

VALOR

VICTIMS' ASSISTANCE LEGAL ORGANIZATION, INC.

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(1936-1992)

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Dear Colleague:

This year we mark the 20th anniversary of the commemoration of National Crime Victims' Rights Week with the theme "Victims' Rights: Dare to Dream." As we gather together all across the country to honor victims and those who serve them, it is fitting to reflect upon the dreams that inspired the victims' rights discipline, the dreams that have carried it through the last three decades, and the dreams toward which we still strive in our ongoing struggle for better and more comprehensive rights and services for victims of crime.

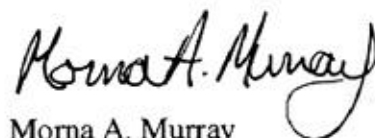
Thirty years ago, pioneers in the field of victim services dared to dream that innocent victims of crime were entitled to basic rights within the criminal and juvenile justice systems. Since that time, victims, victim advocates, victim service professionals and other allied professionals have fought long and hard toward making this dream a reality. Today, there are over 30,000 laws nationwide that define and protect victims' rights, as well as over 10,000 national, state, and local organizations that provide assistance to people who have been hurt by crime. We have made tremendous progress, but there is still work to be done.

It is our sincere hope that this *Resource Guide*, developed with the assistance of the Office for Victims of Crime, will provide ideas and resources to use during your commemoration of National Crime Victims' Rights Week and throughout the year. We have chosen the Statue of Liberty as a lasting and unifying symbol of one of America's most fundamental and cherished dreams—*liberty and justice for all*. As we begin this new century, let us recommit ourselves as individuals, as neighborhoods, as communities, and as a country to daring to dream, and to acting upon the dream, that *justice for all* will become a genuine reality for all victims of crime.

Sincerely,



Eric Smith
President



Morna A. Murray
Executive Director