



Office of the La Paz County Attorney

County Attorney Tony Rogers

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 5, 2013

**La Paz County Attorney's Office
National Crime Victims' Rights Week Opening Event**

La Paz County Attorney's Office will kick-off 2013 National Crime Victims' Rights Week April 23 starting at 11:30 am at the Parker Senior Center. Please join us for lunch and a ceremony honoring Victims Advocates, Law Enforcement Officers and Service Providers—local champions of crime victims' rights. This year's theme—*New Challenges. New Solutions.*—celebrates the spirit that will advance the progress these heroes achieved. La Paz County will observe National Crime Victims' Rights Week with this special event and a keynote speaker from Adult Protective Services.

These dedicated people made remarkable progress for crime victims, despite many challenges. Only 30 years ago, crime victims had no rights, access to crime victim compensation, or services to help rebuild their lives. They were often excluded from courtrooms, treated as an afterthought by the criminal justice system, and denied an opportunity to speak at sentencing.

Through decades of advocacy and hard work, we have come a long way. Today, all states have enacted crime victims' rights laws and established crime victim compensation funds. More than 10,000 victim service agencies help victims throughout the nation. Every year, states and localities receive millions of federal dollars to support these services.

National Crime Victims' Rights Week reminds us that many challenges remain. Crime victims' rights are not universal and are often not enforced. Only a small percentage of victims receive crime victim compensation, which is usually limited to victims of violent crime. According to last year's National Crime Victimization Survey, more than 50 percent of violent crimes were not reported to police in 2006-2010. In addition, a 2011 report called the *Use of Victim Services Agencies by Victims of Serious Violent Crime* showed that only 9 percent of violent crime victims received needed services in the 1993-2009 timeframe.

Advocates also face a host of new challenges as they strive to provide culturally competent services for increasingly diverse populations (e.g., seniors, teens, immigrant populations) and victims of newly prevalent crimes (e.g., trafficking and technology-related stalking and identity theft). As funding sources decrease, providers must target their services even more strategically.



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“*New Challenges. New Solutions.* captures our mission in the 21st century,” said Joye E. Frost, Acting Director, Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), U.S. Department of Justice. “As reflected in OVC’s major strategic planning initiative, *Vision 21: Transforming Victim Services*, we must craft a new vision for reaching all victims of crime. We can achieve this only by substantially broadening our thinking, strategically planning our future, and creatively expanding our resources and tools.”

National Crime Victims’ Rights Week will be held April 21–27 in communities throughout the nation. In Washington, DC, the U.S. Department of Justice will hold OVC’s annual Service Awards ceremony that month to honor outstanding individuals and programs that serve victims of crime.

OVC encourages widespread participation in the week’s events and in other victim-related observances throughout the year. For additional information about 2013 National Crime Victims’ Rights Week and how to help victims in your community, please contact the Megan Spielman at the La Paz County Attorney’s Victim Services Division at 928-669-6118, or email at mspielman@co.la-paz.az.us. For more ideas on how to volunteer to help crime victims, visit the Office for Victims of Crime website, www.ovc.gov.

La Paz County Attorney’s Mission Statement:

TO SEEK JUSTICE

TO SERVE THE CITIZENS OF LA PAZ COUNTY WITH HONOR

TO TREAT VICTIMS OF CRIME WITH COMPASSION, DIGNITY AND FAIRNESS