

# VICTIMS' RIGHTS BRIEF

for Arizona's Justice System Administrators, Practitioners, and Advocates

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## Office of Victim Services Welcomes New Director

*A letter from the Director:*

On October 6, 2003, I was given a tremendous opportunity to work with the victim service's community in Arizona when I was appointed as the Director of the Office of Victim Services for the Arizona Attorney General's Office. The majority of my professional life has been in public service and criminal justice. Having recently relocated to Arizona from Maryland, I had hoped to once again contribute in that way. Not only was I grateful for the position and the opportunity to work in the Office of Attorney General, but I received a heart-warming welcome from the staff as well as those of you I have had the chance to meet. Thank you for that, it has meant a great deal.

I'll share my professional background which may help in understanding my experiences in working with victims and with others on issues of victimization and re-victimization. With a degree in law enforcement and corrections, and having just started law school at night at the University of Maryland, I became a police officer in Howard County, Maryland in 1974. Yes, that was the time that many law enforcement agencies were just hiring women! After two years working in patrol, I became a detective investigating crimes against persons which included homicides, rapes and child abuse. After completing law school, I became a prosecutor with the Baltimore County State's Attorney's Office. Ultimately, I was working in the Child Abuse/Sexual Offense Unit and within a few years, returned to Howard County to work in that State's Attorney's Office which I did until 1984. After a short period of private practice, I joined the Howard County Solicitor's Office and did defense litigation, representing the county and county officials and employees when they were sued civilly. I also provided legal advice to the police department and Human Rights Commission.

In 1994, I ran for office and in January, 1995, became the State's Attorney for Howard County and served two terms, ending in January, 2003. A hallmark of our administration was the elevation of victims rights within the office by bringing the coordinator of that unit to the senior staff table and expanding the staff to serve victims of juvenile and misdemeanor crime as well as felony cases. I also gained a governor's appointment to the Maryland State Board of Victim Services where I served for six years. As member of the Board, I worked on our annual state-wide memorial service and with the training committee, where we planned for a certification process for victim advocates. We also developed witness protection fund guidelines and implemented an automated victim notification system.

I served on the Board of our county's Rape Crisis Center, Family & Sexual Violence Coordinating Council and Grassroots, our 24-hour crisis hotline and shelter. As a member of the Maryland Sentencing Commission, along with other victim advocates, we were able to add to the sentencing worksheet information regarding compliance with victims' rights

In looking at the victims' rights movement in Arizona, the constitutional amendment and resulting statutory implementation, I have to be impressed. I recognize how progressive Arizona has been in this arena and the commitment by so many victims' rights advocates to promote positive change within the criminal justice system is commendable. My vision for the Office of Victim Services is that we continue to facilitate justice and healing to crime victims that our office serves. Last year, our office provided assistance to 10,252 victims of crime. I also look to increase awareness and compliance with victims' rights by supporting criminal and juvenile justice agencies in their implementation of their victims' rights programs. I am pleased with the collaborative efforts thus far in Arizona when it comes to victims' rights. As director, I will certainly continue to foster such efforts in any way possible. Our office continues to build in expertise and skill. We have two offices in Arizona (Phoenix and Tucson) and currently have seven victim advocates who provide direct assistance to victims of crime throughout Arizona. Two advocates

*A letter from the Director continued...*

specialize in restitution cases and assist victims in collecting the restitution that they are owed. Another component of OVS is our Victims' Rights Funding Program and Victims' Rights Enforcement Program. These programs are operated by our Victims' Rights Fund Administrator Kirstin Flores and Victims' Rights Enforcement Officer Sarah Lynne Vasquez. Lastly, OVS' exceptional Victims' Rights Training Program is managed by our Victims' Rights Trainer. Recently, Sarah Lynne moved into the Enforcement Officer position to focus on compliance issues; Many of you have had the chance to meet Sarah Lynne as she has worked as the Office's trainer and traveled across the state in that capacity visiting with many victim service practitioners. In late November, we will have a new trainer on board and expect, with all positions filled, to have a successful 2004. We are looking forward to working with you this coming year; please contact us if we can be of assistance in any way possible.

Marna McLendon

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VICTIMS' RIGHT IN PRACTICE  
REGIONAL TRAINING SCHEDULE

Phoenix - January 28, 2004  
Yuma - February 18, 2004  
Lake Havasu - March 3, 2004  
Phoenix - March 24, 2004  
Tucson - April 14, 2004  
Tucson - May 5, 2004  
Flagstaff - May 19, 2004  
ACVS - TBD

Phoenix Advanced - September 15, 2004  
Tucson Advanced - October 20, 2004  
Phoenix Advanced - December 8, 2004

The brochure and registration form will be mailed out to all the criminal justice and non-profit agencies in mid-December. So, save the dates!



**Office of the Arizona Attorney General  
Terry Goddard, Attorney General**

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The *Victims' Rights Brief* is published every other month by the Arizona Attorney General's Office of Victim Services, who remains wholly responsible for its content. The goal in distributing it 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 Marna McLendon, at (602)364-3329. To learn more about