

Academy Forum

Continuing the Message of the Roper Victim Assistance Academy

A Quarterly Newsletter

Issue #10 - April 2008

Just a Thought

Learn about the critical role a Victim Services Unit plays in Law Enforcement.

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Just a thought...

Victim Advocacy in

Law Enforcement

Debbie Bradley

Being a victim of crime is a traumatic event in someone's life, one that most people are not prepared for. In addition to the pain inflicted upon them by the criminal, they may also experience confusion, frustration, and even heartache having to relive the experience while going through the criminal justice system. Since law enforcement officers are often a victim's first contact with the system, it is imperative for officers to have an understanding on the dynamics of trauma, as well as victims rights, in order to better serve victims and/or survivors of crime.

The Harford County Sheriff's Office Victim Services Unit

The Victim Services Unit of the Harford County Sheriff's Office was created to provide

necessary services and actively assist victims of violent crime. This is accomplished by:

- * providing support and encouragement to victims and/or survivors at the scene of the crime through crisis intervention 24/7, helping them to understand the law enforcement process, whereby allowing the detectives to investigate the crime;
- * to provide victims and survivors information on what resources may be available to them;
- * to guide victims and survivors through the criminal justice system;
- * to ensure that victims are informed of their lawful rights, and that victims who choose, shall have the ability to exercise those rights;
- * to facilitate healing and resolution for victims and survivors through referred support group services and pro bono counseling services.

Law Enforcement Training and the Benefits to Victims

A large part of the responsibilities of the Victim Services Unit is to provide the necessary training to law enforcement recruits and 911 operators during their initial academy training, as well as to senior law enforcement officers during their in-service training on victim

issues. This is extremely important as law enforcement officers are primarily the first on the scene, when victims and survivors are generally in traumatic shock. One particularly important skill law enforcement officers be trained on is the proper techniques in delivering a death notification, as they are usually the people making these notifications. The Victim Services Unit does assist the responding officers, but as this is a one person unit, there are many more times the officers have to go it alone and there is only one opportunity to get it right.



Community Service

Community service is also a critical component of a law enforcement victim services unit.

Helping the community to understand that victims have specific rights and services available to them before a crime occurs helps them to know where to turn in the event they are ever struck with tragic circumstances. Additionally, providing knowledge and resources in advance can also possibly help to prevent the victimization of some.

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EDITOR'S CORNER

Greetings Alumni!

Well Spring has finally arrived! I hope everyone has been enjoying the warmer temperatures and longer days.

Can you believe we are about to embark on our 5th Academy class?! My how time does fly! There are so many exciting things awaiting for our Academy participants, as well as our alumni; however there is so much to do and many people are needed to assist with the Academy preparations, including helping out during the week of the actual Academy - June 2nd-6th. If you are able to help in any way, please send an email to roaam@mac.com with when and how you would like to participate. Let's make our 5th Academy the best so far!

I'm sure you are all very busy right now planning your Crime Victim's Rights Week activities. This is a very busy time for many, but it is a great time to let everyone know about victims rights. Some of the activities that are scheduled are the 19th Annual Maryland Statewide Memorial Service for Crime Victims and Their Families, the Governor's Victim Assistance Awards Luncheon, and the 8th Annual Prison Tour. Please see the "Save the Date" section of the newsletter for further events and details.

I also recently sent out a form via email to each of you to update the contact information for our Alumni Directory. The goal is to publish a directory that will outline the various specializations each of us are knowledgeable in, as well as compile a list of trainings various alumni could lead. Please be sure to take a moment and fill this form out and then return it to me as soon as possible.

I hope you have a wonderful spring season ... thank you for all the hard work that you do!

Wishing you all the best!

Debbie (Creswell) Bradley, Editor

bradleyd@harfordsheriff.org

Web Links

Although we have a virtual library at our fingertips every time we turn on the computer, we often lose sight of the forest through the trees just trying to navigate the world-wide web. So, here are some sites we thought you might find useful ... happy surfing!

Prevent Child Abuse has just released several great documents that study the scope of child abuse and neglect, and highlight recommendations for prevention and child safety. We highly recommend downloading "Time for Reform: Investing in Prevention and Keeping Children Safe at Home at http://www.preventchildabuse.org/about_us/media_releases/pew_kaw_prevention_report_final.pdf, and you can access all related documents at http://www.preventchildabuse.org/about_us/press_room.shtml

The Council of State Governments (CSG) has just published "Improving Responses to People with Mental Illnesses: The Essential Elements of a Mental Health Court" which can be accessed at http://consensusproject.org/mhcp/essential_elements.pdf

The International Association of Chiefs of Police has launched a great new website dedicated to preventing teen drinking and promoting awareness of this important issue. Check it out at <http://letssaveyounglives.org>

Here is a web-cast of a Court of Appeal's motion hearing regarding whether a victim has rights to be informed, present, and heard at a reconsideration hearing - http://www.courts.state.md.us/coappeals/media/2007/coa030608_case87.wmv

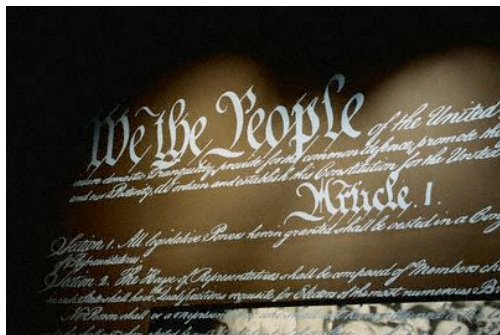
"Ready to Lead: Next Generation Leaders Speak Out" interviewed over 600 leaders of nonprofit organizations, and identified many needs and suggested strategies that can help nonprofit organizations with succession planning. It's a short term report, and well worth reading! You can download a summary and the full report at: http://www.meyerfoundation.org/newsroom/meyer_publications/ready_to_lead

News From the Field

The Maryland Crime Victim Resource Center was recently awarded a \$500,000 grant from the Department of Justice to assist victims of identity theft and fraud. The Center plans to use the money to provide direct assistance to



victims, work with law enforcement agencies to help victims and investigate their cases, and encourage pro bono work by attorneys. The grant was announced by U.S. Attorney Rod J. Rosenstein, who said MCVRC will work with the Maryland Identity Theft Working Group, which coordinates and promotes the investigation and prosecution of identity theft cases in the state, as well as other groups.



Just a thought...

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Above all, we are here to assist victims through the most horrific time of their lives. I believe this is achieved by having a specific knowledge of traumatic response, being empathetic, being a good listener, and being honest with victims and survivors. Going above and beyond is an absolute. Victim Services has to be in your heart and soul.

Debbie Bradley is the Victim Services Coordinator at the Harford County Sheriff's Office.

Save the Date

As the temperatures climb and the days get longer, there are even more great events to add to your calendar!

2008 National Crime Victims' Rights Week

April 13th - 19th, 2008

Theme: "Justice for Victims, Justice for All"

To ensure that you receive your free copy of the 2008 NCVRW Resource Guide and 2008 NCVRW Theme Poster, please sign up at http://puborder.ncjrs.gov/listservs/subscribe_NCVRW.asp

National Observance and Candlelight Ceremony

Thursday, April 10th, 6:30 - 7:30pm; U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 1615 H Street NW, Washington, DC

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Hot Topics

With an increase in international terrorist acts, the likelihood of a U.S. citizen becoming a victim has become greater, and so have the chances that those victims or their families will be contacting victim service providers in the U.S. for assistance. With that in mind, did you know that there is a compensation program that provides financial reimbursement to victims of international terrorism?

The International Terrorism and Victim Expense Reimbursement Program (ITVERP) was authorized by Congress to reimburse eligible victims of international terrorism that occur outside the United States. This program, administered through the U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), was implemented to assist U.S. nationals, U.S. government officers, and employees of the U.S. government (including foreign nationals working for the U.S. government) who become direct victims of international terrorism abroad and who have suffered direct physical or emotional injury or death as a result. Similar to most state victim compensation programs, ITVERP reimburses eligible victims for medical, mental health, and funeral and burial expenses that were incurred as a direct result of a terrorist act. In addition, ITVERP also will reimburse eligible victims for property loss, repair and replacement costs, as well as temporary lodging, transportation, telephone costs, and emergency travel. Costs not covered under this program include: attorneys' fees and legal expenses, lost wages, pain and suffering, and loss of enjoyment of life or loss of consortium.

The criteria for eligibility is that the victim must be a U.S. national, U.S. government officer, or U.S. government employee; have suffered a direct physical or emotional injury as a result of an act of international terrorism; and the act must have occurred on or after December 21, 1998 for which an investigation or prosecution was ongoing or began after April 21, 1996. The filing deadline is 3 years from the effective date of the program, which was October 6, 2006.

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Alumni Updates

It seems like only yesterday when we were all together at the Academy. But in a blink of an eye another year has almost passed us by. Here's just a snapshot of some of the special events and milestones our alums have experienced since we last met...

Bethany Backes (2007) - Bethany is leaving the Maryland Crime Victim Resource Center and has accepted a position with the U. S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice as a Social Science Analyst in the Violence and Victimization Branch. Congratulations Bethany and good luck in your new position!

Debbie Bradley (2005) - Debbie will be celebrating her birthday on May 28th and her first wedding anniversary on June 7th. For the first time, Debbie will miss the Academy because she and her husband Tom will be celebrating their anniversary in Hawaii. Have a wonderful time, we'll miss you!

Cori Brooks (2007) - Be sure to wish Cori a Happy Birthday when you next see her. She'll be celebrating it on May 7th. Hope you have a special day Cori!

Heather Courtney (2006) - Heather recently announced she is expecting her first child on May 7th. We send you our congratulations Heather and wish you all the best!

Donald Geiger (2005) - Don recently accepted a new position with the London Firm of Baltimore as a Field Agent, where he works to substantiate social security benefits and disability claims in conjunction with the Department of Social Services and local hospitals. Congratulations Don!

Jennifer Goode (2005) - A belated congratulations go out to Jen. Her first baby, a bouncing 8lb boy named Andrew, was born this past fall on September 7th. Congratulations Jen!

Rebecca Marcolini (2006) - Rebecca recently left her position as Victim/Witness

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Save the Date (continued from page 3)

Maryland Division of Corrections 8th Annual Prison Tour

Friday, April 11, 2008; MD Correctional Adjustment Center (Supermax), Baltimore, MD. For more information, please contact Debbie Neighoff at dneighoff@dpscs.state.md.us

Attorney General's Crime Victim Services Awards Ceremony

Friday, April 11, 2008, 2:30-4:30pm; Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium, 1301 Constitution Avenue, Washington, DC.

8th Annual Victims' Fund Run and Walk, Sponsored by the Office of the State's Attorney for Baltimore City

Saturday, April 19, 2008, 9:00am; Patterson Park 2601 E. Baltimore St., Baltimore, MD

Governor's Victim Service Awards Luncheon

Friday, April 25th, 2008, 11:30am-2:30pm; Turf Valley Conference Center, Ellicott City, MD

Tickets are \$26, and payment is due by April 11th. For more information, please contact Kimberly Herndon at (410) 821-2845.

Basic CRT Training

April 28 - May 2, 2008; Charles County Department of Social Services, La Plata, MD. Registration due by April 14th. For more information, log on to www.trynova.org

VINE Training for Victim Advocates and Law Enforcement

Thursday, May 22nd, 2008; Two sessions - 9:00am-11:30am, or 1:00-3:30pm. University of Baltimore

Join us for a training that will teach you all the ins and outs of the VINE program, including VINELink, VINEWatch, and VINE administrative tools. Participants will learn how to access offender and court data, how to register victims of crime for automatic notification, and much more!

Registration is open until May 9th. For more information, please contact Janna Poole at jpoole@appriss.com or Anne Litecky at annemarie@gocccp-state.md.org

2008 Roper Victim Assistance Academy

June 2nd- 6th, 2008; Maryland Public Safety Education & Training Center, Sykesville, MD.

For more information go to <http://rvaam.ubalt.edu>

34th Annual NOVA Conference

September 28 - October 3, 2008; The Galt House, Louisville, Kentucky

Theme: "Advocacy: Turning Survivors into Thrivers"

Alumni Updates (continued from page 3)

Coordinator for the Prince George's County State's Attorney's Office and joined the Montgomery County State's Attorney's Office as a Bilingual-Spanish Victim Witness Coordinator. We wish you all the best in your new position Rebecca!

Teresa Martin (2006) - Teresa recently accepted a new position. She left the Victim-Witness Unit of the U.S. Attorney's Office and accepted a new position in the agency as an Administrative Services Specialist. Good luck Teresa in your new endeavors!

Sciana Roach (2006) - This past February Sciana was promoted to Sergeant in the Maryland State Police. Way to go Sciana!

Bonnie Robertson (2005) - In January Bonnie started her new job at OVC as a Program Support Specialist in the Terrorism and International Victim Assistance Services Division. Congratulations Bonnie, we wish you all the best!

Valda Rotollo (2004) - We are very excited to announce that Valda has officially accepted the position of President of the RVAAM Alumni Association. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to work with Valda!

Occupational Outlook



The Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center is currently seeking a dynamic and dedicated individual to fill the position of *Coordinator of Victim Services*.

The following highlights a few of the specific duties of this posi-

tion:

- * Supervise a team of victim advocates and interns to ensure all clients receive comprehensive and individualized services;

- * Supervise the Volunteer Coordinator in developing and implementing volunteer program;

- * Manage multiple grants, including grantor and reapplication of grants;

- * Coordinate pro bono attorney referral services; collaborate with legal services team to address the legal needs of each client; and collaborate with therapist to ensure clients are receiving appropriate therapeutic services.

Minimum requirements for this position include: MSW with licensure in MD (LGSW minimum; LCSW-C preferred), 2 years supervisory experience, 1 year grant management and reporting experience, and past experience working with victims of crime including trauma and grief. If interested in applying for the position, please email a cover letter and resume to Lorrie Martin at lorrie@mdcrimevictims.org

The Community Mediation Program of Baltimore is seeking an *Executive Director* to oversee and coordinate the following: *Resource Development & Management* (e.g., raise funds through individual giving to support service in the community, manage finances, write administrative grants and government contracts), *Strategic Leadership* (e.g., work closely with Board of Directors to lead strategic direction of the organization, raise visibility of CMP and community mediation generally), and *Operational Management* (e.g., manage and design programs, supervise and support staff, direct service).

Candidates will have strengths in each of the core duty areas listed above, as well as the following areas: Dedication to nonviolent conflict resolution and some knowledge of the field of mediation; excellent oral and written communication skills; excellent problem-solving skills; competence with various fundraising methods; supervisory skills. If interested in applying for the position, please email a cover letter and resume to Odette Ramos, Search Committee Chair, at ORamos@StrategicMgmt.net

The 20/20

Each newsletter we pose twenty questions to one of our members to get an inside look at who they are ... this month get to know Rev. Brian Murray, a graduate of the 2006 Academy

The last book I read was...

The Purpose Driven Church
by Rick Warren

My motto or favorite saying is ...

God wants you like He made you, and He made you like He wants you

My childhood nickname was ...

"Bill," but in college my frat brothers started calling me "Doc" and many peopled from college still do to this very day

My favorite time of day is ...

Late afternoon - its the best time to play golf!

I can't stand ...

Beets!!!!

The soundtrack that best exemplifies my life is ...

Somewhere between Isaac Hayes' soundtrack to the movie "Shaft," and Whitney Houston's "The Preacher's Wife"

If I could go anywhere in the world, it would be ...

Africa

My inspiration is ...

Knowing that I don't qualify for my job. God certainly could have selected someone more worthy of being a minister

If I could learn any language, it would be ...

Spanish

The biggest challenge for me is ...

I still want to get my doctorate degree

The three words that best describe my life are ...

An unbelievable ride! Ministry is my second career. I started in corporate America.

My favorite movie is ...

Young Frankenstein

My childhood ambition was ...

Playing in the NBA

My favorite indulgence is ...

Watching sports

The occupation, other than the one I am currently in, I would want is...

College basketball coach

The perfect day to me would be ...

Preaching a great sermon, shooting a round of golf in the 80s, and dinner at a great restaurant with the wife and friends.

My greatest accomplishment (so far) has been ...

Being a decent husband and father

What I hate about my job is ...

Waiting on God. He always delivers...sometimes just not as fast as us humans would like Him too! The great thing about God is He sees the big picture that we can't.

What I love about my job is ...

Every day is different, and ministry allows you to make a real difference in people's lives.

One of my goals for 2008 is...

To pastor my own congregation. I've gotta add cutting my golf score as an answer too!

Hot Topics

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For more information regarding ITVERP program or to schedule a presentation, please contact the Office for Victims of Crime, ITVERP at (800) 363-0441, by email at ITVERP@udoj.gov or by mail at Office for Victims of Crime, ITVERP Resource Center, 810 7th Street NW, Washington, DC 20531.

Alumni Directory

Please help us keep the Alumni Directory up to date! If any of your personal and/or professional information has changed, please contact Debbie Bradley via email at bradleyd@harfordsheriff.org or by phone at (410) 836-5490. We will then publish those changes in the following newsletter.

We Need Your Help!

The Academy Forum is looking for volunteers to serve as Assistant Editors. Responsibilities include contacting RVAAM alumni for information and updates, preparing the 20/20 section of the newsletter each quarter on a different member, and providing current, useful websites to the victim services field. If you are in interested, please contact Debbie Bradley at bradleyd@harfordsheriff.org

Editorial Board

Debbie (Creswell) Bradley — Editor
Bonnie Robertson — Assistant Editor
Heather Courtney - Assistant Editor
Heather Pfeifer — Art Director/Layout

Watch for the next edition of the Academy Forum in July 2008