



MASSACHUSETTS VICTIM RIGHTS MONTH

April 2026



**Massachusetts Office
for Victim Assistance**

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Massachusetts Office For Victim Assistance

MOVA

Victim & Witness Assistance Board



**VIEW THE
2026 VICTIM
RIGHTS AWARDS
DIGITAL PROGRAM**



MOVA

Massachusetts Office For Victim Assistance

MOVA

Victim & Witness Assistance Board

MOVA is an independent state agency governed by the Victim and Witness Assistance Board. MOVA strives to advance victim rights by ensuring all victims and survivors of crime across the Commonwealth are supported and empowered through access to high-quality services that are trauma-informed, culturally-responsive, and reflective of diverse communities. MOVA achieves this through survivor-informed work, advocacy for enhanced victim rights and services, partnerships with agencies and individuals, and a commitment to providing funding and services for underserved and marginalized communities.

2026 VICTIM RIGHTS MONTH AWARD CEREMONY



*April 28, 2026,
1:00- 3:00 p.m.*

*Massachusetts State House,
Grand Staircase*



MOVA

VICTIM RIGHTS AWARDS CEREMONY

April 28, 2026

Welcome

Liam Lowney, MOVA Executive Director

Opening Remarks

Attorney General Andrea Joy Campbell

Presentation of Victim Rights Month Awards

Members, Victim and Witness Assistance Board

Gerard D. Downing Leadership Award

Dawn Sauma, Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence (ATASK)

Legislator of the Year Award

Senator Paul Feeney, Massachusetts State Senator, Bristol & Norfolk

Public Policy Award

Susan Malman Altman, Alliance for HOPE International

Access to Justice Award

Laura W. Gal, Greater Boston Legal Services

Special Recognition Award

Denise Cosby & Fay Rackley, The Just-In-Time Initiative

Innovation Award

Karen Hoffman & Catalina Folch, REACH Beyond Domestic Violence

Corporate Leadership Award

Beth Israel Lahey Health

Advocate of the Year Award

Chelsea Davies, Center for Violence Prevention and Recovery

Steven Nelson, Norfolk County District Attorney's Office

Lori Roy, Northwestern District Attorney's Office

Proclamation of Victim Rights Month & Closing Remarks

Liam Lowney, MOVA Executive Director

MOVA

During Victim Rights Month,
we would also like to recognize the following victim
advocates for their dedicated years of service ...

Length of Service Awards

10 Years

Dar'ya Matkovska, *Middlesex District Attorney's Office*
Rachel Murphy, *Worcester District Attorney's Office*
Diane Reed, *Worcester District Attorney's Office*
Tara Howard, *Massachusetts Probation Service*
Shelby Ray, *Yarmouth Police Department*
Laurie Duro, *Norfolk District Attorney's Office*
Rocky Yaniv, *Essex District Attorney's Office*

15 Years

Renee Leone, *Middlesex District Attorney's Office*
Donald Coughlin, *Independence House*
Robin Trainor, *Independence House*
Michael Santos, *Bristol District Attorney's Office*
Melissa Coughlin, *Norfolk District Attorney's Office*

20 Years

Maria Deyette, *Worcester District Attorney's Office*
James Pearson, *Worcester District Attorney's Office*
Adine Latimore, *Children's Advocacy Center of Suffolk County*
Linda Rogers, *Northwestern District Attorney's Office*

25 Years

Neusa Galvao, *Massachusetts Parole Board*
Margaret Rwaramba, *Worcester District Attorney's Office*
Tracy DeFusco, *Worcester District Attorney's Office*
Carmen Tung, *Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence*
Kathy Goulet-Fenn, *Alianza*

30 Years

Dora Quiroz, *Middlesex District Attorney's Office*

MOVA

GERARD D. DOWNING LEADERSHIP AWARD

recognizes a public or private agency leader who has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to advancing the rights of crime victims. This individual is recognized by their colleagues for their efforts in advancing victim rights.



Dawn Sauma

*Asian Task
Force Against
Domestic
Violence
(ATASK)*

Dawn Sauma, MSW, LICSW, is Co-Executive and Clinical Director of the Asian Task Force Against Domestic Violence (ATASK), where she has led direct services, grant development, and cross-sector collaborations since 2010. With over 30 years in social services across Hawaii and Massachusetts, she has supported Asian and Pacific Islander communities as a clinician, educator, and nonprofit leader. Drawing from both lived and professional experience, Dawn's work reflects a deep commitment to advancing equity, healing, and justice.

She also serves in leadership roles on coalitions and community initiatives, including as Board President of Jane Doe Inc., Community Co-Chair of ADAPT (Tufts CTSI), and on the steering committees of APIs CAN and the MIRA Advisory Committee, advancing policy and advocacy for immigrant and AA&PI Communities.

MOVA

LEGISLATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD

recognizes a legislator who has made outstanding contributions to the victim rights movement through promoting legislation and policy that further rights and services to victims and survivors.



**Senator
Paul Feeney**

Paul Feeney is a Democratic State Senator serving his fifth term in the Massachusetts Senate representing the Bristol & Norfolk district. Senator Feeney is the Assistant-Vice Chair of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means and Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Financial Services.

Since his election to the Senate, Paul has been a voice for the under-served, whether it be workers negotiating for a fair contract, middle class residents struggling to make ends meet, or survivors of violence in need of an advocate. Senator Feeney works closely with organizations in his District such as New Hope Inc., to support victims of domestic violence and the Foxborough Child Sexual Abuse Awareness Committee to advance legislation he has filed to strengthen mandated reporter provisions across the Commonwealth. Paul is also the lead sponsor of legislation to address the alarming prevalence of illicit drink spiking incidents in the Commonwealth to ensure victims have access to necessary care and recourse.

Prior to his service in the Senate, Paul was a blue-collar telecommunications technician by trade for over 20 years. He served as a member and Chairperson of the Select Board in his community of Foxborough, as well as the legislative director, spokesperson and chief steward of his local union in Boston, MA. Paul resides in Foxborough with his wife Laura, a licensed family childcare provider and small business owner. He is an avid Boston sports fan, sports card and memorabilia collector, and unrelenting promoter of the idea that Tom Brady is in fact, the Greatest of All Time.

MOVA

PUBLIC POLICY AWARD

recognizes a survivor of crime who has transformed their experience of victimization into impactful change through promoting legislation or advocating for policy changes that further rights and services to fellow victims and survivors.



**Susan Malman
Altman**

*Alliance for HOPE
International*

Susan Malman Altman is a survivor-advocate who transformed profound personal loss into sustained public policy impact. After her sister, Stacy Malman Feldman, was murdered by her husband in 2015, Susan was thrust into a criminal justice process that exposed critical gaps in how domestic violence homicides are understood and investigated. Determined that no other family would face the same barriers, she committed herself to advancing systemic reform.

Following the 2022 conviction of Stacy's husband, Susan emerged as a leading voice in national conversations on coercive control, hidden homicide, and victim-centered reform. As a founding member of VOICES for Victims of Hidden Homicide, a program of Alliance for HOPE International, she educates policymakers, law enforcement professionals, and communities about the warning signs and investigative complexities that too often delay justice. Her advocacy promotes stronger protections, greater accountability, and policies that center the rights and dignity of victims and survivors.

In Massachusetts, Susan worked closely with Senator Becca Rausch to introduce An Act addressing staged suicides, legislation designed to honor victims of domestic violence and strengthen justice for their families. The bill advances improved law enforcement training and enhances investigative protocols in death cases involving a history of domestic violence.

Equally committed at the local level, Susan speaks regularly at synagogues, Jewish day schools, sororities, fraternities, and Boston College. Through Journey to Safety, the domestic violence and dating abuse program of Jewish Family & Children's Service, she shares Stacy's story with audiences across Greater Boston. Her work strengthens faith-based and community responses to domestic violence. She participates in Domestic Violence Awareness Month vigils and community roundtables, ensuring survivor voices inform public safety initiatives.

She has also addressed professional audiences, including the Colorado Association for Victim Assistance, helping bridge lived experience and policy reform. Through courage, persistence, and principled advocacy, Susan has transformed personal tragedy into meaningful public policy influence. Her work strengthens rights, services, and systemic protections for victims and survivors — embodying the purpose and spirit of the Public Policy Award.

MOVA

ACCESS TO JUSTICE AWARD

recognizes a survivor, service provider, agency, or organization (criminal justice and/or community-based) whose leadership and outreach efforts have made victim rights and services more accessible or readily available to underserved populations.



Laura W. Gal

*Greater Boston
Legal Services
(GBLS)*

Laura W. Gal is Managing Attorney for Family Law at Greater Boston Legal Services, where she oversees a team of 20 advocates engaged in trial and appellate court litigation, community outreach, and systemic advocacy on behalf of low-income survivors of domestic violence and other disadvantaged parents raising families in the Commonwealth. Previously, while a staff attorney at Community Legal Aid, Laura was lead counsel on *L.B. v. Chief Justice of the Probate and Family Court*, 474 Mass. 231 (2016), which expanded the rights of indigent parents to court-appointed counsel in guardianship of minor cases. Laura began her legal career at the nation's first medical-legal partnership, Family Advocacy Project of Boston City Hospital (now "MLP Boston") where she established a legal aid project for grandparents raising their grandchildren.

Among her other professional and volunteer activities, Laura is a member of the Women's Bar Association's Amicus Committee, the Boston Bar Association's Delivery of Legal Services Committee, and the Access to Justice Commission's Family Law Committee. She co-chaired the Access to Justice Commission (2021-2022), served as a member of the Judicial Nominating Commission (2023-2025), was a board member for the Women's Bar Association (2017-2019), and has been a guest lecturer at Boston College School of Law (2016 - 2018) and Suffolk University Law School (2026). Laura was a 2025 recipient of the Women's Bar Association's Lelia J. Robinson award, a 2024 Top Women of the Law recipient, and a 2011 Community Legal Aid Equal Justice awardee. Laura received her B.A. from Dartmouth College in 1991 and her J.D., with honors, from The George Washington University Law School in 1995.

MOVA

SPRECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD

recognizes a survivor of crime who has transformed their experience of victimization into positive change, healing, and leadership through promoting rights and services for victims and survivors.



Denise Cosby

The Just-In-Time Initiative

Denise Cosby was born in Richmond, Virginia. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Virginia Union University in 1978 and pursued graduate studies in Criminal Justice at Virginia Commonwealth University.

In 1988, Denise relocated to Cambridge, Massachusetts, where she has resided ever since. She built a distinguished 20-year career as a legal assistant in major Boston law firms, including the internationally renowned Ropes & Gray. Denise is a Realtor and the Founder of The Just in Time Initiative.

Denise is the proud mother of Shenita Cosby and the late Justin Cosby. In 2009, her youngest child, Justin Cosby, age 21, who was murdered on the grounds of Harvard University. That devastating loss transformed Denise's life and purpose.

In the wake of intense media speculation surrounding her son's murder, Denise made the courageous decision to tell the story from a mother's perspective. After enduring two and a half years of court proceedings to bring three defendants to justice, she authored a deeply personal memoir "Murder at Harvard's Kirkland House-A Mother's Worst Nightmare" that offers an unfiltered account of grief, resilience, faith, and the pursuit of justice.

Since Justin's death, Denise has become a dedicated advocate for families impacted by homicide and traumatic loss. She speaks to young adults about accountability, choices, and consequences, urging them to consider how one bad decision can change the fabric of their lives.

In June 2021, Denise and fellow survivor Faye Rackley co-founded the Just-In-Time Initiative, an organization committed to supporting and connecting survivors of homicide through healing resources, advocacy, and community.

Denise has been a featured speaker at numerous events and has received multiple recognitions for her advocacy work. Through her writing, speaking, and activism, Denise Cosby continues to transform unimaginable loss into purpose, power, and impact.

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SPRECIAL RECOGNITION AWARD

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Fay Rackley

The Just-In-Time Initiative

Fay Rackley has 3 children, 9 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren. In July 2010, Fay lost her 19-year-old grandson Kenneth K. Rackley a.k.a. Kenny. Kenny was murdered at Washington Park while attending a basketball game in Roxbury, MA. He was such a loving soul. Kenney came from a close-knit family. In addition to Fay, his grandmother, he leaves to mourn his loss his loving mother Kim, two brothers Eddie and Deandre and a daughter he never got to meet we affectionately call Miss Kali.

In memory of her grandson Kenny, Fay decided to recognize every murdered child, his/her birthdays and the anniversary of their deaths by posting their pictures and memories on facebook to let others know their loved ones will never be forgotten.

In June 2021, Fay and fellow survivor Denise Cosby founded the Just-In-Time Initiative, an organization committed to supporting and connecting survivors of homicide through healing resources, advocacy, and community.

Fay has been a featured speaker at numerous events and has received multiple recognitions for her advocacy work.

Working with other parents of murdered children, Fay has come to recognize that “Not one stands alone.”

Today, Fay stands with her legacy sister Denise Cosby to help support, educate and motivate others to seek peace again and seek healing with their program called the Just in Time Initiative.

MOVA

THE INNOVATION AWARD

recognizes an individual survivor, service provider, agency, or organization (criminal justice and/or community-based) who has developed an innovative program or policy that helps crime victims.



Karen Hoffman

*REACH, Beyond
Domestic Violence*

Karen Hoffman is an attorney, whose legal practice focuses on employment matters, a founding partner of DKS Consulting Group, which provides business consulting and executive coaching and a long-time volunteer at REACH Beyond Domestic Violence. Her work at REACH has focused on legal advocacy, training, and legal issues related to post-separation abuse.

Together with Catalina Folch, LMHC, Karen co-developed and co-facilitated an innovative post-separation abuse therapeutic group for survivors at REACH, in which she provided training and education about the legal system. She is also a member of the Needham Domestic Violence Action Committee and a former member of the Needham Human Rights Committee, Needham Education Foundation, Needham Steps Up and other groups related to social justice. Karen is a graduate of Brown University and American University Washington College of Law.

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Catalina Folch

*REACH, Beyond
Domestic Violence*

Catalina Folch is the Director of Children, Families and Group Services at REACH Beyond Domestic Violence, where she has dedicated the past nine years to walking alongside survivors of domestic violence. A licensed mental health clinician with a Master's degree in Counseling Psychology and Art Therapy, Catalina specializes in group therapy and attachment-focused work, creating and facilitating transformative support and psychotherapy groups for both adults and children.

Born and raised in Bogotá, Catalina brings cultural humility and deep gratitude to her work, especially in service to immigrant communities. She believes in the healing power of connection and community, and she has witnessed firsthand how safe spaces can help survivors reclaim their voices, rebuild trust, and rediscover their strength.

Catalina shares this honor from the Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance with the extraordinary team and mentors who have supported and inspired her along the way. She is especially motivated by her brave, strong, and curious daughter—and by all children whose resilience fuels her commitment to helping families break cycles of transgenerational trauma.

MOVA

CORPORATE LEADERSHIP AWARD

Recognizes a business, organization or individual from a discipline outside of the victim assistance field for their dedication to supporting crime victims and advancing the victim services community. These allied professionals are committed to innovative approaches to ending violence and supporting those impacted by it.



**Beth Israel
Lahey Health**

Beth Israel Lahey Health is a health care system that brings together academic medical centers and teaching hospitals, specialty and community hospitals, more than 4,700 physicians and 39,000 employees in a shared mission to expand access to care and advance the science and practice of medicine through groundbreaking research and education.

We are helping our patients, their families, our communities, and health care as a whole, be healthier. Together, as a coordinated system of care, we are doing more than we ever could alone. We are solving more problems. Helping more people. Making more breakthroughs. Making a difference.

MOVA

THE ADVOCATE OF THE YEAR AWARD

recognizes an individual from a public and/or community-based agency who has made extraordinary contributions to the lives of victims and survivors.



Steven Nelson

*Norfolk District
Attorney's Office*

For the past 15 years, Steven has worked within the criminal justice system, supporting victims, witnesses and families through court proceedings and connecting them to resources. He currently supports the Norfolk District Attorney's Office.

"Helping individuals find strength and justice during the most difficult times makes this work deeply rewarding."

-Steven Nelson

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Chelsea Davies

*Center for
Violence
Prevention
and Recovery*

Chelsea Davies is a licensed independent clinical social worker who has worked at BIDMC's Center for Violence Prevention and Recovery at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center since 2018. In her current role she specializes in supporting people impacted by multiple forms of interpersonal violence including domestic and sexual violence, community violence and homicide, and human trafficking.

She works with survivors immediately after they have been harmed in helping with acute safety and stabilization, as well as with survivors who are engaged in therapy that supports their longer-term healing goals. She has a specialized interest area in improving the medical system's response to survivors of sexual assault, as well as in training interdisciplinary groups of medical providers in trauma informed care practices.

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Lori Roy

*Northwestern
District Attorney's
Office*

September of 1993, Lori Roy began an Internship with the Victim Witness Unit of the Northwestern District Attorney's Office, primarily working in the Orange office assisting plaintiffs with restraining orders.

December of 1993 Lori was hired as a Victim Witness Advocate for our Greenfield office. Over the next 5 years, she worked in Juvenile, District and Superior Court on a wide variety of cases. These included: Domestic Violence, Assault, Sexual Assault, Property Crimes and Homicide.

In 1998 Lori was promoted to Advocate Supervisor and moved to the Northampton office. While in Northampton, Lori was responsible for similar cases as Greenfield and also tasked with supervising advocates in Hampshire County and Franklin County when needed.

In addition to her Supervisory duties, in October of 2016, Lori returned to Greenfield and served for 2 years as the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Advocate.

In January of 2018 Lori was promoted to Deputy Director of the Victim Witness Unit where she will remain until retirement.

MOVA

THE MASSACHUSETTS VICTIM BILL OF RIGHTS M.G.L. CH. 258B

The Massachusetts Victim Bill of Rights (M.G.L c2588) provides the below rights and services to victims and survivors of crime in order to ensure a meaningful role for them in the criminal justice system. While the Bill of Rights applies to all crimes, victims and survivors of violent crimes are given priority status for services.

Victim assistance programs are available in each District Attorney's Office, the Office of the Attorney General, and several post-conviction agencies. After the crime has occurred the needs of victims and their families often change. The Massachusetts Office for Victim Assistance (MOVA) is committed to working with community providers to find the services that meet a victim's evolving needs.

Below are some of the rights to which victims and witnesses are entitled For a complete listing of rights, please refer to the Victim Bill of Rights (M.G.L c2588).

You have the right to

- **Be Informed about victim rights and services In the criminal Justice system.**
- **To receive specific Information about the criminal case.**
- **To be heard and present at court proceedings.**
- **To confer with key officials at major stages In the court process.**
- **To financial assistance.**
- **To be notified of an offender's release or status while In custody.**
- **To other protections In the criminal justice system.**

THE GARDEN OF PEACE

The Garden is the Massachusetts memorial to victims of homicide, a place where families, friends, and the larger community may remember and honor the lives of those taken by violence. It's an enduring reminder of the impact of violence and a visual testament of the need to eliminate it. At the same time, the Garden serves as a symbol of hope, peace, and renewal.

Support the Garden of Peace

The Garden of Peace is sustained by the generosity of individuals, groups, foundations, and corporations. A donation will help us maintain the Garden, including providing subsidies for families who can't afford the full cost of engravings. Support from individuals and groups is greatly appreciated as there's currently no dedicated state appropriation for ongoing Garden operations. Donations to the Garden of Peace are tax-deductible as allowed by law. For donations to remember or honor someone special, please provide the relevant information and we'll send an acknowledgment.

***For more information
click here***

Application for Engraving

Applications may be submitted any time throughout the year, keeping in mind any applications received and verified before August 1st will allow for engraving the same year and read aloud at the Annual Honor Program in September. Any application received and verified after August 1st may be held for engraving the following year and will be read aloud also during the following year.

***For more information
click here***

STAY CONNECTED WITH MOVA!

The Victim Services Bulletin

Each month, MOVA sends a Victim Services Bulletin to our community members. The monthly newsletter includes important training and events happening in the field of victim services.

If you have upcoming events or training opportunities, send them to mov@mass.gov to be included in the next VSB.

Please note our guidelines below prior to submitting new requests.

Guidelines:

- Entries must be received by the first business day of the month in order to be included in the bulletin.
- Events and announcements will only be included until the following month (30 days).
- MOVA cannot communicate last minute changes or cancellations of events or announcements.
- Submissions must include the date/time (if it is an event), and contact information.
- Submissions should not exceed 10 sentences.
- MOVA cannot disseminate information on political events or fundraisers.

Follow us on Social Media!

NEVER MISS AN UPDATE!
FOLLOW US @MASSMOVA



[For more information
click here](#)





**THANK YOU
FOR ALL YOU DO
TO SUPPORT VICTIMS
AND SURVIVORS ACROSS
MASSACHUSETTS**



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