

Academy Forum

Continuing the Message of the Roper Victim Assistance Academy

A Quarterly Newsletter

Issue #18 - April 2010

Just a Thought

With the Power of One to One campaign in swing, think about sharing this special essay submitted by one of the Academy alumni about the valuable insight and experience she gained from attending the Academy
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Web Links

You never know what resources await you on the world-wide web ...come see what our latest surfing expedition uncovered
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National Crime Victims Rights Week

Learn about some of the different events OVC and Maryland has planned to honor those who lost their lives to a crime, those who survived, and those who serve the field so devotedly
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Alumni Updates

Always find yourself thinking, "I wonder what happened to..." Check out what your fellow Alumni are up to!



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Save the Date!

Find out what trainings and events are just around the corner. It looks like it is shaping up to be a very busy fall!
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The 20/20

Each newsletter get an inside look at one of the RVAAM peers - 20 questions, 20 unique answers
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Just a thought...

My 'aha!' moment - The value of the Roper Victim Assistance Academy

Eartha Pinder Harris, Alumni Class of 2007

Have you ever had an "aha" moment? A time when pieces fell into place and you could clearly see something that had previously been obscure? You know, one of those moments when the proverbial lights came on, and things finally made sense? Such was my experience at the 2007 Roper Victim Assistance Academy of Maryland.

I learned about the Academy while seeking training opportunities to better equip me to serve victims of domestic and sexual violence. Relatively new to the victim service arena, it was clear to me that I had a lot to learn. I had just come to Life Crisis Center to serve as its Legal and Advocate Program Coordinator after serving 21 years of full time ministry to homeless and street people for the expressed

purpose of learning how to better assist people who found themselves crippled spiritually, emotionally, and mentally after experiencing life altering tragedies or trauma. Having lots of experience helping hurting humanity while they tried to pick up the pieces of their broken lives, I wanted to know how to keep so many from ending up on the streets self-medicating, engaging in self-destructive behavior, bitter and hostile, and sometimes trapped in a lifestyle of inner turmoil and pain. I came to the Academy seeking answers. I had questions - lots of questions!

At the Academy, I found answers. I found the missing puzzle pieces that I needed held in the hands of others who over the course of the week not only taught me about the importance and value of collaboration, but also helped me learn something about myself. Learning about victims rights laws and victim assistance organizations and resources equipped me with valuable tools to help empower the victims I serve. The Illuminations training took me on a journey into the soul of a child who was sexually abused, and art therapy opened up the doors to look into my own soul. The most refreshing aspect of the Academy for me was its holistic approach to assisting victims. One does not need to check one's spirituality at the door. In fact, learning how a traumatic event can influence and/or alter a victim's image of God was one of the missing puzzle pieces for

me, and I believe I will be a more effective minister of the gospel as a result of that understanding.

I was very grateful for the high caliber of instruction from all of the instructors and their willingness to not only share their wisdom and knowledge, but a piece of themselves with all of us who attended the Academy. The Academy wasn't just another training event, it was so much more. Even though many of us felt like we were back in school living in dorms and having roommates, the week we spent together as a group was invaluable. We got to meet fellow advocates and other victim service professionals from across the state and from all different

backgrounds. For me, networking, participating in group activities, eating, socializing in the evening or just chilling after a long day of class was simply a wonderful way to become better equipped as a victim service provider. At the end of the week, I felt I grew not only professionally, but personally.

Another remarkable aspect of the Academy is the continuing relationship it fosters among its participants. As alumni, we are given the opportunity to attend a variety of advanced trainings each year for free, and have the

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EDITOR'S CORNER

Happy Spring Everyone!

It is so nice to hear the birds singing and to see the sun in the sky. What an incredible winter we had!! I don't know about you, but I am sure glad it is over. Now that the weather is nice, remember to take some time for yourself and go for a walk, eat lunch outside, or take a drive. As caretakers we need to remember to take care of ourselves, and these are just a few ways you can de-stress during the day.

Can you believe it's time for another Academy class?! For the past several years we have enlisted the strategy of peer networking through the Power of One to One campaign. What does that mean? Well, we ask each alumnus to recruit one person to go through the Academy and then join us at the end as alumni - it's that simple! The application can be downloaded online at www.rvaam.org. We need your assistance in achieving this goal! The more people who go through the Academy, the more connections we build within our field, so start recruiting today! And don't forget, scholarship money is available both through the Academy itself, as well as through TTAC via the Office for Victims of Crime - just go to the OVC's website at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc> and click on the Training and Technical Assistance tab, then click on the Professional Development Scholarship Program to apply.

Finally, don't forget about the advanced training opportunity that will be held at the Academy - watch your emails and the RVAAM website for further details as they become available - I hope to see everyone there!

Wishing you all the best!

Debbie Bradley, Editor

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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. Here are a few sites that relate to this issue's "Just a Thought" ... happy surfing!

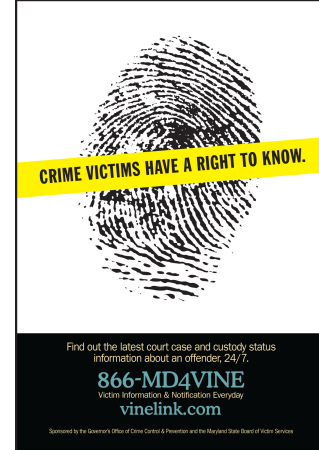
Roper Victim Assistance Academy of Maryland Website - If you haven't checked out the RVAAM website recently, come see what's been happening and what new trainings are going to be offered (www.rvaam.org). The website is also a great tool to share with your colleagues to help recruit them to come to the Academy. Not only does it provide an overview of what to expect but it also highlights the curriculum that will be covered and provides them with the steps on how to apply.

RVAAM is on Facebook! - Did you know that the Academy is on Facebook! Join our facebook group (www.facebook.com) and tell your friends about it. This is another great tool to help get the word out about the Academy and to educate others on how the Academy can help professionals working in the field of victim services.

Pearlstone Conference and Retreat Center - Want to learn more about where the Academy is held? Pearlstone is located in Reisters town, MD and has magnificent facilities in a gorgeous setting. Check out their website at www.pearlstonecenter.org and see what an incredible venue Pearlstone provides for the Academy learning experience.

Office for Victims of Crime - Since April 1991, OVC has helped lead the nation in its annual observance of National Crime Victims' Rights Week. Go on their website at <http://ovc.ncjrs.gov/ncvrw/> to learn about the different resource guides OVC has made available to communities to help organize their own events, as well as provide information on the National Crime Victims' Service Awards OVC gives out each year.

VINE: Victim Information and Notification Everyday - Be sure to share this wonderful resource with your colleagues and the victims you assist (www.vinelink.com). This tool provides victims with up to date information about their offender, even if he or she is living outside of Maryland!



Maryland Crime Victims Resource Center - Do you have a victim who needs legal representation? Spend some time reviewing MCVRC's website (www.mdcrimevictims.org) to find helpful information you can use to better serve victims of crime. Too many times crime victims' rights have been violated; help give victims a voice by referring them to the MCVRC where they can get help navigating the court process.

Maryland Criminal Injuries Compensation Board - Have questions about the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, or how to obtain financial assistance for victims of crime? Go to their website (http://www.dpscs.state.md.us/victimservs/vs_cicb.shtml) to learn the criteria for eligibility, what expenses are covered, and how to apply.

National Crime Victims Rights Week

April 18th - 24th, 2010

In Maryland, as well as around the country, observances and ceremonial events will be held during the week of April 18th through the 24th. Each year during this time, victim service providers, justice professionals, and community advocates come together to reflect on past milestones and re-dedicate their efforts towards the furtherance of victims' rights.

In Washington, DC there will be two events that are free and open to the public. Additionally, the Maryland State Board of Victim Services, together with the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention, will commemorate this national, historical event as well with a series of events to honor lives that were lost to crime and to recognize those individuals who have worked tirelessly representing a commitment to the cause. For more information about the various statewide memorial services, go to the Governor's Office of Crime Control website to see a complete calendar of these special events (<http://www.goccp.maryland.gov>) or contact Anne Litecky, State Victim Services Coordinator, at (410) 821-2828 or by email at Annemarie@goccp-state-md.org

We hope each of you will take a moment from your busy schedules during this commemorative week and show your support by attending at least one of the many special events held this month.

National Observance and Candle Light Ceremony

Thursday, April 15, 2010, 6:30-7:30pm, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, 1615 H. Street NW, Washington, DC

Each year the Office for Victims of Crime hosts this prelude event in the Nation's capital to pay tribute to crime victims and survivors. This year's featured speaker is William Kellibrew IV, a victim advocate and President of the William Kellibrew Foundation, a non-profit resource for individuals and organizations committed to breaking the cycle of violence and poverty. Also providing remarks are U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder, Assistant Attorney General Laurie Robinson, and U.S. Attorney for D.C. Ronald Machen.

Registration is required to attend - go to <http://www.ncvrw.org> by April 12th to register

National Crime Victims' Service Awards Ceremony

Friday, April 16, 2010, 2:00-3:30pm, Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium, 1301 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC

The Office for Victims of Crime will be hosting this special ceremony to honor individuals and organizations that have demonstrated outstanding service for victims. The award recipients are selected from public nominations in eight categories. For more information about each of these categories, go to <https://ovcncvrw.ncjrs.gov/awards/about.html>. A dessert reception will follow the ceremony.

Registration is required to attend - go to <http://www.ncvrw.org> by April 12th to register.

Baltimore City State's Attorney's Office Annual 5k Victims' Fund Run & Walk

Saturday, April 17, 2010, 9:00am (rain or shine), Patterson Park, 2601 E. Baltimore St., Baltimore

Refresh your body and soul while helping raise funds to maintain emergency funds to assist crime victims. Entry fee is \$20 if paid by April 16h; \$25 the day of the race, and includes a t-shirt. Deadline for online registration is April 14th. Register online at www.charmcityrun.com

21st Annual Maryland Statewide Memorial Service

Sunday, April 18, 2010, State's Attorney's Offices in Calvert, Harford, Montgomery and Talbot Counties.

Since 1989, Maryland families have gathered once a year to attend a memorial service in honor and remembrance of their loved one who lost their life to a crime. This year the four regional "Their Light Still Shines" services will unite the families of crime victims, victim service professionals, and public officials for this 21st annual remembrance. The four events will be hosted by the State's Attorney's Offices in Calvert, Harford, Montgomery, and Talbot counties. The State Board

is proud to announce this year's poem is written by State Board member, Debra Tall, who is also the Anne Arundel Police Department Victim Services Coordinator:

"The Flame of Life" - Candles flicker with light of promise, vigilance and hope to last, with memories of our lifelong past. As the candles flame burns and flickers away, your life and meaning will dance on every day.

The Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services 11th Annual Open House and Award Ceremony

Monday, April 19, 2010, 9:30 - 11:30am, Public Safety Education and Training Center, 6852 Fourth St, Sykesville, MD

Refreshments will be served from 9:00-9:30am; Please bring old cell phones for domestic violence victims.

RSVP by emailing rhodavis@dpscs.state.md.us or calling (410) 339-5824

The Governor's Victim Assistance Awards Luncheon

Friday, April 30, 2010, 11:30am - 2:30pm, Club Meade, 6600 Mapes Road, Fort Meade, MD

The Governor's Victim Assistance Awards Luncheon is held each year to convey appreciation and recognition to an individual, agency, organization or group who has provided commendable service on behalf of victims or in furtherance of the crime victims' movement in Maryland. This year's keynote speaker is Anne Seymour, the co-founder and senior advisor of Justice Solutions, a non-profit organization in Washington, DC that specializes in criminal and juvenile justice, crime victims' rights and services, and community safety.

Tickets are \$30 per person and must be purchased by Friday, April 16. For more information, please contact Anne Litecky, State Victim Service Coordinator, at (410) 821-2828 or by email at Annemarie@goccp-state-md.org

ing spirit carried you through. Our thoughts and prayers are with you, always!



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 passed us by. Here's just a snapshot of some of the special events and milestones our alums have experienced since we last met...

Mary Edebe (2009) - Mary just celebrated her 25th birthday on February 26th and finished all of her coursework for her Masters degree in Criminology, with a specialization in victimology and victim services at the University of Baltimore and sat for her comprehensive exams. Congratulations Mary, we wish you all the best!

William & Kathy Griffin (2008; 2009) - Wedding bells have rung for two of our alumni!! Griff and Kathy were wed on February 24th and have been enjoying the life of newlyweds. Congratulations you two, we wish you a long and happy life together!!

Anne Litecky (2004) - Anne will be celebrating her birthday on May 3rd - we hope you have a wonderful birthday and wish you good health and happiness in the coming year!

Valda Rotolo (2004) - Valda just welcomed her second grandchild, a beautiful little girl Payton Elaine, to her family. Now she has a little girl and little boy to shower with love! Congratulations Valda!

Debra Tall (2004) - Debra will be celebrating her birthday on May 8th. We wish you a very special day and hope this year will be the best!

Diane Wilkens (2007) - Diane is celebrating life after surviving breast cancer. We are so glad everything went well and that your fight-

News From the Field

Everyone knows that the field of victims services is always evolving. The challenge is to find a way to keep on top of all the changes ... we're here to help! Here's an overview of just some of the most recent legislative changes:

Governor reactivates Sex Offender Advisory Board

On January 27th, 2010, Governor Martin O'Malley announced legislation to reconstitute the Sexual Offender Advisory Board, which is charged with, among other things, training sexual offender management teams in the Division of Parole and Probation, certifying sexual offender treatment providers, and making policy recommendations. The Board is among six proposals on sex offenders the Governor will push for this year. He is also seeking lifetime supervision for violent and repeat sex offenders, changes to the state sex offender registry that will bring it into federal compliance, and criminal background checks for employees at all facilities that care for or supervise children.

Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence announces its 2010 Legislative Agenda

MNADV has announced it will be working to promote the passage of the following bills this legislative session:

- * HB 1382/SB 554 - Rental Housing - Protection for Victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
- * HB 534/SB 867 - Domestic Violence - Protective Order, Extension
- * HB 106/SB 248 - Civil Cases - Maryland Legal Services Corporation Fund- Surcharges

Maryland Crime Victims Resource Center Lobbies for Additional Training for Law Enforcement

MCVRC has proposed its support for SB 820/ HB 779 - Police Training Commission - Additional Minimum Training Requirements. This bill would expand the focus of the victim component of the required training for new and current police officers to include victims of all types of crimes, not just sexual assault and domestic violence.

MCVRC encourages you to contact your delegates and urge their support of this important piece of legislation. For a complete list of Maryland Delegates by county, go to <http://www.msa.md.gov/msa/mdmanual/07leg/html/gaco.html>

Just a Thought (Cont.)

opportunity to come to the Academy each year to serve as mentors for the newest participants. Not only does this allow us to continue to grow as professionals, but it helps us connect with fellow professionals and foster the development of wonderful friendships. As a person who is focused on helping others, it is nice to know that there is an organization that is there to help me.



Save the Date

7th Annual Roper Victim Assistance Academy

June 7th-11th, 2010, Pearlstone Conference Center, Reisterstown, Maryland. For more information, please contact Dr. Debra Stanley at dstanley@ubalt.edu

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 Kia Hackney, a graduate of the 2007 Academy

The last movie I saw at the theater was ... Precious; I would recommend it

My favorite professional sports team is ... Philadelphia Sixers

My two favorite colors are ... Gray and black

The strangest thing I ever ate was ... beets

My favorite thing to do to help unwind from a rough day is ... shop!

Best advice I ever got was ... It's not what happens to you, it's what you do with what happens to you

The occupation other than the one I am currently in that I would want is ... a Policy Analyst - it's in the works now!!

The occupation I certainly would not like to have is ... a window washer, I'm afraid of heights!

The technological device I currently have I would hate if it were lost/broken ... my I-pod!

My favorite smell ... DKNY Be Delicious perfume

Three adjectives that best describe my personality ... Spunky, caring, & empathetic

My favorite time of year is ... Spring - not too hot or too cold

What I like best about my job is ... I get to help children get what they need to succeed

One thing I do well is ... advocate for people

The quality I like/appreciate most in others is ... honesty

The most challenging thing about my job is ... getting there on time

My favorite sound is ... Peacefulness (quiet)

My favorite book is ... the Bible

The last thing I did to pamper myself was ... bought a new pocketbook from Coach

One of my goals for 2010 is ... move back to Philadelphia

Guess what! The RVAAM Alumni Association is going to have a new name!!

Recently the RVAAM Alumni Association Executive Board solicited feedback from the entire alumni to come up with a new name for its organization ... we will be announcing the winning name right before the next Academy! So stay tuned to your email to find out what the new name will be, and which of your fellow Alum submitted the winning moniker!!

Watch for the next edition of the Academy Forum in July 2010

Alumni Directory

The 2009 Alumni Directory, which includes the addition of the most recent Academy class members, is available for distribution. However, we still would like your help to keep the Alumni Directory up to date! If any of your personal and/or professional information changes, please contact Debbie Bradley via email at bradleyd@harfordsheriff.org or by phone at (410) 836-5490.

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