



# National Association of Victim Service Professionals in Corrections

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## Introduction

*By Denise Giles*

Dear Victim Service Provider:

As many of you know, over the years there has been growing interest to establish a professional organization for corrections-based victim service providers nationally.

We are very excited to announce that we have been diligently working toward, what we feel, will be a very informative, supportive network in which colleagues can share promising practices, experiences and strategies. This will provide the best possible services within corrections for crime victims.

Here are just some of the accomplishments in creating the "National Association of Victim Service Professionals in Corrections" to date.

A letter of introduction is being sent out to all fifty heads of the State's Corrections agencies introducing the Association and requesting updated contact information for the Victim Services Office in each agency. The Association intends to maintain and update the contact list periodically and make it available to the members.

We are excited to be publishing our newsletter introducing the Association nationally! ♦

A membership application for the "National Association of Victim Service Professionals in Corrections" is enclosed in this newsletter on page 7. We encourage you to join and be a part of this effort to unify Victim Services in Corrections Nationwide. ♦

In order to have 501C(3) status, we were required to have officers named, so until we can actually hold elections with the membership, the following individuals have been appointed to these acting positions:

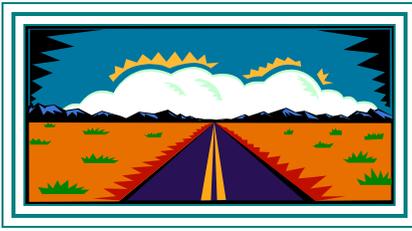
**Bill Stutz**  
Chairman/Treasurer  
Consultant, Washington State

**Denise Giles**  
Vice-Chairman / Newsletter  
Editor  
Maine DOC

**Traci Dory**  
Secretary  
Nevada DOC

**Karin Ho**  
Marketing / Membership  
Ohio State Department of  
Rehabilitation and Corrections

**Dan Levey**  
Programs  
Arizona DOC



## The History of Corrections-Based Victim Services

By Anne Seymour

The concept of combining “corrections” and “crime victims” was absolutely foreign for a long period within the victim assistance field, which began in 1972. Two significant turning points occurred in 1987, beginning with a Task Force formed by James Rowland – known as “the father of the victim impact statement” and then-Director of the California Department of Corrections – within the American Correctional Association (ACA). I recall a lively discussion in New Orleans, fueled by fine Napa wine hand-carried by Rowland to Louisiana, that for the first time explored corrections’ *obligations* to, and *opportunities* involving, crime victims and those who serve them.

Two months later, a horrific crime brought this new challenge to a painful reality. She requested simply that the Indiana Department of Corrections notify her if he was *ever* released, for *any* reason. The DOC released Alan Metheny on a furlough, and he showed up on Bianco’s doorstep with a sawed off shotgun, which he used to beat her to death in a manner so severe that his weapon broke into several pieces.

As Sharon English (mother of the “Impact of Crime on Victims” programs) has stated, “the

power of the personal story’ has been a driving force behind many of the accomplishments of the victim assistance field.” For me personally, the tragedy of Lisa Bianco was a turning point that affirmed the nascent work of the ACA Task Force.

In 1987, the ACA Task Force published a report and 15 recommendations to initiate or enhance corrections-based victim services, focusing on the implementation of victims’ rights, responding to staff victimization and critical incidents, and creating “Impact of Crime on Victims” programs for adult and youthful offenders.

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*“In Indiana, a chronically battered women named Lisa Bianco found the courage to leave her abusive husband and assist in the effort to prosecute him.”*

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At a series of regional public hearings to respond to the recommendations, the-OVC Director Jane Nady Sigmon not only committed her personal support to the endeavor; she committed OVC funding to develop a curriculum and train states on how to create corrections-based victim assistance programs.

There are so many landmarks in our incredible journey, a few of which are especially noteworthy:

- In 1990, the first national conference that addressed corrections-based victim services was sponsored by OVC in Sacramento, with over 150 participants from 40 states. Bill Stutz can best explain the “Thelma and Louise” offense he

experienced, *with verification from me.*

- That same year, the American Probation and Parole Association (APPA) formed a Victim Issues Committee that, today, is a driving force behind program development and implementation for corrections-based victim services.
- OVC Project produced three national surveys in 1991, 1996 and 1998 that created benchmarks and defined the scope of corrections-based victim services.
- In 1995, the ACA Victims Committee published the landmark “Report and Recommendations on Victims of Juvenile Offenders” that, for the first time, addressed victim services in juvenile justice and corrections.
- In 1996 the association of State Correctional Administrators (ASCA) formed a dynamic Victim Committee. The term “ASCA and you shall receive” summarizes the powerful influence that has resulted from the involvement of state correctional directors in our efforts.

What has been the end result? Nearly *all* states have received training and technical assistance sponsored by OVC and the National Institute of Corrections (NIC) in the past 15 years. Extensive curricula and training programs that address corrections-based victim services, how to respond to workplace violence and staff victimization, and victim awareness programming for offenders have been developed by OVC with support from dozens of corrections-based victim service

providers. A training manual published by APPA and a book soon-to-be-published by OVC address “the Victim role in offender reentry.” Perhaps most important, adult correctional agencies in 49 states and juvenile correctional agencies in nearly half the states have strong, vibrant and effective victim assistance programs.

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*“When we give crime victims and those who serve them the opportunity to be “players” in corrections, we validate them as critical partners...”*

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The support from OVC, NIC and the former Corrections Program Office (CPO) has had a powerful impact on the development of corrections-based victim assistance programs, as well as the establishment of a national network and mentoring program that nurtures new programs, and relieves the stress of those who work in longstanding ones.

Larry Meachum, the former Director of the CPO within the Office of Justice Programs, summed up his (and my) feelings about this amazing effort when he said in 1991 that “victims should be *players*, not *projects*.”

When we give crime victims and those who serve them the opportunity to be “players” in corrections, we validate them as critical partners, and we send a message to the public that the corrections equation no longer is simply offender focused, but victim-centered.



## *The Victim’s Role in the Offender’s Re-entry - Broadening the Agenda*

By **Bill Stutz**

“Making the victim feel safe again must be at the core of any reparative strategy. Protecting the victim or potential victims from future harm and harassment, must be our first concern.”

Offender Risk Management without voluntary involvement of the victim is like reading a good novel with the final chapter missing. We really never know the full reality of the true harm done as a result of the criminal act. To fully understand, we must first invite victims to participate in the development of strategies and allocation of resources involved with offender risk management. However that is not enough. Listening to the concerns and fears from those truly injured, then attempting to respond to their concerns must be at the core of what we are all about. No longer can our system be offender centered if we are going to hold offender’s accountable and have an impact on the harm done. We have the capacity to make this change!

Approximately two years ago I was given the case of a sex offender, who, during his treatment at the Sex Offender Treatment Program, disclosed very graphic descriptions of what he desired to do to his fourteen year old victim and her mother after his

release. This disclosure revealed careful planning of mutilation and death. I was given this case, with the words. “I am not sure what to do about this, but here it is.” “How are we going to keep the victim safe?” was my first response. I then personally met with the victim and her mother independent of anyone else. I then made an appointment with advocates of the Sexual Assault Program in the county where the victim was residing. Arrangements were made for the victim and her mother to meet with the advocate of the program to assist in safety planning for them. I then met with local law enforcement in the area and assigned Department of Corrections’ staff to discuss a safety plan should the offender be released to the county where the victim resides. Thus, the *Victim Wrap Around Process* was born in Washington State.

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*“Listening to the concerns and fears from those truly injured then attempting to respond to their concerns must be at the core of what we are all about.”*

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From the first Wrap Around that was done over two years ago, this process has become a critical component in offender re-entry. We certainly have become more educated and skilled in our deployment of Wrap Around teams, addressing a holistic approach in the development of safety planning for victims and offering support to victims when high risk offenders reenter the community. We have developed strong relationships with Community resources, law

enforcement, and local victim advocates who are invited to the table for the sole purpose of developing safety plans for victims. The victim is the center of this process. Wrap Arouns provide an opportunity for the victim to have direct input into the release planning of the offender, identifying risk factors and safety plan development. This of course is done without the offender's participation in the Wrap Around meetings. The results of the Victim Wrap Around meetings produces valuable information that assist with transition issues, risk management and helping the victim feel safe.

I want to share some direct responses received from victims who have participated in the Victim Wrap Around meetings. They reflect, in part, feelings of support and safety. This is from my file, "From their own voices:" "A quick note to let you know the meeting was a success! I feel wrapped around. I'm glad I decided to risk losing my anonymity with the community by taking advantage of the wrap around meeting. Everyone was kind but most importantly not condescending! I will feel as safe as I can and the rest I'll rely on God for."

Prior to my meeting with Mr. Stutz, I surely feared for my and my daughter's lives. He has taken a vested interest in my case by keeping me consistently informed. He has also guided me and helped me find the right direction and validated my need for help. .... is a very scary person and to this day he is

obsessed with finding us. He has gone to the extent of threatening Mr. Stutz in order to get cooperation. Mr. Stutz has never wavered. I truly am grateful for everything that Mr. Stutz and his program have done and continue to do for my daughter and myself. Without his assistance I honestly can tell you that I believe that ... would have murdered me."

"Thank you for the time and attention you have given to my strange situation. I especially appreciate the meeting you arranged. I know it takes time to bring so many parties to the table. I'm pleased that the Sheriff's Office is aware and prepared to respond, should the need arise. I'm also pleased that I'll have ready access to advocacy resources. Like everyone, I'll hope for the best and try to prepare for the worst."

"I am writing you to say Thank You so much for all your help. I would have never gone through this so peacefully without all your help. **Thank You!** I would have never thought at the age of fourteen my life would have changed so fast. It took a long time to understand who he really was and what he was about. I caused so much pain within my family and hurt friends also. I thought it was too late to get help but I found out it wasn't. Without your support and understanding I don't know where I would be right now. Thank you for everything? You changed my life. I hope you know how much you have helped me. Wish you the best in life."

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*"I am writing you to say Thank You so much for all your help. I would have never gone through this so peacefully without all your help. Thank You!"*

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"Government systems and agencies can become unwieldy and convoluted. With current budget issues, additional stress has been added to programs trying to deliver services in the community. However, your program seems to be holding up well. I have been extremely pleased with the assistance that my daughter and I have received from you and your staff.

The wrap-around session was a tremendous aid for both of us. Discussing safety issues, his release and supervision, and receiving recommendations from professionals that have dealt with him and violent offenders like him has given us a better sense of what to expect."

Let us be mindful that the reason we have a justice system is not because a crime was committed, but because someone was harmed as a result of the crime. As corrections' professionals, not only must we respond to the factors that contribute to crime by assisting offenders in changing behavior, but to recognize the importance of giving victims a choice to participate. If they chose to do so, we must respect their involvement, listen too them, and support their needs to feel safe.



## NVASPC NEEDS YOU!

We are looking for volunteers to work on establishing and maintaining the National Association of Victim Service Professionals in Corrections (NAVSPC). This Association needs your help! We have been attempting to build this Association from the grass roots level, but just like any organization it needs people who are willing to work on various committees, such as Membership, Publications, Publicity and Marketing. As you know corrections professionals working with victim and survivors of crime is a specialized and worthwhile career. We want to build this organization to be a strong voice for all those individuals working in this field. If you are interested in being on the ground level in building and strengthening this Association, please contact Denise Giles, Maine Department of Corrections 111 State House Station, Augusta, Maine 0433-0111 (207) 287-4385 or Bill Stutz, at NAVSPC, P.O. Box 3145, Lacey, WA 98509-3145, e-mail address [wastu49@hotmail.com](mailto:wastu49@hotmail.com), phone (360) 438 6909.

## PREA- Inmate Eligibility for Victim Compensation Benefits

As a result of the Prison Rape Elimination Act, many of us in Victim Services in Corrections have to take into consideration the services needed for prisoner/victims. Victim Compensation immediately comes to mind. I have recently had a conversation with Deb Rice, the Victims' Compensation Director here in Maine regarding this issue. Her response was that the Maine Victims' Compensation Board has not taken the position that felons are ineligible for Compensation, therefore, they could apply and decisions would be made on a case-by-case basis. However, that said, Compensation is to be considered the payor of last resort and for an incarcerated felon the Department of Corrections is responsible for medical and mental health services. The only issue would be continuing counseling needs after release. If the felon met all other eligibility requirements an application could be submitted and the Board would decide the case based on the circumstances. Deb went on to say that she spoke to Dan Eddy, Executive Director of the National Association of Crime Victim Compensation Program who said that the issue has not generated a national position, rather each state is setting its own policy.

## Prison Rape Elimination Act

By Traci Dory

The Prison Rape Elimination Act [PREA] was signed into law by President Bush on September 4, 2003. This new federal law affects all correctional facilities throughout the United States, whether they are run by the state or a private corporation. It affects all juvenile and adult facilities; jails; police lock-ups; and community correctional settings. The highlights of this Act are: it supports the elimination, reduction and prevention of sexual assault within the corrections system; it mandates several national data collection activities; it provides funding for program development and additional research; and it creates a national commission to develop standards and accountability measures.

As Victim Service Providers in Corrections, some of us are highly involved, not involved at all, or involved somewhere in between regarding this law in our correctional institutions. For those of you not involved at all, congratulations. This new law creates numerous challenges to all members of the correctional staff at every institution, from maximum to minimum to community corrections.

Some states with developing models to look at are: Ohio and Texas. The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction developed the *Ten Point Plan*. It includes:

1. Staff Training – all new and current employees will receive training specifically on inmate sexual assault and inappropriate staff-inmate relationships;
2. Inmate Education – all new and current inmates receive information related to sexual assault including prevention, self protection, how to report, and treatment and counseling;
3. Sanctions – a committee was formed to examine how the department can improve its current practices related to disciplinary actions and criminal prosecutions in an effort to deter sexual assaults;
4. Victim Support Persons – they have been trained and established in all institutions to provide support to an [inmate] victim of sexual assault;
5. Investigation Procedures – all department investigators will be provided specific training on how to investigate sexual assaults;

6. Electronic Tracking of Inmate Aggressors/ Manipulators – the department will be implementing an electronic means of identifying sexually aggressive inmates and inmates known to have engaged in inappropriate relationships with staff. This will assist correctional staff in making appropriate institutional and housing assignments;
7. Data Collection – data related to inmate on inmate assaults and inappropriate staff-inmate relationships will be maintained electronically. A committee will then be formed to formulate a plan designed to more effectively analyze the data and utilize it in planning and policy development;
8. Audits – internal management audit standards will be developed for use to monitor institutional compliance with department policy regarding sexual assaults. The department will also continue to comply with the American Correctional Association’s standards on sexual assault;
9. Fear of Reporting – a process improvement team will be formed to study ways to encourage inmates to report sexual assaults by other inmates and staff; and
10. Prison Rape Elimination Act – an inmate sexual abuse oversight committee will monitor developments in this legislation and direct further action by the department as appropriate, as well as assure implementation of this 10 Point Plan.

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Correctional Institutions Division developed the *Safe Prisons Program*. This program involves:

1. Prevention;
2. Intervention;
3. Investigation;
4. Discipline / Prosecution;
5. Recordkeeping and Monitoring; and
6. Tracking Offenders; and
7. Safe Prisons Program Office.

There are numerous challenges for Victim Service Providers especially for those agencies that have only one person in their Victim Service Unit. Nevada is one of those states.

The most prominent challenge is to get PREA implemented in the appropriate time without creating a conflict of interest. The Victim Services Officer in Nevada has taken the approach of assisting Department staff by:

1. Training all department staff during Pre-Service Training, Correctional Employee Refresher, and Supervisory Employee Refresher classes on the law;
2. Developing the administrative regulations, policies, procedures and protocols dealing with the Department’s response to sexual assaults in our institutions;
3. Development of inmate education materials, including posters, brochures and a video; and
4. Providing specialized training to specific and select staff members to be on their institution’s Sexual Assault Response Team [SART].

The challenge lies with making sure that the Victim Services Officer is assisting staff only so that a conflict does not arise with assisting the “community” victim of an “inmate” victim at the same time. Nevada’s Victim Services Unit does not assist the inmate victim, but provides specialized training for department staff to become that inmate’s victim support person. In addition, Nevada’s Victim Services Officer continues to work with local community providers to develop a brochure and video so that the inmate victim has a place to go when released from custody to get any medical services and/or further counseling that may be needed.

The challenges remain not only for those highly involved, but also for all staff of every correctional institution throughout the country. More challenges and struggles are sure to follow, but by working together, sharing ideas, successes and failures, we can make it work for everyone involved.

# National Association of Victim Service Professionals in Corrections

## Membership Application

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
DATE

\_\_\_\_\_  
NAME

**HOME ADDRESS:**  
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**ADDRESS**

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**CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE**

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**AGENCY/CORPORATION**

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**CITY/STATE/ZIP CODE**

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**AREA CODE/PHONE AREA CODE/FAX**

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**E-MAIL ADDRESS**

TAX ID # 57-1211509

**\*\*Description of Membership Categories\*\***

- ❖ **Support Membership:**
  - This membership is aimed towards Directors of Correctional Agencies (Director, Commissioner, Secretary)
- ❖ **National Membership**
  - This membership is aimed towards Official Representatives of National Associations
- ❖ **Associate Membership**
  - This membership is aimed towards students in an accredited academic institution
- ❖ **Community-Based Victim Service Providers**
  - This membership is aimed towards Non Government agencies providing Victim Service or Advocacy
- ❖ **Allied Correctional Organizations**
  - This membership is aimed towards Law Enforcement and Correctional Agencies
- ❖ **Professional Corrections-Based V/S Providers Charter**
  - This membership is aimed towards Prison and Institution employees
- ❖ **Corrections-Based Victim Service Program**
  - This membership is aimed towards correction based victim services programs with staff of five or less

**MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES:**

(U.S. and U.S. Territories)

- ❖ Support Membership (Directors)  \$75
- ❖ National Association Representatives  \$50
- ❖ Associate Memberships (students)  \$15
- ❖ Community-Based Victim Service Providers  \$15
- ❖ Allied Correctional Organizations  \$50
- ❖ Professional Corrections-Based Victim Service Providers Charter  \$35
  - 3-Year  \$75
  - Life  \$250
- ❖ Corrections-Based Victim Services Program (up to 5 staff)  \$75

\_\_\_\_\_  
**SIGNATURE**

**MAIL COMPLETED FORM AND PAYMENT TO:**

Bill Stutz, Chairman and Treasurer  
P.O. Box 3145  
Lacey, WA 98509-3145

ADDRESS      CORRECTION  
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Subscriber Name  
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