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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE HONORS WISCONSIN WOMAN WITH NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS SERVICE AWARD

WASHINGTON – The Justice Department’s Office for Victims of Crime, a component of the Office of Justice Programs, presented Jennifer Dunn of Waukesha, Wisconsin, with the National Crime Victims Service Award. This award category honors extraordinary individuals and programs that provide services to victims of crime. It also recognizes programs and individuals whose work exemplifies the long-term commitment that characterizes many victim service providers, some of whom are also victims of crime.

“For more than a quarter-century, Jennifer Dunn has been a leader, an innovator and a collaborator, faithfully serving crime victims in her community,” said OJP Acting Assistant Attorney General Maureen A. Henneberg. “Ms. Dunn is a model of service and an example to victim advocates across the country.”

Jennifer Dunn began working as a legal advocate at a domestic violence organization in Washington County, Wisconsin, in 1994, when she graduated from law school. There, she founded Washington County’s first domestic violence-focused Coordinated Community Response team and helped to improve the countywide response to domestic violence. In 1997, Ms. Dunn became the Director of Victim Services in the Waukesha District Attorney’s Office. She led her county as it enforced the provisions of two constitutional amendments for crime victims. Both times, she worked with the justice system to implement changes to procedures and educated domestic violence partners about the requirements of new laws. Ms. Dunn has written curricula that are used in statewide victim services education and provides training and technical assistance to her colleagues across the state. She has also expanded a part-time domestic violence response team into a 24-hour mobile crisis unit that assists all victims of crime. In December 2020, Ms. Dunn achieved her dream by adding a facility dog to her program to comfort anxious victims, particularly children.

“By training service providers, putting teeth into victims’ laws and providing direct support to crime victims, Ms. Dunn has helped to make the communities she serves safer, more just and more welcoming to victims of domestic violence and other crimes,” said OVC Acting Director Katherine Darke Schmitt. “We are proud to honor her for outstanding service and exceptional leadership.”

Every April, OVC 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. The 40th anniversary of NCVRW took place this year, April 18-24, and featured the theme, “Support Victims. Build Trust. Engage Communities,” which emphasizes the importance of leveraging community support to victims.

The Office of Justice Programs provides federal leadership, grants, training, technical assistance and other resources to improve the nation's capacity to prevent and reduce crime, advance racial equity in the administration of justice, assist victims and enhance the rule of law. More information about OJP and its components can be found at www.ojp.gov.

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