



Department of Justice



Office of Justice Programs

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, June 8, 2016

Contact: Sheila Jerusalem
(202) 616-3227
www.ojp.gov

OFFICE FOR VICTIMS OF CRIME AWARDS \$3.6M TO SUPPORT VICTIMS OF CHARLESTON CHURCH SHOOTING

WASHINGTON—The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), part of the U.S. Department of Justice’s Office of Justice Programs, announced a \$3,611,088 grant for organizations providing support to the victims, witnesses and first responders involved in the events surrounding the June 2015 shooting at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in Charleston, South Carolina. OVC awarded the grant through its Antiterrorism and Emergency Assistance Program (AEAP).

“OVC is committed to supporting healing, recovery and justice for all victims of crime,” said OVC Director Joye Frost. “We recognize that the heinous act in Charleston devastated victims, their loved ones and the community physically, emotionally and financially. This award will provide critical assistance to victims, and organizations dedicated to supporting them, throughout the healing process.”

On June 17, 2015, a 21-year-old man allegedly entered the historic Emanuel AME Church in Charleston and, after being welcomed by the congregation and participating in bible study, shot and killed nine of the 12 church members who were present. The murder victims included the chief pastor, Reverend Clementa Pinckney. The alleged gunman will stand trial for murder in Charleston County. A federal grand jury also returned a 33-count indictment, charging him with federal hate crimes and firearms offenses.

This award to the National Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center, Medical University of South Carolina, will support crisis response, consequence management and criminal justice victim services, both incurred and anticipated, for organizations providing crisis intervention services and trauma-informed care, continuum of care and other assistance essential to victim healing.

In 1995, following the Oklahoma City bombing, Congress authorized OVC to set aside and administer up to \$50 million annually from the Crime Victims Fund for the Antiterrorism Emergency Reserve Fund to assist victims in extraordinary circumstances. Following an act of terrorism or mass violence, jurisdictions can apply for an AEAP grant award for crisis response, criminal justice support, crime victim compensation and training and technical assistance expenses. OVC also provided AEAP funds and assistance following the mass violence incidents in Marysville, Washington (2014); Boston, Massachusetts (2013); Newtown, Connecticut (2012); Oak Creek, Wisconsin (2012); Aurora, Colorado (2012); Tucson, Arizona (2011); and

Binghamton, New York (2009); and at the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (2007) and the Minnesota Department of Public Safety on behalf of the Red Lake Nation (2005).

For more information on the AEAP program, please visit <http://ojp.gov/ovc/AEAP/index.html>.

The Office of Justice Programs (OJP), headed by Assistant Attorney General Karol V. Mason, 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. More information about OJP can be found at www.ojp.gov.