

Office of Arizona Attorney General Terry Goddard

VICTIMS' RIGHTS BRIEF

For Arizona's Justice System Administrators, Practitioners and Advocates

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National Crime Victim Rights Week Victims' Rights: Every Victim. Every Time. April 22-28, 2007

April 22–28 is National Crime Victims' Rights Week—a time for all Americans to learn about victimization, reflect on the cost of crime to our society, and promote laws, policies, and programs to help victims of crime rebuild their lives. The week's theme, "Victims' Rights: Every Victim. Every Time.," envisions a strengthened national commitment to the nearly 24 million

Americans harmed by crime each year. Only a fraction of crime victims actually participate in the criminal justice system. Victims' rights are ever evolving and vary in provision across Arizona. Services are not always available to meet all victims' needs. And populations with special vulnerabilities—the elderly, victims with disabilities, human trafficking victims, children, teens, and victims from racial minorities—often fall through the cracks. If we are to serve *every victim, every time*, all Arizonians must do their part.

We invite you to take part in all events during the week to show support and commitment in helping victims heal and move forward.

Phoenix

Monday, April 23, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. - The Governor's Office will host a ceremony kicking off the week. The Governor, Attorney General, Supreme Court Vice Chief Justice, and Arizona Department of Corrections Director will speak. Governor Napolitano will present her *Triumph over Tragedy Award* to Hilary Griffith, Miss Arizona 2006. The event will pay tribute to crime victims and survivors who have joined together to support and promote victims' rights and services. The location is the Sate Capitol, Executive tower, First Floor Lobby 1700 W. Washington Street in Phoenix.

Thursday, April 26, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. - The Office of the Attorney General - Office of Victim Services will honor Arizona's crime victims by presenting awards in recognition of those who have excelled in their service for victims of crime at the annex of the Capital Center Building, 15 S. 15th Avenue. Attorney General Goddard will present his *Spirit of Compassion* award to two dentists and a lab owner who provided more that \$100,000 worth of care to a group of patients who were left high and dry by a dental practiced that defrauded them. Dr. Louis Core, Dr. Bradley Sandvik and Doug Stegman will be recognized for their selfless compassion.

Tucson

Wednesday, April 25, 2007 at 10:00 a.m. - The Office of the Attorney General will honor staff and recognize specific efforts in assisting crime victims. The location is the North Building Room 222, 400 West Congress Street in Tucson.

National

The Office for Victims of Crime will hold two events in Washington, D.C., leading up to National Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 22-28 2007.

Thursday, April 19, 2007 6:30-7:30 p.m.- National Observance and Candlelight Ceremony
U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 1615 H Street NW., Washington, D.C.
Featured Speaker: Mark Lunsford, father of Jessica Marie Lunsford and founder of Jessica Marie Lunsford Foundation

Friday, April 20, 2007 2:30-4:30 p.m.- Awards Ceremony
Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, D.C.

For various events across the country, please view the OVC online calendar at <http://ovc.ncjrs.gov/ovccalendar/default.asp>.

Note from the Director

During National Victims' Rights Week, we come together to recognize and commemorate people who through no fault of their own have been victimized by crime. The trauma from victimization can be devastating but we are fortunate in Arizona to have a network of agencies in all 15 counties that provide service and support to tens of thousands of victims annually. Arizona has long been a pacesetter in victims' rights, with our Constitutional Victims' Rights Amendment ratified by the electorate in 1990. We are one of only 13 states that monitors compliance and enforces statutory rights, including the right to be treated with fairness, respect and dignity, the right to be heard in court, and the right to receive prompt restitution.

As we prosecute cases, we find that people's knowledge of the criminal justice system is influenced heavily by television shows like *CSI* or *Law and Order*. Reflection on early TV shows like *Perry Mason* or *Dragnet* illuminates that defendants' rights have been repeated over and over: "innocent until proven guilty", "the right to a speedy trial", and the *Miranda Warning*. These rights are critical to our justice system, but so are the rights of crime victims and society is slowly learning that these rights exist. Unless you become a crime victim it is unlikely that you know your rights, but nearly everyone knows defendants' rights even though they will never be a criminal defendant.

What can we do, short of writing a television show? We can and must continue to advocate for victims' rights individually and collectively. We can communicate through our community and e-mail networks that victims' rights are equally important as defendants' rights. We can ask our friends, family and colleagues to join the effort, to become part of the movement and maybe some day we will see a television show that conveys a message that crime victims have rights and must be treated with fairness, respect and dignity by everyone in the system, every step of the way.



The Victims' Rights Brief is published by the Arizona Attorney General's Office of Victim Services, which remains wholly responsible for its content. The goal in generating the Brief is to promote justice and healing for crime victims by sharing information and fostering sensitivity within the justice system. Questions regarding content can be directed to Mel Williams at (602) 542-8409. To learn more about victims' rights via the internet, email us at victimrights@azag.gov or visit us at www.azag.gov.