

The Service and Leadership of Janice Harris Lord

Recently Janice Harris Lord, Board Member, Texas Board of Criminal Justice, and long-time victim advocate was honored by the Tarrant County Branch of the National Association of Social Workers with the Lifetime Achievement Award. I was fortunate enough to attend the ceremony and was reminded of her countless contributions to crime victims and to the victim services field. Arlington Police Department Victim Services Director Derrelynn Perryman introduced Ms. Lord and agreed to share her comments.

Janice Harris Lord decided to be a social worker in 1961, the summer after her junior year in high school, when she traveled through the South at the back of the bus, befriending black passengers and their children. Later that summer she experienced poverty as she had never seen it before while working in Haiti, the western hemisphere's poorest nation. Janice was determined to stand with those who had no or limited rights, not knowing what form that might take.

Janice received her bachelor's degree in sociology at Phillips

University and her Masters of Science in Social Work degree from the University of Texas at Arlington. She is a licensed clinical social worker (LCSW) and member of the Academy of Certified Social Workers (ACSW). She is a Fellow in Thanatology with the Association of Death Education and Counseling.

Janice began her career standing with neglected children as a Child Protective Services (CPS) worker in Dallas. In 1982, she turned her focus to victims of drunk driving crashes as National Director of Victim Services for Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), a position she held for 14 years. She developed the Victim Services program nationally and for states, and developed publications that are still used by MADD today. She also founded the magazine, MADDvocate. In 1993, Janice received the U.S. Presidential Award for "Outstanding Service on Behalf of Victims of Crime" from President Bill Clinton and U.S. Attorney General, Janet Reno.

Janice left MADD in 1997 and opened a private practice, also serving as a consultant for a number



Janice Harris Lord

of crime victim organizations with special interest in trauma-related bereavement, resilience in clients and caregivers, ethics in victim services, and the role of spirituality in human services. She helped develop the curriculum for the first National Victim Assistance Academy sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime, wrote the curriculum for the first Texas Victim Assistance Academy, and served for several years as a consultant to the 34 State Victim Assistance Academies throughout the nation. She was also a member of the National Victim Assistance Standards Consortium, which developed standards and ethics for the emerging field of Crime Victim Services.

continued on page 7

The

VICTIM'S INFORMER

PASSING THE TORCH

Articles from seasoned victim services professionals who are retiring—or realigning—to share their insight with those that are new or still working in victim services.

by Herman Millholland

As I look back on my career in the field of victim services—a journey that continues to be both richly rewarding and, more recently, validating—I think about the great privilege it has been to be in a profession where you have the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others in very profound ways.

I would like to share with you my journey and a recent event that reminded me how incredibly wonderful it has been. Several months ago I had the opportunity to attend the retirement celebration of a dear friend, someone I have known for over 25 years and who also served as one of my mentors early on in my career as a victim advocate in the District Attorney's Victim-Witness Assistance Program in Los Angeles, California. Gathered together for the occasion were a group of former victim assistance directors, now all retired, who had come to celebrate our dear friend and colleague. It was reminiscent

of an “Ole Buffaloes” gathering, spending quality time with old friends catching up over a weekend of festivities. This gathering took place in San Luis Obispo, a picturesque seaside town north of Santa Barbara, a community known for its vineyards, wineries and scenic beaches. We took many long walks through this charming and quaint little town.

We were a close knit group of advocates and friends who relied on each other dating back to the 1980s. We talked often on the telephone, problem solved complex cases or discussed our grants programs. We attended regional meetings to reconnect, recharge and support one another as peers. We also experienced historic change over the years that included the introduction of mobile phones and the revolutionary age of computer technology that enhanced the way direct services are and will be provided. These were extremely exciting times, and we were part of it!

continued on page 5

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice Victim Services Division is proud to provide you with an email notification service. Email notifications may be retrieved directly from your computer, mobile device, or wherever internet access is available. Email notifications are time sensitive and notify you of changes in an offender's status.

Being a current Victim Notification System registrant will not automatically register you for this email service. To register, contact the Victim Services Division at 800-848-4284 or visit our website at www.tdcj.state.tx.us and complete the victim email notification form.

You continue to have the option to receive notifications by letter, email, or both. We would like to encourage all victim service providers who utilize the Victim Notification System to elect to receive email notifications only whenever possible.

Confidentiality of the Victim Impact Statement and Senate Bill 1611

by Mary McCaffity

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) Victim Services Division has received inquiries regarding Senate Bill 1611, also known as the Michael Morton Act, and how it changes the discovery process—specifically regarding the Victim Impact Statement (VIS). Senate Bill 1611 amends current law relating to discovery in a criminal case in an effort to uphold a defendant’s constitutional rights and to minimize the likelihood of wrongful convictions.

The resulting amendments to the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure art. 39.14 change the way discovery is provided to the defense. The portion of the bill that is specifically relevant to victims (art. 39.14(f)), requires the defense team to redact identifying information (including address, phone number, driver’s license number, etc.) about victims or witnesses before showing the information or document to the defendant. Previously, prosecutors were required to redact the identifying information. Senate Bill 1611 now places the responsibility with the defense under the statute as written. Defendants may not have copies of the information provided by the prosecution, but they can view the documents or statements.

Sensitive victim information being accessible to defendants

was a serious concern during the debate on the Michael Morton Act of the 83rd Legislative Session. Concern about whether the new requirements sufficiently protect victims’ identities was addressed during the debate on Senate Bill 1611. The details of how the redaction will occur are not specified in the bill, so the implementation by defense lawyers and the enforcement of the bill by the courts remains to be seen. The bill prohibits the defendant from being the agent for the attorney representing the defendant for redaction purposes.

Senate Bill 1611 prohibits the defendant, the attorney representing the defendant, or an investigator, expert, consulting legal counsel, or other agent of the attorney representing the defendant, except as otherwise provided in the bill, from disclosing to a third party any documents, evidence, materials, or witness statements received from the state under the bill’s provisions unless a court orders the disclosure upon a showing of good cause after notice and hearing and after considering the security and privacy interests of any victim or witness or unless the documents, evidence, materials, or witness statements have already been publicly disclosed (art. 39.14(e)). The bill authorizes the attorney representing the defendant, or an

investigator, expert, consulting legal counsel, or agent for the attorney representing the defendant, to allow a defendant, witness, or prospective witness to view the information provided under the bill’s provisions, but prohibits allowing that person to have copies of the information provided, other than a copy of the witness’s own statement.

While Senate Bill 1611 brings significant changes to criminal discovery in Texas, it did not amend the statutes relating to the confidentiality of the VIS, including the victim’s contact information. The following statutes still apply:

Code of Criminal Procedure art. 39.14(a): as amended by Senate Bill 1611, does not require the state to hand over documents that are “otherwise privileged...”.

Code of Criminal Procedure art. 56.03(g): “A victim impact statement is subject to discovery under Article 39.14 of this code before the testimony of the victim is taken only if the court determines that the statement contains exculpatory material.”

Code of Criminal Procedure art. 56.03(e): “Before sentencing the defendant, the court shall permit the defendant or the defendant’s counsel a reasonable time to

continued on page 8

Keeping Kelly's Spirit Alive

by Judy Brumbelow

My 13 year old daughter, Kelly Elaine Brumbelow, was the center of my universe. My world revolved around her. A gifted athlete, she competed in gymnastics for many years, played volleyball and basketball on her school's "A" teams, took dance lessons, and earned belts in karate. She was in the choir, was a cheerleader, and she ranked second in her class at C.D. Fulkes Middle School in Round Rock, TX. She was cute, sweet, highly motivated, and a really good kid. In fact, everything a mother could ask for. She had even been selected by Duke University for their pre-SAT exams.

Then my whole world turned upside down on Dec. 2, 1989. Kelly and our next door neighbor, 12 year old Terrance Sampson, were playing basketball in my driveway when I got in the shower to get ready for a dinner date. When I finished my shower, Kelly was no longer outside. I spoke to Terrance on the phone twice that evening as I frantically looked for her. He even came to my door hours later, asking if I had found her yet. He said he was really worried about Kelly. I reported her missing to the police. I had half of Round Rock helping to search for Kelly that night.

The next morning, while Terrance and his mom were at church, Terrance's dad found Kelly's body hidden under a stack of firewood



Judy Brumbelow's daughter, Kelly

in the corner of his backyard. Terrance quickly became the prime suspect. The coroner determined that Terrance had stabbed Kelly in the face and head 97 times with a serrated bread knife, which the police discovered in their kitchen dish drainer. While his parents were working, Terrance told Kelly he wanted to show her a new video game. When she stepped inside his front door, he attacked her. She struggled but finally bled to death in their hallway. Before his parents returned home, he washed walls, cleaned carpets, did laundry and even talked to me three separate times!

I knew nothing about the criminal justice system before this tragedy. Fortunately, the Round Rock Police Department, led by Sgt. Dan LeMay, treated me with compassion and respect from the very start. Due to Terrance's

young age, his case was tried in the family court with County Attorney Billy Ray Stubblefield prosecuting the case. I could not have asked for a better team. They were very patient and kind as they helped me prepare for a two-week trial in Kerrville 10 months later. Later, in 1995, the County Attorney also guided me through the transfer hearing.

Terrance was convicted to the maximum 30 years under the Determinate Sentencing Act, but I knew I had to do something to change two juvenile laws that caused me great pain and concern. In my mind, 30 years just wasn't enough for such a horrific crime. Why did it matter that he was only 12? Kelly was no less dead than if he had been 22, 42 or 82! Also, the jury never heard that Terrance admitted his crime to five individuals from the police department and juvenile center where he was detained until trial. The fact that he had not made a signed confession before a magistrate kept those confessions from the jury.

I met with Parker McCullough, my district Representative, who sponsored two House bills. After presenting to the Texas Legislature in 1991, both bills were signed into law. The determinate sentencing maximum was increased to 40 years and juvenile oral confessions are now admissible in court.

continued on page 7

Passing the Torch (cont.)

Throughout the weekend we reminisced about our work in the field of victim assistance and its importance: the 1984 passage of the Victim of Crime Act (VOCA); subsequent legislation and its impact on service delivery; what this meant for crime victims and advocates; and, attending national victim assistance conferences that allowed us to network with other professionals from around the country. During those early times of growth in the victim services field, we seized every opportunity to learn from experts who could educate and train us on innovative and best practices, which we could then take back with us to incorporate in our programs and in our communities to help us serve crime victims.

In our efforts to meet the increasing needs of crime victims, and recognizing that we do not provide services in a vacuum, we understood that to be successful in our pursuit of excellence it was essential that partnerships and collaboratives were formed. Doing so allowed us to develop those all-important relationships with other victim service providers, state coalitions, prosecutors and law enforcement associations to ensure that appropriate training was provided to new advocates and allies. Curriculums and certification programs—what was then the early version of Victim Assistance Academies—were developed for entry level and seasoned victim advocates to ensure they had the necessary

tools and resources to be effective when providing direct services in the field.

As advocates and leaders we were also mindful that one of our fundamental goals was mentoring and preparing advocates for leadership roles which were vital to the growth of the field and the eventual passing of the torch.

My journey as an advocate continued to be fortuitous. In 2002, I took an incredible career opportunity working with a group of dedicated men and women in the Office of the Texas Attorney General's – Crime Victims Services Division in Austin. My work early on in my career had prepared me for this leadership role and the opportunity to work alongside a talented team of committed staff members. Together we were able to create a vision and mission of providing victim-centered services, made possible through partnerships with and the all-important work of victim service organizations around the state: the Crime Victim Compensation Program, Victim Services Outreach, Sexual Assault and Crisis Prevention Services, the Address Confidentiality Program,



Herman Millholland in a photo from December 2010

and the Statewide Automated Victim Notification Program located in county jails and in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

With the support of our partners, policy makers and the Texas Legislature, we designed, created and implemented an important and much needed Statewide Grants Program that would eventually support funding opportunities for hundreds of victim services organizations, create scores of jobs for victim service professionals and provide services for thousands of crime victims around the state. I was extremely honored to work with this talented team of staff members, advocates, partners and legislators, many of whom I now call friends and all of whom are dedicated to serving crime victims

continued on next page

Passing the Torch (cont.)

and making a difference in the lives of others.

Now, living back in Southern California and having transitioned from public service to semi-retirement, my work as an independent consultant continues to provide extraordinary opportunities to impact the victim services field in a variety of ways. As a consultant and national victim advocate, this work has taken me all-over the country providing guidance on public policy matters, crime victim initiatives and leadership development working with community and systems-based organizations, federal, state and local governments, as well as not-for-profit and for-profit organizations whose work seeks to advance the rights of and improve services to crime victims.

It is amazing how time flies though. My “bucket list” continues to grow as my journey continues. One of the ‘to do’s’ on the list is devote time to volunteering and mentoring. As fate would have it, a few months into my newfound and re-imagined life an unexpected but welcome opportunity came knocking. I was recruited by a major non-profit organization to join their efforts as a board member.

Several years on, I now serve as President of the Board of Directors for End Violence against Women International. Our board members include prosecutors, law enforcement,

doctors, nurses, sexual assault, domestic violence and child abuse professionals. Through our educational programs, training, technical assistance and public policy work we seek to inspire and educate those who respond to gender-based violence. Our mission is to equip professionals with the knowledge and tools they need to support victims through victim-centered, multidisciplinary collaboration which strengthens the response of the criminal justice system and to make communities safer. This organization has done impressive work on behalf of crime victims, and I greatly appreciate the opportunity to serve as its president and to make a difference in the lives of victim service professionals and crime victims.

It was great seeing my friends again. Who could have imagined decades later on a crisp December evening that we would all be together sitting in front of a fireplace in a small Italian restaurant reminiscing about old times? A good time was had by all, and it seemed almost as if time stood still! What I took away from that important weekend was an incredible sense of validation; a feeling that we have each in our own right, even in some form of post-retirement, continued our commitment to mentor, train and educate others with the breadth of knowledge and experience amassed over the years. With our passion for this profession, we also realized that our purpose, mission

and personal journeys were much larger and far more encompassing than we could ever have imagined.

Our friend being celebrated that weekend shared with us her thoughts about planning for the big “R” day, and the importance of her work as a victim advocate mentoring and preparing her successor. As she sat back with a smile on her face, she felt extremely confident that she was leaving her program of 30 years to someone that would continue the legacy she had created. Driving back home, it all felt surreal, as though we had been given a rare opportunity to go back in time, to glance through the proverbial looking glass of our individual and collective journeys. We had each, in our own way, taken the lessons learned over the many decades and recognized that it was all in preparation for passing the torch on to those who would follow in our footsteps.

It has been a great journey. What a privilege and honor! I am humbled by the many friendships developed along the way, the incredible experiences throughout my career, and how unbelievably wonderful and meaningful it is to know that our work in this distinguished profession will continue to make a difference for generations of victims and victim advocates. ★

Janice Harris Lord (cont.)

After 9/11, Janice established the Daughters of Abraham, a group of Christian, Jewish, and Muslim women who meet regularly. During the last eight years, more than 100 women have sought out the group and discovered a treasure of interfaith relationships. Daughters of Abraham believe in and actively work toward peaceful and non-violent solutions to problems. Community projects have included activities that address violence and its victims

and the needs of immigrants when they arrive as strangers in the community. As part of their public awareness campaign, they provide a team of members who respond to invitations from churches, civic organizations, and schools. The team presents a brief video and presenters explain their participation in the group. Community outreach has included the development of an interfaith youth group.

In 2007, Janice co-founded Trauma Support Services of North Texas, a non-profit organization that provides professional trauma therapy to those without insurance or other ability to pay. The program utilizes eight paid therapists and 33 volunteer therapists who agree to see one client/family at a time pro bono in exchange for the opportunity to attend the organization's monthly trauma therapy trainings for free. ★

Keeping Kelly's Spirit (cont.)

Going from being a working mom juggling the extracurricular activities of an active teenager to being alone with grief can be absolutely devastating. To honor the unique relationship we had and the exceptional person Kelly was, I knew I had to do something constructive to maintain my sanity. I also felt driven to do everything possible to prevent others from suffering the same terror that my family, Kelly's friends, and our community experienced.

One of the first things I did after Terrance was committed to Texas Youth Commission's (TYC) Giddings State School was request a tour of the facility and meet with the administrator. I needed to ensure that the staff at Giddings knew the brutality that Terrance had unleashed on Kelly. I wanted to prevent anyone at Giddings State School, staff and residents, from being Terrance's next victim. During the visit, I requested notification of

everything pertaining to Terrance that was afforded me by law. That visit was the start of a very positive working relationship with TYC that still exists today.

I learned of policies held by TYC and Giddings State School that just did not make sense to me as the mother of a victim of violent crime. It amazed me that I was the first person who ever protested, politely of course, to their weekend furloughs. I was allowed to help redefine some of their policies. I knew that only victims could "get through" to these juveniles to make them see the real long-term ramifications of their actions, so we started Victim Impact Panels.

After Terrance was transferred to the TDCJ, I engaged with the Victim Services Division here in Austin. I jumped at every opportunity to participate in staff victim empathy training. I was able to share some of my experiences and insights to help others. For

example, I explained that it was very stressful and frightening to receive a voicemail or letter from Victim's Services that provided no details and simply requested, "Please call me at your earliest convenience." No information, no indication of *why* I needed to call. Of course I always worried it was bad news. A more explicit message with the reason for the call, an address confirmation for example, would have prevented my anxiety. On one occasion I checked my mailbox after 5:00 p.m. on a Friday and found a letter asking me to call for an offender status update. Can you imagine my panic all weekend, thinking perhaps Terrance had escaped? I requested letters be mailed at the beginning of the week so they would not arrive Friday evenings.

I also began going into the adult prison units with Mark Odom for more Victim Impact Panels. Just like my relationship with TYC, the Victim Services Division team

continued on page 10

Senate Bill (SB) 1611 (cont.)

read the statement, excluding the victim's name, address, and telephone number, comment on the statement, and, with the approval of the court, introduce testimony or other information alleging a factual inaccuracy in the statement."

Code of Criminal Procedure art. 56.09: "As far as reasonably practical, the address of the victim may not be a part of the court file except as necessary to identify the place of the crime. The phone number of the victim may not be a part of the court file."

The changes in law made by the Michael Morton Act apply to the prosecution of an offense committed on or after the effective date of January 1, 2014. To view the bill in its entirety, please visit the following link: www.legis.state.tx.us/tlodocs/83R/billtext/pdf/SenateBill01611F.pdf. ★

An Overview of the Board, Part II

from the Board of Pardons and Paroles

The Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles decides which eligible offenders to release on parole or discretionary mandatory supervision, and under what conditions. The Board uses research-based Parole Guidelines to assess each offender's likelihood for a successful parole against the risk to society.

Parole Guidelines are tools to assist parole panel members in making discretionary parole release decisions. The Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles guidelines combine a risk assessment with a measurement of the severity of an offense. The research-based risk assessment measures the likelihood of an offender to have a successful parole. It uses both historical (static) information and an offender's current situation (dynamic factors). The level of risk combines with the offense severity ranking to create a Parole Guidelines Score. The score ranges from one to seven -- one indicates the poorest probability,

and seven the greatest, for success on parole. While the score provides a measurement for parole panel consideration, the guidelines do not produce a precise recommendation to either deny or grant parole. Not every aspect of an offender's case is measured by the parole guidelines. Board members and parole commissioners also consider such information as plea bargains, victim impact statements, protests from victims, other citizens, and trial officials (judges, district attorneys, sheriffs and police chiefs), and letters of support. These factors may also influence parole decisions.

To maximize public safety, victim justice and adherence to law while restoring human potential to society is the challenge facing the Board of Pardons and Paroles. Parole guidelines are a tool to help the parole panels achieve that balance. The Board of Pardons and Paroles has a committee of both board members and parole commissioners that meet on



a regular basis to review and suggest revisions to the guidelines that will utilize the most current evidence based practices.

Each offender is assessed by the voters on an individual, case by case basis. Based on the entirety of the available information, the parole panel then determines whether the offender deserves the privilege of parole.

In the next edition of the Victim's Informer, we will continue to look at the components of a parole decision. ★

Texas Adds Two New Notifications on Warrant Actions and a Text Notification Option for Statutory Victims



by Kerry Strand

Notifications keep victims, victim's families, and other concerned citizens informed on the status of an offender for whom they have registered on the confidential Victim Notification System (VNS). They can provide registrants with a greater sense of security in knowing the status of the offender as well as assist them in participating in the criminal justice system.

Earlier this year, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Victim Services Division (TDCJ VSD) announced the introduction of two new notifications. The notifications will inform a VNS registrant when an offender who is on parole supervision is arrested and when an offender's arrest warrant has been withdrawn. Currently, more than 80 different notifications are sent out, both in English and Spanish, to people who are registered with the TDCJ VSD.

The TDCJ Parole Division can issue a warrant for an offender for technical violations, criminal violations, or both. Law enforcement will execute the warrant upon contact with the offender. This will generate one of the new notifications and send the information to the VNS registrant(s) of that offender indicating the offender has been

arrested on an outstanding warrant. The second new notification is to notify VNS registrants when an offender's warrant has been withdrawn. Warrant withdrawals can occur due to a variety of reasons. Prior to the offender being arrested, facts could be reported indicating the offender did not violate the rules or terms of conditions of their parole.

Additionally, an alternate sanction may be imposed on the offender when applicable instead of pursuing the parole revocation process. Most often, a warrant being withdrawn follows the revocation process. If the offender in question is continued on parole supervision, the warrant will be lifted within timelines indicated per Parole policy. If the offender is sent to an Intermediate Sanction Facility or a Substance Abuse Felony Punishment Facility, the warrant will be withdrawn upon release from either facility. Also, if the offender is revoked following a hearing, the warrant will be withdrawn.

In February 2014, a mass mail out was utilized to inform statutory victims whose offenders were on parole supervision of the additional notifications and the option to receive these notifications via text messaging. The new notifications that can be

received via text messaging by statutory victims are when: a warrant is issued, a warrant is withdrawn, or an arrest is made. Previously, TDCJ VSD was able to notify victims by mail or email. With the addition of text messaging, statutory victims will have the option to be notified of warrant actions in a time sensitive manner. This new advance in the notification process makes information faster and easier to obtain, which could be important to statutory victims who are concerned about their safety.

At this time, only registered statutory victims can choose the option to receive text messages for these notifications. However, all registrants (statutory or non-statutory) can receive the new notifications via email or mail. Enhancements have been made so that emails on warrant actions are received in a time sensitive manner.

Please contact the TDCJ VSD by telephone at (512) 406-5900 or 1-800-848-4284 or by email at victim.svc@tdcj.state.tx.us if you would like to register for notifications or have any questions or concerns. ★

Keeping Kelly's Spirit (cont.)

embraced me with open arms. I remain truly grateful to this day for every staff member I have met and with whom I interacted.

In 1998, I met John Sage and participated in a pilot program that was the beginning of BridgesToLife.org. For over ten years, I volunteered in countless 12-week "Bridges" programs in the prison units. The program pairs victim volunteers with small groups of inmates, discussing topics such as compassion, accountability, forgiveness,

reconciliation, restitution, etc. toward reducing the recidivism rate. In every group, I have witnessed true changes in attitude with inmates and volunteers alike. These programs are a real blessing for me and many others. I was finally able to let go of some of the anger, frustration, and pain that I had been carrying inside me since the morning we found Kelly's lifeless body under that wood pile.

I mentioned at the onset that even at the young age of 13, Kelly was a highly motivated young lady with

a purpose driven life. To honor her life and keep her vibrant spirit alive, I hope to keep influencing positive change. If I can convince even one inmate to change his or her ways and never cause bodily harm or death again, then Kelly's death is easier to bear. To those who come in contact with victims, if I can provide food for thought to strengthen their empathy toward victims, then my pain has found purpose. ★



2014 National Crime Victims' Rights Week Ceremony

During National Crime Victims' Rights Week this year, from April 6-12, victim services organizations throughout the country held events to honor crime victims and their rights in the criminal justice system. This year, staff members of the TDCJ Victim Services Division participated in numerous events throughout the state, including a wreath laying ceremony for the Fallen Officers Memorial at the San Antonio Police Academy and various Crime Victims' Rights Week Ceremonies. We wanted to thank all victims and advocates who participated and helped plan these events, as well as share a few photos. If your agency held local events in other areas of Texas, please share with us by sending in photos and descriptions to tdcj.clearinghouse@tdcj.state.tx.us.

Announcing the TDCJ Victim Services Division's Summer Webinar Series



Below is a list of upcoming webinars to be hosted by the TDCJ Victim Services Division. For registration and additional details, please click on the Webinar ID next to each entry or visit the TVAT Calendar page listed below. Please contact Lynn Hyde at (512) 406-5916 or email tdcj.clearinghouse@tdcj.state.tx.us with any questions.

<u>Date and Time</u>	<u>Webinar ID</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Presenter</u>
June 10 - 9:00 AM	727097608	Victim Impact Statement: The Victim's Voice in the Criminal Justice Process	Lynn Hyde & Gabriella Lucero
June 24 - 9:30 AM	479787336	Victim Services from the Victim's Perspective	Judy Brumbelow
July 8 - 9:30 AM	438023321	Victim Impact Statement 101 for Non Governmental Agencies	Lynn Hyde, Gabriella Lucero, & Rose Treviño
July 22 - 9:30 AM	168712665	Victim Sensitivity Training	Angie McCown
August 12 - 9:30 AM	539158128	Victim Impact Statement Quarterly Activity Report: Questions & Answers	Lynn Hyde & John Nelson
August 26 - 9:30 AM	704234489	Compassion Fatigue and Vicarious Trauma	Eugenia "Jennie" Barr, PhD

Texas Victim Assistance Training Online



The Texas Victim Assistance Training (TVAT) Online is a state-wide foundational victim assistance training focused on victim-centered service delivery and professional development that complements other victim services initiatives and enables new advocates to acquire baseline professional skills and competence.

CALENDAR

Check out the Calendar page for Texas Victim Assistance Training (TVAT) Online. Criminal justice and victim services professionals can [view](#), [search](#), and [submit](#) victim-related trainings and events on the TVAT Calendar webpage.

www.tdcj.state.tx.us/php/vscalendar/index.php

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU !

OUR GOAL IS TO PRINT NEWS OF INTEREST FOR VICTIMS AND VICTIM ADVOCATES

The *Victim's Informer* newsletter is published quarterly. Articles, meeting notices, and other submissions should be sent to TDCJ Victim Services Division, Texas Crime Victim Clearinghouse, 8712 Shoal Creek Blvd, Suite 265, Austin, Texas 78757-6899; faxed to 512-452-0825; or e-mailed to tdcj.clearinghouse@tdcj.state.tx.us. For questions or comments, please call us at 800-848-4284 or 512-406-5931.

Please Note:

You may access the publication at the TDCJ VSD Internet website. If you wish, we will notify you via e-mail each time *The Victim's Informer* becomes available on the TDCJ VSD Internet website and provide an electronic link to *The Victim's Informer*. Send your e-mail address to:
tdcj.clearinghouse@tdcj.state.tx.us

Angie McCown, Director
Texas Department of Criminal Justice
Victim Services Division
victim.svc@tdcj.state.tx.us
8712 Shoal Creek Blvd., Suite 265,
Austin, Texas 78757

Victim Restitution and the Texas Department of Criminal Justice

by Victim Services Division staff

Restitution is generally money the court orders a defendant to pay a victim who has suffered financial losses caused by a crime. The court's judgment and sentence direct how much restitution a defendant pays and by whom it is received. Court costs and fees, fines, attorney fees, or any Department of Public Safety or other contracted entities' fees for drug testing and/or transportation of the offender to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) are not considered restitution.

As an offender is processed into the TDCJ for incarceration, if restitution has been noted on the Judgment and Sentence, a copy is forwarded to the TDCJ - Accounting and Business Services Department, and a restitution case file is created for each named victim. If any of the following information is missing, Accounting and Business Services staff contact the clerk in the county of conviction for the necessary information to complete the restitution case file:

- Victim on Judgment and Sentence states 'unknown';
- Judgment and Sentence states amount owed in restitution is 'undetermined';

- Victim is named, but no address is given; or
- Multiple victims are named on the Judgment and Sentence without an itemization of the amount owed to each victim.

Accounting and Business Services staff actively pursue communication with the victim(s) early in the offender's incarceration process. Once the restitution case file is completed, the victim(s) is mailed a brochure containing general information regarding the restitution process during the offender's incarceration and any subsequent release to parole or mandatory supervision.

In some instances, victims state that they were not notified by the court that there was a conviction, and they are unaware they are due restitution. To help remedy these situations, the TDCJ also provides brochures to the courts for distribution to victims to assist in explaining the restitution process. The brochure can be viewed as a PDF document online at the following link:

[tdcj.state.tx.us/documents/
Restitution_Brochure.pdf](http://tdcj.state.tx.us/documents/Restitution_Brochure.pdf)