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Agency News

National Crime Victims' Rights Week is April 2 to 8

Every year in April, the National Crime Victims' Rights Week initiative promotes victims' rights and honors crime victims and those who advocate on their behalf. The theme of the 2017 NCVRW, which will take place from April 2 to 8, is "Strength. Resilience. Justice."

"National Crime Victims' Rights Week gives us an opportunity to honor victims of violent crime and those individuals who work tirelessly to assist them," said Victim Services Director Angie McCown. This year's theme focuses on building the strength and resiliency in communities necessary to support victims of violent crime. "Though their work is officially recognized for one week in April, every day of the year, all year long, victims and their advocates work to repair some the harm caused by criminal violence. The criminal justice professionals in TDCJ's Victim Services Division are proud of their work in fulfillment of the agency's mission to assist victims of crime."

The first crime victims' rights week took place in 1975 in Philadelphia and six years later President Reagan established the annual Na-



tional Crime Victims' Rights Week. NCVRW organizers work to protect and improve the rights and resources needed by crime victims to rebuild their lives. Since 1984 the Victims of Crime Act provided a source of funding for victims' compensation through criminal fines, penalties and forfeitures, and VOCA funding has helped provide critical services to those who have suffered the effects of violent crime.

In 1993, TDCJ established a Victim Services section in the agency's Parole Division in order to notify crime victims about their offender's status in regards to the parole process. In 1997, the agency's mission statement was amended to include "to assist victims of crime" and the Victim Services section was elevated to divisional status.

Visit the online Texas Victim Assistance training calendar to submit an NCVRW event in your area, and check back as new events are posted. You may also contact the victim assistance coordinator at your local prosecutor's office for information about NCVRW activities, which typically include recognition ceremonies, community walks and runs, education programs and art displays. The National Crime Victims' Service Awards Ceremony will be held on April 7 in Washington, D.C.

For more information, go to the NCVRW website or contact the Texas Crime Victim Clearinghouse by calling 800-848-4284 or writing to tdcj.clearinghouse@tdcj.texas.gov. ●