

The 1984 Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) authorizes OVC to administer two major formula grants that support state crime victim compensation and assistance programs—the mainstays of support for victims throughout the Nation. Although victim compensation and assistance services funded through VOCA vary by location and need, the common element is extending effective outreach and support to individuals and families who have suffered physical, sexual, emotional, and financial harm as a result of a crime.



Services to Crime Victims

Putting Victims First

VOCA VICTIM

Compensation

CHAPTER 4

Funds authorized by VOCA and administered by OVC support victim compensation programs in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. In the FY 2007–08 reporting period, VOCA state compensation payments totaled \$863,266,811 (figure 4).

Victims of assault, homicide, child abuse (including sexual and physical abuse), and robbery accounted for the majority of victims whose crime-related expenses were reimbursed by the state programs. Victims of domestic violence accounted for nearly 30 percent of the total assault and homicide victim claims reimbursed, as well as nearly 50 percent of the stalking claims reimbursed. Costs related to medical and dental care constituted nearly 50 percent of the total expenses reimbursed, followed by costs associated with funeral and burial, and economic and mental health support.

While VOCA victim assistance helps crime victims cope with the physical, emotional, and criminal justice issues associated with a crime, VOCA victim compensation helps victims cope with the resulting financial losses. VOCA compensation grants supplement a state's efforts to provide financial assistance and reimbursement to victims, most frequently for medical and dental care in the aftermath of a violent assault.

State victim compensation programs are payers of last resort, reimbursing victims for qualified crime-related expenses when other resources, such as private insurance, Social Security, and Medicaid, will not cover the losses. Although each state compensation program is administered independently, most programs have similar eligibility requirements and offer comparable types of benefits. The average payout per claim is approximately \$3,000.

Some expenses, including theft, damage, and property loss, are not covered by most states. In FYs 2007 and 2008, many state programs continued to face the challenge of finding sufficient funding to reimburse crime victims who requested compensation for services, as the number of claims grew in the face of reduced



The funds have allowed the Alaska compensation program to reach into the smallest and most remote of Alaska's village communities to serve innocent victims and their families . . . who would have, otherwise, not been served.

—Project Director, Alaska Violent Crimes Compensation Board

revenue sources. A combined total of \$863,266,811 was paid to victims from federal and state revenues during this reporting period. This was an increase from the total payouts to victims during the previous biennium (the previous biennium total was \$838 million).

VOCA Compensation at Work

When a crime occurs, a victim must first file a report with law enforcement. The victim or vendor rendering the service may file a claim with the state compensation program accompanied by the

Figure 4. Number and Amount of Victim Compensation Claims Paid in FY 2007 and FY 2008, by Type of Crime

Crime Category	Total Number of Paid Claims (FY 07 + FY 08)	Claims Related to Domestic Violence (FY 07 + FY 08)	Total Amount Paid (in \$) (FY 07 + FY 08)
Assault	69,642 + 73,748 Total: 143,390	23,524 + 25,818 Total: 49,342	256,204,846 + 251,257,361 Total: \$507,462,207
Homicide	15,861 + 16,509 Total: 32,370	1,301 + 1,250 Total: 2,551	74,123,721 + 75,931,186 Total: \$150,054,907
Sexual assault	11,155 + 12,352 Total: 23,507	784 + 757 Total: 1,541	12,585,598 + 14,072,276 Total: \$26,657,874
Child abuse (including physical and sexual)	26,567 + 28,785 Total: 55,352	-----	26,053,625 + 27,213,552 Total: \$53,267,177
DWI/DUI and other vehicular crimes	6,926 + 6,912 Total: 13,838	-----	33,963,015 + 35,118,924 Total: \$69,081,939
Stalking	575 + 845 Total: 1,420	258 + 329 Total: 587	932,549 + 1,188,040 Total: \$2,120,589
Robbery	7,977 + 8,941 Total: 16,918	88 + 107 Total: 195	18,155,329 + 19,327,733 Total: \$37,483,062
Terrorism	386 + 253 Total: 639	-----	1,523,212 + 921,978 Total: \$2,445,190
Kidnaping	467 + 571 Total: 1,038	113 + 161 Total: 274	863,483 + 921,501 Total: \$1,784,984
Arson	214 + 201 Total: 415	35 + 27 Total: 62	409,113 + 349,880 Total: \$758,993
Other	3,444 + 2,526 Total: 5,970	1,341 + 1,235 Total: 2,576	6,547,735 + 5,602,154 Total: \$12,149,889
Total	143,214 + 151,643 Total: 294,857	27,444 + 29,684 Total: 57,128	431,362,226 + 431,904,585 Total: \$863,266,811

required supporting documentation established by each state. Either the victim or the vendor is reimbursed if the claim is approved.

At a minimum, VOCA requires all states to offer reimbursement to victims for expenses related to medical and dental care, counseling, funeral and burial services, and lost wages. Compensation programs may also reimburse victims for other types of crime-related expenses, such as travel, temporary lodging, crime scene cleanup, and dependent care. The maximum award available to crime victims depends on each state's guidelines.

States receive VOCA funding for victim compensation programs separately from the VOCA funds they receive for assistance (see appendix B). Each state compensation program receives an annual VOCA grant from OVC equal to 60 percent of its state-funded compensation benefits paid during the federal fiscal year 2 years prior to the year of the federal grant. The result is a natural ebb and flow of VOCA funding levels as amounts rise and fall following years of greater and lesser state-paid benefits.

As one would expect given the prevalence of assault claims, the services most commonly reimbursed were medical and dental care (figure 5). Of the \$507,462,207 paid to victims of assault (figure 4), \$467,977,944 was for medical and dental expenses (figure 5). This is more than half of the approved compensation payments for *all* victims. Economic support—including compensation for lost wages—was the second most common form of reimbursement for all crime victim categories, at \$150,428,708. Funeral and burial expenses were third, at \$103,911,551. These figures are consistent with those of the previous reporting period, FYs 2005 and 2006, in which the same categories received the majority of compensation benefits.

State performance reports specify not only the number of claims paid to each category of crime, but also how many of these claims involved domestic violence. This victimization was a factor in 41 percent of claims related to stalking, as well as 34 percent of assault-related claims. Domestic

Figure 5. State Compensation Program Benefits Paid in FYs 2007 and 2008, by Type of Expense

Expense Category	Total (in \$) (FY 07 + FY 08)	Percentage
Medical and dental	228,766,625 + 239,211,319 Total: \$467,977,944	51 (51.22)
Economic support	76,263,838 + 74,164,870 Total: \$150,428,708	16 (16.47)
Funeral and burial	51,389,570 + 52,521,981 Total: \$103,911,551	11 (11.37)
Mental health	36,781,634 + 38,504,140 Total: \$75,285,774	8 (8.24)
Forensic sexual assault exams	22,902,417 + 29,812,559 Total: \$52,714,976	6 (5.77)
Crime scene cleanup	276,056 + 289,373 Total: \$565,429	1 (.10)
Other	36,574,377 + 26,150,722 Total: \$62,725,099	7 (6.87)
Total	452,954,517 + 460,654,964 \$913,609,481	100

... although I lost almost all that I had, [your organization] helped with bills that would have buried me. Thank you so very much.

—A crime victim's letter to the Oregon Department of Justice,
Crime Victims Compensation Program

violence also was linked to a noticeable number of kidnaping claims (26 percent) and sexual assault claims (almost 7 percent). In addition, the crime was related to approximately 8 percent of all claims paid to survivors of homicide victims and arson. Overall, domestic violence was a factor in nearly 19 percent of all compensation claims paid in the biennium, which is consistent with victim services statistics discussed in the VOCA Victim Assistance section of this report.

Compensation Is More Widely Available, With Higher Payouts

Annual performance reports for the VOCA compensation funding program continued to show that states most often use the money to make compensation available to a larger number of victims, and to provide more types of benefits for which victims may be reimbursed. Like VOCA assistance funding, VOCA compensation funding significantly expands the benefits that states

are able to offer. VOCA compensation funding represents 37 percent of total payments to victims annually.

Florida's VOCA administrator reported that "VOCA remains a stabilizing factor in funding victim compensation benefits for victims of crime." In fact, because of the availability of VOCA funds, Florida reported that state leaders are more supportive of enhancements to the state's compensation program. Montana reported that the 60-percent match in federal VOCA funds continues to be a tremendous help in meeting rising medical costs and in offsetting cuts in other social programs.

Each state must submit an annual performance report identifying if and how it used a specific portion of its VOCA funding (not to exceed 5 percent of the total grant award) for administrative and training purposes. Most of the 36 jurisdictions that used funds in FY 2007 for administrative purposes did so to pay for personnel to process compensation claims; to rent space to house the program; for office supplies and printing and dissemination of public awareness materials; for professional training for staff; and for other operational costs. Similar uses were reported for FY 2008.

Hawaii reported that it used money to fund a position for fast-tracking claims for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Kansas reported that it used funds, in part, to support a full-time position devoted to recovering restitution that offenders owed the program. Puerto Rico



used these funds to develop “an educational DVD to reach out to victims and claimants island-wide who are not aware of our services.” Minnesota reported that these funds “enabled our program to provide high-quality services to meet the needs of victims of violent crime” and that “without VOCA administrative funds, payments to victims would take considerably longer and customer service would suffer.”

Many states used their funds so staff could attend the National VOCA Victim Compensation Training Conference, an annual event geared toward addressing the needs of compensation program executives and their staff.

States also used these funds to update their claims processing systems to pay compensation claims more efficiently. Some states even instituted paperless internal computer systems to streamline this processing.

VOCA Makes a Difference, Victim by Victim

In their state performance reports, some VOCA administrators calculated the difference that VOCA funds made in the number of victims served. Connecticut reported that VOCA funding accounted for 32 percent of the total funds used to pay compensation to crime victims, and that without these VOCA funds, annual payments to crime victims would be significantly reduced. The District of Columbia reported that in FY 2007, VOCA funds allowed its program to assist a greater number of crime victims. Specifically, the program increased its payments by 7 percent over FY 2006. Minnesota reported that because of federal funding its program was able to provide critical financial assistance to more than 1,500 victims of violent crime.



VOCA VICTIM

Assistance

CHAPTER 5

In FYs 2007 and 2008, 7,896,716 victims received state VOCA-funded assistance, with victims of domestic violence accounting for 46 percent of those served (figure 6). In this reporting period, \$379,060,663² was subawarded by states to provide services to crime victims.

The VOCA funds administered by OVC support thousands of assistance programs throughout the Nation, all sharing the same goal: to help victims of crime rebuild their shattered lives. Victim assistance funding—awarded through subgrants to state agencies and local service providers—is the most far-reaching and visible demonstration of OVC’s commitment to providing crisis intervention, counseling and social service support, and criminal justice advocacy to those in urgent need of assistance.

The growth of VOCA state assistance allocations over the years is a dramatic indicator of the overall expansion of programs that serve crime victims. In FY 1986, the first year of the program’s operations, federal VOCA allocations for victim assistance services totaled \$41 million. More than 20 years later, in FY 2007, funding for victim assistance totaled more than \$370 million (figure 1).

In FYs 2007 and 2008, more than 7.8 million victims received VOCA-funded assistance channeled through more than 4,000 agencies. Approximately 5.2 million victims found information and referrals by telephone. An additional 4.7 million benefited from criminal justice support and advocacy (figure 7). Victims of domestic violence, who number more than 3.6 million, accounted for almost half of the victims served in the biennial reporting period (figure 6).

Serving Victims Directly

The direct services funded by VOCA include crisis counseling, telephone and on-site information and referrals, criminal justice support and advocacy, emergency shelter, and therapy. In addition to these services, funds may be used to develop new programs to address emerging needs and gaps in service. In FYs 2007 and

²Based on data from Subgrant Award Reports as of April 7, 2009, which grantees must submit to the state VOCA administrator: \$247,737,603 (FY 07) + \$131,323,060 (FY 08).

Everyone at the center reminds us that there are still 'good' people in the world.

—Parents of Alabama victims

2008, OVC allocated almost \$680 million (appendix A) for victim assistance to—

Respond to the emotional and physical needs of victims. Virtually all states use their funds to provide a range of services, such as operating domestic violence shelters where battered women and children can find refuge and security.

Help victims and their families stabilize their lives after victimization. Funds routinely pay for

referrals and counseling for family members who are so overwhelmed by a loved one's victimization that they are unable to meet their regular responsibilities as a spouse, parent, or caretaker.

Help victims and their families understand, and participate in, the criminal justice system. Funds help pay the salaries of trained advocates who explain the legal process to victims and accompany them to trials and other legal

Figure 6. Victims Served by VOCA Assistance Programs in FYs 2007 and 2008, by Type of Victimization

Victim Categories	Number of Victims Served (FY 2007 + FY 2008)	Percentage of Total Victims
Domestic violence	1,859,912 + 1,792,481 Total = 3,652,393	46 (46.25)
Child sexual abuse	406,820 + 390,225 Total = 797,045	10 (10.10)
Assault	313,847 + 300,667 Total = 614,514	8 (7.78)
Adult sexual assault	237,047 + 224,374 Total = 461,421	6 (5.84)
Robbery	179,216 + 176,446 Total = 355,662	5 (4.50)
Child physical abuse	182,298 + 160,484 Total = 342,782	4 (4.34)
Survivors of homicide victims	115,813 + 106,276 Total = 222,089	3 (2.81)
Adults molested as children	92,946 + 89,188 Total = 182,134	2 (2.31)
DUI/DWI crashes	85,326 + 82,143 Total = 167,469	2 (2.12)
Elder abuse	69,782 + 57,644 Total = 127,426	2 (1.61)
Other	573,641 + 400,140 Total = 973,781	12 (12.33)
Total	4,116,648 + 3,780,068 Total = 7,896,716	100

proceedings. Advocates also help victims prepare impact statements and ensure that their rights are respected throughout the justice process.

Provide victims with a measure of safety and security. Local agencies often use VOCA assistance to replace or repair broken locks and windows on victims' homes so they will feel less vulnerable to repeated crime.

Distributing the Funds

All 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 5 territories received VOCA victim assistance funding in this reporting period (see appendix A for state and territory allocations). Allocations are determined using a \$500,000 base amount (except in the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and American Samoa, where the base is \$200,000) plus a formula amount tied to population. States and territories award subgrants to service providers in the following categories:

- Criminal justice agencies within the government, including law enforcement, prosecution, and corrections agencies; courts; probation offices; and others.
- Noncriminal justice agencies within the government, including social services, hospitals, mental health agencies, public housing offices, and others.
- Private nonprofit organizations, including rape crisis centers, shelters, mental health organizations, religious organizations, hospitals, and others.
- American Indian tribes or organizations, including on-reservation and off-reservation providers.

Funding for the reporting period supported 33,741,669 specific services to 7,896,716 victims of crime (figure 8). Many individuals need more than one type of assistance in the aftermath of victimization. Victims who have lost a loved one to homicide, for example, may receive crisis counseling; assistance in seeking compensation benefits to cover crime-related expenses, such as

funeral and burial costs; and other types of support to help them heal. In FYs 2007 and 2008, each victim received an average of 4.25 services (figure 8), according to state-provided statistics.

During FYs 2007 and 2008, more than 5 million people sought information and referrals by telephone in the aftermath of their victimization, making the phone a critical resource for identifying other available sources of assistance (see figure 7). OVC's Online Directory of Crime Victim Services, easily accessible via the agency's Web site, was another important source of information about available services, with nearly 180,000 visits recorded during FYs 2007 and 2008.

In addition to the help found through phoned-in requests for information and referrals, 4,719,179 victims who sought assistance benefited from criminal justice support and advocacy services; 4,346,867 received onsite information and referral services and followup assistance; and 3,140,333 received crisis counseling (figure 7). These are also the services most frequently delivered in the previous reporting period, which demonstrates the continuing need for them. The small percentage of victims who sought emergency financial assistance is an indicator of the important role the state crime victim compensation programs play in meeting the emergency financial needs of victims, as well as the states' increased capacity to process claims efficiently.

The 3,652,393 domestic violence victims served by VOCA-funded programs in FYs 2007 and 2008 account for close to half (46 percent) of all victims served by VOCA-funded programs (figure 6). Domestic violence has been the most common crime for which victims seek assistance in virtually every reporting period for two decades. In recognition of the urgent need for services, the most frequently occurring crimes—domestic violence, child abuse, and sexual assault—are considered priority categories under the formula that states are required by statute to use in allocating VOCA assistance funding to providers.

*By the grace of God I found Sheltering Wings and
you have made me feel sane and hopeful!*

—Victim in Indiana

Focusing on Priority Needs

Each state is required to allocate a minimum of 10 percent of its VOCA assistance funds to serving victims in each of the three priority categories: domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse.

Another 10 percent must be dedicated to historically underserved victims of crime within the state. States are allowed broad discretion in determining which groups fall into this category, but they typically include family members of homicide victims, adults molested as children, and victims of drunk

Figure 7. Services Delivered to Victims by VOCA Assistance Programs in FYs 2007 and 2008, by Type of Assistance

Type of Assistance	Number of Victims Receiving This Service (FY 2007 + FY 2008)
Telephone information and referral	2,581,580 + 2,705,060 Total = 5,286,640
Criminal justice support and advocacy	2,265,875 + 2,453,304 Total = 4,719,179
Onsite information and referral	2,108,086 + 2,238,781 Total = 4,346,867
Followup	2,338,157 + 2,532,065 Total = 4,870,222
Crisis counseling	1,525,578 + 1,614,755 Total = 3,140,333
Personal advocacy	1,588,356 + 1,814,954 Total = 3,403,310
Help filing compensation claims	870,983 + 871,036 Total = 1,742,019
Shelter or safe house stay	429,397 + 337,447 Total = 766,844
Group treatment and support	499,934 + 523,126 Total = 1,023,060
Emergency legal advocacy	464,574 + 468,747 Total = 933,321
Therapy	302,898 + 423,101 Total = 725,999
Emergency financial assistance	287,489 + 317,864 Total = 605,353
Other	1,374,909 + 803,643 Total = 2,178,552
Total services delivered to victims	16,637,816 + 17,103,883 Total = 33,741,699

Figure 8. VOCA Assistance Program Nationwide Performance Indicators

Annual Performance Indicator	FY 2007	FY 2008
Agencies funded	4,201	4,358
Subgrants funded	5,171	5,287
Victims served	4,116,648	3,780,068
Specific services to victims	16,637,816	17,103,883
Average number of services per victim	4.0	4.5

drivers, physical assault, elder abuse, robbery, and kidnaping. Each state allocates the remaining 60 percent of its funds as it believes will be most beneficial to its crime victims.

Although OVC maintains minimum allocation requirements for priority areas, the actual needs of victims dictate that states far exceed that minimum. Of the \$379,060,663³ in VOCA moneys used to fund projects for both priority and underserved categories of crime victims, \$296,330,629⁴ was used to deliver services in priority categories during the FY 2007–08 reporting period (figure 9). In fact, state subgrantees used 78 percent of their total VOCA assistance funds to aid victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse—far more than the mandated 30 percent.

Priority Program Innovations

VOCA funds are directed toward projects that address needs in individual communities and regions. The priorities evolve as some needs are met, as data from states reveal new trends in victimization, and as service providers in the field propose more innovative programs.

A Northeast Missouri program reached out to clients where they lived, rather than requiring them to drive to the local domestic violence

shelter (some 75 miles away) for services. Outreach offices in three locations provided transportation; criminal justice, civil justice, and medical advocacy; crisis intervention; and case management to a large number of domestic violence and sexual assault victims. The majority of those served reported that they did not need to go to a shelter and wanted to stay in the community where they lived.

In Louisiana, one program implemented protocols involving creative accommodations for clients with various disabilities, including the use of art and play therapy techniques. Another agency provided in-home direct services as part of its victim outreach program to those confined to their homes. The agency accommodated the special needs of crime victims to help avoid various barriers to accessing services, by providing



³Based on data from Subgrant Award Reports as of April 7, 2009, which grantees must submit to the state VOCA administrator: \$247,737,603 (FY 07) + \$131,323,060 (FY 08).

⁴Based on data from Subgrant Award Reports as of April 7, 2009, which grantees must submit to the state VOCA administrator: \$191,399,371 (FY 07) + \$104,931,258 (FY 08).

*The people in the [Survivors of Murder] Group . . .
are my greatest support even more than my family.*

—Parent of Delaware victim

transportation or outreach to those homebound, ill, or critically injured as a result of their victimization.

A sexual assault program in Arizona provided training on sexual violence to that state's American Indian tribes. The goal of the training

was to educate youth and youth service providers about the facts and myths pertaining to sexual assault, including strategies for intervention and ways to offer compassionate assistance to victims. The success of this training opened the door for the program to provide additional trainings to tribes on other topics.

Figure 9. VOCA Assistance Allocations for Priority and Underserved Areas*


Service Area	FY 2007 (in \$)	FY 2008 (in \$)
Priority Areas		
Domestic violence	91,631,372	47,826,061
Child abuse	54,721,111	32,701,814
Sexual assault	45,046,888	24,403,383
Total priority services	191,399,371	104,931,258
Underserved Victim Areas		
Assault	9,525,403	4,057,538
Survivors of homicide victims	7,520,217	3,578,853
Elder abuse	7,105,203	3,541,298
Adults molested as children	6,392,840	2,694,717
DUI/DWI crashes	5,601,299	1,939,644
Robbery	4,387,615	1,831,342
Other violent crimes	15,805,655	8,748,410
Total underserved services	56,338,232	26,391,802
Overall total services	247,737,603	131,323,060

* This data is fluid based on the allocation financial information OVC receives from state VOCA administrators on a continuing basis via OVC's online Subgrant Award Report module in the Grants Management System. In addition, the FY 2008 VOCA victim assistance grants were awarded in July/August 2008 and many states have not yet provided their subgrant award allocations to OVC.

INDIAN

Country

CHAPTER 6



The disturbingly high rate of victimization in tribal communities and villages requires OVC's continuing focus on the development of victim assistance programs in Indian Country. The American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) population experiences violence at more than twice the rate of the rest of the Nation.⁵ The poverty, isolation, lack of victim services, and high crime rates affecting many AI/AN communities make this underserved population a high priority. OVC is committed to enhancing direct services to these crime victims and providing training and technical assistance for their service providers that is culturally relevant.

Strong intergovernmental relationships are paramount to supporting tribal programs in Indian Country. Tribal governments work closely with state and federal agencies to ensure a continuum of support for crime victims. OVC provides funding that is specifically designed to meet the needs of these underserved communities by strengthening collaboration, enhancing direct services, and invoking systematic improvements, including the following:

- The **Children's Justice Act Partnerships for Indian Communities Grant (CJA) Program**, supported by the Crime Victims Fund, provides funding to assist AI/AN communities in developing, establishing, and operating programs to improve the investigation, prosecution, and overall handling of cases of child abuse, child sexual abuse, and severe physical abuse in a manner that increases support for and lessens additional trauma to the child victim. The funding further supports the development and implementation of comprehensive programs for abused children, and child-sensitive policies and procedures to address child abuse cases in tribal courts and child protection service systems.
- The **Counseling and Faith-Based Services for Crime Victims in Indian Country Grant Program** received OVC's continued support in FYs 2007 and 2008. The initiative links faith-based organizations, spiritual leaders, and traditional healers with victim service programs in AI/AN communities. Like similar non-AI/AN initiatives supported by OVC, this one helps both the

⁵Perry, S., December 2004, *American Indians and Crime: A BJS Statistical Profile, 1992–2002*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, NCJ 203097.

victim service and faith communities to understand the type of support that victims seek from each group. It also reinforces the concept that by strengthening collaboration between both communities, they can ensure a continuity of support for crime victims.

- **Tribal Victim Assistance Discretionary Grant Program** funds are used to develop culturally appropriate training curricula; facilitate mentoring, communication, and information sharing among TVA programs; and otherwise improve the quality of services for victims in remote tribal communities.

CJA Focuses on Child Victims

CJA helps grantees provide child-centered, multi-disciplinary services that share tribal, federal, and state resources. These specialized services aim to minimize trauma through sensitive investigative and judicial practices, tailoring standard procedures to better respond to the special needs and abilities of child victims.

The Children's Justice and Assistance Act of 1986 was enacted to provide states with funding to establish programs to effectively handle child abuse cases. In 1988, the Anti-Drug Abuse Act amended the 1984 Victims of Crime Act, authorizing the use of a portion of the state CJA funds

to help tribal communities develop and establish programs to improve their investigation and prosecution of child abuse cases, particularly cases of child sexual abuse. Since 1989, OVC has provided funding for approximately 255 individual grants to tribes and nonprofit tribal agencies through the CJA grant program. As a consequence, these tribal programs have made a number of systemic improvements in how they handle child abuse cases, including the following:

- Established child assessment centers and supported Child Advocacy Centers in tribal communities.
- Provided training to forensic interviewers.
- Established, expanded, and trained multi-disciplinary teams and child protection teams.
- Revised tribal codes and procedures to address child sexual abuse.
- Provided child advocacy services for children involved in court proceedings.
- Created protocols for reporting, investigating, and prosecuting cases of child sexual abuse.
- Developed working agreements that minimize the number of times a child is interviewed.
- Enhanced case management and treatment services.
- Offered specialized training for prosecutors, judges, investigators, tribal leaders, and other professionals who handle child sexual abuse cases.
- Created special child-centered interview rooms.
- Hired specialized staff to handle child abuse victim cases.

Administration of CJA Funds

The CJA grant program makes approximately \$3 million available annually to tribes and nonprofit tribal agencies to support this effort. Each program cycle is 3 years. The first year of award is the competitive announcement; two additional years of continuation support are provided to grantees that



Let us put our minds together and see what a difference we can make for our children.

—Chief Sitting Bull

have a demonstrated ability to implement their projects. In FY 2007, OVC provided more than \$2.2 million in continuation funding to 13 tribes and tribal organizations. In FY 2008, OVC awarded these organizations \$2 million in continuation funds. (A complete list of grantees and award amounts appears in appendix D.)

CJA funding is responsible for numerous improvements in services, including enhanced coordination among U.S. Attorneys' Offices, the FBI, and other federal and tribal agencies; an increase in the number of child protection teams; more culturally relevant services; and an increase in staff trained to handle child abuse cases. These grants support the program's overall goal—assisting AI/AN communities with developing, establishing, and operating programs that improve the investigation, prosecution, and overall handling of cases of child abuse, child sexual abuse, and severe physical abuse in a manner that increases support for, and lessens trauma to, the child victim. In addition, \$17 million of CJA funds go to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and are distributed through formula grants to the states.

CJA Partners Bring Tribal Communities Training and Technical Assistance

Comprehensive training and technical assistance is crucial to implementing the CJA grant program. Through the CJA Training and Technical Assistance Grant, OVC provides funding to ensure that tribal communities receive culturally appropriate training. The funds awarded through this program provide support, training, and technical assistance that help tribes improve their program implementation.

OVC believes it is crucial that training and technical assistance be developed and delivered by vendors with experience and expertise in supporting AI/AN communities. The Tribal Law and Policy Institute provides training and technical assistance support to the CJA grantees. In FY 2007, OVC awarded the institute \$500,000 to provide this support to 12 CJA grantees, and in FY 2008, the institute received an additional \$500,000 from OVC for this purpose.

A CJA Success Story: Nitaput Child Advocacy Center

The Nitaput Child Advocacy Center was established by the Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation to improve the investigation and prosecution of child abuse cases. The corporation began receiving its 3-year, \$250,000 Children's Justice Act grant in FY 2006 (the final \$250,000 was awarded in FY 2008). The tribe used the funding to pursue a number of goals, including improving the multidisciplinary response to reports of child abuse in Nitaput regions, and expanding the center's services to provide specialized crisis and treatment services to help child victims recover from the trauma of child abuse and for their nonoffending family members.

The tribe continues to seek training and technical assistance to train law enforcement on how to investigate cases of child sexual abuse, as well as to train members of the multidisciplinary team in specialized forensic interview techniques. Forensic interviews are crucial to investigating and prosecuting child sexual abuse cases, and having multidisciplinary team members trained in how to conduct forensic interviews further supports the Nitaput Child Advocacy Center in its efforts to effectively investigate these cases.

Training and technical assistance activities can include the development of resource materials, individual consultation, problem solving, and onsite assistance. Some of the accomplishments during FYs 2007 and 2008 include—

- Developing the *Pathways to Hope* video to bring awareness to the issue of sexual abuse in Indian Country.
- Facilitating the development of the *CJA Emerging Issues* report, which highlights the emerging issues related to the investigation, prosecution, and case management of child sexual abuse cases.
- Developing *Practice Skills for Tribal Court Child Abuse Prosecutors*, a training curriculum that will offer an internal protocol for use by tribal prosecutors, who play an important role in securing safety and justice for American Indian survivors of sexual abuse.
- Developing a *Resource Booklet for Tribal Child Victim Advocates and Community Helpers* to help victim advocates provide support services to tribal children who are victims of crime.
- Improving the forensic interviewing and child sexual abuse investigation skills of law enforcement, prosecutors, and investigators, with better collaboration among agencies.
- Increasing understanding and cooperation among non-AI/AN groups that work with tribal children, especially regarding the role and importance of tribal child advocates in the federal court system.
- Increasing the tribes' commitment to initiatives that would continue the efforts of the CJA grant-funded project after the funding period ends, as well as increasing tribal leaders' and elders' willingness to address child victimization.



Faith-Based Program Expands Counseling Capacity

FY 2004 grantees received final year continuation funding in FY 2007 from OVC's Counseling and Faith-Based Services for Crime Victims in Indian Country Grant Program. In FY 2008, a competitive announcement resulted in the award of \$525,000 to seven new award recipients. Unified Solutions Coaching and Consulting Group, Inc., provides the training and technical assistance for these recipients. (A complete list of grantees and award amounts appears in appendix E.)

Unified Solutions helps victim service providers in tribal communities to collaborate with traditional healing practitioners and other faith-based counselors to effectively address the specific needs of tribal crime victims. Through a faith-based online resource forum, onsite visits, distance learning, and collaborative agreements, Unified Solutions delivers culturally relevant training and technical assistance to tribal communities, including—

- The *Counseling and Faith-Based Services in Indian Country Training Curriculum*.
- A video that highlights the best practices of various faith-based programs.
- The annual Resource Forum, which provides training and capacity building for tribal communities collaborating with both faith-based and other victim service providers.

Tribal Victim Assistance Program Supports Innovation

The TVA Discretionary Grant Program provides support for AI/AN communities to plan and implement innovative strategies that—

- Help these communities to better identify what their crime victims need and the types of victimization on which to focus.
- Provide direct services to victims of crime.
- Address the needs of unserved and underserved victims, particularly those who have experienced child abuse, homicide, elder abuse, and gang violence, and survivors of incidents involving individuals driving while intoxicated (DWI).

TVA projects must conform to VOCA program guidelines. Their services may include, but are not limited to—

- Responding to the emotional and physical needs (excluding medical care) of crime victims.
- Providing mental health assistance, such as counseling, group treatment, support groups, and therapy.
- Offering advocacy on behalf of crime victims, including accompaniment to criminal justice offices and court, transportation to court, child care so a victim may attend court, restitution advocacy, and assistance with victim impact statements.
- Providing services that give crime victims an immediate measure of safety.
- Making forensic medical examinations available for sexual assault victims (if other funding sources are not available).
- Helping with expenses essential to providing direct services, such as prorated costs for rent, telephone service, transportation for victims, and local travel for direct service providers.

Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches—Partnerships Increase Services

The Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches' Division of Indian Work received its first Counseling and Faith-Based Services for Crime Victims in Indian Country Program award in FY 2004. In FY 2007, the grantee received \$34,341 to increase culturally relevant services to crime victims by linking faith-based organizations, spiritual leaders, and traditional healers with victim service programs in the Minneapolis American Indian community. The council also received an FY 2008 award of \$52,740. They used the funding to pursue a number of goals, including (1) using the *Faith-Based Curriculum* to train local native-victim servicing agencies; (2) establishing a collaboration of 13 organizations and agencies, including the FBI and state VOCA office; (3) instituting a referral process between victim service agencies and the council's spiritual healers to ensure continuity in victim counseling; (4) establishing outreach services to clients and to the urban Little Earth Reservation Community in Minneapolis; and (5) creating a network of counselors, including native traditional counselors and Methodist and Lutheran church representatives.

- Supplementing expenses related to personnel who serve victims directly, including salaries and fringe benefits.
- Training for law enforcement personnel in delivering services to victims of federal crime.
- Promoting the community's coordinated efforts to aid crime victims.
- Helping victims to apply for crime victim compensation benefits.
- Preparing, publishing, and distributing materials that explain the services offered to victims of crime.

Following are several TVA projects that have provided exemplary services:

The Warm Springs Victims of Crime Services Department (Confederated Tribes of the Warm

Springs Reservation, Oregon) provides services to victims of person-to-person crime, including domestic violence, nondomestic violence assault and harassment (including teen dating violence), DWI, sexual assault, elder abuse, child abuse, homicide, gang violence, and restraining order violations.

In 2006, department staff provided 3,387 victim services and recorded another 3,841 in 2007. The department's advocates and staff quickly respond to crime victims in crisis on the reservation and provide appropriate followup, emotional support, and select services. To better support the program, the tribe has increased tribal council involvement; conducted Youth Sexual Abuse Awareness training; ensured that weekly crime victim support group meetings are available; developed and disseminated special recovery kits featuring information about services available for victims of various crimes such as elder abuse, sexual assault, and domestic violence; and provided special training venues as part of Sexual Assault Awareness Month (April) and the annual Northwest Indian Youth Conference.

The **Choctaw Nation Victim Assistance Program** provides comprehensive support services for American Indian victims of crime residing within the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma. These services include intervention; accompaniment to hospitals for medical examinations; emergency food, clothing, transportation, and shelter; emergency legal assistance; and other emergency services. The program also serves victims of crime through advocacy by accompanying them to criminal justice offices and court; providing transportation to court; providing child care so a victim may attend court; and assisting with victim impact statements and forensic medical examinations.

Recent accomplishments include providing 2,366 services to crime victims; distributing more than 20,000 printed items, including brochures, fliers, cards, and educational and informational materials; conducting 73 training workshops for the community; arranging for staff members to receive 884 hours of professional training; establishing a memorandum of understanding with the Oklahoma Department of Human Services' Adult

Tribal Victim Assistance Funds at Work

During 2007 and 2008, OVC increased TVA funding to more than \$3.5 million; awarded 30 TVA projects to AI/AN communities and related organizations; conducted national and regional trainings that reached out to more than 1,100 tribal victim service providers; and provided individually crafted onsite training and technical assistance services with TVA project directors, staff, and tribal leaders who represented the following 17 tribal communities.

- Bay Mills Indian Community, Michigan
- Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma
- Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians, Wisconsin
- Maniilaq Association, Alaska
- Modoc Tribe of Oklahoma
- Native Village of Barrow, Alaska
- Northwoods Coalition for Battered Women, Minnesota
- Northern Arapaho Tribe, Wyoming
- Pit River Tribe, California
- Pascua Yaqui Tribe, Arizona
- Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, Kansas
- Samish Indian Nation, Washington
- Shingle Springs Rancheria, California
- Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe, Washington
- Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate of the Lake Reservation, Oregon
- Tewa Women United, New Mexico
- United Keetoowah Band of Cherokee Indians, Oklahoma

*See appendix C for TVA allocation by state.

Protective Services Unit; and participating in the Community Coalitions' Oklahoma March Against Meth Month.

Tewa Women United, New Mexico, is an organization that provides a safe space for American Indian victims of physical, sexual, and emotional violence in tribal communities and helps to uncover the power, strength, and skills they possess so they may become positive forces for change in their families and communities. The V.O.I.C.E.S. initiative (Valuing Our Integrity with Courage, Empowerment & Support) provides an array of culturally appropriate healing modalities, including traditional forms of healing, herbs, medicines, and food coordinated together in a holistic approach to aid both youth and adult victims of sexual assault, child sexual abuse, child abuse, domestic violence, elder abuse, homicide, and DWI.

Recent accomplishments include (1) providing upwards of 100 hours of family advocacy support to children and adults participating in forensic interviews; (2) conducting 72 youth-related support sessions at the Santa Fe Indian School; (3) holding 5 grief support groups at the Santa Clara Senior Center, along with 12 ongoing grief counseling sessions at Tewa offices; (4) providing emergency funds to 4 families seeking assistance for food, clothing, and utility expenses; (5) sponsoring a community healing session at the Ohkay Owingeh Community School; (6) conducting 188 other victim service-related community trainings reaching more than 2,850 individuals; (7) hosting 6 trainings for law enforcement and other service providers; and (8) developing and disseminating newly designed brochures for Tewa Women United, *Brave Voices Forensic Interviewing* handouts, resource lists, stalking handouts, and *Reporting Child Sexual Abuse* handouts that have been distributed to thousands of residents of tribal communities.

In the **Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians' Family Violence and Victims Services** unit, the victim assistance coordinator is an active



member of the multidisciplinary team coordinated by the Choctaw Children's Advocacy Center. The multidisciplinary team includes representatives from the Choctaw Police Department, Children and Family Services Department, federal and tribal prosecutors, tribal criminal investigators, behavioral health, and the Choctaw Health Center Medical Examiners. The victim assistance coordinator is also part of the multidisciplinary team working group, which discusses each child victim's physical and/or sexual abuse case status. The victim assistance coordinator serves as the victim's advocate for the Choctaw Children's Advocacy Center and provides client education about investigation, prosecution, and treatment; appropriate referrals for counseling and other needed services; assistance to tribal/federal prosecutors with court orientation and trial preparation, and transportation for victims and families to attend court, if needed. The victim assistance coordinator also provides victims and families with access to services such as protection orders, housing, public assistance, and domestic violence interventions; information regarding the rights of crime victims, including presentencing victim impact statements and assistance with completing victim compensation forms; and ongoing feedback with clients and caretakers concerning the adjudication process.

Three Programs Meet Training Needs of Indian Country

OVC training programs that serve the AI/AN community are supported by funding streams dedicated to victim services in those regions: the CJA Grant Program, the TVA Discretionary Grant Program, and district-specific training.

CJA Training

As outlined earlier, CJA funds help tribes develop, establish, and operate mechanisms to improve their investigation, prosecution, and handling of child abuse cases (particularly sexual abuse). Training and technical assistance efforts focus specifically on building multidisciplinary responses to crime and result in—

- Better understanding and cooperation among those individuals who work with tribal children but are not of AI/AN descent themselves, particularly regarding the role and importance of tribal child advocates in cases adjudicated in the state and federal court systems.
- An increase in collaborative investigations of child sexual abuse cases among tribal, federal, and state agencies.
- Tribe-specific, culturally appropriate training events.
- Specialized training for law enforcement officers and allied professionals who handle child sexual abuse cases.

- Enhanced awareness of and support for efforts to address child victimization.
- Increased commitment to protecting and healing traumatized children.

TVA Training

A number of advancements were made in FYs 2007 and 2008 using TVA funds, including continued support for the VOCA-Tribal Victim Assistance Working Group and the publication of the bimonthly, electronic *Training and Technical Assistance Newsletter*. The newsletter, published by Unified Solutions Tribal Community Development Group, Inc., is a valuable tool for informing people in Indian Country of training opportunities. The newsletter features funding, training, and research opportunities available to AI/AN populations and is distributed to more than 50 individuals and organizations, including the TVA community and other vested persons.

District-Specific Training

The Executive Office for United States Attorneys, with OVC support, presented 10 district-specific training conferences in Indian Country in FYs 2007 and 2008. The conferences brought together federal, state, and local law enforcement and victim assistance providers who work in Indian Country to focus on issues pertinent to the tribes in the region, such as family violence and child exploitation, methamphetamine and drug endangered children, child sexual abuse, Internet crimes, identity theft, and human trafficking.

FEDERAL

Programs

CHAPTER 7

OVC, in partnership with other government agencies, works to provide innovative services to address the wide range of issues that can devastate victims. Several programs highlighted below make a significant impact by helping victims in fundamental ways.

Federal Crime Victims Assistance Fund

The Federal Crime Victims Assistance Fund is managed by the FBI, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), and the U.S. Department of Justice's Civil Rights Division-Criminal Section and Executive Office for United States Attorneys. The program assists federal crime victims with services they may need immediately after the crime. These agencies receive funding for services as dictated by the *Federal Crime Victims Fund Guidelines*. Services include, but are not limited to, transportation costs, emergency shelter, crisis intervention, and services that help victims participate in the criminal justice system. In FYs 2007 and 2008, the Federal Crime Victims Assistance Fund paid for the following—

- Travel expenses for parents of a juvenile killed by gang members to attend sentencing.
- Travel expenses for the widow of a victim killed by a drunk driver to attend sentencing.
- Travel expenses for a sexual abuse victim to speak at her father's sentencing.
- Travel expenses for the family of an abducted child to attend sentencing.
- Tests for sexually transmitted diseases for a young, sexually assaulted trafficking victim.
- Travel expenses for a victim of investment fraud to attend and speak at sentencing.
- Counselors for victims who were tortured.
- Crime scene cleanup.

Without this aid from the Federal Crime Victims Assistance Fund, hundreds of victims and their families would not have attended court proceedings, or would have borne the medical or mental health expenses themselves.

Treasury Offset Program

The Treasury Offset Program (TOP) is a centralized debt collection program that helps agencies collect delinquent debts owed to the Federal Government. To do this, TOP matches delinquent debtor files against outstanding debts. When it finds a match, TOP intercepts funds before they reach the debtor and uses them to offset any outstanding debt owed to the Federal Government—from sources such as federal tax return refunds, annual annuities, and Social Security payments. Until 2003, TOP was not available for the offset of criminal debts; however, because of a small investment of \$50,000 from OVC, U.S. Attorneys’ Offices throughout the Nation now have the insurance policy they need to access TOP to collect criminal debt. The Financial Litigation Unit within each U.S. Attorney’s Office now has access to TOP for enforcing and collecting criminal debts owed to the U.S. Government and nongovernment victims of federal crime.

Since 2003, TOP’s interception of funds to pay outstanding criminal debts has resulted in an enormous amount of restitution paid to crime victims. To date, collections have totaled nearly \$24 million. In 2007 alone, TOP recovered \$5.2 million, and in 2008, it recovered \$16.6 million in fines deposited into the Crime Victims Fund and paid out as restitution to crime victims.

Calendar Year	Collected Amount
2008	\$17,306,333
2007	\$5,243,020
2006	\$1,026,175
2005	\$430,364
2004	\$390,116
2003	\$5,100
TOTAL	\$24,401,108

Drug Endangered Children Meth Initiative

This program strives to collaborate with federal, state, and local nonprofit entities and the general public to continue Drug Endangered Children (DEC) Program efforts and to provide DEC training to law enforcement, child protection services personnel, prosecutors, victim service providers, public health and medical professionals, and educators. It also works to develop training materials and protocols, and to summarize best practices culled from DEC teams that can be used by other districts.

The program developed a newsletter that it distributes nationwide—*Wisconsin Alliance for Drug Endangered Children*—and a Web site. With the initiative’s assistance in FY 2008, the Victim-Witness Program for the Western District of Wisconsin released approximately 400 copies nationwide of its video, *Living in Shadows: The Innocent Victims of Meth*, to raise awareness of



the devastating impact meth addiction can have on families, and children in particular.

In fall 2008, project staff, and staff from the Wisconsin Coalition on Drug Endangered Children, worked with Wisconsin's American Indian tribes to present the first statewide training for tribes on drug endangered children. After this conference, project staff were asked to present at a national drug endangered children conference to facilitate better coordination of DEC efforts with tribes.

Student Intern Professional Victim Advocate Training

Operated by the victim-witness program manager for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of California, the Student Intern Professional Victim Advocate Training Program evolved from a unique partnership among a non-profit victim advocacy training agency, a local university, and the Eastern District of California's Victim-Witness Program. Graduates receive a certificate after they complete this one-semester training program. The program hired graduates for various positions within the office, including its lead trainer for victim-witness interns who, under the direction of the victim-witness program manager, is responsible for recruiting, supervising, and training interns, and for assigning the intern projects.

The volunteer intern victim advocates provide crucial services to victims who do not meet the qualifications established by many crime victim service programs, with special emphasis on victims and victimized communities that feel disenfranchised from the civil, criminal, regulatory, and administrative justice systems. Interns also provide routine services, including victim notification, court accompaniment, and resource development.

Contract Paralegal To Enhance Early Collection of Restitution

Managed by the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Kentucky, this program implements a new strategy to enhance the timeliness and effectiveness of collecting restitution for victims. The project has a contract with a paralegal who works with criminal prosecutors and agents before sentencing to collect and analyze financial information that is critical to early freezing and seizing of assets until sentencing. This includes focusing on restitution issues during plea negotiations and providing more complete information to the probation office and court in anticipation of sentencing. These efforts resulted in a substantial increase in the amount of money collected, and it lessened the time it takes for restitution to be paid to victims of federal crimes. Before the program began, the district had collected more than \$1 million in restitution only once in the past. During 2008, it collected \$1.8 million in restitution.

During FY 2007, the paralegal identified numerous assets in cases that should result in more restitution being paid in the coming years. For instance, during 2007, the paralegal searched for assets prior to indictment in a case involving approximately \$5 million in restitution. As a result of this work, the defendant has entered a guilty plea and more than \$5 million in assets has been identified. In the past, the collections unit would have received this case only after a judgment was entered—probably long after the assets had been dissipated.

TERRORISM and *Mass Violence*

CHAPTER 8

As Americans, both at home and overseas, grapple with the aftereffects of terrorism and mass violence, OVC lends a supportive hand by delivering comprehensive programs designed to meet the immediate and future needs of victims. When victims need assistance the most, these programs provide funding for an array of critical needs, such as emergency food, transportation, and clothing; mental health counseling; temporary housing; and out-of-pocket expenses related to victimization.

Over the past several years, acts of criminal mass violence and terrorism have tragically affected U.S. communities and citizens around the Nation and abroad. The emotional impact of such experiences can be devastating, leaving victims and emergency personnel in need of services, including mental health counseling, to reduce the symptoms of trauma immediately following the event. In addition to victims, local governments are left in need of immediate and long-term services to help restore their citizens' sense of equilibrium on a longer term basis. OVC helps communities and victims seeking assistance through three primary programs: (1) the Antiterrorism Emergency Assistance Program (AEAP); (2) the International Terrorism Victim Expense Reimbursement Program (ITVERP); and (3) the Crime Victim Emergency Assistance Fund at the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

After the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing, Congress amended VOCA to authorize the OVC Director to set aside up to \$50 million from the Crime Victims Fund in an Antiterrorism Emergency Reserve account (Emergency Reserve). This funding resource is designated specifically to assist victims of domestic or international terrorism, or acts of intentional mass criminal violence, and to provide essential services to help local communities cope with these events. The Emergency Reserve has been an essential resource for ensuring that victims of terrorism and mass violence receive the assistance they deserve, and it has kept funding for standard victim services from being diverted to respond

People must realize that [families] have a huge need to understand what's going on, to view the process, to humanize events.

—Widow of bombing victim

to large-scale criminal catastrophes. In FYs 2007 and 2008, OVC set aside \$50 million each year for the Emergency Reserve, although not all of those funds were expended in either year, to support AEAP, ITVERP, and the Crime Victim Emergency Assistance Fund, among other functions.

AEAP Provides Both Short- and Long-Term Help

AEAP offers five categories of support to assist victims and communities following an incident of terrorism or mass violence, with each category targeting a specific phase in the aftermath of a crisis:

- **Crisis response grants** (emergency/short term, up to 9 months after the incident) provide funds to help victims build adaptive capacities, decrease stressors, and reduce symptoms of trauma immediately following the event.
- **Consequence management grants** (ongoing/longer term, up to 18 months after the incident) provide supplemental funding to help victims recover from the traumatic event and restore their sense of equilibrium.
- **Criminal justice support grants** (ongoing/longer term, up to 36 months after the incident) facilitate victim participation in an investigation or prosecution related to the incident.
- **Crime victim compensation grants** (available anytime in the aftermath of a crisis) provide supplemental funds to state crime victim compensation programs to reimburse victims for out-of-pocket expenses related to victimization.
- **Training and technical assistance** (available anytime in the aftermath of a crisis) and other nonmonetary assistance (e.g., providing training through consultants) also are available to help federal, state, and local authorities identify victim needs, coordinate services, develop response strategies, and address related issues.

AEAP Serves Victims Within and Outside the United States

The Antiterrorism and Emergency Assistance Program provides assistance to victims and communities reeling from terrorist attacks and other incidents of intentional mass criminal violence. The funds, available to state and local jurisdictions through a grant process and to federal agencies via a reimbursable or intra- or interagency agreement, are designed to meet the needs of victims both within the United States and abroad. State victim compensation and victim assistance programs, public agencies (including federal, state, and local governments), and victim service and nongovernmental organizations are eligible to apply for funding. Since the program began in 2002, approximately \$64.5 million in AEAP funds have been used to meet a wide range of victim needs, including crisis counseling, temporary housing, and emergency transportation and travel.

AEAP Funds Extend Program's Services

A good example of the type of criminal justice support assistance OVC makes available is the reimbursable agreement it entered into with the Office of Military Commissions (OMC), U.S. Department of Defense. On July 28, 2008, OVC executed a \$4,568,977 reimbursable agreement to support OMC in its effort to provide closed circuit television (CCTV) coverage of the military commission trial proceedings occurring at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, for the victims of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack. OMC will establish CCTV sites at Fort Devens, Massachusetts; Fort Hamilton, New York; Fort Monmouth, New Jersey; Fort Meade, Maryland; and Guantanamo Bay. These sites give victims and family members access to the trials of those

individuals charged with the attacks, tentatively scheduled for 2009. Although it is uncertain whether the OMC proceedings will take place at Guantanamo Bay, OVC will work with the prosecutorial entity to ensure that CCTV coverage is provided to the victims and family members wherever the proceedings occur.

On September 8, 2008, OVC awarded a supplemental grant of \$2,650,953 to Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. The award provides up to 2 years of funding for salary and fringe benefits, travel and training, supplies, and other costs for the University's Office of Recovery and Support. This office was established to facilitate recovery efforts for direct victims of the mass shooting event: families of the deceased, wounded students and employees, and the families of injured students. In addition, the office helps coordinate the ongoing and changing recovery needs of indirect victim communities both on and off campus. The office supports direct victims by providing communications, responding to requests for university-related matters (e.g., class schedule changes for students who are direct victims), and providing group-support events for direct and indirect victims who were or are friends of the deceased and injured. This supplemental award is in addition to the initial award of \$350,959 made on May 28, 2008, resulting in a total award of \$3,001,912.

On September 29, 2008, OVC awarded \$1,682,225 to Northern Illinois University to assist it in recovering from the mass shooting that occurred on February 14, 2008, in the Cole Hall lecture auditorium. Funds are used to reimburse the university for expenses it incurred in the immediate aftermath of the shooting, and to support the school's Office of Support and Advocacy, which will work directly with the victims of the tragedy and their families.

AEAP Funds Crisis Support

In addition to the reimbursable agreement with OMC, and the grant awards made to Virginia Polytechnic and Northern Illinois University,



OVC's AEAP provided crisis response and compensation support in the aftermath of the following acts of terrorism and mass violence:

- **Westroads Mall shooting in Omaha, Nebraska, on December 5, 2007.** With the holiday shopping season in full swing, a 19-year-old man walked into the Von Maur Department Store with an AK-47-style semiautomatic assault rifle. Before police arrived 6 minutes later, the gunman had killed six store employees and two customers, and left four others injured, before taking his own life. A fifth person was also treated for a medical condition resulting from the event. OVC awarded \$90,000 over a 24-month period to reimburse counseling or group therapy costs for up to 60 people who witnessed the shooting.
- **Platte Canyon High School shootings in Bailey, Colorado, on September 27, 2006.** OVC made a supplemental award to the State of Colorado to continue counseling to those affected by this shooting, in which one student was killed and six other hostages were sexually assaulted. Currently, an AEAP grant supports four emergency/short-term, school-based employees, including a mental health counselor, an outreach and education coordinator, and a school administrative coordinator. The Colorado Division of Criminal Justice estimates that 1,300 individuals may suffer

... OVC funding made the difference in the ability to access critically needed medical care

—Kathryn Turman, Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation, Office for Victim Assistance

traumatic effects from the incident, including the immediate family members of the victims, Platte Canyon High School students and personnel, and emergency responders.

- **Nickel Mines Amish Schoolhouse shootings in Bart Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, on October 2, 2006.** Five

students were killed in the Nickel Mines Schoolhouse shootings, and five others were seriously injured and transported to area hospitals. Emergency personnel assisted in many tasks that exposed them to trauma, including identification of dead victims, care and transport of injured victims, family and community care, and crime scene cleanup. AEAP funding provided resources for outreach, therapy, counseling, support groups, and assistance for emergency personnel who were affected by the crime.

OVC Publications Guide Post-Incident Efforts

In addition to providing services and assistance to victims of terrorism and mass violence, OVC released several publications to aid crime victims and help victim service providers and policymakers improve their response to victims. These publications provide practical guidance to help crime victims better understand the psychological, emotional, and financial impact of terrorism; identify policy issues and make recommendations for improving the coordination of response to terrorism for policymakers and service providers; and offer guidance to criminal justice professionals responsible for ensuring that victims have access to judicial proceedings:

- *International Terrorism Victim Expense Reimbursement Program* (ITVERP brochure)
- *Antiterrorism Emergency Assistance Program* (AEAP brochure)
- *Terrorism and International Victim Assistance Services* (e-only fact sheet)
- *Resource Guide for Serving U.S. Citizens Victimized Abroad* (e-only guide)
- *International Terrorism Victim Expense Reimbursement Program Report to Congress* (two editions in 2006 and 2008)

See the OVC Web site (www.ovc.gov) for additional publications on this subject and ordering information.

Emergency Fund Helps Victims Outside the United States

OVC provided funding to the FBI to establish a Crime Victim Assistance Emergency Fund (Emergency Fund) for assisting crime victims and their families who are victims of terrorism or mass violence occurring outside the United States. Through a memorandum of understanding, OVC and the FBI Office for Victim Assistance identified services and support that the Emergency Fund will cover to address victims' immediate needs for assistance when they cannot find the resources to obtain the help they need. Since ITVERP began operating in October 2006, the Emergency Fund has not received such a request.

OVC and the FBI Office for Victim Assistance work collaboratively to ensure that resources are available to assist crime victims and their family members with minimal delay if a crime, reasonably believed to be the result of terrorism or mass violence, occurs overseas. From January 1 to December 31, 2006, using OVC funds, the FBI Office for Victim Assistance provided emergency crisis response assistance to 28 crime victims. The services rendered ranged from helping to

transport victims to appropriate medical facilities, to providing short-term lodging and travel assistance to help family members join their injured loved ones overseas, to providing emotional and logistical support.

In addition, OVC directly reimbursed victims seeking emergency mental health services. Those who asked for help finding a mental health provider received it through an OVC contractor. This contractor also reviewed victims' and vendors' requests for reimbursement and made recommendations to the OVC Director about whether they qualified for it. When the OVC Director approves the request for reimbursement for emergency mental health expenses, the U.S. Treasury issues payment. Now that ITVERP is operational—and can provide interim emergency payments—this protocol for providing emergency mental health services is being revised.

OVC is proud of the advancements it has made during the 2007–08 biennium to respond to victims of terrorism and mass violence, and of the collaborations and partnerships it has forged within the U.S. Department of Justice and with other federal, state, and nongovernmental agencies. In cases of terrorism and mass violence, the understanding, trust, and cooperative relationships that OVC has formed, and the implementation of ITVERP, have allowed OVC to offer victims a system of service to meet their needs—as always, *Putting Victims First*.

Reimbursement for Victims of International Terrorism

Although victims of terrorism outside the United States may have the same physical, emotional, legal, and financial needs as victims in the United States, their situation may be significantly complicated by their location and by jurisdictional issues regarding the investigation and prosecution of the perpetrators. For example, families of international victims often face financial or administrative hardships in arranging to have the remains of a loved one transported home. Survivors of

terrorist events may have difficulty finding appropriate medical care and mental health counseling. Legal, political, and cultural barriers, and language—for family members of Foreign Service nationals, in particular—often pose further problems. ITVERP will alleviate some of the financial hardships these victims face.

Payment of ITVERP Claims

The ITVERP program reimburses eligible victims of terrorism outside the United States for expenses related to that victimization (for incidents occurring on or after October 23, 1983) (amended by Public Law 110-181). Eligible expenses are out-of-pocket costs related to funeral and burial services, mental health counseling, and medical care; property loss, repair, and replacement; and miscellaneous expenses, including temporary lodging, local transportation, phone calls, and emergency travel. Reimbursement is not available for lost wages, attorney's fees, or nonmonetary losses such as pain and suffering or loss of enjoyment of life. Applicants will find applications and instructions on OVC's Web site (www.ovc.gov/itverp).

When a claim is received, the Attorney General's designee, the Assistant Attorney General for National Security, in consultation with the Director of National Intelligence, determines



whether an act of international terrorism occurred. To date, the National Security Division has given 15 events this designation, including the October 2002 nightclub bombings in Bali, Indonesia, and the May 2003 bombing of expatriate housing in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

To verify a request, OVC reviews documents showing the expenses incurred and any collateral sources that are available to the claimant (e.g., insurance, Medicare or Medicaid, workers' compensation). The OVC Director approves the final award determination.

Because victims of terrorism abroad may have difficulty accessing resources to address their immediate financial needs, ITVERP allows victims to request an interim emergency payment. Victims may apply for this payment if the time needed for OVC to review the claim would cause the victim or the victim's family substantial hardship. Victims, or their family members, may use these emergency awards to pay for immediate medical care, funeral and burial expenses, short-term lodging, and emergency transportation. To receive interim emergency reimbursement, however, the claimant's circumstances must meet specific eligibility criteria outlined in the ITVERP regulations.

OVC's Terrorism and International Victim Assistance Services Division established procedures for processing ITVERP requests for reimbursement prior to its implementation. In September 2006, final regulations were published in the *Federal Register* and adopted that October. Then OVC focused on training ITVERP case managers to work closely with victims and their families to explain the process and provide victims,

families, and their representative's with up-to-date information on the status of their application throughout the process. ITVERP staff communicate directly and frequently with victims and their families to ensure that the application process follows the regulations while remaining easy for victims and their families to access and understand. From October 2006 to November 2008, OVC received 43 applications. Of those 43, 2 were emergency applications, 40 were itemized, and 1 was supplemental. Direct victims submitted 23 applications, and family members submitted 20.

Outreach to Potential Claimants

A critical component of ITVERP is its outreach campaign to inform victims of international terrorist events and their families of the resources available to them. OVC targets its outreach specifically to potential claimants and collaborating agencies, plus other partners who may have contact with potential claimants. To reach this group, ITVERP mails applications to potential claimants and presents at conferences that are attended by partners. The program also points its constituents to the ITVERP Resource Center and Web site.

The outreach campaign also seeks to educate the victim assistance community, including collaborating agencies and other potential partners, about ITVERP. By reaching out to both U.S. and international organizations and individuals who have direct and indirect contact with potential claimants, OVC can increase the number of potential claimants it notifies about ITVERP and the resources it offers them. To reach this audience, OVC presents at and sends informational materials to conferences, conducts briefings, and writes articles for various publications.

OVC also developed an online *Resource Guide for Serving U.S. Citizens Victimized Abroad* to help victim service providers in the United States deliver services to victims of international crimes by facilitating access to resources both abroad and in the United States. The guide includes a section about international terrorism that outlines the effects of terrorism on individuals and the resources available for victims, including ITVERP. OVC also developed a fact sheet that includes information about ITVERP. Both publications are available on the OVC Web site.

ITVERP is an important link in the chain of services and assistance OVC has developed to help American citizens and government employees victimized by terrorism overseas. With ITVERP's implementation, the United States joins 36 countries in providing financial assistance to its citizens who fall victim to acts of international terrorism and closes the gap in service that has left past victims with limited or no viable resources to help them or their family members to cope with their victimization.



PRIORITIES



CHAPTER 9



VOCA formula grants to states and territories account for the majority of funding made available to provide services to crime victims throughout the Nation. However, discretionary grants administered by OVC play an important role in funding a broad array of programs to help meet emerging needs, fill gaps in existing services, and support model programs to help strengthen the skills and abilities of service providers.

Sexual Assault Victims

Sexual assault is one of the most underreported crimes in this country. Although the actual number of sexual assaults committed each year is not known, the Bureau of Justice Statistics estimates that only about 40 percent are reported to law enforcement.⁶ OVC continues to address how to best support victims in seeking the help they need and deserve, and to encourage their participation in bringing their attackers to justice. As the criminal justice system's response to sexual assault victims improves, these victims are more likely to participate in the system and to benefit from the services available. Much work still needs to be done to ensure that the system works for, not against, victims.

Trained first responders—law enforcement officers, forensic nurses, advocates, and others—play a critical role for victims after a crime, helping them to cope and eventually to recover. OVC took the lead in the U.S. Department of Justice's support of the development of sexual assault nurse examiners (SANE) and sexual assault response teams (SART). In recent years, the SART model has become the standard protocol for responding to victims of sexual assault in communities throughout the country. The collaborative, interdisciplinary approach of this model allows service providers to do more for victims than the individual disciplines could achieve on their own, making a tremendous difference in the quality of care provided to sexual assault victims. By coordinating their members' resources, community-based SARTs can offer sexual assault victims prompt, consistent, and compassionate care and

⁶Rand, M., and S. Catalano, 2007, *Criminal Victimization, 2006*, Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 3.

... and it was so good to get my questions answered and know recovery is possible. I was really having a hard time with what happened to me, and I am still unable to verbalize it. . . . They helped a lot. I'm starting the road to recovery.

—Anonymous Online Hotline user

help keep them from experiencing further trauma and victimization while navigating the criminal justice system.

In FYs 2007 and 2008, OVC provided funding for training and technical assistance, demonstration projects, and other initiatives to improve the response to victims of sexual assault. These initiatives included—

- **Biennial National SART Training Conference.**

In 2007, the Sexual Assault Resource Service (SARS) of Minneapolis, Minnesota, held the Fourth National SART Training Conference in Tampa, Florida. Approximately 800 forensic medical professionals, victim advocates, law enforcement officers, prosecutors, crime lab personnel, and other allied professionals attended. Organizers of the conference sought to improve coordinated services to victims of sexual assault by providing state-of-the-art, evidence-based training on this multidisciplinary, victim-centered approach to sexual assault. To foster continued SANE-SART program development and operation on a national level, OVC has provided funding to SARS to plan and implement the Fifth National SART Training Conference in Seattle, Washington, in May 2009.

- **National SANE Coordinator Symposium.** The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape's National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC) and the Oregon Attorney General's Sexual Assault Task Force held a National SANE Coordinator Symposium in May 2007. This event provided an opportunity for state, regional, territorial, tribal, and military SANE programs to share

promising practices and capacity-building activities. NSVRC also held four regional meetings with coordinators of state, regional, territorial, tribal, and military SANE programs to identify and address regional training and technical assistance needs, as well as disseminate victim-centered promising practices related to SANE program coordination.

- **SART Toolkit.** NSVRC continued developing state-of-the-art technical assistance to provide information and resources to help communities build or enhance SART services. The toolkit is designed to address the special needs of rural, remote, tribal, military, and campus communities. NSVRC also developed a video on the SART response to include in its toolkit to promote the development, implementation, and ongoing enhancement of a coordinated, multidisciplinary response to sexual assault. Additional project objectives include conducting a national-scope review of existing resources for SART communities and assessing the state of SART development throughout the United States. The project is pilot testing the toolkit to evaluate its usefulness to the field and to make improvements before it is disseminated in 2010.
- **Missouri Sexual Assault Response Model.** The Missouri Chapter of the American College of Emergency Physicians continued developing a model to establish statewide standardized certification, services, and resources to enable health care institutions to serve as sexual assault resource centers. Under the new system, sexual assault victims will have access to high-quality services and resources, regardless of geographic location or time of day.

- **Strengthening Military-Civilian Community Partnerships to Respond to Sexual Assault Project.** The Pennsylvania Coalition Against Rape (PCAR) continued developing a curriculum and toolkit for civilian rape crisis centers and state sexual assault coalitions to use in their work with military victims of sexual violence. PCAR convened a committee of civilians and military personnel and held focus groups to inform the development process, drafted the curriculum and toolkit, and pilot tested the resources. In December 2008, teams of military and civilian trainers were taught how to implement the curriculum and toolkit.
- **Existe Ayuda (Help Exists) National Outreach Project.** Arte Sana worked with Latina victim service providers, immigrant rights advocacy groups, and community-based social service professionals throughout the Nation to develop and pilot test culturally competent outreach tools and training materials that were designed to make services more accessible to Spanish-speaking victims of sexual violence. In 2008, Arte Sana pilot tested both “Latinas and Sexual Violence,” a training workshop for victim advocates, and sample Spanish-language scripts that state coalitions and rape crisis centers can use on their answering machines. The final products are due for release in 2010.
- **Sexual Assault Victim Assistance Program.** In FYs 2007 and 2008, OVC provided funding to the Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN) to expand its Online Hotline, the Web’s first live, secure, victim assistance hotline service. Using a secure and anonymous instant messaging-type format, the Online Hotline allows rape and sexual assault victims to communicate directly with trained crisis support volunteer advocates via RAINN’s Web site. The Online Hotline was created to meet the needs of younger victims, providing a safe place online where they can access immediate support from a trained advocate. Since OVC began providing support in FY 2007, the Online Hotline has tripled its service hours and now operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Hotline

sessions between victims and trained volunteer advocates increased from 15 sessions per day in October 2007 to more than 80 sessions a day 1 year later, providing secure and anonymous support to more than 15,000 people. According to anonymous feedback from users, the majority remain very satisfied with the Online Hotline service.

With OVC’s support, RAINN more than doubled the number of volunteers recruited and trained to work on the Online Hotline project. At the beginning of FY 2007, RAINN had 491 Online Hotline volunteers. As of FY 2008, the project has attracted more than 1,000.

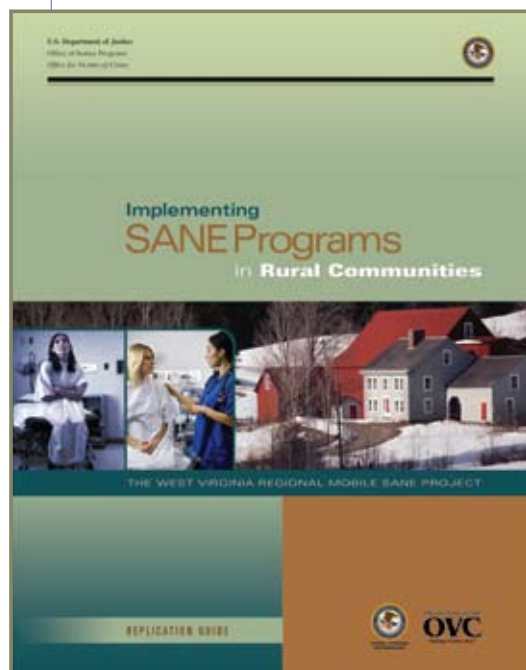
Federal funding also helped to leverage support from private-sector technology companies, including AOL and McAfee, which are donating their expertise in online security risk management and secure hosting to ensure that RAINN continues to provide the safest online victim support possible.



- **SAACT Online.** In August 2007, OVC officially launched a new online, downloadable training curriculum: *Sexual Assault Advocate/Counselor Training (SAACT)*. The curriculum was originally developed as a regional workshop with a grant to the Sexual Assault Resource Service of Minneapolis, Minnesota. SANEs and sexual assault victim advocates from throughout the Nation provided input into the curriculum, which was designed to teach advocates how to provide competent, effective crisis intervention services to victims and survivors of sexual assault. Because of the popularity of the onsite SAACT training, OVC developed an online, downloadable version to make the course more widely available. Components of the online, 2-day training include trainer and participant manuals, a customizable agenda, PowerPoint slides, and vignettes. The online version of SAACT can be accessed at www.ovcttac.gov/saact/index.cfm.
- **Implementing SANE Programs in Rural Communities: The West Virginia Regional Mobile SANE Project Replication Guide.** With OVC funding, the West Virginia Foundation for Rape Information and Services developed

Implementing SANE Programs in Rural Communities: The West Virginia Regional Mobile SANE Project, a replication guide that explains the essential steps needed to plan and implement a rural SANE program and offers a blueprint for other communities to follow as they establish their own programs. OVC released this publication in both print and electronic formats in June 2008. The online version can be accessed at www.ovc.gov/publications/infores/WVA_Mobile_SANE_guide/welcome.html.

- **Strengthening Sexual Assault Victims' Right to Privacy Bulletin.** With funding from OVC, Connecticut Sexual Assault Crisis Services, Inc., developed the *Strengthening Sexual Assault Victims' Right to Privacy* bulletin, which provides practical assistance and recommendations to statewide sexual assault coalitions and rape crisis centers to help them protect sexual assault victims' right to privacy. It also addresses common challenges, discusses core concepts, and offers practical tips to help sexual assault victim advocates maintain victim confidentiality. OVC plans to release the bulletin as an electronic publication in 2009.



Human Trafficking

OVC supports projects that provide timely, high-quality, comprehensive services and enhance interagency collaboration and coordinated multidisciplinary responses to victims of human trafficking.

Every year, between 600,000 and 800,000 people are transported across international borders to be systematically abused, sexually exploited, and brutalized through a form of modern-day slavery known as human trafficking. In the United States, men, women, and children are exploited through various forms of sex and labor trafficking. Under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) of 2000, and its subsequent reauthorizations in 2003 and 2005, OVC is one of a number of coordinated federal agencies committed to providing much-needed services to these victims.

The passage of TVPA codified the State Department's intent to pursue a victim-centered approach to this crime, with equal emphasis on the three Rs: rescue, rehabilitation, and reintegration.⁷ Under TVPA, OVC receives specially designated government funds (an independent appropriation that is not associated with the Crime Victims Fund) to support the development or enhancement of emergency services to assist victims of severe forms of trafficking. OVC grantees provide a comprehensive array of services to victims after they are identified or "rescued" from their trafficking situation, but before they are eligible to receive other benefits through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Refugee Resettlement.

To serve victims of human trafficking effectively, comprehensive service providers and other professionals within the community, such as law enforcement, must consider the rescue through the eyes of the victim, who often does not speak English, lives in a continual climate of fear, and may have been brutally treated with no regard for basic health, welfare, or human rights. Because traffickers often severely restrict the communication and movement of victims and also exploit their fear of the authorities, providers must work to establish trust with victims and provide a full range of services to help restore physical, mental, and emotional health. Once basic needs, such as shelter, medical care, and crisis counseling are met, and a mutually trusting relationship is established, victims are much better prepared to participate in the investigative and prosecutorial process.

Grant Program Focuses on Collaboration

OVC established the Services for Trafficking Victims Discretionary Grant Program in 2002. Because no single agency can meet the multiple needs of trafficking victims, the program

⁷U.S. Department of State, June 2006, "Introduction," *Trafficking in Persons*, Report to Congress, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of State. (See www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/65983.htm.)



emphasizes creating and enhancing collaborative networks to provide comprehensive services and build a community's overall capacity to respond to victims. Multidisciplinary, cross-agency collaboration is necessary to ensure that victims have access to the services they need from the beginning. The Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), within OJP, has provided funding to 42 local and state law enforcement anti-trafficking task forces throughout the country. In 2007 and 2008, OVC worked with BJA to ensure that an OVC victim service provider would be available to coordinate services for victims wherever an anti-trafficking law enforcement task force was in place.

This grant program awarded \$3.8 million to grantees in FY 2007 and \$5.4 million in FY 2008. Nearly that entire amount was dedicated to developing comprehensive services. The remainder was used to create and implement training and technical assistance resources for grantees. (A list of grantees and award amounts appears in appendix F.)

As of December 2008, 36 grantees had received TVPA funding from OVC to provide and enhance victim services. All grantees have a network of partnerships with other service providers and community-based organizations in their area, as well as local law enforcement agencies. All of the grantees, except one in Georgia, work

Victim Services Program Results in Rescues

The International Institute of Buffalo provides an excellent example of a collaborative and comprehensive response to victims of human trafficking.

In December 2007, investigators raided four massage parlors and acupuncture spas in western New York State. They found nine women, all illegal aliens from Asia, who spoke little English. These women and two others had been brought over to the United States and coerced into performing a variety of sexual acts with customers.

The owner of the business, her husband, and two other family members were arrested. The owner eventually pleaded guilty to a charge of sex trafficking of persons by force, fraud, and coercion, and she faces 15 years in prison.

The victims were provided with safe, confidential housing, medical care, legal support, and eventually, English as a Second Language and employment support services through the International Institute of Buffalo and its network of service providers. Additionally, the plea agreement required that \$350,000 in restitution be paid to the 11 victims. Due to the pre-raid planning and collaboration between law enforcement and nongovernmental members of the Western New York Task Force, this case provided successful outcomes for all involved.

collaboratively with at least one BJA-funded law enforcement task force. Some providers cover multiple cities or states and have two or three task forces operating in the geographic area covered by the OVC grant. These task forces and collaborative networks ensure that victims' needs are met, regardless of where or how they enter the system, and that comprehensive, culturally competent services are available.

From January 1, 2007, through June 30, 2008, OVC trafficking victim service grantees and their partners provided services to 640 trafficking victims.⁸ Since the program began, OVC grantees have served approximately 2,200 victims of sex and labor trafficking. During this period, grantees also continued their education and outreach efforts, training individuals—including more than 6,600 law enforcement officers and prosecutors—on the dynamics of trafficking, the legal definition of trafficking under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, the legal rights and services available for victims, and cultural considerations that affect response strategies.

⁸The most recent period for which data are available.

Much of the training and public awareness efforts are intended to raise the profile of human trafficking so that more victims may be identified and rescued. Since the program's inception, grantees have trained more than 121,000 individuals, including law enforcement, community-based social service providers, immigration and civil attorneys, physicians, teachers, clergy, and other community professionals.

Identity Theft

Identity theft remains a growing crime in the United States. According to a study released by Javelin Research and Strategy,⁹ incidents of identity theft were up 22 percent in 2008. OVC administers \$1.7 million in grant funds to provide direct assistance to victims of identity theft and financial fraud. The funds are targeted to expand existing services and strengthen law enforcement's response to victims of identity theft and financial fraud nationwide.

⁹Javelin Strategy and Research, 2009, *2009 Identity Fraud Survey*, Pleasanton, CA: Retrieved February 12, 2009, from www.javelinstrategy.com/category/press-releases.

The funds support existing national, regional, state, and local victim service organizations that provide direct assistance to victims so that they may collaboratively expand their efforts to help identify additional theft and fraud victims. The award recipients include—

- The Identity Theft Resource Center, a national organization that provides free assistance to identity theft victims, received \$500,000 to improve and expand its victim counseling and individual casework services and to add staff to its identity theft call center.
- The Texas Legal Services Center, a state and regional victim services provider, received \$500,000 to operate the Victims Initiative for Counseling, Advocacy, and Restoration of the Southwest (VICARS) project. VICARS provides free legal assistance to victims of identity theft and financial fraud living in Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Colorado, and provides step-by-step coaching on how victims can reacquire their identity and credit.
- The Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center received \$500,000 to enhance its free assistance to victims of identity theft and financial fraud by increasing direct victim services and self-advocacy, and by convincing more attorneys to provide their services to the center's victims pro bono. The center will partner with a variety of national programs, including the National Center for Victims of Crime, the Identity Theft Assistance Center, and the National Crime Victim Law Institute, to assist victims of identity theft and fraud nationwide.
- Atlanta Victim Assistance, Inc., a nonprofit organization serving the needs of both victims and witnesses, received \$200,000 to carry out a public education campaign aimed at stopping identity theft and financial fraud in Atlanta, Georgia. The "Stop Atlanta Fraud Empower (SAFE)" campaign consists of a three-pronged approach of education, advocacy, and training to help reduce the incidents of fraud in Atlanta and increase residents' awareness of their rights if victimized.

These grants were awarded in 2007, cover 24 months, and are a direct outcome of efforts made by the President's Task Force on Identity Theft. The task force, cochaired by the Attorney General and the chairman of the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), was established by an Executive Order of the President on May 10, 2006, and is made up of 17 federal agencies and departments. The task force's strategic plan, released in April 2007, can be found at www.idtheft.gov.

OVC is helping to raise awareness of the consequences of identity theft for victims by sponsoring several initiatives to help these victims. Those efforts include the following:

- In 2008, OVC negotiated the transfer of VOCA funds to the Bureau of Justice Statistics so the bureau could include victim impact questions related to identity theft on the National Crime Victimization Survey. This is a groundbreaking step because it will provide a neutral basis for comparing victim impact across all types of crime (violent and nonviolent crime) and can help policymakers determine the full impact of identity theft on victims compared with the impact of other crimes such as burglary. The findings will provide data so that resource allocations and policy decisions can be made based on actual needs, and victim assistance



programs serving victims of identity theft will be in a better position to ask for resources that address the specific needs of these victims.

- In January 2008, OVC hosted a meeting with national, regional, state, local, and federal grant recipients who were concerned with serving victims of identity theft. To encourage expansion of existing services to reach this underserved population and to strengthen the ability of local law enforcement agencies and victim service providers to assist these victims, OVC funded four victim assistance programs (at the national, regional, state, and local levels) that directly serve victims of identity theft. As a result, a new referral policy has been put into effect with the FTC and the Identity Theft Resource Center.
- The task force recommended that member agencies develop nationwide victim assistance training for victim assistance counselors to address the needs of victims of identity theft. In February and October 2008, OVC conducted national victim service provider trainings titled “Identity Theft: Supporting Victims’ Financial and Emotional Recovery.”
- OVC and the National Institute of Justice are working collaboratively on *Assisting Victims of Identity Theft: A Resource Guide for Victim Services*, a guide aimed at helping programs that already serve victims to expand their reach and address the complex issues that confront victims of identity theft. The guide is expected to be printed in 2009, and will be the basis for the instructor-led training, “Identity Theft: Supporting Victims’ Financial and Emotional Recovery,” offered by OVC’s Training and Technical Assistance Center. OVC also funded an online, interactive version of this training that is expected to be completed in summer 2009.
- In June 2008, OVC provided substantive feedback to the FTC on a draft of a new pro bono guidebook that will assist victims of identity theft. The guidebook will be distributed nationally to pro bono attorneys who have been selected to represent victims of identity theft as a result of the American Bar Association’s Center for Pro Bono’s designation of identity theft as a priority area for pro bono attorney time.

HOPE Grant Supports Mothers Against Murderers and Katy ARTreach

With a \$10,000 HOPE grant, the Florida-based Mothers Against Murderers Association, Inc., disseminated a public service announcement to television stations, movie theaters, radio stations, and newspapers. The association developed brochures and fliers in English and had them translated into Spanish and French; purchased training materials, computer equipment, and office supplies; and paid for telephone service and local travel for advocates and volunteers to receive training.

With a \$5,000 HOPE grant, the Texas-based organization, Katy ARTreach, conducted an art workshop for children who were victims of domestic violence. While the children were attending the workshop, their parents participated in counseling provided by the center.

HOPE Grants Support Community Agencies

Helping grassroots organizations build the capacity to serve crime victims is a major focus for OVC. At roundtable discussions with advocates and victims in 2002 and 2003, OVC learned of community- and faith-based organizations and coalitions that were not linked to mainstream programs and, thus, lacked access to funding resources. Often, such groups need only modest funding to raise their services to effective levels.

In response to this need, OVC offers Helping Outreach Programs to Expand (HOPE) grants that provide up to \$10,000 each to such organizations and coalitions to help them improve their outreach and services to crime victims. HOPE funds may be used to develop program literature, including newsletters and brochures; train victim advocates; support victim outreach; and recruit

volunteers. In FYs 2007 and 2008, \$250,000 was made available for this initiative; \$902,713 was distributed to 161 organizations.

Faith- and community-based organizations are trusted members of their communities that often provide significant services to crime victims. When victims are coping with issues such as domestic abuse, rape, or the homicide of a family member, they may turn first to these familiar faces. OVC supports faith- and community-based organizations through a HOPE II cooperative agreement with the Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center, in addition to the individual grants it awards. Under this agreement, the center solicited proposals to establish subgrantee sites in urban, high-crime areas throughout the United States to assist underserved victims of crime. In FYs 2007 and 2008, \$2.45 million was made available for this initiative to fund each site with up to \$50,000 for 12 months. Services that sites provide include emotional support, personal advocacy, help filing compensation claims, crisis counseling, and referral services.

Faith-Based Initiatives

In the aftermath of victimization, victims often seek spiritual support and other assistance from the faith community. Although clergy are trained in how to assist members of their congregation with spiritual matters, they may not be aware of assistance programs that can help address the physical, emotional, and financial needs of victims of crime. Similarly, victim service providers may not know about resources within the faith community that can assist victims with their spiritual needs. Committed to bridging this gap in services, OVC has been dedicating resources to building relationships between the faith and victim assistance communities.

In FYs 2007 and 2008, OVC continued to support initiatives to educate service providers about the spiritual needs of victims and, in turn, equip faith leaders with the skills and resources they need to guide victims to appropriate assistance programs.

To improve victims' access to effective, comprehensive services, OVC also continued to support faith- and community-based partnerships at both the national and local levels.

OVC has funded numerous educational programs and trainings that work to strengthen victim support systems within the faith community, such as the *Community Crisis Intervention: Volunteer Responder Basic Training Curriculum*. This curriculum was developed by the U.S. Community Chaplaincy through its Law Enforcement Chaplaincy Services to Crime Victims project. It teaches volunteer law enforcement chaplains how to improve the law enforcement response to victimization and how to provide nonsectarian support and services, such as death notifications, to victims of violent crime.

Ensuring the steady progression of victim services is of primary concern to OVC, as well as supporting alliances among community, government, and professional organizations. In Charleston, South Carolina, for example, OVC has expanded support for a model of community collaboration, the Helping and Lending Outreach Support

HOPE II Success Story

In 2002, the New Testament Baptist Church in California formed a service program to assist victims of domestic violence within the community. The ministry found its purpose in breaking the silence and the generational cycle of violence by educating the community through workshops, advocacy services, peer mentoring, counseling, and referrals. HOPE II funding allowed this program to broaden its target population and open a new resource center to perform outreach and provide services to new populations of crime victims.

With HOPE II funding, the new resource center developed, printed, and distributed various outreach materials, including a public service announcement that was played on several cable television stations. This increased outreach brought new clients to the center; it also significantly increased the organization's volunteer base.

The value of linking the faith community with the victim assistance community is that ALL are needed to serve the individual.

—Janice Harris Lord, Daughters of Abraham

(HALOS) program. With OVC funding, HALOS has expanded from a small grassroots organization into an independent nonprofit agency. HALOS—in collaboration with private citizens and community, business, medical, and faith-based organizations—provides services for abused and neglected child victims served by the Charleston County Department of Social Services (DSS). The organization pairs a DSS case manager with a faith, civic, or business group, and together they address the academic, self-esteem, and financial needs that cannot be met by DSS and Medicaid.

Because of HALOS' success, and the many inquiries received from other communities about how to start their own programs, OVC is providing funding to HALOS to replicate the program in three communities. The three replication sites are Lancaster Partners for Youth, which targets Lancaster County, South Carolina; Pee Dee Coalition, which targets Darlington County, South Carolina; and the Council of Churches of the Ozarks, which targets Greene County, Missouri. Replication sites were selected through a competitive application process in 2007; in 2008, the selected groups began developing HALOS-based programs in their own communities.

Serving the immediate needs of crime victims is an important step toward helping them recover, but many communities lack the financial and human resources to provide this assistance. In Mobile, Alabama, the OVC-funded Good Samaritans Volunteer Assistance Program has addressed this issue with a strong network of caring citizens. A collaborative effort among the Mobile County District Attorney's Office, faith-based organizations, businesses, and law enforcement, Good Samaritans dispatches trained volunteers to offer spiritual and emotional support, secure homes by

changing locks or fixing broken windows, make referrals, explain the court system to victims, and help them to access compensation. The program serves the area's most vulnerable victims—elderly residents, individuals with disabilities, single mothers, and women living alone—and has received Volunteers of America's national Excellence in Human Services Award.

To promote this work throughout the Nation, Good Samaritans produced an online guide, *Good Samaritans: Volunteers Helping Victims Program Handbook and Training Guide*, for other communities interested in building a similar network. The guide will be available in spring 2009 at www.ovc.gov/GoodSamaritans.

To further support connections between faith-based and victim assistance communities, OVC developed a DVD titled *Faith-Based Responses to Crime Victims* and released it in conjunction with National Crime Victims' Rights Week in April 2008. The DVD briefly illustrates the history and evolution of OVC-supported initiatives involving collaborations between victim service providers and faith communities and highlights successful collaborations that are making a difference in victims' lives. These promising practices should inspire the two communities to reach out to one another to expand the victim service network.

OVC also developed a Web page—Victim Assistance by Faith-Based Organizations—on its Web site to provide information and resources tailored to the needs of faith-related victim assistance efforts (www.ovc.gov/help/fb.html). The page provides information about training, funding opportunities, and publications of interest to clergy. It also shares quotes from the field and showcases promising practices in the faith

community and innovative and inspiring partnerships between the faith and victim assistance communities.

Programs Strengthen Officers' Response to Victims

Law enforcement officers often provide the first response to victims of crime and frequently are the only contact victims have with the criminal justice system. As such, they are uniquely positioned to provide victims with assistance and information following a crime. It is critical that they respond in both a sensitive and effective manner.

To address this issue, OVC has provided substantial support for projects that aim to build the capacity of individual agencies and law enforcement officers to improve their response to victims. Prior to OVC's involvement, little had been done to change the culture of law enforcement with respect to victim response. In FY 2003, OVC began providing funding for the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) to develop and implement a national strategy that would create systemic change—both in philosophy and practice—in how law enforcement agencies respond to victims.

In the early phases of the initiative, IACP designed the draft national strategy with substantial input from the law enforcement and victim assistance fields, pilot-tested the strategy with three law enforcement agencies, and subsequently refined it. In FY 2007, IACP developed a guide and toolkit of resources to facilitate agencies' implementation of the strategy. IACP asked eight law enforcement agencies to use the guide and toolkit and offer their feedback as an additional layer of validation. In FY 2008, IACP finalized the strategy and accompanying resources and released them at its annual conference, laying the groundwork for the institutionalization of the strategy through marketing, dissemination, and technical assistance, and for continuation of the efforts after OVC funding ends.



In FY 2008, OVC released *First Response to Victims of Crime*, a comprehensive guidebook and companion video for law enforcement and other first responders. These products, developed by the National Sheriffs' Association with OVC funding, provide practical information on meeting the needs of victims of particular crimes and certain victim populations. Among the types of victimizations covered are sexual assault, drunk driving, homicide, human trafficking, and mass casualties. The special needs of older, child, and immigrant victims, and victims with disabilities, are addressed, as well.

Victims With Disabilities

Disability advocates continue to report an epidemic of victimization committed against people with disabilities. According to one study, women with disabilities are four times more likely to have experienced sexual assault in the past year, and people with severe mental illness are 11 times more likely to be victims of violent crime than the general population. Yet despite the high rate of estimated crime against people with disabilities, many victim assistance agencies report that they rarely serve crime victims from this population. This gap suggests an opportunity for raising community, criminal justice system, and individual

awareness of victim services and reminds us of the continuing need to make those services more accessible to people with disabilities.

In addition to funding the programs outlined below, OVC has modified the federal guidelines for the administration of VOCA funding to better serve victims with disabilities. Perhaps the most important result of OVC initiatives to raise awareness and better serve this population has been the partnerships forged between the disability and victim advocacy fields, uniting previously well-intentioned but separate efforts into a strong voice for fundamental justice for all victims, including people with disabilities.

The following projects represent some of OVC's initiatives during FYs 2007–2008 to support increased awareness of and services to victims of crime who have disabilities.

In April 2007, OVC released *Victims with Disabilities: The Forensic Interview*. This 57-minute DVD (NCJ 212894) provides a specific set of guidelines for practitioners (law enforcement officers, prosecutors, victim advocates, forensic interviewers, and others) to follow when interviewing adults and children with communication and/or cognitive disabilities. A training and discussion guide, which includes a transcript of the DVD and a

glossary of terms and concepts used in the film, accompanies this DVD. OVC anticipates the release, in March 2009, of a new DVD and training guide, *Victims With Disabilities: Collaborative, Multidisciplinary First Response*, which will provide skill building and guidelines for first responders and allied professionals who come into contact with victims who have disabilities. This publication will also include a transcript of the DVD and a glossary of terms and concepts used in the film.

In September 2007, OVC awarded \$2.5 million through four cooperative agreements to address the victimization of persons with disabilities. Two cooperative agreements, of \$550,000 each, were awarded to Washburn University of Topeka's Joint Center on Violence and Victim Studies and the National Center for Victims of Crime. These two entities will coordinate to develop and administer a state-of-the-art, multidisciplinary training at a national conference, anticipated for fall 2009. The training will be geared to enhancing practitioner responses to victims with disabilities, and to advancing strategic partnerships at the local, state, and national level to enhance victims' access to the criminal justice system and needed services and support.

Two additional cooperative agreements of \$700,000 each were awarded to the Disabled Persons Protection Commission in Quincy, Massachusetts, and SafePlace in Austin, Texas, to adapt and replicate each program's innovative multidisciplinary response model in three state-wide or community-based pilot sites across the Nation. It is OVC's goal that these programs will increase the reporting of victimization and ensure that crime victims with disabilities receive comprehensive, quality services and are afforded fundamental rights, including access to the criminal justice system in the aftermath of criminal victimization. As of September 2008, the two replication projects have chosen their six sites and submitted recommendations to OVC to begin the replication process. It is anticipated that these grantees will attend the national conference and contribute to the development of the training to be delivered



by Washburn University of Topeka's Joint Center on Violence and Victim Studies and the National Center for Victims of Crime in fall 2009.

In September 2007, OVC also awarded funding to two projects designed to improve services to victims of crime who have disabilities under the solicitation, "Action Partnerships with Membership and Professional Organizations." The Arc of Aurora, Colorado, in partnership with the Arc of the United States, developed "Recognizing and Responding to the Vulnerability Trail for People With Developmental Disabilities," a training designed to provide information on the incidence, prevalence, and impact of crime victimization on people with developmental disabilities. The training was presented to several chapters of the Arc of the United States at conferences around the country to enhance members' skills in collaborating with victim service organizations. The Howard County Chapter of the Autism Society of America (ASA), in partnership with the ASA national office, produced a curriculum titled *The*

Crime Victims with Autism Assistance, Education, and Training Program. The curriculum is designed to grow and improve the capacity of ASA chapters to work with their local victim assistance agencies to enhance community-based assistance services for victims of crime with autism. The grantee has piloted it to chapters of the ASA nationwide.

In October 2008, OVC premiered *Promising Practices in Serving Crime Victims With Disabilities*, an electronic toolkit that serves as a guide for organizations wishing to improve their community's capacity to respond to victims of crime with disabilities. The accompanying electronic bulletin describes the 3-year "Promising Practices" initiative through which SafePlace, of Austin, Texas, with funding from OVC, administered a pass-through project in 10 communities across the country to improve community response and services to victims of crime with disabilities.

