**Charles Ramsey**

*Chairman*

**Michael Pennington**

*Executive Director*

OVS Newsletter

December 4, 2019

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Credits towards VOCA/RASA/VOJO training requirements are available for all sessions (unless indicated otherwise in the session description). To receive training credits: 1) you must be logged into the session and 2) the WebEx application must be on your computer for the entire duration of the session. As the OVS recognizes that emergencies may arise and you may not be able to attend the entire session, there is no prohibition against attending part of a session (although training credits will not be given in that instance).

* + [Training/Networking Opportunities](http://www.pccd.pa.gov/Victim-Services/Pages/OVS-Training-Networking-Opportunities.aspx)
  + [Additional RASA/VOJO/VOCA Approved Training](http://www.pccd.pa.gov/Victim-Services/Pages/RASA-VOCA-VOJO-Trainings.aspx)

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# Coping With The Holidays

For those who have experienced tragedy or significant trauma, the holiday season may seem too much to bear. OVC’s Coping with the Holidays shares online resources and suggestions from survivors on how to make the best of the holiday season. Please click [here](https://www.ovc.gov/news/featuredres.html?utm_source=newsfromovc&utm_medium=email&utm_content=coping_holidays&utm_campaign=featuredresources#Nov3) to learn more

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# PCCD Seeks Stakeholder Input in Implementing Gun Violence Executive Order

On August 16, 2019, Governor Wolf signed a sweeping [Executive Order](https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.governor.pa.gov%2Fnewsroom%2Fexecutive-order-2019-06-reducing-gun-violence%2F&data=02%7C01%7Csakoch%40pa.gov%7Cf0fc2044a25e43c826dc08d7778dc4fb%7C418e284101284dd59b6c47fc5a9a1bde%7C0%7C0%7C637109323207349297&sdata=19%2Fbb5Sjlm7b0c72Ux8uzItJHXxV4e%2FvRkV%2Fp6mchLo%3D&reserved=0) on gun violence. The Order tasks state agencies, including PCCD, with working together to identify and implement evidence-based initiatives to help address the public health and public safety crisis of gun violence in Pennsylvania.

The Order established a new Office of Gun Violence Prevention within PCCD, and also established a Special Council on Gun Violence tasked with identifying recommendations and best practices to prevent and reduce gun violence in its many forms across the Commonwealth.

The Governor’s Executive Order asks PCCD and the Special Council to engage a wide array of stakeholders in its efforts. To that end, the Special Council has identified five stakeholder Workgroups focused on key areas of gun violence, including mass shootings, accidental/unintentional shootings, suicide by firearms, domestic violence-related shootings, and community gun violence.

PCCD has also developed and launched a new *Gun Violence* [website](https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.pccd.pa.gov%2Fcriminaljustice%2FGunViolence%2FPages%2Fdefault.aspx&data=02%7C01%7Csakoch%40pa.gov%7Cf0fc2044a25e43c826dc08d7778dc4fb%7C418e284101284dd59b6c47fc5a9a1bde%7C0%7C0%7C637109323207359294&sdata=xtUAnPR4gG%2BPJK2L0tXjdPYkEtJfoAYRQbzkBotoNVE%3D&reserved=0) and an [Online Public Comment Survey](https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.surveymonkey.com%2Fr%2FVRSMY59&data=02%7C01%7Csakoch%40pa.gov%7Cf0fc2044a25e43c826dc08d7778dc4fb%7C418e284101284dd59b6c47fc5a9a1bde%7C0%7C0%7C637109323207369291&sdata=LpyflNXrkrMg%2Baz9dhQd1QgGkHITjJppPwM%2Bf9FeRWw%3D&reserved=0) where individuals can share their thoughts and ideas with members of the Special Council.

Through these collective efforts, PCCD has engaged more than 550 individuals so far representing victim services, public health, state and local law enforcement, public safety, survivors, advocates, gun owners, parents and family members, educators, veterans, community leaders and concerned citizens.

The Special Council will hold its next meeting on December 11th, where it will consider key themes and initial recommendations from Workgroups and public hearings. A first draft of a full report of findings and recommendations will be finalized by the end of January, ahead of the Council’s January 29th meeting. A final report of recommendations will be presented for consideration by the Commission at its March 11, 2020 meeting.

We invite you to learn more about this work by visiting PCCD’s website, and to share your feedback with the Special Council using our [Online Public Comment Survey](https://gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.surveymonkey.com%2Fr%2FVRSMY59&data=02%7C01%7Csakoch%40pa.gov%7Cf0fc2044a25e43c826dc08d7778dc4fb%7C418e284101284dd59b6c47fc5a9a1bde%7C0%7C0%7C637109323207369291&sdata=LpyflNXrkrMg%2Baz9dhQd1QgGkHITjJppPwM%2Bf9FeRWw%3D&reserved=0).

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# Winners of the Governor’s 2019 Victim Service Pathfinder Awards Announced

The Governor’s Victim Service Pathfinder Awards that took place on December 3, 2019 at the Pathways for Victim Services Conference, recognized Brenda Gorski (Nogales) of the Nationalities Service Center, Roxanne Davis of Crisis Center North, and Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin Steele for their work with crime victims. The annual awards are administered by the Office of Victims’ Services (OVS) in the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD). They were presented at OVS’ Pathways Conference.

“I am pleased to announce the award winners, who have gone above and beyond in their efforts for the victims of crime,” Governor Tom Wolf said.  “By highlighting their achievements, we honor their notable contributions to their communities and the victim service provider field.”

The Pathfinder Individual Direct Service Award was presented to Brenda Gorski (Nogales), Senior Manager with the Immigrant Survivor Program at the Nationalities Service Center in Philadelphia.  An immigrant from Bolivia, Ms. Gorski has been providing free legal immigration services and resources for immigrant victims of crime since 2005.  She oversees a program that provides comprehensive services for immigrant survivors of torture, human trafficking, domestic violence, sexual violence and other crimes.

The Pathfinder Survivor Activist Award was presented to Roxanne Davis, who serves as an adult counselor for Crisis Center North in Pittsburgh.  Beginning her career as a volunteer and now currently serving as a domestic violence counselor and advocate, Ms. Davis works directly with survivors and provides trauma-informed therapeutic counseling for her clients.

The Pathfinder Allied Professional Award was presented to Kevin Steele, District Attorney of Montgomery County, to recognize his work in prosecuting sexual and domestic assault cases and other violent crimes and seeking justice for victims.  He is known for his recent victory in the Bill Cosby sexual assault case.

The mission of the PCCD is to enhance the quality, coordination and planning within the criminal and juvenile justice systems, to facilitate the delivery of services to victims of crime, and to increase the safety of our communities.

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# Guns And Violence Against Women: America’s Uniquely Lethal Intimate Partner Violence Problem

Intimate partner violence and gun violence in the US are inextricably linked, impacting millions of women, families, and communities across the country. Abusers with firearms are five times more likely to kill their victims, and guns further exacerbate the power and control dynamic used by abusers to inflict emotional abuse and exert coercive control over their victims.

Every month, an average of 52 women are shot and killed by an intimate partner. Nearly 1 million women alive today have reported being shot or shot at by intimate partners, and 4.5 million women have reported being threatened with a gun. In more than half of mass shootings over the past decade, the perpetrator shot a current or former intimate partner or family member as part of the rampage. The ripple effects of firearms in the hands of an abuser extend far beyond the intimate relationship—affecting children who witness or live with it and the family members, coworkers, and law enforcement officers who respond to it. Please click [here](https://everytownresearch.org/reports/guns-intimate-partner-violence/) to read more.

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# Shooting Victims Have Increased Risk Of Mental Harm Long After Physical Injuries Have Healed, Study Finds

Years after being shot, a large proportion of gun victims continue to suffer from increased unemployment, alcohol and drug abuse, and post-traumatic stress disorder, a new study shows, and the effects persist even when the injuries were minor. The authors point out that treatment for gun injuries may need to change. Currently, patients may be discharged quickly from the hospital, often with no checks on their mental health or follow-up care. And they say, growing evidence suggests that gunshot trauma is harder to recover from than other types of injuries.

“When it comes to guns, we as a society and as researchers pay a lot of attention to deaths. That’s what the public outrage often focuses on. But what’s not captured are the people who survive,” said Michael Vella, lead author on the study who began the research as a fellow at University of Pennsylvania and is now a trauma surgeon at University of Rochester. “What we found is these patients are facing long-term physical and mental health problems that just don’t go away over time.” Please click [here](https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2019/11/20/shootings-victims-have-increased-risk-mental-harm-long-after-physical-injuries-have-healed-study-finds/) to read more.

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# Hate-Crime Violence Hits 16-Year High, F.B.I. Reports

Personal attacks motivated by bias or prejudice reached a 16-year high in 2018, the F.B.I. said Tuesday, with a significant upswing in violence against Latinos outpacing a drop in assaults targeting Muslims and Arab-Americans.

Over all, the number of hate crimes of all kinds reported in the United States remained fairly flat last year after a three-year increase, according to an annual F.B.I. report. But while crimes against property were down, physical assaults against people were up, accounting for 61 percent of the 7,120 incidents classified as hate crimes by law enforcement officials nationwide. Please click [here](https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/12/us/hate-crimes-fbi-report.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share) to read more. Please click [here](https://ucr.fbi.gov/hate-crime/2018/hate-crime) to view the “Hate Crime Statistics, 2018” annual report.

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# Shared Hope International: Annual “State Report Card”

Since 2011, Shared Hope International has graded states based on the strength of their laws related to the commercial sexual exploitation of children. Grades are based on an annual review of state laws as analyzed under the Protected Innocence Challenge Legislative Framework.

Recognizing that most of the gaps in responding to domestic minor sex trafficking must be addressed at the state level, the Protected Innocence Challenge Legislative Framework addresses state laws related to the following:

* Preventing domestic minor sex trafficking through reducing demand
* Rescuing and restoring victims through improved training on identification
* Establishing protocols and facilities for victim placement
* Mandating appropriate services and shelter
* Incorporating trauma-reducing mechanisms into the justice system

States have made significant progress in advancing their laws under the Legislative Framework. Please click [here](https://sharedhope.org/) to learn more.

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# Truckers Against Trafficking Honored For Extraordinary Efforts

On October 29, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo presented the 2019 Presidential Award for Extraordinary Efforts to Combat Trafficking in Persons to Truckers Against Trafficking and the Responsible Business Alliance (RBA).

Every year, the Secretary of State presents these awards to up to five individuals or organizations who are chosen by the President’s Interagency Task Force to Monitor and Combat Trafficking (PITF). PITF is a cabinet-level entity, chaired by the Secretary, which includes representatives from more than a dozen government agencies, including the Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, and Labor. This task force was formed following President Obama’s call to bolster federal efforts to combat human trafficking in March 2012, spurring the first White House Forum to Combat Human Trafficking in April 2013. Please click [here](https://www.traffickingmatters.com/truckers-against-trafficking-and-the-responsible-business-alliance-honored-with-award-for-extraordinary-efforts-to-combat-tip/) to read more.

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# Legislation To Make Bullying A Criminal Offense

State lawmakers are planning to introduce legislation to tackle the issue of bullying. They say bullying today has hit a crisis point and are doing this not just as lawmakers, but as fathers. State Representatives Torren Ecker of Adams and Cumberland Counties and Kyle Mullins of Lackawanna County are addressing bullying. "This is a bipartisan bill that we kind of talked about over the summer," said Ecker. "We both are young fathers, we have young kids, bullying's a problem." Please click [here](https://fox43.com/2019/11/15/legislation-to-make-bullying-criminal-offense/) to read more.

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# Victims Compensation Online Trainings

The following trainings will be held on December 5, 2019:

* Funeral & Burial Expenses Clinic - 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
* Myths of Compensation - 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

The following trainings will be held on December 10, 2019:

* “Wow, That’s Covered by Compensation” - 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
* Loss of Support Clinic - 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

The following trainings will be held on December 17, 2019:

* Relocation Expenses Clinic - 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
* Counseling Expenses Clinic - 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

The following training will be held on January 7, 2020:

* Basic Compensation – 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

The following trainings will be held on January 15, 2020:

* Stolen Benefit Cash Expenses Clinic - 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
* Crime Scene Cleanup Expenses Clinic - 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

The following trainings will be held on January 21, 2020:

* Loss of Earnings Clinic - 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.
* Motor Vehicle-Related Crime Expenses Clinic - 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

The following training will be held on January 23, 2020:

* Restitution Basics – 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

All trainings count towards 1 hour of the required RASA/VOCA/VOJO training hours, except Basic Compensation, which counts towards 2 hours, and DAVE training, which counts towards 2 hours and 15 minutes.

Please click [here](https://pccd.webex.com/mw3300/mywebex/default.do?siteurl=pccd&service=6) to register.

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# Victim/Witness Legislation Q&A Webinar

Do you have any questions regarding Victim/Witness Legislation passed in 2019 but are unsure who to ask? Are you confused about the most recent ruling regarding Marsy's Law? Greg Rowe, the Director of Legislation and Policy for the Pennsylvania District Attorneys Association, will be online during this session to answer all of your questions. Greg was the Chief of the Legislation and Policy Unit in the Philadelphia District Attorney’s Office and, in that capacity, served as the legislative liaison for the PDAA.  Greg has been extensively involved in many important legislative initiatives, including enactment of Pennsylvania’s strangulation law and reforms to the Wiretap Law. The Victim-focused legislation supported by the PDAA follows; however, the discussion and questions are not limited to only these.

Trainer: Greg Rowe

Date: December 16, 2019 AND December 19, 2019

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

**This is a Webinar** (similar to Basic Comp) **and qualifies for 2 PCCD-approved training hours**.  Please click [here](https://pccd.webex.com/mw3300/mywebex/default.do?siteurl=pccd&service=6) to register. Any questions should be directed to [Amy Smulktis](mailto:AJS@restitutionconsulting.com), Training Consultant. There is no fee for this training.

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# OVC TTAC Webinar – Courageous Spirit: The Effects Of Historical Trauma On AI/AN Communities

The Office for Victims of Crime Training & Technical Assistance Center (OVC TTAC) is offering an upcoming webinar. This session will identify the historical and traditional ways that domestic and sexual violence were addressed in American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities prior to colonization and how historical experiences persist to have residual trauma in the community. Recommendations will be provided to improve advocacy for native communities that have been affected by domestic and sexual violence.

Please click [here](https://www.ovcttac.gov/views/TrainingMaterials/dspWebinars.cfm) to register.

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# PA Immigration Resource Center Webinar – Hiring, Retaining And Supporting Bilingual Staff At Your Organization

On Wednesday, December 11, 2019, PIRC is offering a webinar aimed at mainstream DV/SA organizational management, which highlights the importance of hiring bilingual/bicultural staff, offers concrete strategies for recruiting, hiring and retaining bilingual/bicultural personnel and provides information on how to effectively supervise bilingual/bicultural staff by: listening, understanding work load of bilingual/bicultural staff, addressing vicarious trauma, encouraging growth, and supporting leadership. This webinar will underscore the importance of language access planning to ensure meaningful language access for individuals with Limited English Proficiency that is proactive, sustainable and draws from multiple strategies (direct services in language, qualified interpretation and meaningful collaborations) while it ensures appropriate role boundaries between bilingual staff and interpreters.

Paula Gomez Stordy is Senior Director of National Training and TA of Casa de Esperanza, the National Latin@ Network for Healthy Families and Communities. She has more than 25 years of experience working in social services, of which 17 years were in non-profit management. She oversees national training and technical assistance to mainstream and culturally specific organizations across the country overseeing federal contracts and supervising staff. Paula has served in leadership positions within various institutions including courts, hospitals, shelters and community-based programs to enhance the safety, health and inclusion of individuals and families. As a consultant, she supported organizations with fundraising, board development, mentoring and training. Paula has served as an Adjunct Professor at Merrimack College teaching Social Justice: Theory and Practice where she conducted research on the leadership of women of color. Paula was born in Boston to Chilean parents and has lived in various cities and towns in Massachusetts and Chile.

Please click [here](https://events-na1.adobeconnect.com/content/connect/c1/2297520381/en/events/event/shared/default_template_simple/event_registration.html?connect-session=na1breeztc6qvropnv6h9dfs&sco-id=3343070970&_charset_=utf-8) to register.

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# PDAI Victim Services Trainings

Victim/Witness Legislation Q&A

Date: December 16, 2019

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Do you have any questions regarding Victim/Witness Legislation passed in 2019 but are unsure who to ask? Are you confused about the most recent ruling regarding Marsy's Law? Greg Rowe, the Director of Legislation and Policy for the Pennsylvania District Attorneys Association, will be online during this session to answer all of your questions. Greg was the Chief of the Legislation and Policy Unit in the Philadelphia District Attorney’s Office and, in that capacity, served as the legislative liaison for the PDAA.  Greg has been extensively involved in many important legislative initiatives, including enactment of Pennsylvania’s strangulation law and reforms to the Wiretap Law. Click [here](https://pccd.webex.com/mw3300/mywebex/default.do?siteurl=pccd&service=6) to register.

This training has been approved for two PCCD Annual Training Hours.

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# 2020 Foundational Academies - SAVE THE DATE!

April 15 – 17, 2020

State College, PA

\*Accommodations provided only at this Academy

July 15 – 17, 2020

Cranberry Township, PA (Pittsburgh Area)

\*A small block of rooms will be available at discount.

October 7 – 9, 2020

King of Prussia, PA

\*A small block of rooms will be available at discount.

**REGISTRATION FOR EACH ACADEMY WILL OPEN APPROXIMATELY 60 DAYS PRIOR TO THE START DATE** UNDER THE PDAI TRAINING CALENDAR AT [WWW.PDAA.ORG](http://www.pdaa.org/). REGISTRATION IS FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED FOR THOSE VOCA, VOJO, & RASA FUNDED INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND PER PCCD’S CONSOLIDATED VICTIM SERVICES STANDARDS. THERE IS ALSO A SUPPLEMENTAL ONLINE TRAINING REQUIREMENT IN ADDITION TO THE 3-DAY CLASSROOM ACADEMY.  Lunch will be provided at all Academies in 2020 instead of breaktime snacks.

If you have any questions about the above webinar, the 2020 Academies, or wish to be added to her Quarterly Restitution & V/W Training Newsletter, please email the Training Consultant, Amy Smulktis, at [AJS@RestitutionConsulting.com](mailto:AJS@RestitutionConsulting.com).

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If your program is offering new or extended services, or implementing new initiatives that you would like to highlight, please submit your news article to Stacie Brendlinger at [sbrendling@pa.gov](mailto:sbrendling@pa.gov).

The next OVS Newsletter will be published on Wednesday, **December 18, 2019**. If you would like any training events, fundraisers, or notable news published in this newsletter, please submit them to Stacie Brendlinger at [sbrendling@pa.gov](mailto:sbrendling@pa.gov) by Wednesday, **December 11, 2019**.

You have signed up to receive the OVS Newsletter from the Office of Victims' Services. This newsletter will be sent to you on a biweekly basis via email. If your email address changes or you would like to be removed from the OVS Newsletter distribution list, please contact Stacie Brendlinger at (717) 265-8722 or via email at [sbrendling@pa.gov](mailto:sbrendling@pa.gov).

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Pennsylvania’s [Office of Victims’ Services](http://www.pccd.pa.gov/Victim-Services/Pages/default.aspx) | 3101 North Front Street | Harrisburg, PA 17110 | (717) 783-0551

[www.pccd.pa.gov](http://www.pccd.pa.gov)

**PA Crime Victims Website**

[www.pcv.pccd.pa.gov](http://www.pcv.pccd.pa.gov)

**Twitter:** [@PaCrimeCom](https://twitter.com/PaCrimeComm)m.