

## Tools for Public Speaking

**Tools for Public Speaking** contains resources to enhance public presentations about *New Directions*. This section contains the following:

- Sample Speech
- Suggested Talking Points

### How To Use the Sample Speech

A sample 20-minute speech that provides an overview of *New Directions* is presented in this section. The sample speech is designed to use as a keynote speech about *New Directions*, and can be used when opening a statewide task force, community forum, or plenary session. It is built in segments—after a brief introduction to *New Directions*, the speech lays out challenges to enhance victims' rights, discusses the critical role of each stage of the justice system, and highlights what allied professions can do to help crime victims. Given the type of the audience and time allotted for the presentation, the speech can be reduced to 10 minutes (noted in speech). The speech can be even more persuasive and powerful if presenters incorporate their experiences into the speech. **Please note:** when using crime victim stories, always seek permission from the victim before including such information in any speech.

### How To Use the Talking Points for Presentation

The suggested talking points presented in this section highlight key issues and ideas, promising practices, and recommendations found within *New Directions*. They are organized to correspond with *New Directions'* five global challenges. Talking points are provided for each global challenge in an easy to use format that includes introductory statements, examples to underscore the topic, and summary statements. The talking points are designed to enhance any presentation. When combined with specific examples from local, State, Tribal, national, or international speaker experiences and concerns, presentations can be even more informative and useful.

## Sample *New Directions* Speech

Even though nearly 30,000 victims' rights laws have been enacted across the Nation and 10,000 victim assistance programs have been established in communities to help crime victims, the trauma of victimization is very painful for too many of America's 31 million crime victims each year. Let's consider just three examples of crime victims' experiences in the aftermath of criminal victimization. While these cases are hypothetical, they contain real problems experienced by real crime victims in communities across the Nation every day.

Johnnie, a molested child, is so frightened by the strange and daunting criminal justice system that when it comes time to testify in court, he is too afraid to speak—the molester goes free. Sophie, the mother of three children, has been hospitalized from the injuries she received as the result of yet another brutal beating at the hands of her husband. Sophie now must choose between life in a home where she and her children risk further violence on a daily basis or life on the street where their safety and well-being are no more certain. Susan, a rape victim, becomes aware that her attacker has been released from prison when she sees him in the grocery store because no one bothered to tell her in advance that he would be getting out of prison.

You have probably heard stories just like these. You see them on television or read about them in the paper every day. You or someone you know might have even experienced such injustice first hand. Such affronts to our basic principles of justice seem to affect us at a visceral level, shaking our belief in the fundamental fairness of our society and our criminal justice system.

Though the U.S. Department of Justice reports that for the past several years crime rates have been decreasing overall, evidence of violence and fear of crime seem to surround us in our daily lives. Statistics indicate that crime is on the decline, but Americans feel less safe now than at any other time in our Nation's history. The problems of crime and crime victims seem overwhelming and intractable. Some choose to look the other way, rendered helpless and hopeless by the nature and magnitude of the problem. Yet even if you are someone whose sense of moral outrage at such injustice urges you to action, what can be done that will make any difference?

What can one person do? Indeed, what can an entire community do to address problems that seem as formidable as they do pervasive? In short, how do we address the many injustices crime victims suffer under our Nation's current system of justice? Tough questions that seem to have no easy answers.

It may surprise you to learn that I stand before you today, ready to suggest answers to these difficult questions—or at least to suggest a place to begin looking for solutions—the answer is as simple as turning to a single book. [*Hold up New Directions*—a book representing the collective knowledge of more than 1,000 individuals from communities across the Nation and published by the U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime. It's called *New Directions from the Field: Victims' Rights and Services for the 21st Century*, and it's available to you absolutely free. This is no ordinary government publication. Rather, as its title implies, it sets forth recommendations from individuals across the Nation. *New Directions* represents the voices of crime victims, along with hundreds of victim services and justice professionals, who contributed to the development of this groundbreaking publication. *New Directions* pro-

vides recommendations *from* the field *for* the field for improving the treatment of crime victims in every part of the Nation.

The Office for Victims of Crime, within the U.S. Department of Justice, supported the development of this publication by soliciting input through expert summits, public hearings, focus groups, national training academies, and symposia. These forums included professionals representing the judiciary, law enforcement, prosecution, and corrections. Also included were crime victims, victim service providers, crime victim compensation program personnel, and allied victim services professionals from every constituency. The result of these efforts is a definitive description of the "state of crime victim justice" in America today and recommendations for the future. The cumulative knowledge gained from the contributors allows unparalleled precision in defining the problems of crime victims and, more importantly, offers the most promising solutions to those problems. *New Directions* incorporates 250 recommendations and hundreds of promising practices and practical strategies to those individuals, organizations, and agencies who provide victims' rights and services in either the private or public sector.

For example, *New Directions* contains an entire chapter on children as victims, which includes a host of policies, programs, and procedures that have helped minimize the trauma and emotional distress child victims of sexual assault must endure during their involvement with the criminal justice process. This chapter discusses programs, such as child advocacy centers, which provide a caring, sensitive environment for taking care of the legal and emotional needs of child victims such as young Johnnie. It includes the fundamental conceptual framework for collaborative community responses to domestic violence so victims can avail themselves of the resources that will allow them to escape a life of torment for one of hope, safety, and security. *New Directions* suggests countless ways for the criminal justice system to protect and keep safe victims such as Sophie, including enforcing anti-stalking laws. *New Directions* also cites strategies, such as automated notification, which would greatly enhance the ability to provide notice of a perpetrator's release to the victim before the perpetrator hits the street. This would allow crime victims like Susan, a rape survivor, to feel some sense of safety and security knowing that at least she will know the status and location of her offender.

Perhaps more than to any other segment of our society, *New Directions* speaks to criminal and juvenile justice officials who have the primary responsibility for keeping our democracy's most sacred promise—the promise of justice for all its citizens. Indeed, justice officials often define what "justice" really means for our Nation's crime victims. They define its nature and its scope. *New Directions* challenges those both inside and outside the criminal and juvenile justice systems to re-examine the way in which they administer victim justice.

*New Directions*, in essence, poses the question, "What, indeed, are the boundaries of justice?" The answer resulting from years of input from a diverse community of professionals and volunteers serving victims is this: *Helping victims should not be about boundaries*. Justice officials and society as a whole must stop asking, "What is the *least* we can do for crime victims?" Rather, justice officials and society must start asking, "What is the *most* we can do for crime victims?" The provision of quality victim services extends beyond the enforcement of victims' rights. It asks justice officials to do more than live up to the letter of victim-related laws, but go further and live up to the spirit of those laws. This means that provision of quality victim services means *doing what is right for victims* to make them feel respected and validated, to help them reconstruct their lives in the aftermath of a crime, and to show that the justice process can be caring, concerned, and *just*.

Justice practitioners, in particular, can use *New Directions* as a road map for victim justice. Traditionally, like Johnnie, Sophie, and Susan, victims have endured numerous detours and roadblocks in their search for justice. This remarkable book [*hold up book*] offers simply that: new directions toward a Nation and communities that make quality victim services and expanded victims' rights a destination, rather than a dream.

**(10 minute stop point)**

*New Directions* offers law enforcement vital resources on how to best fulfill their role as the "first responders" to crime and victims. It emphasizes promising practices that will result in positive victims' memories and opinions of their first encounter with the justice system. The numerous recommendations, policies, protocols, and procedures offered by *New Directions* provide a sound basis for realizing law enforcement's fundamental mandate to "protect and serve" victims of crime.

*New Directions* provides prosecutors specific recommendations for their role and responsibilities for the implementation of victims' core rights, which are notification, participation, input, and protection. Equally important, *New Directions* highlights the vital and central role of the prosecutor to important collaborative efforts involving allied professions and the community in pursuit of victim justice. As a primary purveyor of victim justice, prosecutors can serve as guides to victims who journey toward justice, using the guideposts provided by *New Directions*.

*New Directions* clearly recognizes and describes the significant leadership role of judges. The judiciary has the power and responsibility to ensure a fair and respectful justice process to *all* parties involved, including victims. *New Directions* validates this key leadership role and offers promising practices that encourage judges to use and cultivate their inherent leadership responsibilities to promote justice for all.

*New Directions* documents the tremendous progress that has been made in the past two decades in victims' rights and services during the post-sentencing phases of cases. While the role of community and institutional corrections has traditionally focused on offender management and supervision, their responsibilities for implementing victims' rights and services and focusing on community protection and safety are without parallel. For corrections officials, *New Directions* offers many model policies, programs, and practices that have been developed through partnerships between victim services and correctional agencies. Together they strive to achieve a balance of the rights, needs, and interests of victims, offenders, and the community.

*New Directions* rightfully recognizes our Nation's victim services community as "the glue that holds it all together." Many people are surprised to learn that there are more than 10,000 programs that serve victims of crime, located in communities of all kinds—large, small, urban, and rural. While the policies and programs of victim services communities may vary, their central mission remains the same. They want to ensure that victims of crime are afforded rights and services in a manner respectful of the trauma they have endured and insightful into their most critical needs. *New Directions* offers valuable perspectives into the roles of victim service providers, who act as catalysts for positive change and as caregivers in victims' time of need.

For allied professional stakeholders on the road to victim justice, *New Directions* provides both a road map and indispensable "roadside services" that help victims progress. These

services take the form of concrete, creative examples of programs and practices that recognize the mutual responsibility of the Nation, the community, and the individuals to secure justice for victims of crime.

The justice system alone cannot accomplish the lofty goals of victim justice. Rather, it relies on the active involvement and creative, collaborative responses of individuals and agencies seeking to improve society's perception and treatment of crime victims. Everyone can help—health and mental health professionals, educators, members of the news media, the faith community, and business and legal professionals. What is the most important is that, as Maryland homicide victim Stephanie Roper recorded in her journal before her tragic murder, "One person can make a difference, and everyone should try." *New Directions* challenges key stakeholders to support initiatives that improve the plight of victims and provides countless, creative solutions that have been developed over the life of the victims' rights discipline that have made a significant difference for victims.

It is often said that a "just" society is best measured by how its citizens are treated by the justice system. By that standard, we live in a world of unfulfilled promise and potential when it comes to victim justice. *New Directions* is by far the best book ever written to guide our Nation in its journey toward that justice. Consider that 31 million crimes will be committed this year. This means that virtually everyone will be a direct or indirect victim of crime. It is in everyone's interest to join in the journey even though the trip may be long and difficult. Even though the first generation of the victims' rights movement has shortened our journey by many miles, the end is not in sight. We may not make it to the promised land, to paraphrase Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., but we can take solace in knowing that each day, in big and small ways, we take steps that will ease the journey to justice for the countless generations of victims who will follow in our footsteps.

*New Directions* offers us the opportunity to take the small steps that will allow our Nation to take giant leaps forward for victims. It provides the blue print and the tools, but it is up to all of us, joined together, to build the road. Remember, "many hands make light work," so I encourage each and every one of you to spread the word. Share *New Directions*, share its ideas, share its vision of victim justice. Share it in part or in whole, with friends, with colleagues, with community leaders, and with elected officials. Share everyone who cares, or should care, about the quality of justice in America. Injustice to one of us is an injustice to all of us. . . especially to victims of crime.

# Talking Points for *New Directions*: *Five Global Challenges for the Field*

Certain key recommendations emerged during compilation of the hundreds of recommendations from the field and from listening to the voices of crime victims, their advocates, and the allied professionals working with crime victims throughout the Nation.

The following five global challenges for responding to crime victims form the core of the hundreds of ideas and recommendations contained in *New Directions*.

1. To enact and enforce consistent, fundamental rights for crime victims in Federal, State, juvenile, military, and Tribal justice systems, and administrative proceedings.
2. To provide crime victims with access to comprehensive, quality services regardless of the nature of their victimization, age, race, religion, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, capability, or geographic location.
3. To integrate crime victims' issues into all levels of the Nation's educational system to ensure that justice and allied professionals and other service providers receive comprehensive training on victims' issues as part of their academic education and continuing training in the field.
4. To support, improve, and replicate promising practices in victims' rights and services built upon sound research, advanced technology, and multidisciplinary partnerships.
5. To ensure that the voices of crime victims play a central role in the Nation's response to violence and those victimized by crime.

## Global Challenge #1:

To enact and enforce consistent, fundamental rights for crime victims in Federal, State, juvenile, military, and Tribal justice systems, and administrative proceedings.

### Consistent, Fundamental Rights That Are Enforced

#### Introduction

- Tremendous strides have been made to enact victims' rights laws and to foster victim assistance services throughout the Nation. Few other movements have succeeded in igniting the kind of legislative response that victims' rights activists have fostered over the past two decades.
- In the early 1980s, State laws addressing victims rights, services, and financial reparations numbered in the hundreds. Today, there are over 30,000 crime victim-related State statutes, 32 State victims' constitutional amendments, and basic rights and services for victims of Federal crimes.
- Serious deficiencies nonetheless remain in our Nation's response to crime victims. The rights of crime victims vary among States and at the Federal level. At present, victims face a lack of parallel rights on the Federal, State, and local levels; an absence of rights for victims in some juvenile justice systems; and, all too often, a lack of rights extended to victims of nonviolent crime.

#### Examples To Underscore Topic

- While all States have enacted victims' rights statutes, these laws vary considerably State-to-State. Some States provide comprehensive rights for crime victims, while others do not make these rights mandatory. Some States limit the types of crime victims that qualify for certain rights. For example, victims of felony crimes and victims of misdemeanors may qualify for different rights.
- Less than half of the States have a fairly comprehensive list of rights for victims of juvenile offenses. Yet, offenses committed by juvenile offenders are the fastest growing segment of violent crime in America. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, arrests for violent juvenile offenses increased more than 50 percent between the late 1980s and the mid-1990s.
- Crime victims potentially face six different sets of rights depending on the following: the type of offense committed (felony or misdemeanor), the age of the offender (criminal or juvenile justice system), and the prosecutorial jurisdiction of the offense (Federal, State, military, or Tribal).
- Even in States that have enacted constitutional rights for victims, implementation of these rights is still arbitrary. Too often, limitations are based on the individual practices of the criminal justice officials rather than on uniform policies and practices. When this is the case, it is not surprising that victims' rights laws are inconsistently implemented and enforced.

#### Summary Statements

- The enactment and vigorous enforcement of consistent, fundamental rights must be one of the priority goals for the 21st century. Victims' rights, especially the right to be informed of and to participate in criminal and juvenile justice proceedings, must be parallel at all levels of government and in all justice systems.

## Global Challenge #2:

To provide crime victims with access to comprehensive, quality services regardless of the nature of their victimization, age, race, religion, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, capability, or geographic location.

### Equal Access to Comprehensive Services

#### Introduction

- In 1982, the United States had only an estimated 1,500 victim assistance programs. Only 37 States had victim compensation programs that helped pay for medical, mental health, lost wages, and funeral expenses resulting from crime. Significant Federal and State funding has resulted in more than 10,000 victim assistance programs today, and every State has a victim compensation program.
- In spite of this progress, only a fraction of the Nation's 31 million crime victims each year has access to services such as emergency financial assistance, crisis and mental health counseling, shelter, victim compensation, and information and advocacy within the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

#### Examples To Underscore Topic

- Many rural areas have no services for crime victims who must travel hundreds of miles to find a safe shelter, effective counseling, or other specialized victim assistance services.
- A substantial number of crime victims, particularly victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse, do not report the crime. As a result, countless victims never access victim assistance and compensation programs.
- Victims of what is often referred to as white-collar or nonviolent crime, including various forms of fraud such as identity theft and telemarketing, often do not receive needed assistance such as counseling services. This is because most services are focused on victims of violent crime. For example, despite the fact that thousands of elderly crime victims lose their life savings due to telemarketing fraud, few programs have been developed to help these victims.
- Crime victims with disabilities are victimized at an unusually high rate and have great difficulty accessing services to meet their needs. Many victim assistance programs are unable to communicate effectively with deaf victims or provide resources and referrals in braille.
- Victim service providers are often not equipped to meet the needs of victims from diverse cultures and victims who speak different languages. As a result, these victims are not adequately informed of the services available to them or of their rights in the justice system.
- While tremendous progress has been made in responding to victims of domestic violence, there are still parts of our Nation where domestic violence victims must travel great distances to seek safety and shelter away from their abusers.
- Even when services are available, many victims are afraid to access them because they fear retaliation by the offender or revictimization by the system. This includes many victims of domestic violence and child abuse, and victims of gang violence who must continue to live in neighborhoods with ongoing gang activity.



## Summary Statements

- As we prepare for this new century and beyond, it is especially important that all programs and agencies work to reduce barriers to accessibility, including those related to physical and mental disabilities, language and communication, age, competence, and geographic location.
- As a field, the victims' rights discipline must define what a comprehensive system of victim services entails. It should include immediate trauma and emergency response, short- and long-term psychological counseling, shelter, and advocacy throughout the criminal, Tribal, military, and juvenile justice systems. Crime victims should also have access to diverse sources of financial recovery including emergency financial assistance, crime victim compensation, restitution, and civil legal remedies.
- A system of comprehensive services requires dedicated resources. A step toward that goal was the enactment of the Victims of Crime Act of 1984, which established a creative, nontraditional funding mechanism that relies on the collection of fines and penalties from convicted Federal offenders, rather than Federal tax-based appropriations. However, many criminal and juvenile justice officials and victim advocates continue to assert that the lack of comprehensive services *in every community* for victims of crime is primarily due to inadequate funding. New, creative, and consistent sources of funding must be found to ensure quality services to all crime victims.

### Global Challenge #3:

To integrate crime victims' issues into all levels of the Nation's educational system to ensure that justice and allied professionals and other service providers receive comprehensive training on victims' issues as part of their academic education and continuing training in the field.

## Education and Training

### Introduction

- Enhanced education and training are critical for providing quality victim services and must be addressed on three fronts—require education about crime prevention and victims' rights and services in the Nation's schools; improve educational curricula in colleges and in graduate schools for professionals who interact with crime victims; and expand opportunities for training professionals and volunteers in the field.
- The places that provide the best opportunity to reach the most children about crime prevention strategies and victims' services are our Nation's schools. Schools should take better advantage of this important responsibility. For example, children often do not learn in school about how to protect themselves, where to turn for help, and what services are available to them if they become a victim of crime.
- Even on many college campuses, where sexual assault and other crimes affect a significant number of students, information about these crimes and prevention strategies is rarely incorporated into classes or student activities beyond student orientation.
- Because many victims turn first to their friends for assistance, it is critical to educate those most likely to provide advice about what to do. Education about crime prevention and victims' rights and services must begin in grade school and continue through college and graduate school.

### Examples To Underscore Topic

- On the national level, OVC has supported the training of thousands of victim service providers over the past decade. Through its funding of national, regional, Tribal, and State conferences, approximately 40,000 individuals have been trained in the area of victims' rights and services. Many of OVCs training initiatives for criminal justice and allied professionals, as well as topic specific trainings, are cited throughout *New Directions*.
- In order to make comprehensive, academic-based training available to a diverse group of victim service providers, including Federal, Tribal, State and local justice and allied professionals, OVC funded the development of the first National Victim Assistance Academy (NVAA) in 1995. Now in its sixth year, the Academy is coordinated by the Victims' Assistance Legal Organization and a consortium of universities, including California State University-Fresno, the Medical University of South Carolina, the University of New Haven, and Washburn University in Topeka, Kansas.
- In 1997, the Program Against Sexual Violence and the School of Dentistry at the University of Minnesota received funding from the Office for Victims of Crime to develop a comprehensive education model for dentists and dental auxiliaries regarding family violence.

## Summary Statements

- Many professionals who deal with crime victims are never taught in school about the impact of victimization or the best practices to use in the field. The educational curricula in colleges and in graduate schools for doctors, lawyers, nurses, social workers, law enforcement, mental health professionals, the clergy, and others should include specialized training about victim trauma and related crime victims' issues.
- Where appropriate, these courses should be interdisciplinary and inform students about effective team approaches to address crime. To provide high quality, state-of-the-art services, initial and continuing education must be provided for every allied professional and service provider who regularly interacts with crime victims. This training should include multicultural sensitivity and training about the needs of victims from other cultures whose primary language may not be English.

## Global Challenge #4:

To support, improve, and replicate promising practices in victims' rights and services built upon sound research, advanced technology, and multidisciplinary partnerships.

## Promising Practices

### Introduction

- In the last two decades, many communities have developed "promising practices" in victim services. These practices are intended to serve as models for the Nation. These innovative programs offer services for a variety of crime victims and generally use a multidisciplinary or team approach to respond to victims' needs.

### Examples To Underscore Topic

- **Children's Advocacy Centers.** In 1984, the first Center was initiated in Huntsville, Alabama, by the District Attorney who was tired of seeing sexually abused children re-victimized by the system. One example was how the children were being interviewed many different times by numerous agency officials in frightening settings. He developed an Advocacy Center especially designed for kids, where governmental agencies work together to reduce the number of interviews and coordinate case management. This vision led to a national movement, and today there are more than 300 Children's Advocacy Centers in 48 States. This kind of interagency model should exist in every community.
- **Comprehensive Victim Service Centers.** Jacksonville, Florida, is the site of the Nation's first comprehensive victim service center. It provides a wide range of services in one location for all crime victims, expanding on the model used by Children's Advocacy Centers. Center staff operate an emergency fund for victims; counselors provide therapy to victims and accompany police to all homicides; and self-help groups, such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving and Parents of Murdered Children, are co-located in this facility especially designed for crime victims.
- **Community Criminal Justice Partnerships.** In 1989, the Sheriff of St. Martin Parish, Louisiana, began a program to ensure that his department responded to the needs of elderly crime victims. Called TRIAD, this collaborative program between law enforcement and senior citizens has been duplicated in many communities and is co-sponsored by the American Association of Retired Persons, the International Association of Chiefs of Police, and the National Sheriffs' Association. In Bridgeport, Connecticut, for example, after meeting with seniors and hearing their concerns, the Chief of Police provided a bus and officers who assist seniors who live in a high crime area to go to the market and safely conduct their banking. Today there are more than 500 of these cooperative programs in 46 States, plus Canada and England. Additional services offered by TRIAD programs include crime prevention classes, repairs to damaged residences, transportation to medical services and criminal justice proceedings, and courtroom escorts.
- **Crisis Response Teams.** In 1986, the National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) sponsored the victim assistance field's first crisis response team comprised of diverse professionals following the Edmond, Oklahoma, Post Office shooting in which more than a dozen employees were killed. With NOVA's leadership and training, many States have organized crisis response teams made up of many different professionals, including psychologists, law enforcement, doctors, social workers, victim advocates, and religious leaders. These teams provide assistance to communities in the aftermath of major crimes and acts of terrorism such as mass murders and bombings. For example, South Carolina's crisis response team includes more than 100 specially trained professional volunteers.

- **Technologies To Benefit Crime Victims.** Emerging technologies hold great promise for improving services to crime victims. For example, after a woman was murdered by a former boyfriend just a few days after he posted bail on a charge of raping her, Kentucky enacted an automated victim notification system to inform victims when their offenders are released. Although she had requested notification, no one had informed her of his release. In addition, computers can be used to link victim services and allied justice agencies together to share information. Some communities have linked domestic violence shelters through computers so that if a shelter is full, staff will know where available space exists to make appropriate referrals.

### Summary Statements

- A priority for the victims' rights discipline in the 21st century should be to support and replicate promising practices, such as "team approaches" and the use of technology, with the goal of improving the quality of programs and services nationwide.
- Similar innovative and creative approaches to meeting the needs of crime victims are highlighted throughout *New Directions*.

## Global Challenge #5:

To ensure that the voices of crime victims play a central role in the Nation's response to violence and those victimized by crime.

### Listening to Crime Victims

*I discovered long ago that among the most effective advocates I have seen are the survivors, those who have channeled their pain and anger into activism to achieve lasting reforms.*

Attorney General Janet Reno, August 15, 1996

#### Introduction

- The victims' rights discipline owes its many accomplishments to the activism of crime victims themselves, their families, and supporters. Many crime victims have struggled to survive their own victimization and also to bring much needed legal reforms, financial relief, and services to other victims.
- In implementing *New Directions from the Field: Victims' Rights and Services for the 21st Century*, it is important to never forget the needs, desires, and potential contributions of crime victims. The input of victims—"victims' voices"—must remain a powerful guiding force as the crime victims' discipline and allied professions begin the tremendous task of bringing words on paper to action in communities across the Nation.
- Since 1982, a substantial number of the 68 recommendations in the President's Task Force on Victims of Crime have been implemented. From the passage of the Victims of Crime Act in 1984 to the current 32 State constitutional amendments, these successes are in large part due to the efforts of crime victims.
- In an increasing number of communities, victims are requesting opportunities to meet and have a dialogue with their offenders. Such opportunities allow victims to define the harm that was caused by the crime; to receive answers to questions about the crime; and to hold offenders accountable for the devastation committed against the victims. When offenders listen to victims, they can learn the true impact that their criminal actions caused.

#### Examples To Underscore Topic

##### Victims' Voices

Victims have spoken in countless letters to the President, the Attorney General, the Office for Victims of Crime, at public hearings, and through Congressional testimony. Victims of crime have told those who help them that they need:

- A voice that is listened to throughout the justice process.
- Full enforcement of fundamental rights, including the rights to be informed, present, and heard.
- Financial support, including victim compensation, emergency funds, and restitution.
- Access to services such as mental health counseling, emergency shelter, and legal advocacy.
- Protection from intimidation, harassment, and harm.

## Summary Statements

- Crime victims play an important role in guiding public policy. They are an equally valuable resource in developing and participating in crime prevention programs such as school-based gang violence and drunk driving prevention programs.
- In addition, victims have a significant role in training programs for service providers and allied professionals. Basic training for law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, corrections personnel, and allied professionals should include victim impact panels, such as those initiated by Mothers Against Drunk Driving, where crime victims sensitize the participants by discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the system, and how crime affects their lives and those of their loved ones. Many offenders benefit from educational programs that feature crime victims discussing the impact of their victimization.

## Conclusion to Talking Points on Global Challenges

- These five important global challenges have helped guide the development of the 250 recommendations set forth in *New Directions*.
- The recommendations contained in *New Directions* include proposals to improve the response to crime victims from virtually every professional with whom they interact; proposals to improve reforms to justice systems that respond to crime victims; and proposals to improve critical areas that need to be addressed to respond to specific victim populations.
- The global challenges are integrated into every section of this landmark plan for our Nation's future treatment of victims of crime.