



Department of Justice



Office of Justice Programs

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JUSTICE DEPARTMENT HONORS DALLAS POLICE SERGEANT FOR SOLVING COLD CASES

DALLAS—The Department of Justice will recognize Sgt. Patrick B. Welsh of the Dallas Police Department for developing a sexual assault cold case program. Attorney General Eric Holder will present Welsh with an award during the National Crime Victims' Rights Week awards ceremony on Wednesday, April 24, 2013 in Washington, D.C.

“These committed individuals are being honored for their dedication to assisting and supporting victims of crime all across the country,” said Attorney General Eric Holder. “Their actions inspire all Americans, to do what we can, each in our own way, to help lessen the physical, emotional and financial impacts of crime on people in our communities.”

Welsh will receive the Allied Professional Award, recognizing individuals outside the victim assistance field for their service and contributions to victims and the victim services field. Welsh has advocated for crime victims for more than 30 years and currently serves as the sexual assault unit supervisor. There he established the Sexual Assault Cold Case Program (SEACAP), which focuses on assaults that occurred between 1970 and 1996, past the statute of limitations for prosecution. SEACAP uses DNA evidence left by an unknown attacker and the Combined DNA Index System, to identify the perpetrators of unsolved stranger-on-stranger sexual assault crimes.

Due to the statute of limitations, even when the perpetrators of these assaults have been identified by DNA, they cannot be brought to justice. So, in 2009, Welsh, along with a number of sexual assault victims, testified representing the SEACAP program in support of a bill requiring Texas law enforcement officials to note in individuals' criminal histories the fact that their DNA was linked to a sexual assault for which they can never be tried. Enacted in 2009, the bill is now law in the state of Texas.

In addition to Welsh, Attorney General Holder will recognize 12 other individuals and organizations for their outstanding efforts on behalf of crime victims. Descriptions and videos of the honorees are available at the Office for Victims of Crime's Gallery: <https://ovcnvrvw.ncjrs.gov/Awards/AwardGallery/gallerysearch.html>.

President Reagan proclaimed the first Victims' Rights Week in 1981, calling for renewed emphasis on, and sensitivity to, the rights of victims. National Crime Victims' Rights Week will be observed this year from April 21-27.

The Office of Justice Programs (OJP), 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. For more information about OJP, please visit: www.ojp.gov.