



California Crime Victims Assistance Association

1809 S Street, Suite 101-305, Sacramento, CA 95811

* * * * * P R E S S R E L E A S E * * * * *

February 22, 2011

01
Release Number
02-15-11
Release Date

Approved By

CINDY MARIE ABSEY
Contact Person (805) 781-5821

**Subject: CALIFORNIA CRIME VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS
REACH RECORD NUMBER OF VICTIMS LAST YEAR**

The California Crime Victims Assistance Association (CCVAA), representing Victim/Witness Assistance Programs statewide, announced today that its member programs provided a record-setting 175,000 victims with crisis and support services during FY 09-10. Victim/Witness Assistance Programs are the largest provider of crime victim services in California and the only statewide victim organization serving all types of crime victims. Ironically, the record increase in crime victims last year occurred at the same time that many victim service programs in California are facing severe cuts in funding and staffing. Catherine M. Duggan, newly elected President of the CCVAA, remarked on the current state of victim services in California: "The source of victims' strength and

durability is hope in fair dealing, a hope in a justice system that can be both tough and tender. With the passage of the Victims' Bill of Rights Act in 2008, victims gained new constitutional rights. The Act recognized the most fundamental right of a victim is the right to be kept informed. Victims cannot participate in the process of justice unless they are informed of their rights and of the time and place of the relevant proceedings in which they may exercise those rights. Keeping the victim informed is a prerequisite to the exercise of the victim's rights, and therefore, an important part of the mission of California Victim/Witness Assistance Programs."

Ms. Duggan was appointed to the Governor's Sex Offender Management Board from 2007 to 2009 and in 2009 was honored by former Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger with the Governor's Crime Victim Advocate Award for outstanding leadership in advancing victims' rights. Since 2000, she has directed the Ventura Co. District Attorney's Crime Victims' Assistance Unit. As President of the statewide California Crime Victims Assistance Association, Ms. Duggan will work with the Governor's Office, the California District Attorneys Association (CDAA) and other state law enforcement organizations, as well as a host of state agencies and victim advocacy groups to advance rights and services for California crime victims.

Locally, the Shasta County District Attorney's - Crime Victims Assistance Center assisted approximately 4,500 victims of crime in 2010 to include victims of family violence, child abuse, elder abuse, sexual assault, DUI with injury, homicide and assault. Crime Victims benefits for eligible applicants include: medical/dental, mental health counseling, relocation, security device, wage loss or support, job retraining and funeral expenses. For further information, please contact the Crime Victims Assistance Center at (530) 225-5220.