

2013 VICTIM RIGHTS MONTH Award Recipients

Congratulations to the following award recipients who will be recognized at the following events during Victim Rights Month!

STATE HOUSE AWARD CEREMONY
APRIL 8, 2013
9:00AM - 11:00AM
MASSACHUSETTS STATE HOUSE, GRAND STAIRCASE

Gerard D. Downing Leadership Award

District Attorney Daniel Conley, Suffolk County District Attorney's Office

Suffolk County District Attorney Daniel F. Conley is the chief law enforcement officer for the cities of Boston, Chelsea, Revere, and Winthrop, Massachusetts. Appointed to the office in February 2002, Conley was elected in his own right on Nov. 5, 2002, again on Nov. 7, 2006 and most recently in 2010. As district attorney, Conley oversees an office of more than 300 men and women and is responsible for the prosecution of more than 40,000 criminal cases every year in the state's most densely-populated county. Prior to taking office as Suffolk County's 14th district attorney, Conley served for eight years on the Boston City Council, serving several terms as chairman of the Council's Public Safety Committee. A career prosecutor before seeking public office, Conley served as an assistant district attorney for nine years in the office he now leads, prosecuting homicides and other serious felonies including drug trafficking, non-fatal shootings, and intimate partner violence. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, he was one of a handful of state prosecutors named to Massachusetts' first anti-gang violence task force. Conley's top priorities as district attorney include the protection of society's most vulnerable members, including seniors, children, and victims of domestic violence; the aggressive prosecution of violent offenders, especially those who carry and use firearms on city streets; and adherence to the highest ethical standards by every member of his office.

Innovations Award

Alexandra Donovan, Cambridge Public Health Department

Alexandra Donovan has 18 years of working in the domestic violence field in various settings – international refugee camps, DV shelter, community agencies, court based advocacy, hospital based services, state level victim services and now public health. She joined Cambridge Public Health Department (CPHD) in 2006 where she is currently the Violence Prevention Coordinator. She has helped develop and adapt a number of violence prevention programs. In 2009, she designed and taught a 13 week class at Tufts University called Technology and Interpersonal Violence. Donovan has her Masters in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and an International Diploma in Humanitarian Assistance. She is certified in mediation, divorce mediation and as a Mental Health First Aid Instructor. She is on the Injury and Violence Prevention Board of National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) in Washington, DC.

Innovations Award

Leslie Powell Knowles, New Bedford Women's Center

Leslie Powell Knowles, LMHC, ATR-BC has been working with traumatized children since 1984. In 1997, she founded the Child and Adolescent Trauma Program (CATP) at The Women's Center in New Bedford. The CATP provides innovative and evidenced based treatment to child victims of sexual, physical and domestic violence. Since its inception, the program has supported 1,300 victims, ages 1-18 and their non-offending caregivers. Leslie and her colleagues choreograph treatment to address symptoms of each individual child regardless of age, gender or type of victimization. She and her team are constantly seeking new avenues to address the myriad issues that traumatized children present. Leslie has published articles on treatment issues in art therapy journals and has presented at numerous conferences, workshops and trainings around the country. Leslie was among the founding members of community leaders to form the Children's Advocacy Center of Bristol County (CAC). The 10 year journey that led to the doors of the CAC opening is one her proudest accomplishments as the center has brought together professionals from many different disciplines that are now closely collaborating to support child victims and to prevent child abuse in the county. She serves as board chair for the CAC and plans to stay involved forever.

Public Policy Advocacy Award

Kathy Picard, Children's Right Advocate

Kathy Picard's unique perspective as a survivor of childhood sexual abuse has enabled her to reach out and help raise the awareness of this secretive crime. She was instrumental in helping to pass HB 5234 signed into law in September 2006 by Massachusetts Lt. Gov. Kerry Healy, which extended the Statute of Limitations on prosecuting sex crimes. She has organized and hosted several child safety events which featured the Chips Child ID Program and the Iris Scan. Kathy is a frequent guest speaker at the Western Mass Police Academy and Holyoke Community Colleges Criminal Justice class, and has spoken with inmates in Massachusetts and Connecticut correctional facilities on the traumatic lasting effects of sexual abuse. She has recently partnered with the YMCA of Greater Springfield to bring education and awareness on prevention of abuse to children.

Legislator of the year

Senate President Therese Murray

Therese Murray was elected Senator of the Plymouth and Barnstable District in 1992 and became the first woman President of the Massachusetts Senate in March 2007. Throughout her career, Murray has been a driving force behind children's issues and health care reform efforts, and helped pass landmark legislation including Children's Mental Health and the Health Care Reform Act of 2006. Prior to becoming Senate President in 2007, Murray served as Chairwoman of the Senate Ways and Means Committee for four years, where her main responsibility was crafting the annual state budget. Her leadership of the Massachusetts Senate enabled the passage of arguably the most comprehensive human trafficking law in the nation on February 19, 2012. Also under Senate President Murray's leadership, the Senate passed legislation providing for employment leave for victims of domestic violence. She has spearheaded efforts to pass a texting loophole bill making it illegal to send "lewd" electronic messages to minors. Through her legislative career Senate President Murray has historically lead the Senate in passing budgets that support key public safety programs, including Shannon Grants, which help maintain partnerships at the local level to address the root causes of gang violence; the Safe and Successful Youth Initiative, which targets services to youth who

have been identified as most likely to be criminally involved; and support for municipal police staffing in cities with the highest crime rates and decreased police staffing.

Access to Justice Award

Victim Rights Law Center

The Victim Rights Law Center (VRLC) is celebrating its 10th year as the first legal services agency in the country, and the only one in the Commonwealth, dedicated solely to serving the legal needs of rape and sexual violence victims. The VRLC provides free holistic, comprehensive legal representation to victims throughout the Commonwealth in the following areas of the law: Immigration, Housing, Employment, Privacy, Safety, Education, Benefits, and Consumer Rights. The VRLC addresses survivor's legal needs in order to help stabilize and rebuild their lives. They serve those victims who are traditionally underserved or elevated-risk, sub-populations such as: youth and college-age victims; victims with disabilities; low-income urban victims, including immigrants; and victims living in rural communities. The VRLC is considered by many to be a national leader in using civil laws to provide victims with access to justice by helping victims stay in school, their jobs, homes, the country and secure their safety and privacy. Through collaborations with law enforcement, rape crisis centers, the medical community and community organizations, the VRLC is a leader in the anti-sexual violence movement that is focused on the comprehensive needs of survivors of sexual violence. This model has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women (OVW). VRLC serves as the OVW's primary trainer and technical assistance provider on these matters so that these services may be replicated nationally. The VRLC has been recently funded by OVW to replicate their direct legal services model in Massachusetts in the Portland, Oregon area.

Access to Justice Award

Detective Sergeant Steven Pisano, Revere Police Department

Sergeant Detective Steven Pisano has worked for the Revere Police Department for over thirty-three years. He has been a detective for 23 years including 3 years assigned to the drug unit. He has served as Detective Sergeant supervisor for 15 years. He has worked on cases involving drugs and guns, to robberies, assaults and homicides and child abuse. He has worked on countless cases from inception until they were resolved. He has also been involved in the education of Police Officers in the understanding and treatment of victims. He instructs officers to always have an empathetic and compassionate approach with their victims.

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VICTIM RIGHTS CONFERENCE
APRIL 26, 2013
8:30AM - 3:30PM
SEAPORT WORLD TRADE CENTER, BOSTON, MA

Special Recognition Award for Activism

Michael Santos, Bristol County District Attorney's Office

Bristol County District Attorney's Office Michael Santos is a fourth generation Cape Verdean American and is a native of New Bedford, Massachusetts. He is a longtime activist who as a young adult advocated for the rights of New Bedford housing residents. In 1994 he witnessed the homicide of his 14 year old brother as he was hit by a stray bullet pushing a 9 year old deaf child to safety. The long search for justice transitioned his activism towards gun control and promoting empathy towards the families of murder victims. In 2006 Michael produced and directed a documentary titled "13 By 3 Mile Problem" that examined the trauma families go through in the aftermath of losing a loved one to gun violence. That same year he was named the 2006 person of the year by Southcoast247.com which is owned by New Bedford's local newspaper the Standard Times. He also produced and directed a short film for Citizens for Safety that asks the question "Where Did the Gun Come From?" Today he remains active in the community and works as a Victim Witness Advocate for the Bristol County District Attorney's Office.

Special Recognition Award for Activism

Ann Wilkinson, My Life, My Choice

Ann Wilkinson has been with My Life My Choice since 2004. Since 2002, MLMC has offered a unique continuum of survivor-led services including prevention groups, training, survivor mentoring, and program consultation, all aimed at addressing the commercial sexual exploitation of girls. Ann serves as the MLMC Coordinator of Survivor Mentor Services, Ann brings to MLMC over twenty years of experience as Counselor, Group Facilitator, and Mentor to multi-stressed youth and women. Prior to coming to My Life My Choice, Ann worked in the fields of domestic violence, homelessness, and substance abuse treatment in a variety of leadership roles. Her work experience has included being the Senior Manager at Elizabeth Stone House, and the Director of Women's Programs at Peace at Home. Ann utilizes her personal experience as a survivor of "the Life" to inform the work she does with adolescent girls, helping them build a life free from exploitation.

Advocate of the Year

Maureen Flores, Dove, Inc.

Maureen Flores is currently the Civilian Domestic Violence Advocate for the Quincy, Randolph and Holbrook Police departments through DOVE. However, she has been

assisting those experiencing domestic violence at DOVE for almost 20 years. Her journey started as a part time Relief worker in their Emergency Shelter and quickly progressed to a full time Advocate. In the last three years she has been working in conjunction with the police departments under a grant from the Violence against Women Act by reaching out to those who have experienced recent police involvement. She provides a whole host of services ranging from giving support, resources and information about the legal system, providing safety planning, restraining order assistance and court accompaniment, and offering trainings to police departments. Maureen also facilitates a healthy relationship group at the Norfolk County Community Corrections Program working with female offenders who are also survivors of domestic violence.

Advocate of the Year

Susie Marshall, Middlesex District Attorney's Office

Susie Marshall graduated from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst with a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Education in 1986. In 1988, she earned a Master's of Science Degree in Criminal Justice at Northeastern University. She began her professional career as a Victim Witness Advocate in the Northwestern District Attorney's Office in 1988. She then transferred to the Middlesex District Attorney's Office in 1991 where she is currently employed. Susie has spent over twenty years providing direct service on a wide variety of investigations and prosecutions. In 1998, she became a Supervisor in the Child Abuse Division and was recently named Deputy Chief of the Middlesex District Attorney's Victim Witness Services Bureau. In addition, Susie has trained law enforcement professionals and numerous community agency representatives on issues pertaining to physical and sexual abuse of children, adult sexual assault, homicide, and domestic violence.