



An employee publication of the
Texas Department of Criminal Justice

January/February 2015

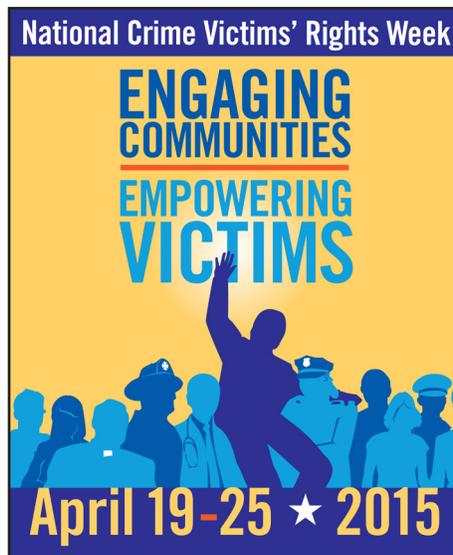
Volume 22 Issue 3

Agency News

National Crime Victims' Rights Week begins April 19

The 2015 National Crime Victims' Rights Week takes place April 19 through 25, and this year's theme is "Engaging Communities. Empowering Victims." During this time, crime victims, victim advocates, criminal justice professionals and community leaders honor crime victims and their advocates by promoting victims' rights and providing support to help crime victims rebuild their lives.

In 1984 President Reagan signed into law the Victims of Crime Act, establishing the crime victims' fund comprising criminal fines, penalties and forfeitures, to support victim compensation and assistance programs. Funding of crime victims' compensation and victim assistance programs through VOCA has allowed families who are touched by violent crime to receive necessary resources and services. The newly enacted Justice Assistance Act also established a financial assistance program for state and local government and provided funding for important victim ser-



vices. The National Victims Resource Center was established to serve as a central information resource and still serves the community as the Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime.

This year's NCVRW theme of engaging communities and empowering victims was selected because it emphasizes the impact

individuals can have on victims by maximizing existing resources in the community and providing them with the necessary support throughout their journey. TDCJ Victim Services Division Director Angie McCown explains, "Each TDCJ staff person has the opportunity to play a role in victim empowerment by working according to our mission statement to provide public safety, promote positive change in offender behavior, reintegrate offenders into society and assist victims of crime."

Visit the online Texas Victim Assistance training calendar to submit or search for events in your area. Typical activities include recognition ceremonies, community walks and runs, education programs and art displays. For more information, go to the 2015 Crime Victims' Rights Week resource guide on the Web, or contact the Texas Crime Victim Clearinghouse by calling 800-848-4284 or by e-mail at tdej.clearinghouse@tdcj.texas.gov.