

VICTIMS' RIGHTS BRIEF

For Arizona's Justice System Administrators, Practitioners and Advocates



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The **Victims' Rights Brief** is published by the Office of the Arizona Attorney General, Office of Victim Services. 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.

To learn more about victims' rights visit us at www.azag.gov/victim-services

If you have questions, suggestions or an idea for an article, contact **Colette Chapman** at (602) 542-8848 or email colette.chapman@azag.gov.

The Agency Support Team Goes to Washington!

The Arizona Attorney General's Office of Victim Services Agency Support Team (AST) was recognized nationally when they were presented with the prestigious "Crime Victims' Rights Award" from the U.S. Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime on April 7th in Washington, D. C. The award ceremony is held every year in conjunction with the National Crime Victims' Rights Week. The AST is comprised of four members from the Attorney General's Office of Victim Services: Kirstin Flores, Director; Colette Chapman, State Victims' Rights Administrator: Compliance; Kennesha Jackson, State Victims' Rights Administrator: Funding; and, Alexandra Rucker, State Victims' Rights Administrator: Training.



Pictured (L-R): Alexandra Rucker, Kirstin Flores, Colette Chapman & Kennesha Jackson

The AST has created programs that advance and enforce statewide uniformity and efficiency in following victims' rights in Arizona. The AST has taken a unique approach in ensuring statewide victims' rights compliance by combining state funding, program audits, technical assistance, training, compliance, and collaboration which has resulted in increased dialogue about victims' rights and increased compliance with Arizona's Victims' Bill of Rights and laws governing victims' rights.

In 2016, AST provided over 2,000 technical assistance services to direct service providers. The AST administers the Victims' Rights Fund to 58 criminal justice agencies, which in turn are subject to comprehensive audits to ensure that the agencies are upholding victims' rights and that services are being provided to victims. These audits allow the funded agencies to more successfully ensure victims' rights and evidence compliance, and allow the AST staff to communicate and institute best practices around the state. *(Continued on Page 2)*

(Continued from Page 1) Members of the AST have a comprehensive picture of statewide issues related to victims' rights due to the interconnection of the programs. Because of this distinctive approach, the AST has developed trainings tailored to specific issues and different agency types in addition to providing Basic and Advanced Victims' Rights training curriculum. In 2016, 72 training sessions were administered to over 1,500 participants including victim advocates, support staff, prosecutors, defense attorneys, law enforcement, judges, and probation.

The AST also works with victims who believe their rights have been violated and to help agencies improve their services. Finally, the AST supports collaboration by chairing the Victims' Rights Advisory Committee which consists of victims' rights providers from various systems and successfully makes legislative changes, identifies best practices, addresses problems with sentencing, and more.

The AST members have advanced victims' rights services in Arizona and increased compliance thanks largely to their knowledge, motivation, collaboration, high quality customer service, and leadership skills.



Pictured (L-R): Alexandra Rucker & Colette Chapman; Senator John McCain (R-AZ); Kirstin Flores & Kennesha Jackson; Paul Ahler, Arizona Attorney General's Office, Criminal Division Chief Counsel

ARIZONA ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE - DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARDS 2017

On April 4, 2017 Attorney General Mark Brnovich presented the Arizona Attorney General's Distinguished Service Awards to five recipients from across the state. Winners were individuals and groups who demonstrated an extraordinary dedication and vision in serving victims of crime.

ADVOCACY/DIRECT SERVICES *CHANDLER POLICE DEPARTMENT VICTIM SERVICES UNIT*

Although the Chandler Police Department Victim Services Unit (CPVS) was formed less than two years ago, their passion and dedication has already had a great impact on the community. In September 2015, the three person CPVS unit began a journey of cooperation, communication and compassion, working alongside patrol officers and detectives alike, to bring essential crisis services and knowledge of victims' rights to crime victims, while also meeting the needs of law enforcement. The CPVS educates victims on the criminal justice process, assists with safety measures and provides resources for emotional and physical healing – oftentimes working long hours, day and night, to ensure that victims receive every bit of assistance the CPVS can offer. They have accompanied the Vice and Trafficking Unit on undercover operations, standing by to help human trafficking victims and encourage them to accept aid and assistance to “get out of the life”; provided invaluable assistance to domestic violence victims such as food, clothing, shelter and child care; and acted as a liaison with agencies such as the FBI and DCS on behalf of victims' families. The CPVS also plays an active role in providing awareness of and training about domestic violence and child abuse to various service providers in the community; and having a bi-lingual member of the unit has been instrumental in bridging the gap between the department and the large Hispanic community. According to one detective, the CPVS has been “Invaluable in assisting [him] over the past several years...by providing excellent services to victims...I'm certain many [of our] investigations would not have been successful if it were not for the assistance by the Victim Services Unit.” The work of the CPVS unit has ensured that all victims in their community can be certain they will have someone to guide, assist and lead them on their road to recovery.



Pictured (L-R): Attorney General Mark Brnovich; Kathleen Cain, Veronica Vierra & Denise Allen, Chandler Police Department Victim Services Unit; Commander David LeVoy & Chief Sean Duggan, Chandler Police Department

ADVOCACY/DIRECT SERVICES

NOEMI ELIZALDE, PATIENT ADVOCATE, MARIPOSA COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER

Working with victims of crime is never easy, and in a rural, border community like Nogales, AZ, limited resources make such work especially challenging. But Noemi Elizalde, a Patient Advocate at the Mariposa Community Health Center, has faced this challenge head on, by providing crisis intervention, short-term case management, and resources to crime victims. Noemi endeavors to assist in the overall well-being of her victims through actions such as transporting them to crisis centers outside of Santa Cruz County for needed services not available locally, accompanying victims to court and advocating on their behalf for financial and legal resources and appropriate assistance. This is not a requirement of her job, but Noemi is determined to make sure clients connect with a resource to meet their medical and mental health needs. Noemi is the Co-Chair of the Community Coordinated Response Task Force (CCRT), where she volunteers and proposes ways to better serve victims in the community. She also provides education and trainings about sexual assault and domestic violence both internally and in the community, and led efforts to organize and present a conference on human trafficking. Within her workplace, Noemi leads the “Mariposa Cares” project, which sponsors children and their families served by the Health Center during the holidays by providing food, toys and warm clothes to families in need. This is only one of many opportunities that Noemi has taken to effect change to further assist victims. In just four short years Noemi has demonstrated tremendous passion, dedication and incredible effort for serving victims, and her impact is felt every day.



Pictured (L-R): Attorney General Mark Brnovich; Noemi Elizalde, Mariposa Community Health Center

SERVICE COORDINATION

ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS, OFFICE OF VICTIM SERVICES

The Office of Victim Services (OVS) at the Arizona Department of Corrections (ADC) has long been providing essential victim services at the post-conviction stage – and have now gone a step further, taking the lead in coordinating services between the OVS and the multiple prosecution agencies across the state. Many victims wish to stay involved with their case throughout the entire process, and while the OVS team supports and assists victims during post-conviction parole, clemency and community supervision proceedings at the Board of Executive Clemency (BOEC), these proceedings can sometimes be even more intense and emotional for the victim than the original trial. Confusion or uncertainty about sentencing/release information, the intensity of defendant participation and the frequent, often last-minute schedule changes for the hearings are particularly difficult to handle. While the OVS is always there, when a representative from the original prosecuting agency is also involved, many of these fears and concerns can be alleviated for victims. As a large step forward to coordinate communications between agencies, the OVS has developed a list of specific contacts at each county attorney’s office they can call upon for assistance with various tasks. Prosecuting agencies can assist with: preparing the victim for the level of defendant participation, coordinating discussions with the assigned prosecutor, and obtaining input and statements from the victims and their supporters to be included in the proceeding. While these may seem to be small accomplishments, this level of coordination between agencies – correctional and prosecutorial – is unprecedented. The ADC OVS continues to work with other agencies in the state to improve coordination even more – and the collaborative experiences that have been set in motion have been invaluable to victims. Appreciation for this new coordination has been expressed by victims, the BOEC and prosecutors alike, and has been a positive influence on the culture of these particular post-conviction hearings.



Pictured (L-R): Attorney General Mark Brnovich; Jan Upchurch, Jaquel Moody, Christine Osborne, Brian Bylbie, Edwin Gonzalez & Linda Stanley, Arizona Department of Corrections, Office of Victim Services

INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

EL MIRAGE POLICE DEPARTMENT VICTIM ASSISTANCE UNIT

Developed only five years ago, the El Mirage Police Department Victim Assistance Unit has been a product of innovative practices and ideas since its inception. Initial development was the result of an internal committee, and in 2012 a single, part-time advocate was hired to primarily serve domestic violence victims. It quickly became apparent that more resources were needed in order to serve all victims in El Mirage, and the department secured grant funding, along with additional city funding, to create a full service program. From the beginning, the Victim Assistance Unit has distinguished itself by utilizing a collaborative approach between the Police Department and the City Prosecutor's Office, ensuring that victims do not have any lapse in services when a case transitions from investigation to prosecution. Technology has also played a large role in providing effective services and is part of their innovative approach. One such example is the process of electronically transferring protective orders directly from the court to the police department for service, which not only removes the burden from victims of having the order served, but also provides mandatory notification of service to the victims. The Victim Assistance Unit also provides support and technical assistance to other criminal justice agencies in the state that look to improve their service levels, such as the Buckeye Police Department, the Surprise Prosecutor's Office and the Attorney General's Office; as well as being invited to assist the FBI in a multi-component, multi-year program aimed at improving law enforcement victim services. Their rapid growth, embrace of technology, and unique, multi-agency coordination approach has made them an innovative leader in victim services.



Pictured (L-R): Attorney General Mark Brnovich; Iva Rody, Adaly Armenta, Frances Kuehler, Raquel Strnad & Janice Taylor, El Mirage Police Department Victim Assistance Unit; Assistant Chief Laura Liuzzo, El Mirage Police Department

LEADERSHIP

RANDALL UDELMAN, FOUNDER/PRINCIPAL, ARIZONA CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS LAW GROUP

Randall ("Randy") Udelman has dedicated many years of his legal career to providing pro bono legal services to victims of crime, and his dedication and leadership have made a lasting impact on the lives of countless victims in Arizona. Randy is the founder and principal attorney of the Arizona Crime Victims' Rights Law Group, which works with crime victims as an attorney of record throughout any stage of the criminal justice process. Randy has taken it upon himself to find new and innovative ways to assist victims, as well as educate others in the criminal justice field on how they can better assist crime victims. He also collaborates with multiple agencies providing legal services and enforcing victims' rights throughout the state, and openly shares his legal tactics with other attorneys who seek to understand the emotional and financial impact of victimization. Randy seeks unique ways to obtain civil justice, by applying existing statutes innovatively to aid in financial recovery for victims, and has also assisted with drafting legislation regarding numerous restitution issues, with the hope of amending the restitution statutes with reasonable and sustainable changes favoring victims. Randy has been a true leader in not only bringing victims' rights issues to the consciousness of the private bar, but in tirelessly advocating and fighting for victims and their rights, and encouraging other attorneys to do the same. He epitomizes the spirit of this award by being a true trailblazer for victims and encouraging others to follow in his path.



Pictured (L-R): Attorney General Mark Brnovich; Randall Udelman, Arizona Crime Victims' Rights Law Group