



Department of Justice



Office of Justice Programs

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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE HONORS STEVEN J. TWIST WITH VICTIM RIGHTS LEGEND AWARD

WASHINGTON – The Justice Department’s Office for Victims of Crime, a division of the Office of Justice Programs, presented Steven J. Twist with the Victim Rights Legend Award. This National Crime Victims’ Service Awards category, instituted in 2019, recognizes an individual whose work has resulted in positive and substantial change in the field of victim advocacy and victims’ rights.

“From his pioneering work to enshrine legal protections in two state constitutions to his indispensable role in securing federal legislation, Steve Twist has built an unsurpassed career as a champion of victims’ rights,” said Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Katharine T. Sullivan. “Crime victims in Arizona, California and communities and courtrooms across the country have firmer legal standing and greater access to justice thanks to this stalwart’s three decades of inspired advocacy.”

Mr. Twist’s activities have shaped the future of victim services and victims’ rights. He was the driving force behind Arizona’s 1990 constitutional amendment, the Arizona Victims’ Bill of Rights, created to preserve and protect victims’ rights to justice and due process. In 1996, Mr. Twist founded Arizona Voice for Crime Victims, the first clinic of its kind to provide both legal and social services to crime victims. He subsequently worked with former Arizona Senator Jon Kyl and California Senator Dianne Feinstein to pass model federal legislation protecting victims, which became the Crime Victims’ Rights Act. The CVRA has helped protect victims through the federal system and provided model language to protect victims’ rights in state statutes. In 2008, Mr. Twist helped draft language for Marsy’s Law in California, which amended the California Constitution to provide additional rights to victims.

“In state houses and the halls of Congress, Steve Twist has worked tirelessly for more than three decades to implement rights for crime victims,” said OVC Director Jessica E. Hart. “Through his unstinting advocacy and his impressive legislative achievements, he has helped to ensure that our system of justice will never again ignore the innocent and the aggrieved.”

The Office for Victims of Crime leads communities across the country in observing National Crime Victims’ Rights Week. President Reagan proclaimed the first Victims’ Rights Week in 1981, calling for greater sensitivity to the rights and needs of victims. This year’s observance took place April 19-25 and featured the theme, “Seek Justice | Ensure Victims’ Rights | Inspire Hope.” The awards recipients was honored privately and virtually with friends, family and Office of Justice Programs leadership.

The Office of Justice Programs, directed by Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General

Katharine T. Sullivan, provides federal leadership, grants, training, technical assistance and other resources to improve the nation's capacity to prevent and reduce crime, assist victims and enhance the rule of law by strengthening the criminal and juvenile justice systems. More information about OJP and its components can be found at www.ojp.gov.

The year 2020 marks the 150th anniversary of the Department of Justice. Learn more about the history of our agency at www.Justice.gov/Celebrating150Years.

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