



Department of Justice

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ASSISTANT ATTORNEY GENERAL LAURIE ROBINSON ANNOUNCES DEPARTURE FROM OFFICE OF JUSTICE PROGRAMS

WASHINGTON - The Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Justice Programs (OJP), Laurie Robinson, announced today that she would be leaving her position at the end of February. Assistant Attorney General Robinson was confirmed by the Senate in November, 2009. She previously served for nearly seven years as assistant attorney general for OJP during the 1990s, making her the longest-serving head in the agency's 44-year history.

Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Mary Lou Leary will serve as acting assistant attorney general following Robinson's departure.

“Laurie Robinson has helped transform OJP’s role in the criminal and juvenile justice field, bringing scientific rigor, a true sense of partnership, transparency, and accountability to the agency,” said Attorney General Eric Holder. “I am proud of her service to OJP’s constituents, the Department of Justice and the Obama Administration and personally grateful for her friendship and her many contributions to ensuring true justice for all Americans. The United States is a safer and fairer nation due to her efforts.”

“One of the reasons I can think about leaving now is that we have made substantial progress towards goals I set in 2009,” Assistant Attorney General Robinson said. “With the attorney general's support, we have made real progress in building strong partnerships with law enforcement and other parts of the state, local and tribal criminal and juvenile justice field. We have put science front and center and focused on evidence-based approaches. And we've made it a priority to ensure OJP's grant process is fair, accessible to our stakeholders, and accountable to Congress and the public in terms of managing scarce federal dollars.”

Science has been a primary focus during Robinson's tenure. In 2009 she launched an Evidence Integration Initiative (E2I) to better integrate evidence into OJP's programs and policy decisions and improve translation of evidence into practice. Assistant Attorney General Robinson was responsible, as part of E2I, for OJP's launching last June a “what works” clearinghouse, crimesolutions.gov, and the appointment of a Science Advisory Board for OJP, chaired by leading criminologist Alfred Blumstein. Congress has also provided support for OJP's evidence-based programs, including a 2 percent set-aside in OJP's 2012 appropriation for research and statistics spending.

Under Assistant Attorney General Robinson's leadership, OJP has also spearheaded new initiatives in a number of important areas, emphasizing innovative partnerships with the agency's federal, state, local and tribal stakeholders. In law enforcement, OJP's Bureau of Justice Assistance created the attorney general's VALOR program, which provides critical nationwide training to prevent and respond to the ambush-style violence against law enforcement officers. In juvenile justice, Assistant Attorney General Robinson played a leading role in developing the White House's National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention, the attorney general's Defending Childhood program, and along with the Department of Education, the Supportive School Discipline Initiative. In corrections, she supported the creation of the attorney general's federal interagency Reentry Council, a cabinet-level effort to ensure those returning from prison become productive, law-abiding citizens. For crime victims, OJP's Office for Victims of Crime is spearheading the Vision 21 Initiative to expand the vision and impact of the victim services field. In consultation with tribal leaders, OJP also partnered with the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services and the Office on Violence Against Women to streamline the grant application and awards process for American Indian and Alaska native communities, creating a single application for multiple purpose areas and facilitating comprehensive planning.

In the area of grant management, Assistant Attorney General Robinson made improving oversight in this area a top priority, with a focus on transparency and rigorous supervision of the grants process. She required for the first time, for example, that all OJP funding decisions be posted on the agency's website, oversaw the introduction of a new high risk grantee monitoring program, and drove a focus on competition in the grants award process. During her tenure, OJP was able to ensure that 100 percent of its \$2.7 billion under the Recovery Act was obligated in a timely manner without the addition of any new staff.

Assistant Attorney General Robinson has spent her professional career as a leader in the criminal justice field. Immediately prior to coming back to the Department of Justice, she was director of the Master of Science program at the University of Pennsylvania's Department of Criminology.

Additional information about the Office of Justice Programs is available at www.ojp.gov.

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