

Executive Officer's Statement

April 22, 2008

VCGCB was honored to team up with the State and Consumer Services Agency (SCSA), other state departments, local agencies and advocates throughout the state to expand awareness of victims' issues and services during the recent National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

Governor Schwarzenegger proclaimed April 13-19 as Crime Victims' Rights Week in California.

We assisted SCSA with media outreach to highlight how three departments within the agency were serving crime victims and participating in Victims' Rights Week. The VCGCB's Victim Compensation Program, which works year-round to help victims recover from the devastation of violent crime, participated in a March to the Capitol on April 16. In keeping with the Governor's mission to strengthen victims' rights, the Office of Information Security and Privacy Protection took part in Victims' Rights Week by promoting the rights of identity theft victims and educating the public about the Fair Credit Reporting Act the state passed in 2003. The California African American Museum is now running Common Ground, an exhibit that features contemporary art that calls attention to victims of violent crime in Mexican American and African American communities.

Victims' Rights Week was an opportunity to praise California's leadership in supporting victims' rights. California and 32 other states have amended their constitutions to protect these rights. California was the first state to establish a victim compensation program, the first state to establish a hospital-based sexual assault treatment center, the first to establish a victim assistance program, and the first state to implement a domestic violence shelter.

However, the annual observance was also an occasion for us to educate the public and stakeholders about the ongoing challenges faced by crime victims. Victims not only have to recover from their physical, emotional and financial injuries, but they also must stand up for their rights in the criminal justice system. Victims' Rights Week was a time to vow to do more to help crime victims. We noted that, as a community, we must take steps to respond to the needs of victims, to help them understand their rights, negotiate the criminal justice system and access needed services.

Crime victims, survivors, local victim advocates and state program representatives joined in local events, candlelight vigils and the rally at the State Capitol during the week to honor victims, their families and those who serve them. Throughout the activities, it was clear that participants took the week's theme – "Justice for Victims. Justice for All." – to heart. Standing together on behalf of victims, we let it be known that crime affects everyone, and that supporting victims' rights promotes justice, both for victims and for the community as a whole.

(continued)

- **National Association Leader Recognized With Crime Victims' Week Award**

I'd like to congratulate Dan Eddy, the executive director of the National Association of Crime Victims Compensation Boards, who was the recipient of a 2008 National Crime Victims' Rights Week Award. Presented by the United States Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, these awards recognize the work of individuals and organizations that have helped victims rebuild their lives. Eddy was presented with the Ronald Wilson Reagan Public Policy Award, which honors an individual whose leadership, vision and innovation have resulted in significant changes to public policy and practice benefiting crime victims. In addition, two Californians received awards. Nora J. Baladerian, Ph.D., of Los Angeles, received the National Crime Victim Service Award for her work in advocating for crime victims with disabilities. Steven D. Walker, Ph.D., of Fresno, received the Allied Professional Award for his work in promoting higher education and professional development for those who work in victims' services. Walker operates the National Victim Assistance Academy at California State University, Fresno.

- **Governor's 2008 Crime Victim Advocacy Awards**

Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger has presented the Governor's 2008 Crime Victim Advocacy Awards to 12 individuals and organizations that have made exceptional contributions to the support and service of victims of violent crimes. This is the first time the Governor has presented the Crime Victim Advocate Awards after he reinstated them last year. The following advocates receiving awards were nominated by their peers or by members of their communities:

- Marilyn Baldwin, Riverside District Attorney, Victim Witness Office, was one of the first victim advocates in California to travel to inmate hearings to assist and support victims.
- Marie Belmontez has been involved in Parents Of Murdered Children since 2001, serving as a victim advocacy leader.
- Kam Lou Lopez has been working with domestic violence survivors for the past nine years.
- Kimberly Peterson (formerly Sund-Carrington), Sund-Carrington Memorial Reward Foundation, served as the executive director from the organization's inception in 1999 until October of 2007.
- Matt Mullin, Associate Warden, Susanville, has served as a liaison between two state correctional institutions, the federal prison, the community and Lassen Family Services.
- Citizen's Adversity Support Team is a coalition of the City of Chula Vista, American Medical Response Services, Scripps Memorial Hospital, Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center and the Greenwood and Glen Abbey Mortuaries.
- Melissa Donaldson, Safe Alternatives for Everyone, has been providing services to victims of family abuse and violence.

(continued)

- Riverside District Attorney's Office, District Attorney Rod Pacheco and his staff have been providing outstanding service to crime victims.
- Mia Baker (posthumous) was a pioneer of the crime victim rights movement, leading the volunteer effort that created the Los Angeles District Attorney's Victim Witness Program.
- Collene Campbell, Memory of Victims Everywhere, has worked on behalf of crime victims for more than 30 years. She founded and personally funds Memory of Victims Everywhere.
- Suzanne Brown-McBride, California Coalition Against Sexual Assault, has worked for nearly 20 years assisting victims of sexual assault.
- Christine Ward, Crime Victims' Action Alliance, has advocated for victims of violent crime for over 15 years assisting domestic violence and sexual assault victims.

- **VCGCB Strategic Plan Updated**

I am pleased to report that we have completed our review and update of the Board's strategic plan with our Deputies and our management team. Our updated Vision, Mission, Core Values and Strategic Goals are set forth on the attached "plan on a page." Our next step will be to roll out the updated plan to all staff in the coming weeks.

Awareness Campaign

The VCGCB participated, or will participate, in the following events and meetings:

- April 11-19 - VCGCB Executive Staff members participated in a dozen or more local county events, vigils and ceremonies throughout the state in honor of National Crime Victims' Rights Week.
- April 17 - The VCGCB co-sponsored the "Missing Persons: Information, Resources and Hope" conference in Sacramento during Victims' Rights Week. The conference was sponsored by the Governor's Office, Crime Victim Advocate; the Governor's Office of Emergency Services; the Attorney General; and the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.
- April 24 - The VCGCB is a Planning Committee member and sponsor of the DNA/Cold Case Summit in Sacramento. Participants include the Governor's Office, Attorney General, California District Attorneys Association, California Police Chiefs Association, California State Sheriffs' Association and local district attorneys and law enforcement representatives.
- April-July - Provider Outreach Forums held for mental-health professionals who service crime victims, in Los Angeles, Chico, Oroville, Redding, Antelope Valley, Los Gatos and Santa Rosa.



Strategic Plan 2008-2012

Vision

By 2012, we will be recognized as the national model for victim compensation and one of the best places to work in California

Mission

The California Victim Compensation and Government Claims Board provides responsive financial compensation to victims of crime through a stable Restitution Fund, and for those with claims against the State, an opportunity to resolve those claims or proceed with other remedies.

Core Values

- We provide excellent service to our customers and each other
- We value teamwork and promote a creative and collaborative environment.
- We establish and maintain strong partnerships
- We value open and respectful communication and encourage different viewpoints
- We value our employees by providing opportunities for professional growth and development
- We adapt to change
- We are committed to innovation through continuous process improvement and use of new technology
- We are accountable for our actions in a solutions-oriented environment
- We have honesty and integrity
- We value diversity as well as the unique talents and abilities of our employees
- We promote a healthy work and life balance
- We have a strong work ethic resulting in our dedication to public service

Strategic Goals

- Achieve a 10% reduction in processing times for VCP claims and payments by July 2009
- Achieve a 10% increase in customer and stakeholder satisfaction by July 2009
- Achieve a 10% increase in employee satisfaction by July 2009
- Achieve a 10% increase in public awareness of the VCP Program by July 2009
- Achieve a 10% improvement in efficiencies of the Government Claims Program processes by July 2009
- Increase revenue recovery efforts to support a stable Restitution Fund