



U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Justice Programs

Office for Victims of Crime

Washington, D.C. 20531

Dear Colleagues and Friends:

This is truly a landmark year for crime victims and survivors and those who serve them. Twenty-five years ago, President Ronald W. Reagan declared the first National Crime Victims' Rights Week in 1981 and soon after issued an Executive Order that established the President's Task Force on Victims of Crime. The 25th Anniversary of National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVRW)—April 10 to 16, 2005—is dedicated to the memory of President Reagan, who was truly a pioneer in promoting victims' rights and services through public policy and program development initiatives. In addition, he had a strong national vision that, for the first time, articulated the plight of victims.

The theme of the Silver Anniversary of National Crime Victims' Rights Week is "Justice Isn't Served Until Crime Victims Are." This simple yet powerful message focuses attention on victims' needs for justice, for comprehensive services to help them cope in the aftermath of crime, and for the right to be treated with dignity and compassion by our criminal and juvenile justice systems and society.

Many exciting new resources are offered in this year's Resource Guide, including an "At-a-Glance" summary with key tips to promote NCVRW; a "Paving the Path to Justice" document that highlights the field's most significant accomplishments since 1981; tips for public awareness that describe innovative activities sponsored by communities in 2004 that received NCVRW funding support from the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC); six public service posters that highlight this year's theme and OVC's vision of "Putting Victims First;" and all NCVRW camera-ready artwork on CD.

OVC is grateful to Justice Solutions, Inc., for developing the 2005 Resource Guide, a component of the National Public Awareness and Education Campaign coordinated by Justice Solutions with support from OVC.

Please review the Resource Guide in full so you can maximize the many valuable resources it offers. You may want to consider coordinating efforts to commemorate NCVRW with victims and survivors, victim advocates, and justice and allied professionals in your community and state.

When signing the proclamation that declared the first National Crime Victims' Rights Week, President Reagan said: "We need a renewed emphasis on, and an enhanced sensitivity to the rights of crime victims...it is time all of us paid greater heed to the plight of victims."

I know you join OVC in continuing to answer President Reagan's call put forth in 1981 and remain committed to addressing victims' rights and needs.

Sincerely,



John W. Gillis
Director