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*Executive Director*

OVS NewsLetter

March 2, 2016

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Upcoming Events

* + [WebEx Online Trainings Available](https://copa.webex.com/mw0306ld/mywebex/default.do?siteurl=copa&service=6)Compensation Related: Basic, Advanced-Counseling, Transportation Expenses, Restitution and much more!

Credits towards VOCA/RASA/VOJO training requirements are available for all sessions (unless indicated otherwise in the session description). To receive training credits: 1) you must be logged into the session and 2) the WebEx application must be on your computer for the entire duration of the session. As the OVS recognizes that emergencies may arise and you may not be able to attend the entire session, there is no prohibition against attending part of a session (although training credits will not be given in that instance).

* + [Training/Networking Opportunities](http://www.pccd.pa.gov/Victim-Services/Pages/OVS-Training-Networking-Opportunities.aspx)
	+ [Additional RASA/VOJO/VOCA Approved Training](http://www.pccd.pa.gov/Victim-Services/Pages/RASA-VOCA-VOJO-Trainings.aspx)
	+ [2016 Pennsylvania District Attorneys Institute Victim Services Training](http://www.pccd.pa.gov/Victim-Services/Documents/2016%20Victim%20Services%20Training%20Save%20The%20Date.pdf)

# Governor’s Victim Service Pathfinder Awards

Submissions are now being accepted for the 2016 Governor’s Victim Service Pathfinder Awards!

A Governor’s Victim Service Pathfinder Award is the most prestigious award that Pennsylvania gives to a victim service professional or program. The award may be presented to one program and up to seven individuals who have made notable contributions to the program for which they work, the community they serve, or the field of victim services.

The Governor’s Victim Service Pathfinder Award process is slightly different on non-conference years. Normally, the awards would be presented at the Pathways Conference. However since the conference will not be held this year, the awards can be presented at an event of the nominator and winner’s preference in their own community.  This will provide an opportunity to have the award winners recognized in their own community where their elected officials, board members, family, friends and peers can easily attend.  The award presentations can be held anytime with the event being as small or large as you would like. It could be held during a local Victims’ Rights Week Event, at an Annual Board Meeting, a special event, a County Commissioners Meeting or a presentation at your office. The nominator is responsible for coordinating the event and notifying PCCD of the date and location. A PCCD staff member or a Victims’ Services Advisory Committee (VSAC) member will attend the event to present the award to the recipient.

The selection process for recipients of the Governor’s Victim Service Pathfinder Award is highly competitive. Therefore, to be considered, each nomination must meet the criteria and eligibility exactly as outlined.

Submitting a Nomination

Pathfinder nominations will be performed via an electronic submission process. Applications can be submitted by clicking [here](https://www.conferenceabstracts.com/cfp2/login.asp?EventKey=GJUUPPMT). Nominations must be submitted by 11:59pm Tuesday, March 8, 2016. We encourage you to review the following documents on criteria and eligibility:

[Nomination Packet Requirements](http://www.pccd.pa.gov/Victim-Services/Documents/Nomination%20Packet%20Requirements%20revised%202016.pdf)

[Criteria and Eligibility for Award Categories](http://www.pccd.pa.gov/Victim-Services/Documents/Criteria%20and%20eligibility%20Revised%20feb%202016.pdf)

[Nomination Packet Checklist](http://www.pccd.pa.gov/Victim-Services/Documents/Nomination%20Packet%20Checklist%20Revised%20Feb%202016.pdf)

For questions regarding the nominations, contact:

Madelyn Roman-Scott

e-mail: mromanscot@pa.gov

Phone: (717) 265-8455

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# Reviewers Needed For VOCA Competitive Process

In March 2016, PCCD will release its federal Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) 2016-2019 Competitive Solicitation. The goal of this competitive VOCA solicitation is to promote new or enhanced service delivery for crime victims in Pennsylvania. PCCD is recruiting volunteers to review and score the incoming applications.

For background information, the federal VOCA Program was established by the federal Victims of Crime Act of 1984. Its purpose is to provide services which respond to the physical, emotional and financial needs of crime victims by helping them stabilize their lives after the victimization, assisting them in navigating the criminal and juvenile justice systems and providing them with a safe and secure environment. In Pennsylvania, VOCA funding supports direct services like hotlines, crisis intervention, hospital accompaniment, shelter, individual counseling, support groups and therapy.

The money to fund the VOCA Program comes from a dedicated, non-lapsing Crime Victims Fund at the federal level, which is fed by criminal fines and penalties levied against criminals convicted of federal crimes. In 2015, an unprecedented amount of VOCA funding was released from the federal Crime Victims Fund to the states. For Pennsylvania, this meant an increase of annual VOCA funding from $17 Million to over $80 Million.

This is the first time in over a decade that PCCD has had sufficient VOCA funding to foster the development of enhanced direct services for victims of crime and encourage new, eligible victim service providers to apply for funding and we anticipate a robust response. To meet this need, we are actively recruiting volunteers with expertise in the criminal justice system, juvenile justice system, victim services, human services-related fields, mental health treatment or counseling services, or who have extensive experience in scoring grants, to assist us in this review. Please note that if you currently receive VOCA funding but would be interested in scoring, you would be assigned to review applications that would not pose a conflict of interest and would be outside of your county.

Volunteer reviewers will be grouped into small teams of 5-6 people that will be led by a PCCD staff person. Confirmed reviewers will receive training from PCCD to prepare them to review the competitive VOCA applications. Each team will be assigned no more than 17 applications to review and score from mid-May to mid-June.

After the deadline passes for all reviewers to enter their scores into PCCD’s Egrants System, PCCD staff will coordinate Score Reconciliation WebEx Meetings/Conference Calls to bring each review team together for the purpose of discussing scores, collecting feedback, and gaining consensus regarding the applications that the team will be recommending for funding. The Reconciliation Meetings/Conference Calls typically run 2-3 hours at most for each team, and will take place during the remainder of June and into July.

If you are able to volunteer your time to assist us, we ask you to confirm this by responding to Kathy Buckley at kabuckley@pa.gov no later than March 31, 2016. Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to hearing from you.

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# PDAI Victim Services Training News

Register now for:

**Serving Victims Through the Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy**
Wednesday, March 23, 2016  9:00 am to 4:30 pm  registration begins at  9:00 am

The Center for Victims, 5916 Penn Ave, Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Registration fee is $25.00  Scholarships are available.

Pennsylvania's Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy (JJSES) focuses on the enhancement of PA juvenile justice system to achieve its balanced and restorative mission by employing evidence based practices, collecting and analyzing data to measure results, and striving to continuously improve the quality of decisions, services, and programs.  This training will highlight how JJSES supports BARJ and the continued responsibilities of the juvenile justice system to crime victims. In addition, OVA will discuss the Supreme Court ruling that deemed mandatory sentences of life without the possibility of parole unconstitutional for juvenile offenders and what victims can expect whose cases are impacted.

**April 2016 Victim Services Foundational Academy**

Wednesday, April 20 to Friday, April 22  Registration begins at 8:00 am  on Wednesday, April 20

The Atherton Hotel, 125 S, Atherton Street, Sate College, PA 18801

There is **no registration fee** for the Foundational Academy for individuals required to attend.  Individuals not required to attend will be charged a $100 course registration fee.

Registration and additional information for these training is available [here](http://www.pdaa.org/pdai-home/).

**SAVE THE DATE**

**CAC's and Victim Service Agencies Working Together**

Thursday, May 26, 2016  Centre County's Child Advocacy Center and Bonfatto's Restaurant, Bellefonte, PA

**Human Trafficking**Tuesday, June 14  Giant Community Center, Harrisburg, PA

**Serving Victims Through the Juvenile Justice System Enhancement Strategy**

Tuesday, June 21  Philadelphia District Attorney's Office, Philadelphia, PA

**Supporting Domestic Violence Victims**Thursday, September 8  The Atherton Hotel, State College, PA

**Trauma and Post Traumatic Growth**Thursday, October 6   The Giant Community Center, Harrisburg, PA

**October Victim Services Foundational Academy**Wednesday, October 12 to Friday, October 14 The Atherton Hotel, State College, PA

If you have questions, please contact Donna Hull, Victim Services Training/ SAVIN Consultant at 484-947-4837 or donna@dhullconsulting.com.

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# 24th Annual Crime Victims’ Rights Rally

Crime Victims’ Rights Week is being honored April 10-16, 2016. This year’s theme is “Serving Victims. Building Trust. Restoring Hope.” The Crime Victims Alliance of PA will be honoring victims and raising awareness of the rights and interests of crime victims on Monday, April 11th at the Harrisburg State Capitol. This event will be held at 11AM in the Capitol Rotunda. You will hear from victims, survivors, a District Attorney, Pennsylvania’s Victim Advocate and others. All are welcomed to attend.

There will also be tables set up with information from state agencies that provide assistance to victims. If you are an agency that works with victims and would like a table at this year’s Rally please contact Monica Iskric at msiskr@ship.edu by March 25th.

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# OVA Crime Victims' Rights Post-Rally Session

Monday April 11, 2016; 12:30 PM

Room 16E Capitol Building Harrisburg PA.

This event takes place immediately following the Crime Victims Alliance of Pennsylvania Sponsored Rally held in the Capitol Rotunda at 11:00AM

WHERE ARE MY SEX OFFENDERS NOW? PENNSYLVANIA’S INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO SORNA.

This session will provide an overview of the innovative partnership with the Office of Victim Advocate and the PA State Police to provide timely and sensitive notification to crime victims when a sexually violent predator is identified by the courts and falls under the Adam Walsh Act. This partnership has significantly increased the number of victims in PA who are now empowered with tools to assist in their safety.

Please RSVP your attendance to Renee Bressler at rebressler@pa.gov.  A pizza lunch will be provided for those attending the post-rally session. The lunch is sponsored by the House Democratic Caucus.

This has been approved for 2 hours of PCCD annual training hours.

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# OVS Releases 2016 Monitoring Schedule

A copy of the OVS 2016 Monitoring Schedule is now available and has been placed on the PCCD website.  You can access the schedule by clicking [here](http://www.pccd.pa.gov/Victim-Services/Documents/2016%20OVS%20Monitoring%20Schedule%20by%20Staff.pdf).  For those VOCA funded programs that are governed by PCADV and/or PCAR standards and DO NOT receive RASA/VOJO funding or serve “Other” crime victims, desk monitorings have also been scheduled and are shown on this list shaded in blue.

How do I know the exact date I will be monitored?  The assigned PCCD staff monitor will be contacting you and together you can decide upon a date that is best for everyone.

What if I am not on the 2016 Monitoring Schedule and require technical assistance?  Technical assistance is available from PCCD staff.  Please contact Daisy Pagan, Victims’ Services Program Supervisor by calling (717) 265-8516 or by email at dpagan@pa.gov.

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# VCAP Updates – Out of Network Insurance Policy

In cases where a claimant chooses to seek counseling from an out of network provider, VCAP will no longer wait for the claimant’s health insurance company to make a decision on payment. For counseling bills only, VCAP will now process the bills without the explanation of benefits statements so that claimants are able to continue to seek counseling without incurring a financial burden.

However, the claimant will still be advised to submit the bills to their insurance.  Once they receive a health insurance payment/denial, VCAP will need a copy of the explanation of benefits statement.  If the claimant receives a payment from their insurance company, the claimant will need to reimburse VCAP the amount they were paid.

For all other out of network bills (i.e. medical, dental, etc.), the claimant must still submit the bills to their health insurance provider and receive an out-of-network determination prior to VCAP making any payments.

VCAP will continue to require a verbal or written explanation why the claimant chose a provider who does not accept their health insurance.

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# ****Victims Compensation Assistance Program Online Trainings****

The following trainings will be held on March 2, 2016.

Motor Vehicle-Related Crime Expenses Clinic – 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 pm. [Click here](https://copa.webex.com/ec0701lsp13/eventcenter/enroll/join.do?confViewID=3561671102&theAction=detail&confId=3561671102&internalProgramTicketUnList=null&path=program_detail&siteurl=copa) to register.

Myths of Compensation -1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. [Click here](https://copa.webex.com/ec0701lsp13/eventcenter/enroll/join.do?confViewID=3561671478&theAction=detail&confId=3561671478&internalProgramTicketUnList=null&path=program_detail&siteurl=copa) to register.

The following trainings will be held on March 23, 2016.

Basic Compensation - 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 pm. [Click here](https://copa.webex.com/ec0701lsp13/eventcenter/enroll/register.do?formId=0&formType=0&loadFlag=1&siteurl=copa&confId=3565628109&internalProgramTicketUnList=null) to register.

"Wow, That’s Covered by Compensation" - 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. [Click here](https://copa.webex.com/ec0701lsp13/eventcenter/enroll/register.do?formId=0&formType=0&loadFlag=1&siteurl=copa&confId=3565628501&internalProgramTicketUnList=null) to register.

All trainings count towards 1 hour of the required RASA/VOCA/VOJO training hours, except Basic Compensation which counts towards 2 and DAVE training which counts towards 2.15.

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# Victim Assistance Cyber Safety Workshop

The National Organization for Victim Assistance is providing a training on Cyber Safety. The Victim Assistance Cyber Safety Workshop will be held on Thursday, May 12, 2016 from 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

 The training will be held at the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office in the Ray Harley Training Center, Three South Penn Square, Philadelphia, PA. The training is **free,** includes lunch and all materials and is approved for 7 hours of annual PCCD training credit.

Click [here](https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07ec6w5q092f2cabfe&oseq=&c=&ch=) to register.

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# Lethality Assessment Project and Domestic Violence Legislative Initiatives in PA

On March 14th the Crime Victims Alliance of PA will host a training on the Lethality Assessment Project in PA. PCADV has used the Maryland Model to bring Lethality Assessment partnerships to more than 30 counties in PA. Lois Fasnacht, LAP Coordinator, will talk about the Project history; present PA specific findings from the research based tool; discuss issues/challenges unique to PA and identify how all counties can initiate new partnerships and expand existing projects. Ellen Kramer, Legal Director, will share information about legislative initiatives to recognize domestic violence, strangulation and stalking as criminal activities with appropriate grading and sentencing consequences as deserved.

Date: March 14, 2016

Time: 1pm - 3pm (immediately following CVAP General Membership at 12:30pm)

Location: Giant Community Center, Trindle Road, Camp Hill

Contact: Cindy Keeney (ckeeney@adamscounty.us) or Angela Keen (akeenbadjie@gmail.com) to RSVP or ask questions.

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# ****Join Us Around the Table with Dr. Howard Zehr****

Center for Community Peacemaking (CCP) invites you to our 2016 Annual Dinner with the "grandfather of restorative justice," Dr. Howard Zehr on Thursday, April 28th from 5-8:30PM at Shady Maple Banquet Center, East Earl, PA. Join us for a delicious dinner buffet, auction and program featuring restorative justice pioneer Howard Zehr. Tickets are $40 before March 15, $45 thereafter. Get tickets online at [www.AroundtheTable.org](http://www.aroundthetable.org/) or call (717) 397-2404 for more info.

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# [Handbook for Juvenile Justice Professionals and Victim Services Providers](http://www.pachiefprobationofficers.org/docs/VICTIM_SERVICES_HANDBOOK_2016_1.pdf)

Click [here](http://www.pachiefprobationofficers.org/docs/VICTIM_SERVICES_HANDBOOK_2016_1.pdf) for Pennsylvania’s Crime Victims’ Rights and Corresponding Rules of Juvenile Court Procedure.

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# [2014 PA Juvenile Court Dispositions](http://www.pachiefprobationofficers.org/docs/2014_Pennsylvania_Juvenile_Court_Disposition_Report.pdf)

[This](http://www.pachiefprobationofficers.org/docs/2014_Pennsylvania_Juvenile_Court_Disposition_Report.pdf) report provides an overview of juvenile court dispositions in Pennsylvania during 2014 and preceding years, and summarizes juvenile court statistical data provided by county juvenile probation departments.

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# Promoting Protective Factors for Victims of Child Abuse and Neglect: A Guide for Practitioners

[This](https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/victimscan/#.VrtfgzX8Spo.facebook) factsheet presents information from a review of current research on specific protective factors that carry moderate or strong association with improved well-being for victims of child abuse and neglect. Topics include individual skills and capacities that can improve the well-being of children who have been abused or neglected; how parents, guardians, friends, and other adults can contribute to the well-being of these children and youth; strategies for practitioners; and resources for more information. This publication is part of a series of five factsheets for practitioners exploring the importance of protective factors in working with in-risk populations served by the Administration on Children, Youth and Families.

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# Growing List of Colleges Facing Sexual Assault Lawsuits

When six former female students filed a sweeping lawsuit against the University of Tennessee last week, they joined a growing list of high profile legal actions against colleges over how sexual assault allegations are handled, particularly those involving male athletes. Click [here](http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2016/02/20/growing-list-colleges-facing-sexual-assault-lawsuits/80689514/) to read more.

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# A Dangerous Loophole in Federal Law Is Putting Women's Lives At Risk

Experts believe that domestic violence victims are at the highest risk of being killed when leaving an abusive partner. It's long been recognized in the U.S. that domestic violence and guns are a deadly combination. That's why people who have been convicted of domestic violence misdemeanors or who are subject to permanent protective orders can't legally own or buy guns. But a leading group of attorneys from across the country doesn't think federal law goes far enough. Click [here](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/restraining-order-guns_us_56c5f004e4b08ffac127dcb6) to read more.

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# The Year of ‘Enormous Rage’: Number of Hate Groups Rose by 14 percent in 2015

For the first time in five years, the number of hate groups in the United States rose in 2015, according to a new report from the Southern Poverty Law Center, a legal and advocacy organization known among other things for monitoring extremist activity. Click [here](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/acts-of-faith/wp/2016/02/17/hate-groups-rose-14-percent-last-year-the-first-increase-since-2010/?tid=sm_tw) to read more.

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# Faced With Staggering Backlogs of Rape Kits, States Change Testing, Investigations

Seeking to secure justice for thousands of rape victims, about 20 states are moving to test a backlog of unexamined rape kits found in storage rooms in police departments across the country — and change the rules for how rape cases are handled in the future. Click [here](http://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2016/02/17/faced-with-staggering-backlogs-of-rape-kits-states-change-testing-investigations) to read more.

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# The next OVS Newsletter will be published on Wednesday, March 16, 2016. If you would like any training events, fund raisers or notable news published in this newsletter, please submit them to Stacie Brendlinger at sbrendling@pa.gov by Wednesday, March 9, 2016.

You have signed up to receive the OVS Newsletter from the Office of Victims' Services. This newsletter will be sent to you on a biweekly basis via email. If your email address changes or you would like to be removed from the OVS Newsletter distribution list, please contact Stacie Brendlinger at (717) 265-8722 or via email at sbrendling@pa.gov.

Pennsylvania’s [Office of Victims’ Services](http://www.pccd.pa.gov/Victim-Services/Pages/default.aspx)  | 3101 North Front Street | Harrisburg, PA 17110 | (717) 783-0551

[www.pccd.pa.gov](http://www.pccd.pa.gov)

**PA Crime Victims Website**

[www.pcv.pccd.pa.gov](http://www.pcv.pccd.pa.gov)

**Twitter:** [@PaCrimmCom](https://twitter.com/PaCrimeComm)