



Department of Justice



Office of Justice Programs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
MONDAY, OCT. 5, 2020

CONTACT: LAUREN LAMBERT, 202-305-7776
LAUREN.LAMBERT@OJP.USDOJ.GOV

JUSTICE DEPARTMENT HONORS CHILD PROTECTION ATTORNEY WITH CRIME VICTIMS FINANCIAL RESTORATION AWARD

WASHINGTON – The Justice Department’s Office for Victims of Crime, a division of the Office of Justice Programs, presented the Crime Victims Financial Restoration Award to Alexandra Gelber, Senior Counsel for Policy and Legislation of the Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section in the Department’s Criminal Division. The National Crime Victims’ Service Awards category honors individuals, programs, organizations or teams that have innovatively funded services or instituted approaches that secure financial restoration for crime victims.

“Through her creativity and resourcefulness, Alexandra Gelber has made the instrument of the law a tool for healing and recovery, helping to alleviate trauma by delivering financial relief to victims who have suffered unspeakable violation,” said OJP Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Katharine T. Sullivan. “No amount of money can be expected to erase the scars of exploitation, but Ms. Gelber has given victims an immeasurable gift – proof that right and justice will ultimately prevail.”

As she worked with U.S. Attorneys’ offices around the country on child sexual exploitation cases, which include those involving child pornography, sex trafficking of minors, child sex tourism, and enticement and coercion of minors, Ms. Gelber saw the need for clearly defined restitution for the victims. She wrote the proposal on which the Amy, Vicky and Andy Child Pornography Victim Assistance Act of 2018 was based and worked with key stakeholders for more than nine years, through three congressional sessions, to enact it. The law enables victims of child pornography to obtain monetary assistance from a fund of special assessments paid by convicted offenders. Victims may choose to accept a lump sum of \$35,000 or seek case-by-case restitution from jurisdictions.

“The law for which Ms. Gelber is to be given so much credit plays a critically important role in bringing those who sexually exploit children to justice and helping victims to heal,” said OVC Director Jessica E. Hart. “Pornographic images may circulate for years to come, causing victims to continue to suffer long after the initial crime. The law not only benefits victims directly – it holds perpetrators accountable for their despicable actions.”

The Department’s Office for Victims of Crime, a component of OJP, leads communities across the country in observing National Crime Victims’ Rights. 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 award recipients were 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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