



BUILDING OUR FUTURE

OVWA 2018–19 Annual Report



Since 1978, the Ohio Victim Witness Association (OVWA) has been a leading resource for crime victim advocates in the state of Ohio **whose programs have been modeled on the national stage.**

DEAR OVWA FRIEND



For more than 41 years, OVWA has sought to professionalize the field of advocacy by ensuring that crime victim advocates receive the highest quality training, technical assistance, access to best practices, and are represented in public policy efforts to improve victim services and uphold victim rights.

Ohio advocates provide a crucial service to survivors in their time of need. The most important of these services ensuring that the survivor's voice is heard throughout their recovery journey. Survivors are the faces behind the crime statistics, who experience physical and emotional injuries long after the crime, and often the ones who hold the keys to apprehending their perpetrators.

As recovery and resiliency is sought in communities and courts across the state, the role of advocates bridges the gaps for survivors from the earliest stages immediately following their victimization to ensuring trauma-responsive care to empower a survivor's resiliency. As Ohio's advocate coalition, OVWA believes it is our responsibility to ensure that these advocates are best prepared for the services they provide and we've only just begun!

It was a dynamic year for OVWA in 2018! Until the fall of 2017, OVWA's success was due to its dedicated members. Since its inception, OVWA has benefitted and thrived from a steady supply of committed professionals willing to accept leadership positions and continuously work to further its mission. In the fall of 2017, OVWA received federal and state grants to open its first state office. This

state office and its staff would transform OVWA from a volunteer run organization to a fully functioning non-profit with the help of its devoted members. It has not all been easy but every minute has been worth it! **In one year, OVWA increased membership by 295%**, expanded its training and technical assistance program, influenced major public policy that would affect crime victims, redesigned its website and developed a membership database.

OVWA continuously seeks to professionalize the field of advocacy through ethical and performance standards so that survivors can receive consistent victim-centered and trauma-responsive advocacy in the time they need it most.

We are ambitious for the future and see areas of growth in all of our programs. In the coming years, we will continue to expand our training, technical assistance, best practices development and public policy efforts to serve victims and their advocates. OVWA's legacy continues to flourish in this new and exciting era of victim services.

Won't you join us for the ride? We've only just begun!

Most respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Liz Poprocki".

Liz Poprocki
OVWA Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mark Weiner".

Mark Weiner
OVWA Board President

WHO WE ARE

Our Mission:

To promote access to safety, healing, justice, and financial recovery for Ohio crime victims through meaningful rights and quality services.

Ohio Victim Witness Association (OVWA) is a statewide non-profit that began in 1978 as Ohio Association of Victim Witness Divisions. Members consisted of crime victim advocates based out of county prosecutor offices. These advocates realized they could have a more powerful and influential voice together, and made it their mission to improve the rights and services of Ohio crime victims.

These members promoted funding for victim advocacy programs, provided a source of networking for Ohio's crime victim advocates, professionalized the field of advocacy, established best practices for consistent services and addressed public policies relevant to victims and witnesses of all crimes.

A National First That Started Crisis Centers

OVWA held annual events during National Crime Victim Rights Week, honoring victims, witnesses and legislators who had worked on important legislation affecting victims and advocates.

It was during this time that OVWA analyzed Ohio's Victim Compensation program expenses. This led to faster administrative-based processes and created the nation's first law permitting property tax levies for victim services. OVWA's successful advocacy and analysis led to the identification of \$2.5 million dollars from "excess" compensation funds to start rape crisis centers.

1978

Founded as Ohio Association of Prosecutors' Victim Witness Divisions

1984

State Victim Assistance Act

1991

Two Days In May

OVWA members founded the Ohio Advocate Network.

1994

Led passage of Ohio's first victims' rights constitutional amendment.

1996

OVWA members founded the Ohio Crisis Response Team

1999

**Created the nation's first law allowing levies to be used for victim services.
Uncovered excess compensation funds to start rape crisis center funding in Ohio.**

Two Days in May

OVWA's dedicated efforts also led to Ohio crime victim agencies having access to State Victim Assistance Act (SVAA) funds, and they now have a permanent seat on the Ohio Attorney General's SVAA Advisory Board. Through collaboration with the Ohio Attorney General's Office, OVWA developed the annual statewide victim advocacy conference, Two Days In May, now viewed as essential for advocates.

More State and National Progress

During the 2000s, OVWA led an initiative with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections (ODRC) to elevate victim services. This initiative led to the Office of Victim Services within ODRC to be independent from the Parole Board. OVWA members also testified on the national level to endorse a U.S. constitutional amendment for victims' rights.

A 78% Margin That Paved the Way

OVWA has a long history of public policy work. Its members have worked tirelessly and volunteered countless hours to improve systems to be victim-focused.

The most notable of these successes was in 1994 when OVWA's President and Public Policy Committee Chair led the passage of Ohio's first victim rights constitutional amendment. This passed by a 78% margin!

This amendment laid the groundwork for recently expanded victim rights and gave victims and witnesses a much-needed voice in the criminal justice process.

Ohio Advocate Network (OAN)

One of the pillars of OVWA is the professionalization of the field of victim advocacy. Founded in 1994, OAN developed a registration protocol to benefit victim advocates and allied professionals assisting Ohio crime victims. Acquiring and maintaining a valid OAN Registered Advocate Status attests that an individual has achieved a defined level of experience and knowledge in the victim assistance profession.

OAN later became the framework upon which the National Advocate Credentialing Program (NACP) was formed under the National Organization of Victim Assistance (NOVA). NACP then became the basis for the creation of the U.S. Department of Defense Sexual Assault Advocacy Credentialing Program (D-SAACP).

Ohio Crisis Response Team (OCRT)

In 1996, OVWA members began OCRT. This volunteer-run organization's mission is to respond to communities in the aftermath of traumatic events by providing crisis intervention, support services and training. All volunteers are NOVA-trained professionals with varying backgrounds and a wealth of knowledge and experience.

When appropriate, OCRT and the National Crisis Response Team will work together when a community's crisis is too extensive. This was the case on September 11th, 2001. OCRT members were called upon to work at the New Jersey Family Assistance Center in the months that followed. Members provided "companion" services to survivors, family members and friends of those lost on 9/11.

This team of professional advocates is simply outstanding and we are so grateful for their services.

2016 2017 2018

The first OVWA Marlene Young Outstanding Leadership Award was presented to Rhonda Barner

The first OVWA William F. Schenck Award was presented to Todd Schroeder

Assisted in the passage of Marsy's Law in Ohio, which passed by 83%
Opened OVWA's first state office in Columbus, OH

Inaugural OVWA Visionaries in Victim Advocacy (VIVA) Awards ceremony for advocates
Created an advocate's guide, "Serving Survivors with Disabilities"

WHAT WE DO

Training

OVWA offers quarterly four hour in-person trainings for members, webinars, and educational opportunities for non-members throughout the year. OVWA partners with agencies around the state to bring advocates and allied professionals quality trainings from the experts themselves.

OVWA's trainings are approved by the Ohio Advocate Network and meet the requirements of their continuing education guidelines for Registered Advocates. Continuing education credits for social workers, counselors, marriage and family therapists and attorneys is obtained when applicable.

Technical Assistance

OVWA offers technical assistance to all types of advocates and their organizations. Technical assistance can be provided over the phone, via email, or in-person. Our technical assistance is provided by OVWA staff, its members, state coalitions and experts in the field. It is OVWA's responsibility to connect advocates to improve victim services.

Technical assistance ranges from help developing policies and procedures, mediation with other victim advocacy groups, assistance upholding victim rights, referrals to agencies and organizations, research for information and valid referrals and resources, and guidance for new and long-standing advocacy organizations.

Public Policy

In keeping with OVWA's history of successful public policy initiatives, OVWA continues to promote public policy that enhances the rights of crime victims and advocate services and promote funding for victim services across Ohio and nationally. For example, OVWA drafted and sought sponsorship for proposed legislation that would become the State Victim Assistance Act (SVAA), establishing a source of funding for victim assistance programs pre-VOCA.

SVAA continues today as a viable source of funding for victim assistance services in the state of Ohio. OVWA has provided proponent testimony in support of victims' rights legislation and successfully assisted in drafting, presenting and passing a Victim Bill of Rights and a Constitutional Amendment for Victims' Rights in Ohio.

Members of OVWA have many times initiated and/or participated in collaborative efforts to establish protocols for prosecutor-based victim assistance, sexual assault examinations and billing, ORC Chapter 2930 and other victim-related statute compliance.

OVWA's work to establish standardized training and continuing education requirements for victim advocacy professionals resulted in the Ohio Advocate Network (one of the few state advocate credentialing programs in the nation) and what became the BASICS Academy, administered by the Ohio Attorney General's Office.

These are but a few examples of the victim service and rights achievements OVWA is proud to have initiated and worked collaboratively to accomplish in the state of Ohio.

Best Practices

OVWA believes that advocates are only as good as the information they are given. OVWA provides the public with best practices covering a wide array of topics. Whether professionals are a systems-based advocate or a community-based advocate, these resources can provide applicable and current information to improve daily work with victims of crime.

Most recently, OVWA partnered with seven other organizations to develop "Serving Survivors with Disabilities: An Advocate's Guide". This publication has been shared across the state and has influenced how services are provided to survivors. This publication was the first of its kind in Ohio and continues to be a staple for the crime victim advocate.

OVWA AT-A-GLANCE

OUR MEMBERSHIP

Increased our membership in 2018 by **295%**

333 members

42% Systems (city/county victim services)

32% Community advocates (DV, SV, mental health, DD, hospitals, substance abuse)

8% Child advocacy centers and CASA

8% State departments/statewide coalitions

7% Allied professionals

2% Legal/attorneys

1% Schools & university programs/departments

OUR STAFF AND ORGANIZATION

 3 full-time staff

 7 volunteer Board of Directors

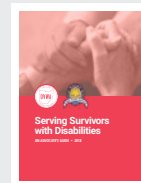
 11 volunteers



Based in Columbus but provide services to entire state

Provided training and technical assistance to **862** advocates, allied professionals and victims of crime

Published "Serving Survivors with Disabilities," a guide for advocates and allied professionals



Influenced public policy:

- **Reagan Tokes Act**
- **Issue 1**
- **Marsy's Law**



Redesigned its website, featuring the first statewide event calendar, which was a collaborative effort to bring consistency to educational opportunities for advocates and a way to streamline information into one location

OUR FY2018 NUMBERS



For every dollar donated to OVWA, **\$0.92** goes to:

- Continuing education initiatives for advocates and allied professionals
- Development of best practices
- Providing direct services to victims and technical assistance for advocates
- Influencing public policy
- Celebrating advocates at our annual VIVA Awards

FY2018 Revenue: \$217,640.09

- \$193,362.86 — VOCA
- \$9,174.96 — Membership dues
- \$7,779.66 — State grant (SVAA)
- \$3,862.61 — Individual donations
- \$3,460.00 — VIVA Awards

FY2018 Operating Expenses:
\$208,762.34

EMPOWERING & RECOGNIZING OUR ADVOCATES

INNOVATIVE TRAININGS

OVWA lead advocates through a culture shift with its **"Empowering Resiliency: Individual and Agency Focused Trauma Responsive Care"** trainings, establishing an understanding of the root of trauma and building collaborative efforts to reduce trauma in advocacy.

5 Regional trainings in Ohio

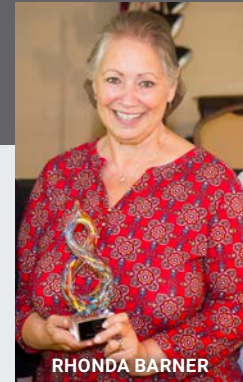
20 Expert speakers

150 Advocates and allied professional trained



2018
Viva Awards

VISIONARIES IN VICTIM ADVOCACY



In 2018, OVWA saw the need to recognize victim advocates and the critical work they do every day ensuring recovery for victims and witnesses across the state of Ohio.

Through this acknowledgement, the Visionaries in Victim Advocacy (VIVA) Awards was born! This annual event seeks to celebrate advocates and recognize the tremendous invaluable role they have in our communities.

2018 Award Recipients

Future Leader — Ryn Farmer

Crime Victim Services of Allen and Putnam Counties

Advocate of the Year — Trish Wright,
Delaware County Prosecutor's Office
Victim/Witness Division

**Program of the Year — Crime Victim
Services of Allen and Putnam Counties**

**Community Collaboration — Greene
County Prosecutor's Office Victim/
Witness Division**

Equality in Advocacy — Katherine Yoder,
Disability Rights Ohio

Lifetime Achievement — Rhonda Barner
Montgomery County Prosecutor's Office
Victim/Witness Division (Ret.)



OVWA MEMBERS (BY ORGANIZATION)

Abail Ministries of Northeast Ohio	Columbus City Attorney's DV & Stalking Unit	Elyria City Law Director/ Prosecutor's Office	IMPACT Safety	Michael's House Child Advocacy Center
Abuse and Rape Crisis Shelter of Warren County	Columbus Public Health	Erie County Prosecutor's Office Victim Assistance	Jefferson County Victim Assistance Program	Montgomery County Prosecutor's Office Victim/Witness
Action Ohio	COMPASS	Fairborn/Beavercreek Victim Assistance	Kent State University	Muskingum County Prosecutor's Office
Adams County Prosecutor's Office	Coshocton County Victim Assistance Program	Fairfield County Prosecutor's Office	Knox County Victim Assistance Program	New Choices Inc.
Adult Advocacy Centers	Crawford County Prosecutor's Office Victim Witness	Family and Child Abuse Prevention Center	Licking Co Prosecutor's Office—Victim Services	Ohio Alliance to End Sexual Violence
Advocating Opportunity	Crime Victim Services of Allen & Putnam Counties	Franklin County Municipal Court Department of Probation Services	Licking County Prosecutor's Office	Ohio Attorney General's Office—Crime Victim Services Section
Ashland County Prosecutor's Office	Darke County Prosecuting Attorney	Franklin County Prosecutor's Office	Lorain City Prosecutors Office	Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation
BRAVO	Deaf World Against Violence Everywhere (DWAVE)	Greene County Prosecutor's Office	Lorain County Safe Harbor/Genesis House	Ohio Crime Victim Justice Center (The Justice League)
Carroll County Victim Assistance	Delaware County Prosecutor Victim Services Unit	Hancock County Prosecutor's Office	MADD, Ohio	Ohio Department of Public Safety—Family Violence Prevention Center
Champaign County Prosecutor's Office	Delaware County Sheriff's Office	Hardin County Victim Assistance	Mahoning County Prosecutor's Office	Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Corrections—Office of Victim Services
CitiLookout Trauma Recovery Center	Disability Rights Ohio	Hocking County Prosecutor—Victim Services	Marion County Victim Assistance Program	
City of Dayton Prosecutor's Office Victim Witness	East Lake Police Victim Assistance	Huron County Victims' Assistance	Mayfield Heights Police Department	
Clermont County Prosecutor's Office			Mechanicsburg Police Department	
Cleveland Clinic			Meigs County Prosecutors Victim Assistance Program	

Ohio Department of
Youth Services—Office of
Victim Services

Ohio Domestic Violence
Network

Ohio Network of Child
Advocacy Centers

Parents of Murdered
Children Inc.

Paulding County Victims
Assistance Unit

Pike County Partnership
Against Domestic
Violence

Probation Offer
Supervisor

ProKids

Ross County Prosecutor
Victim Witness
Assistance

Stark County
Prosecutor's Office

Summit County
Prosecutor's Office

Survivor Advocacy
Outreach Program

The Domestic Violence
Shelter, Inc.

The University of Akron
Tuscarawas County
Victim Assistance

U.S. Department of
Justice

Union Co. Prosecutor's
Office

Union County VOCA

University of Cincinnati,
Department of Public
Safety

Victim Assistance
Program

Victim Services, City of
Mansfield

Wood County
Prosecutor's Office

Xenia City Victim
Assistance Program

YWCA Dayton

YWCA Van Wert County

Individuals

Bruce Adams
Jeannette Adkins
Kathleen Everson
Helen Kamlet

Judy Rasmussen
Katherine Yoder
Carol Cutright
Lauren Giardini
Rhiannon Gill
Annette Jenkins
BreAnna Kusko
Mary Jane Latta
Kerri Owens
Helen Royster
Dee Ruby
Jodi Stacey
Elaine Staples
Robin Stuessel-Temke
Michelle White
Sam Whitney

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO...

Our Volunteers

Mark Poprocki Creative
Cindi Yost, JD
Kristen Wall
Jordan Krumm
Sarah Huffman
Julie Doepke
Ally Roberts
Family and friends
of OVWA staff

Our Staff

Liz Poprocki
Executive Director
Janet Doolan
Program Director

Wendy Ricks-Hoff
Training & Technical
Assistance Coordinator

Our Donors and Sponsors

Grange Insurance
Mark Poprocki Creative
Parker Realty
Aaron and
Rebekah Monroe
David and Laura Voth
Teri LaJeunesse
Jane McKenzie
Virginia Beckman
Crime Victim Services
of Allen & Putnam
Counties

Richard Kiger
Rev. Dr. Karl Kraft
Abe Bonowitz
Kate Foulke
Kaki Kozelek
Jeannette Adkins
Rhonda Barner
Bill & Riki Karolyi
Colleen & Jon Edge
Family and friends
of OVWA staff

Our Board of Directors

This founding all-volunteer board of directors secured the funding to formalize OVWA's state office.

Mark Weiner — *President*
Director of Victim
Services, Licking Co.
Prosecutor's Office

Teri LaJeunesse
Secretary
Director, Victim Witness
Division, Greene Co.
Prosecutor's Office

Stefanie Day — *Treasurer*
Assistant Director, DWAVE

Jane McKenzie — *Member*
Director, Victim/Witness
Assistance Unit, Franklin
County Prosecutor's Office

Virginia Beckman
Member
Executive Director,
Genesis House

David Voth — *Member*
Executive Director, Crime
Victim Services of Allen
& Putnam Counties

Stefani Payton — *Member*
Director, Victim Witness
Division, Fayette Co.
Prosecutor's Office

WAYS TO HELP — YOUR SUPPORT IS VITAL

DONATE

OVWA accepts donations! All donations will receive a letter of acknowledgement and are all tax-deductible.

How to Give

By check: OVWA, Inc.
90 Northwoods Blvd., Suite B-6
Columbus, OH 43235

Online: Visit OVWA at www.ovwa.org to give online. We accept Paypal and credit cards.

SPONSOR US

As a sponsor or donor of OVWA, you will be providing funds necessary to ensure the longevity of the organization and, most importantly, improved services to victims of crime. Your generosity, in addition to the tangible benefits outlined in our Sponsorship Packet, will support a variety of services that are being provided to crime victims and survivors all over the state of Ohio.

Find more info and our Sponsorship Packet at www.ovwa.org.

VOLUNTEER OR INTERN

We are always looking for energetic people who are passionate about helping crime victims and their advocates! We need support in these areas:

- **Public Policy** — Work alongside the Executive Director and OVWA's Public Policy Committee to review proposed legislation that affects crime victims and their advocates.
- **Event Planning** — Work alongside the Program Director and the Training and Technical Assistance Coordinator to plan and implement OVWA's trainings around the state.
- **Resource Development** — OVWA can't do what it does without the help from our communities. Work alongside the Executive Director and the Board of Directors to secure funding sources and conduct fundraising efforts.

Find more info about volunteering and internships at www.ovwa.org.

QUESTIONS

Please contact Liz Poprocki, Executive Director, at liz@ovwa.org or **614-787-9001**.



OVWA is a private, non-profit organization.
Tax-deductible contributions are appreciated.

Contact us or visit our website for
information about membership, meetings,
the Ohio Advocate Network (OAN), the Ohio
Crisis Response Team (OCRT) and other
OVWA initiatives.



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