



Arizona Attorney General Kris Mayes Office of Victim Services

# Victims' Rights Brief

For Arizona's Justice System Administrators, Practitioners and Advocates



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# National Crime Victims' Rights Week

## Survivor Voices: Elevate. Engage. Effect Change

This collaborative event is held annually to recognize National Crime Victims' Rights Week and to honor the outstanding achievements and tireless efforts of those serving victims of crime in Arizona. This year's event was held on April 25th, 2023 at the Orpheum Theatre.



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## Distinguished Service Awards

On behalf of the Arizona Attorney General's Office, individuals were awarded by Attorney General Kris Mayes, Distinguished Service Awards for their outstanding work with crime victims.

- **Advocacy and Direct Services:** This award recognizes an individual or group of individuals who has evidenced passion and perseverance in facilitating victim justice and healing by both promoting and ensuring victims' legal rights, as well as crucial services to meet their needs for recovery from the shattering effects of crime.
- **Leadership:** This individual or an organization has exercised principles and practices of effective leadership, thereby serving as a model or setting an example for others.
- **Innovative Practices:** An individual, group of individuals, or an organization may receive this award for developing programs to serve victims in a new way, providing services where none previously existed, or used technology to assist victims.
- **Courage in Action:** This award recognizes a crime victim or survivor who has exhibited perseverance or determination with his or her own victimization by creating positive systemic change on behalf of other victims.

If you have questions, suggestions, or an idea for an article, please contact Ryan Clark at (602) 542-8848 or by email at [Ryan.clark@azag.gov](mailto:Ryan.clark@azag.gov)

# Distinguished Service Award Winners

## Advocacy & Direct Services

### Clarissa Meda

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)



Clarissa Meda currently serves as a Victim Services Specialist for Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) - Arizona. In her short time with MADD, Clarissa exceeded expectations by juggling a large case load, providing the highest quality of services to each case and by establishing a victim self-care support group for victims. Her extensive knowledge and passion for learning allowed Clarissa to understand how challenging it is for victims of crime to intentionally put their health and well-being first. The ability to think outside the box and create a safe space for victims exemplifies her passion for helping others and building strong relationships. Clarissa's previous work as a Community Service Officer with the Tucson Police Department taught her a different side of crime that sparked her passion for wanting to work directly with victims. Through persistent practice of compassion and understanding, Clarissa can accomplish her primary goal of ensuring that each victim knows they are not alone. Clarissa strives to go the extra mile not only for victims of crime, but in finding ways to better herself as she has recently become certified in Trauma Informed Advocacy. Clarissa is already onto her next knowledge enhancement of obtaining a Graduate Certificate in Mental Health and Wellness with an emphasis in Grief and Bereavement. Clarissa is an excellent example of a compassionate, knowledgeable advocate for victims and MADD is very fortunate to have her.

As a Student Services Advocate for the Vail Unified School District for the past 19 years, Gloria Bernal demonstrates an unwavering passion for mental health and well-being during and after crime and crisis. In addition to her time as a Student Services Advocate, Gloria devotes her nights, weekends and holidays to serving as a Volunteer Crisis Advocate with the Pima County Attorney's Office, Victim Services Division. Being predominantly devoted to helping students, families, and educators, Gloria offers early intervention services to connect youth to necessary resources before the possible onset of crime. Coming from a field of social work, Gloria knows the ins and outs of advocacy and will stop at no lengths to provide the assistance her clients need and deserve in both of her roles. Gloria receives high commendations from her peers at the Pima County Attorney's Office for exemplifying advocacy shown through attuned needs-assessment skills, the ability to co-regulate, and her thoroughness in explaining victims' options. Having volunteered with the Crisis Team for 6 years now, Gloria is a thoughtful mentor and leader to less experienced team members and confidently empowers them to be better advocates for victims. Gloria has been recognized as a beacon for resources and problem solving and has received notable praise from colleagues and victims alike for her genuine, exemplary, victim-centered approach. In the efforts to prevent victimization, provide services to crime victims and guide other advocates, Gloria stands as a compassionate pillar to connecting each and every crime victim with the resources they need within our community. Leading our community one day at a time

## Leadership Gloria Bernal

Vail Unified School District & Pima County  
Attorney's Office Crisis Team



## Innovative Practices Post-Conviction Video Workgroup



The Post-Conviction Video Workgroup (PCVW) was established in 2021 and has been a mainstay in addressing confusion in the Post-Conviction phase of the criminal justice system. The workgroup is comprised of partners from the AZ Attorney General's Office, the AZ Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation & Reentry, the Maricopa County Attorney's Office, the AZ Department of Juvenile Corrections, Maricopa County Juvenile Probation, the AZ Crime Victims' Rights Law Group and the AZ Bar Foundation. Oftentimes, victims are not regularly informed or prepared for the process of opting-in for post-conviction notification, nor understanding what that means and by doing so what rights and services they will receive. The PCVW has worked to close the gap between the pre- and post-conviction phases of the justice system. The PCVW created straightforward, yet comprehensive animated videos that walk a victim through the criminal and juvenile post-conviction process in an effort to explain how to opt-in for notification, as well as each agency's responsibility for victims' rights after sentencing. Technology was utilized in an innovative manner to ensure these videos are engaging and provide easy to understand information about the complicated post-conviction process. The criminal and juvenile justice system videos, *After Sentencing: Now What?* and *After Disposition: Now What?*, are being employed statewide to not only educate victims, but to ensure advocates also understand this process. Innovation is forever a key component to helping victims and the Post-Conviction Video Workgroup is an outstanding example of just that.

### Post-Conviction Video Workgroup Members:

(Pictured Left to Right)

Cathleen Cole - AZ Bar Foundation / Erica Williams - Maricopa County Attorney's Office / Dan Levey - AZ Crime Victim Rights Law Group / Kirstin Flores - AGO Office of Victim Services / Amy Bocks - AGO Office of Victim Services / Ashtyn Buechler - AGO Office of Victim Services / Gretchen McClellan-Singh - Formerly with AZ Department of Corrections, Rehabilitation & Reentry / Chris Andersen - AZ Department of Juvenile Corrections / Daniel Torres - Maricopa County Juvenile Probation / (Not Pictured) Chris Groninger - AZ Bar Foundation

As a survivor herself, Memory Dawn Long Chase is an advocate for the people and a truth teller in the field of Victim Services. Her current work with the Southwest Indigenous Women's Coalition and past work with the Arizona Coalition to End Sexual and Domestic Violence has allowed her to delve into her passion of helping victims of crime. Memory has spent much of her career advocating for victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking. Grounded in her Native American heritage as a member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, Memory displays a natural cadence with her ability to create strong connections with typically underserved victims. Working with indigenous communities and drawing on personal experience of being a victim herself, has given her a unique perspective on how to address and respond to all forms of violence, as well as how to educate community members on the dynamics within Native communities. This mentoring experience has given Memory a voice and passion for policy change in Arizona. In addition to her dedication to crime victims, Memory takes her home life as a single mother to the next level by implementing her close knit relationship with her children into her commitment for advocacy and service. She hopes to use her first-hand experience as a victim, professional knowledge, and formal education to advocate for her Native relatives. Memory believes that this work is her calling and will continue working to make communities safer for all people. Memory is a forever advocate and is truly deserving as her courage is always being put into action.

## Courage in Action Memory Dawn Long Chase

Southwest Indigenous Women's Coalition



# OVS Outreach and Education

Registration for FY23 Victims' Rights Basic and Advanced presentations is open through July.

## Basic Victims Rights Training

This presentation is highly recommended for employees new to victims' rights or for anyone who needs a refresher. Content covers fundamental information about victims' rights for adult and juvenile crimes in Arizona.

June 21st, 2023  
July 18th, 2023  
9am - 3pm


## Advanced Victims Rights Training

This presentation is for experienced victim services providers, Basic Victims' Rights graduates, and anyone interested in gaining a deeper understanding of victims' rights in the state of Arizona.

June 22nd, 2023  
July 19th, 2023  
9am - 12pm

To register visit our website or the link below:

[Victims' Rights Outreach and Education | Arizona Attorney General \(azag.gov\)](https://www.azag.gov/victims-rights-outreach-and-education)



**Arizona Attorney General's  
Office of Victim Services  
Information**

The Arizona Attorney General's Office is dedicated to a system of justice that is inclusive of crime victims and will remain vigilant in striving to provide the most efficient and effective service to the people of Arizona. The services provided to crime victims and the technical assistance and support provided to criminal justice agencies and other service providers is the responsibility of the Office of Victim Services.

Phoenix Victim Service's Office:

**Mainline: 602-542-4911**

**Fax: 602-542-8453**

2005 N. Central Avenue, Phoenix, AZ,  
85004

Tucson Victim Service's Office:

**Mainline: 520-628-6459**

**Fax: 520-628-6566**

400 W Congress, S-315, Tucson, AZ,  
85701



For more information and resources about the Arizona Attorney General's Office, please visit: [azag.gov](https://www.azag.gov)