



# Department of Justice



## Office of Justice Programs

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Office of Justice Programs  
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**ATTORNEY GENERAL ERIC HOLDER HONORS COMMON JUSTICE  
FOR ITS INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO PROMOTING EQUITY  
IN SERVICES TO VICTIMS**

WASHINGTON—Attorney General Eric Holder recognized Common Justice with the Award for Professional Innovation in Victim Services today at the 2012 annual victims' service awards, a prelude to the nation's observance of National Crime Victims' Rights Week, April 22-28, 2012.

"This year's 12 awardees have touched, improved and even saved lives. Perhaps most impressively, many of today's award recipients have achieved these results by transforming their own experiences into a positive force for sweeping change," said Attorney General Holder. "Every one of them deserves the commendation that is being bestowed today – not only for their remarkable contributions in responding to protecting and defending crime victims and their loved ones but also for the examples they have set for others to follow."

Common Justice, a Vera Institute of Justice project, received the Award for Professional Innovation in Victim Services, which recognizes a program, organization, or individual that has helped to expand the reach of victims' rights and services. Common Justice offers an alternative to the traditional court process for youth charged with felonies such as assault, robbery, and burglary. Project staff bring together people immediately affected by a crime—victims and perpetrators-- to acknowledge the harm done, address the needs of the harmed party, and agree on sanctions other than incarceration to hold the responsible party accountable. Through this innovative practice of encouraging victims' participation in the justice process, Common Justice aims to address the underlying causes of violence and begin a long-term process of transformation for individuals and communities.

In addition to Common Justice, Attorney General Holder recognized the efforts of eleven other recipients for their extraordinary efforts in the aftermath of a crime, as well as their professional efforts to better serve the needs of victims with disabilities; for assisting U.S. citizens victimized outside the United States; and for ensuring victims receive compensation and other services at the state and local level.

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The Office of Justice Programs, headed by Acting Assistant Attorney General Mary Lou Leary, provides federal leadership in developing the nation's capacity to prevent and control crime, administer justice, and assist victims. OJP has six components: the Bureau of Justice Assistance; the Bureau of Justice Statistics; the National Institute of Justice; the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; the Office for Victims of Crime; and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking (SMART). More information about OJP can be found at [www.ojp.gov](http://www.ojp.gov).