunflower House** in Shawnee, Kansas, combined a recognition ceremony with a resource fair. They offered several promotional items highlighting various community resources.
- The **Family Refuge Center, Inc.**, in Lewisburg, West Virginia, awarded six people a “Beacon of Hope” plaque in a public ceremony, during which a panel of professionals discussed victims’ rights and a survivor spoke about her experience.

Balloons and Pinwheels

- The **City of Fort Myers Police Department** in Florida released 50 white dove peace balloons, created a rock garden dedicated to crime victims and their families, and held a butterfly release ceremony.
- **Silence Is Violence** in New Orleans, Louisiana, released balloons that displayed the names of crime victims and the agency that served them.

- **Child First Advocacy Center** in Rutland, Vermont, displayed one pinwheel for every victim of crime in the county.
- The **City of Detroit Police Department** in Michigan held a balloon release as part of an advocacy and awareness event to combat “No Snitching” street policies, which often hinder police investigations.
- The **Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma** in Perkins hosted an awareness activity with scenarios about how to assist victims and included a balloon release.
- The **Kaw Nation** in Kaw City, Oklahoma, held a walk/run to raise awareness about cultural competency and released balloons in honor of victims of abuse.

Candlelight Vigils

- The **Walker County District Attorney’s Office** in Jasper, Alabama, displayed a PowerPoint honoring victims during a candlelight vigil held in front of a crime victims’ memorial fountain at the county courthouse. Speakers included survivors, victim service providers, and local children’s musical groups.
- **Destined to Win Ministries** in Winterville, North Carolina, organized a candlelight vigil for victims and their families, in addition to a public event featuring a well-known speaker.
- **Restoring Ancestral Winds** in Termonton, Utah, displayed silhouettes of silent witnesses, representing both tribal and non-tribal victims, at a candlelight vigil. Tribal witnesses wore traditional shawls while non-tribal witnesses held shields.
- The **Resource and Crisis Center of Galveston County** in Galveston, Texas, held multiple NCVRW events, including a candlelight vigil, where they displayed banners and handed out victims’ rights bracelets to attendees.

Educational Forums

- The **Crime Victims Assistance Association of Arkansas** in Little Rock held a forum on victim rights and recognition and displayed victims’ rights law posters in public buildings.
- The **Springtime Club** in Clearwater, Florida, demonstrated motivational coping techniques for survivors, including martial arts and self-defense classes, yoga, a Tai Chi demonstration, chair massage therapy, and therapy dogs.
- The **Guam Coalition Against Sexual Assault & Family Violence** in Hagatna held a two-day forum, which included a tabling event and recognition ceremony.
- The **Kentucky Office of the Attorney General** in Frankfort, Kentucky, hosted a speaker on childhood human trafficking and victims’ rights, and announced poster contest winners.
- **Enlace Comunitario** in Albuquerque, New Mexico, hosted a bilingual awareness event that screened a documentary about a domestic violence survivor who became a community leader. There were also several speakers on victims’ rights, in addition to survivors who shared their experiences and poetry.
- **Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc.**, in Fort Thompson, South Dakota, hosted a survivor’s panel on crime statistics, victims’ rights, compensation programs, shelters, and other available resources. The panel included criminal justice officials, advocates, and victims and concluded with an awareness walk.
- The **Passaic County Prosecutor’s Office of Victim Witness Advocacy** in Paterson, New Jersey, discussed domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, child abuse, and juvenile crime in a community forum.

Garden Ceremonies and Tree Displays

- **Victims for Justice** in Anchorage, Alaska, held a tree-planting ceremony downtown to honor victims of violent crimes. They also decorated a tree with ribbons, each color representing a different type of crime.
- The **Riverside County District Attorney's Office** in California hosted a tree-planting ceremony at the new community garden where victims' families decorated memorial leaves for display in the garden.
- The **New York Crime Victims Assistance Task Force** in Saratoga Springs dedicated new rose bushes in the Homicide Victims' Rose Garden. Families whose loved ones were already represented in the garden spoke at the ceremony.
- **Alliance for Victims' Rights** in Reno, Nevada, created a memorial garden to honor victims and their loved ones, where they presented awards, hung a plaque honoring a deserving family, and displayed victim memorial quilts.
- The **North Carolina Victim Assistance Network** in Raleigh held a memorial flower ceremony. The ceremony was opened by the North Carolina Nation Guard Honor Guard and included a youth choir, memorial video, photos of victims, and a speech by a survivor of human trafficking.
- The **City of Jackson** in Mississippi held a safety information fair that included educational presentations on available services and victims' rights.
- **VictimNet** in Independence, Missouri, hosted a resource fair with speakers who shared their journey of healing and self-care practices. They also announced the winners of an awareness Fit Bit Challenge.
- The **Center for the Elimination of Violence in the Family, Inc.**, in Brooklyn, New York, hosted an awareness day rally and fair that targeted Spanish-speaking local residents. The event included presentations by victims, survivors, and advocates.
- The **Norfolk Commonwealth Attorney** in Virginia held a Community Day Resource Fair and five other public outreach events at local libraries where they distributed NCVRW promotional items.
- The **Emergency Support Shelter** in Longview, Washington, organized a Family Carnival with guest speakers, trivia about victims' rights, and "Empowerment Bingo." Attendees were given a "passport" to take to each resource booth to receive a stamp. There was also a photo booth where survivors could share their stories.

Information and Resource Fairs

- The **Mobile County District Attorney's Office** in Alabama brought together victim advocates and criminal justice professionals, victims, and corporate businesses at a community resource fair to raise awareness about victims' rights, services, and crime prevention.
- **Legacy House** in Indianapolis, Indiana, combined a resource fair with a ROCC-a-thon (Reaching Out to Citizens affected by Crime). Victims sat in large rocking chairs together and shared their stories.
- **Townhall 2** in Kent, Ohio, handed out ribbon cards to the public. Volunteers and staff wore NCVRW-themed shirts and awareness ribbons throughout the week in an effort to educate the public about victims' rights.
- **Turning Point** in Marion, Ohio, spread awareness about domestic violence through the Clothesline Project, which included a display of shirts with powerful messages.
- **Mitchell Area Safehouse** in South Dakota organized Clothesline Project and Silent Witness displays at an awareness and safety expo to remember and honor crime victims.

Interactive Displays

- The **Pinal County Attorney's Office, Victim Services** in Florence, Arizona, displayed wooden victim silhouettes at an awareness event as a way to share and recognize their stories.
- The **Ulster County Probation, Crime Victims' Assistance Program** in Kingston, New York, screened *The Hunting Ground* and *Heaven's Rain* followed by discussions about the films. They also displayed NCVRW artwork and artwork created by the LGBTQ community.

Marches and Walk/Run Events

- The **Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians** in Minnesota walked around the tribal pow-wow grounds with a drum group playing traditional songs in memory of crime victims. There were also speakers and information booths at the event.
- The **Eighth Judicial District Attorney's Office** in Fort Collins, Colorado, hosted an NCVRW walk that included speakers, a balloon release, and flags displaying crime and victim services statistics.
- **Mothers United Against Violence** in Hartford, Connecticut, held a march at the state capital and shared informational materials and presentations with attendees. The presentations focused on victims of homicide and assault with a firearm.
- **Network for Victim Recovery of DC** in Washington, DC, organized a Twitter town hall and an NCVRW 5K that included survivors and supporters. Shirts for the event were designed by the winner of a community art contest. The race was lined with local crime victim services posters.
- The **Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians** in Peshawbestown, Michigan, invited participants to dress up as superheroes at their 5K walk and run to show support for victims of crime. A survivor of childhood sexual abuse spoke at the event and awards were given out for the best costumes.

- The **Third Judicial District Attorney's Office** in Las Cruces, New Mexico, held a Walk Expo that included speakers, a memorial video, and promotional items.
- **North Central Victim Services** in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, invited community members, police officers, and students to participate in a victim awareness 5K and kickball game. They also discussed and promoted victims' rights and resources.
- **Day One** in Providence, Rhode Island, raised awareness about sexual assault and services at their 5K event, encouraging students from local schools, ranging from middle school to college, to attend.

Outreach Activities

- Among some of the many organizations that produced outreach materials were **Cherokee Family Violence Center** in Canton, Georgia; **Lake County State's Attorney Office** in Waukegan, Illinois; **Someplace Safe** in Fergus Falls, Minnesota; **Abuse and Rape Crisis Center** in Towanda, Pennsylvania; **Area Agency on Aging 3** in Lima, Ohio; **Wisconsin Victim Witness Professionals** in Alma, Wisconsin; **DeKalb County Solicitor-General's Office** in Decatur, Georgia; **Safe House for Women** in Cape Girardeau, Missouri; and **Advocacy and Resource Center** in Sheridan, Wyoming. In addition:
 - **Ayuda** in Washington, DC, produced brochures in seven languages detailing victim service options.
 - The **Williamsburg Police Department Victim Advocate Division** in Kentucky published a book of short stories written by victims and survivors of all types of crime. Victims and survivors read excerpts at local libraries where the books were available for free.
 - The **New Jersey Department of Corrections** in Trenton created rubber bracelets with the NCVRW logo and distributed them to social services staff members who wore them throughout National Crime Victims' Rights week.

Public Service Announcements

- **Community Advocates for Family and Youth** in Capital Heights, Maryland, displayed in eight local theater complexes short public service announcements that included their contact information.
- **Ethiopian Tewahedo Social Services** in Columbus, Ohio, reached out to immigrant and refugee families through a public service announcement that aired on Africa TV Network.

Youth-Focused Outreach

- **Lassen Family Services, Inc.**, in Susanville, California, hosted a Walk-a-Mile-in-Their-Shoes event for children that included an NCVRW painting contest and a chalk wall for people to write supportive messages for victims of crime.
- The **Arab Community Center for Economic and Social Services** in Dearborn, Massachusetts, hosted a weeklong art event to spread awareness about domestic violence, intimate partner violence, sexual assault, consent, victim blaming, rape culture, and bystander intervention. Youth worked with professional artists, advocates, and survivors to create visual/conceptual art, photography, new media, video, dance, theater/performance art, music, and creative writing.
- The **Utah Office for Victims of Crime** in Salt Lake City asked youth to submit poetry and creative writing, artwork, photography, music, and videography. The winning selection was displayed and shared widely.
- The **Bristol District Attorney's Office** in New Bedford, Massachusetts, created a coloring book for children that illustrated the right to feel safe, loved, and happy and provided informational resources.
- **Against Abuse, Inc.**, in Casa Grande, Arizona, held poster and coloring contests, along with other activities for children.
- The **Community Organization for Victim Assistance** in Pueblo, Colorado, invited local youth to listen to speakers about the effects of crime, what happens when someone becomes a victim, dating violence, and bullying.
- The **Chattahoochee Circuit Victim-Witness Assistance Program** in Columbus, Georgia, performed "Safety Day" presentations at 17 high schools. Program staff spoke about the dangers of distracted driving.
- The **New Kent/Charles City Victim Witness Program** in Virginia created materials, including a "Going to Court" coloring book that was distributed in several county courthouses. ★