



Department of Justice



Office of Justice Programs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 2021

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

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE HONORS VEGAS STRONG RESILIENCY CENTER 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 the Vegas Strong Resiliency Center 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.

“The Vegas Strong Resiliency Center has been, and will remain, not only a safe haven for hundreds of crime victims directly affected by this terrible tragedy, but a symbol of abiding hope for people everywhere who have suffered the unspeakable pain wrought by an act of mass violence,” said OJP Acting Assistant Attorney General Maureen A. Henneberg. “Through the dedicated and compassionate support of the Center’s staff, survivors, families of victims, citizens and first responders in the Las Vegas area have found a place to turn for comfort and consolation.”

The Vegas Strong Resiliency Center was founded after the Southern Nevada community was traumatized by the October 1, 2017, Route 91 Harvest Festival Shooting, which left 60 people dead and hundreds of others wounded. The Center is a place of healing as well as a multi-agency resource and referral center for survivors, families of victims, first responders and their communities. Managed by Legal Aid Center of Southern Nevada, the Center helps individuals build strength and resiliency, giving access to behavioral and mental health treatment, support services and free legal services for those affected in the aftermath of mass violence. Its services include victim advocacy and support, case management, counseling, spiritual care referrals and technical assistance in applying online for services such as FBI Victim Assistance.

The Center has implemented multiple innovative approaches to serving this community, including forming a partnership with Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles to sell a special license plate, with proceeds donated to the Center. At the start of the pandemic, the Center quickly implemented new policies and procedures to provide the same level of service virtually. Center staff have also provided guidance and hope to other communities affected by mass violence, including those in Ohio, Texas and California.

“There is no way to adequately describe the depth of suffering and the scale of loss brought on by this horrific tragedy, but the amazing professionals and service providers of southern Nevada have found just the right words to capture their community’s response: strong and resilient,” said OVC Acting Director Katherine Darke Schmitt. “We are grateful to the staff of the Vegas Strong Resiliency Center for being a beacon of hope to countless survivors in the time of their greatest need.”

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.

###