

National Association of Probation Executives EXECUTIVE EXCHANGE

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



On behalf of the Association's Officers and Directors, let me first extend to you our best wishes for a joyful holiday season and a successful 1996.

The newly founded National Coalition of Community Corrections Associations (NCCCA), comprised of the President

of ten professional organizations serving community corrections, had its third meeting on December 8, 1995, in Washington, D. C.

During this meeting NCCCA heard from Jeremy Travis, Director of the National Institute of Justice, who described the agency's priorities for the immediate future. Travis indicated that the three major priorities for the upcoming grant cycle would be violence, drugs and crime, and sentencing/corrections. With respect to the last category, Travis mentioned that research on such issues as the effectiveness of electronic monitoring and the impact of sentencing options on offenders' families were examples of the types of research that would attract the interest and support of the National Institute of Justice.

After meeting with Travis, the members of NCCCA spent some time generating examples of the types of research that should get priority attention in the area of community corrections. This list of priorities will be sent to Travis by NCCCA, along with an offer to stay involved by providing suggestions regarding the agenda for future research supported by the National Institute of Justice.

Those in attendance at this meeting collaboratively developed some "key messages" for media presentations. Those messages are as follows:

Public policy that balances punishment, prevention, and treatment controls and reduces crime and conserves scarce tax dollars.

Community corrections provides for the restoration of victim, community, and the offender.

Community corrections makes communities safer through a graduated continuum of sanctions and programs.

On another matter, NAPE has taken the lead on the Executive Track for APPA '96. We have submitted a slate of four workshops, focusing on such topics as leadership, liability, and performance-based management, with most of the faculty drawn from the ranks of NAPE members.

Recently in Boston I met with Tim Flanagan, Dean of the College of Criminal Justice at Sam Houston State University, to begin the work of designing a joint effort in the area of executive education for probation leaders. We are both confident about the feasibility of this important project and we aid to present a "business plan" to the NAPE Board of Directors in Chicago. We will be looking to develop training programs and retreat/seminars for both new and experienced probation executives.

We received correspondence from George Keiser, Chief of the Community Corrections Division of the National Institute of Corrections, in which he was particularly laudatory of the last issue of *Executive Exchange*. The text of his letter may be found elsewhere in this issue of *Executive Exchange*. We are grateful for his kind comments.

Finally, we extend our thanks to NAPE Vice-President Dave Savage and his contributors for submitting the material for this edition of *Executive Exchange*.

Ronald P. Corbett, Jr., Ph. D.

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FROM THE GUEST EDITOR

Probation executives are faced with the challenge of providing professional and meaningful services to courts and supervision to offenders in a balanced manner, all while being sensitive to community concern about crime. It is equally important to be aware of and consider victim issues in meeting these responsibilities.

This edition of the *Executive Exchange* is dedicated to our responsibility in dealing with victim issues while providing sound probation programs. Each of the contributors to this edition share a perspective or program that is worth our time to consider.

Representative Ida Ballasiotes is a member of the Washington State House of Representatives and the Chair of the House Corrections Committee. She and her family have been victims of violent crime, which has led her to make a significant effort and contribution to the criminal justice system within the State of Washington. She offers her perspective both as a victim and as a critical policy maker.

Anne Seymour is a public safety and victimology consultant specializing in corrections based victim services. She is a past director of communications for the National Victim Center and provides a national perspective to victim issues.

Bill Stutz is a Community Corrections Manager for the Washington State Department of Corrections. In that role he manages the department's victim programs. His article describes the Washington Victim/Witness Notification Program.

Craig Donaldson is a past president of the Washington Coalition for Crime Victim Advocates and currently supervises the Pre-Prosecution Diversion Unit and Victim Witness Assistance Unit in the Snohomish County, Washington, Prosecuting Attorney's Office. His article describes the types of victim advocacy programs that exist in many Washington counties.

Richard Lasater is a Community Corrections Officer for the Washington State Department of Corrections in Spokane. In this capacity he operates a Victim Awareness Education Program which his article describes. He is one of many Community Corrections Officers in the State of Washington who provides a Victim Awareness Education Program to offenders that is highly popular with offenders, victims, the criminal justice system, and the community.

Each of the perspectives offered in these articles remind us of our responsibilities to be aware of victims, their needs, and how they can appropriately influence the operation of a successful probation program.

Dave Savage, Director
Division of Community Corrections
State of Washington

INFORMATION ABOUT
EXECUTIVE EXCHANGE

Executive Exchange, the quarterly journal of the National Association of Probation Executives (NAPE), publishes articles, reports, book reviews, commentaries, and news items of interest to community corrections administrators. In keeping with the ethical standards of NAPE, the contents of articles or other materials contained in *Executive Exchange* do not reflect the endorsements, official attitudes, or positions of the Association and the Criminal Justice Center at Sam Houston State University unless so stated.

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Submissions for publication consideration should be typed on 8 1/2 by 11 inch paper, double-spaced, with at least one inch margins. Manuscripts should be submitted in duplicate. Persons submitting articles, commentaries, or book reviews should enclose a brief biographical sketch or resume and a black and white photograph for possible inclusion. Manuscripts exceeding one page in length should be submitted on a computer diskette, with the software used indicated.

Specific questions concerning *Executive Exchange* should be directed to Dan Richard Beto at (409) 294-1675. Facsimiles may be sent to (409) 294-1671. All correspondence regarding *Executive Exchange* should be sent to the following:

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FROM A VICTIM'S PERSPECTIVE

by
Representative Ida Ballasiotes
Chair, House Corrections Committee
Washington House of Representatives

Many people do not know that in a typical year more than eight million serious crimes are committed in the United States. These crimes leave anguished victims who are faced with continuing their struggle in a legal environment that often pays more attention to their perpetrator than it does to them. I know, because my family and I are victims of a violent crime that changed our lives forever. I became a strong advocate for victims' rights which eventually led me to seeking and winning a seat in the Washington House of Representatives in 1992.

I applaud states that have passed laws giving victims broad rights to participate in cases against their assailants. Many of these states have established notification rights for victims and witnesses regarding the escape, release or transfer of an offender, and have toughened penalties for those who threaten victims. In many instances, criminals are prevented from selling their stories to reap financial benefits. But by no means is this enough. Much more needs to be done in the arena of victims' rights, to include victims' issues as an integral part of the system.

As probation executives, you are in a unique position to ensure that victims' issues receive a high degree of attention. Through your position, you have the opportunity to help make our criminal justice system more effective as it relates to victims. Here are some suggestions to help you implement ways to strengthen victims' rights and our country's criminal justice system.

First, you could provide important help by influencing the conditions imposed on an offender to ensure there is a link between the sentence and the crime for which he or she was convicted. This would help to hold the offender accountable in a way that has meaning to the offender, to the victim, and to the community impacted by that criminal's behavior.

For example, an offender convicted of arson for burning down a church should be ordered, as a condition of their sentence, to help rebuild the church. This tailored condition would relate directly to the crime the offender committed and would be a step toward holding him or her accountable for making reparations to the community.

Across the nation, more judges are ordering offenders to pay restitution to their victims. I encourage you to place strong emphasis on collection of this debt. Restitution does not necessarily have to take the form of money. It can be achieved in many forms. With property crimes, restitution as we understand it is relatively simple. However, crimes against people are quite another matter.

Helping probation and parole officers recognize their role is not solely directed toward monitoring the offender's compliance with the conditions of his or her sentence. Their authority also extends to representing the interests of victims as well, whether it is an individual or the community as a whole.

If you have not already done so, develop programs to help offenders really understand the impact of their crime on victims. It is not enough to teach offenders life and employment

skills if they return to their communities with no respect for other people or their property. The State of Washington has already developed a Victim Awareness Education Program which is working to close the gap between criminal behavior and victimization. This program can also be modeled in other states.

Most victims want offenders held to a higher standard of conduct. I recently learned that offenders convicted in Washington are not automatically subject to the condition that they obey all laws. This as appalling to me. I have begun to work with our legislators to introduce a bill in the upcoming session requiring it to be an automatic condition that offenders obey all laws, or else face serious consequences.

As a victim and as a state representative, I believe we must continue to make the rights of victims as important as the rights of the offender. It's an outrage to victimize a person a second time by our failure to act.

History has shown that the needs of victims are often addressed in sporadic intervals. But it does not have to be this way. With your help, working together, we can make a difference so that victims will receive the attention they deserve and criminals will be held accountable for their actions.

PROBATION, PAROLE, AND VICTIM
SERVICES: PARTNERS IN JUSTICE

by
Anne Seymour
Public Safety and Victimology Consultant

Ten years ago in the United States services for crime victims and witnesses in community corrections were virtually nonexistent. Relations between victim service professionals and probation and parole officials were strained, due in large part to a mutual lack of understanding of each other's respective responsibilities and needs. Crime victims were not considered "stakeholders" in community corrections, and often found themselves in adversarial roles with the professionals charged with supervising offenders in the community.

A funny thing happened on the way to 1995. While victim service professionals had traditionally focused on the "front end" of the criminal justice system, specifically law enforcement and the courts, they began to understand the importance of community corrections in the criminal justice continuum. Similarly, probation and parole officials began to view victims as *clients* — citizens with a clear and convincing stake and interest in community corrections processes, policies, and outcomes.

This significant paradigm shift was due, in part, to public policy mandates that called for greater involvement of victims in community corrections, especially in the areas of notification, victim impact information, and restitution. However, this trend can be directly attributed to leadership at the national level by community corrections and victim service associations who searched for and found common ground.

Today, the American Correctional Association, American Probation and Parole Association, and Association of Paroling Authorities International all have long-standing victims committees. Together, these committees have formulated policies and training curricula related to improved rights and services for victims of crime within community corrections. Since 1989, the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) within the U. S. Department of Justice has sponsored major training and technical assistance efforts that have resulted in thousands of probation and parole officers receiving training in victim sensitivity, as well as the development of responsive services for victims and witnesses of crime. OVC continues to offer resources to community corrections administrators who seek to initiate or expand victim services.

Many community corrections administrators have embraced crime victim services as a component of their public safety initiatives. With 36 million Americans touched by crime each year, crime victims now comprise a majority of the "public" that is clamoring for safety in their homes and communities.

The challenge for community corrections administrators in 1995 is to promote victims' rights and services through the implementation of strong policies, programs, and partnerships with victim service programs.

Policies

Every mission or philosophy statement of every probation and parole agency in the United States should incorporate victims' rights and needs. Just as their charge to monitor offenders and promote public safety is clearly stated, so should their commitment to inform and involve victims be duly noted.

Additional policies and procedures that delineate how community corrections agencies respond to specific victims' rights and needs—including assessing the impact of the crime on victims, recommending appropriate restitution orders, notifying victims of offenders' status in compliance with the law, and clarifying how the agency will respond when a staff member is victimized by an offender under community supervision—must be developed. All agency personnel should also receive information and training on the implementation of such policies and procedures, utilizing the expertise of crime victims and service providers as advisors when possible.

Programs

More and more crime victims and their allies are joining forces with community corrections agencies to implement victim/offender programs. Among these innovative approaches to offender accountability and victim services are:

- The "Impact of Crime on Victims" classes, initiated by the California Youth Authority in 1986 and since replicated in over a dozen states, which feature a 40-hour educational curriculum to help offenders understand the devastating impact their criminal actions have on their victims, their communities, their families, and themselves. Crime victims and service providers participate as guest speakers in these classes, and help put a "human face" on the often anonymous victim. "Impact of Crime on Victims" classes have been successfully adapted by states such as Washington to probation, diversion, and even jail settings.

- Victim impact panels, originally implemented by Mothers Against Drunk Driving and Remove Intoxicated Drivers, consist of victims of a specific type of crime addressing offenders who have been convicted of the same crime. Preliminary research indicated that these panels are beneficial not *only* to the offenders, but *also* to the victims.

- Victim/offender mediation, utilized primarily for property crimes, brings together the victim of a crime, his or her offender, and a trained mediator to discuss not only the crime, but also appropriate remedies. Victims have the opportunity to receive answers to questions such as "Why did you choose *me* as your victim?"; offenders can make reparations through direct restitution and community service, apologize for their actions, and be held directly accountable to their victim. Victim/offender mediation *must* be totally voluntary for both participants, and mediators *must* be trained in the basic tenets of victimology.

It is important to note from an administrative perspective that each of these program models can be implemented at no or low cost to the corrections agency.

Partnerships

The progress made among victim service providers, probation personnel, and parole officials is a two-way street. Community corrections administrators should be aware of, and take advantage of, the myriad resources and expertise available from over 8,000 victim service organizations nationwide. Combined efforts to initiate and expand victim service/community corrections partnerships include, but are not limited to:

- The establishment of agency advisory boards that solicit and receive input from victim service providers regarding the development and implementation of policies and programs for victims and witnesses.
- Cross-training efforts — as a component of both orientation and continuing education for community corrections and victim service professionals — that increase mutual understanding of the two disciplines roles, responsibilities, and expectations.
- The development of strong agency policies that clarify victims' roles as stakeholders in probation and parole.
- Implementing joint efforts to generate greatly needed public awareness about victims' rights and services in community corrections, focusing on a unique public safety partnership that contributes to offender accountability, increased victim satisfaction, *and* safer communities.

Through the adoption of policies that are inclusive, the development of programs that are meaningful, and through the creation of partnerships that are service driven, may the criminal justice system appropriately respond to the needs of crime victims.

National Toll-free Numbers for Information and Referrals on Victims' Rights and Services and Criminal Justice Issues

- Childhelp USA/Forrester National Child Abuse Hotline (800) 4A-CHILD
- The Family Violence Prevention Fund (800) 313-1310
- Justice Statistics Clearinghouse (800) 732-3277
- Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse (800) 638-8736
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving (800) 438-MADD
- National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (800) 843-5678
- National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (800) 729-6686
- National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect (800) 394-3366
- National Criminal Justice Reference Service (800) 851-3420
- National Resource Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (800) 227-5242
- National Resource Center on Child Sexual Assault (800) 542-7006
- National Resource Center on Domestic Violence (800) 537-2238
- National Victim Center (800) FYI-CALL
- National Victim Resource Center (800) 627-6872
- Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (800) 656-4673

Provided as a public service by the Victims' Assistance Legal Organization

THE VICTIM EXPERIENCE:
THE RIGHT TO KNOW

by
Bill Stutz, Manager
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Those who have never personally experienced criminal victimization can never fully understand the painful reality and consequences of crime. The victim experience creates an empathetic bond among those who suffer from crime and its aftermath.

For most, crime enters consciousness through media reports of violence in newspaper and on radio and television newscasts. One hears about crime stories through neighborhood chatter and social conversations. Those who work with victims learn about the personal tragedies. Most people are unaware that one out of four American families is touched by crime each year. Millions of victims nationwide are in need of special services and programs to help them cope with their personal tragedies. Although the person who has never been victimized can never fully understand, we can learn enough to make a difference in the life of the victim.

The most crucial aspect of the victim experience is acknowledging the randomness and senselessness of crime.

Victims are totally unprepared for some of the potential devastating problems they must face. The underlying questions for victims is "Why?" Trying to make sense of the chaotic work of criminal victimization is an arduous task for victims and the rest of us who serve the system. For many, such an overpowering and far reaching dilemma is easily ignored. "Leave it alone and it won't touch you" has generally been the way many have responded, especially to things that we do not understand. But it won't go away — crime affects everyone in some way. We owe it to ourselves, and those injured by crime, to look forward at this issue and learn how we can be more effective in helping those impacted.

Many correctional professionals are defensive, or at least wary, about making the system accessible to victims and victims' rights groups. Some seem to worry - understandably — that victims and their representative will attempt to gain control over decision-making and make administrator's already difficult job impossible. "Victims are not what we in corrections are all about!" explained one administrator. "Corrections should not be in the role of being a victim advocate, as it is a conflict of interest. The offenders under our supervision and custody should be our focus and besides, what can we do for the victim?" However, when we speak to victims about their expectations, their first response is they want "accountability" from the system. Is it not the same thing that we as correctional professionals strive for — offender accountability? Where then is the conflict of interest?

In my experience in working with crime victims, there are four basic things they want from the system and, therefore, from those of us working for the system.

First, they want the feeling of safety and security. Victims want to feel that the system, of which they have become a very important part, is protecting them and is concerned for their safety in the decisions that are made.

Secondly, they want an opportunity for ventilation and to be validated for their feelings. Many victims experience a tremendous amount of self-blame, as reflected by statements such as "If only I would have..." or "I shouldn't have..." I worked with one mother whose children were physically assaulted by her estranged husband. She and her children were sitting in the living room watching television one evening. She got up and went into the kitchen to get a cup of tea at about the time her estranged husband broke down the front door. An argument ensued which turned physical with the husband throwing the first blow. Experiencing what was going on between their mother and father, the children tried to break up the fight. During the altercation, the children were assaulted. The mother's response was "If only I hadn't gotten up and gone to the kitchen for a cup of tea, my children would have been protected."

Thirdly, victims want to predict and prepare for the outcome. Many want an opportunity to reorganize their lives and to work on preparing themselves for the changes that victimization brings about.

Finally, they want to be informed and educated. The good news is that of the expectations victims have of us as representatives of the system, accurate and timely information encompasses all of them. Information is power and it offers victims a sense of control. If we recognize that crime is senseless and random, it is no wonder that victims lose a sense of control when hit by crime. Truthful information assists victims regain some of the control they have lost as a result of the criminal act.

Setting up a notification program which provides for information is simple and rewarding. Creating a channel for the exchange of information is not only good for the victim, it can be enlightening for correctional professionals and offer excellent public relations and public policy as well. Notifying crime victims of the status of the offender as the offender moves through the system toward eventual release, offers the victim a feeling of safety and security. It provides them an opportunity for input, and helps them to prepare their lives for the offender's release.

Washington was the first state in the United States to establish a notification program, which has become an integral part of the practices of the Department of Corrections, which administers the program. With the establishment of legislation in 1983 which supports the rights of victims and witnesses to be informed, we set out not only to address legislative mandates, but to recognize and be responsive to the needs of victims and witnesses. Helping those impacted by crime is a good public relations opportunity for correctional agencies. Considering how often we get blamed for almost everything wrong with the criminal justice system, it is an opportunity we should not pass up. But the most important reason to deal positively with victims and their representatives is simply... *it is the right thing to do!* Victims deserve the sensitivity and

attention that a good notification program can provide. It isn't enough to say that the legal responsibility to victims has been fulfilled. We should never stop including victims in policy decisions and practices and work toward a real partnership with them.

When we first started our notification program in 1983, very little was known about the plight of victims. Up to this point, they were considered evidence used by the system to get a conviction, and certainly the words — "victims" and "corrections" — were not spoken in the same sentence. With the onset of the notification program the mistrust that existed between corrections and victims started to diminish. What started to emerge was an understanding from the victim's perspective of what corrections was all about, as well as an understanding of victim issues from the Department's point of view. In the twelve years the program has been operational, this understanding between the Department of Corrections and the "victim community" has only been enhanced and built upon. It hasn't been without some struggles, but the benefits have certainly overshadowed any of the growing pains we have experienced. Today the Washington Department of Corrections is serving over 10,000 victims and witnesses enrolled in the notification program. This isn't even addressing the number of citizens of the State that use our toll-free telephone number into the Victim/Witness Unit to obtain information, sometimes to inquire about the way the criminal justice system works. This is truly a service provided to everyone. An effective notification system provides the sense of protection many victims need, as it provides information which helps them in the reorganization of their lives in the aftermath of the crime.

The following are some comments received from some of the victims the Department's program served:

I would like to thank those involved in the Victim/Witness program for your efforts in making the state of Washington a safer place to live. I can only hope that our neighboring states can learn from your good example and strive to put criminals where they belong and keep them there.

Thank you so much for your efforts & diligence has not gone unnoticed.

...was sentenced to prison for hurting my son.stuck my son in scalding hot water. I am afraid for myself and my son for when he gets out of prison. I was told he told his sisters to leave me alone, I was his to deal with when he gets out. I would like to know when he is getting out of prison, or when he is up for parole so I can get myself and my son mentally prepared. Thank you.

Thank you for your letter updating us on the release of... It was exactly 2 years ago on April 18th that our daughter's life ended due to ...'s negligence.

We feel we have been very well informed and that the Victim/Witness program has been helpful.

We would like to know more about ...'s statement at ... hearing concerning the restitution of our costs. No amount of money will bring ... back to us or make our family forget the tragedy, but we feel this is part of the sentence and should not be forgotten. Any information you could give us concerning this matter would be greatly appreciated (sic). Thank you in advance for your help.

Thank you for keeping me informed about my husband. Following the assault on me by him, I wanted my life to end. Without your program and the information I have received, I could never have gotten up enough nerve to divorce him, which was the beginning of me rebuilding my life. Thank you for being there.

It is unfair to crime victims, and foolish for correctional agencies, to make a notification program a bureaucratic nightmare. Administrators must be willing to back up policies with training around victim sensitivity, consciousness raising, and good people. Publicizing the names and contact phone numbers of the individuals responsible in addressing victim concerns within the agency, has become a good referral source for victims and, at times, can offer agencies information and insights that only the victim can have. The process is a two way street! Best of all, our involvement with the victim community has been a rewarding experience and has truly built allies. No longer should corrections and victims be in adversary roles.

It has been said, "The way to win the battle is to make the enemy your friend." The establishment of an effective notification program which shares information is only one way which the bridges are built and enemies become friends.

VICTIM ADVOCATES AND COMMUNITY CORRECTIONS OFFICERS: ADVERSARIES OR COLLEAGUES?

by
Craig R. Donaldson
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Pre-Prosecution Diversion Unit and
Victim-Witness Assistance Unit
Office of the Prosecuting Attorney
Snohomish County, Washington

Coordination and cooperation between community corrections officers and victim advocates are never easy tasks. This is even more true when these professionals hold conflicting views about each others roles. Like any relationship, it takes work to maintain contact, communication and mutual respect between victim advocates and community corrections personnel. Snohomish County's experience is just one example of how this can work.

Victim advocacy in the Snohomish County Prosecutor's Office takes many forms. Advocates are assigned to the violent

Crimes Unit, the Special Assault Unit, the Juvenile Court Unit and the District Court Unit. In addition, a Restitution Investigator serves the entire felony section, and occasionally assists with District Court cases.

Advocates contact identified crime victims or family members following receipt of a criminal file, explain their role in the office, and offer to be a contact point for the victim as their case moves through the system. Initially, they may answer numerous questions about the process, the timing of events and the expectations the system has of the victim. Additionally, they may assess a crime victim's needs and offer to make referrals to services when necessary. Needs may range from financial assistance, shelter and safety issues to crisis counseling and long-term care. At times victims are so traumatized or disoriented by the crime that they find it difficult to solve what would normally be a simple problem like how to get to work in the morning when their car was disabled, what to say to their employer when requesting leave to deal with the criminal justice system or how to prioritize the list of things they need to do following a crime. Victim advocates help sort out these problems, always keeping in mind the need for the victim to assume as much control of their own life as they can handle. Advocates also assist with the completion and filing of crime victim compensation forms, and at times will handle follow-up questions either victims of the compensation program may have. A key role of our advocates is to assist victims with defense interviews. Often a defense attorney or their investigator will want to interview the victim to assess for themselves the strength of our case. Advocates help by being supportive to the victim, by setting out in advance what is to occur at the interview, and sometimes by calling a halt to the interview if the victim is too shaken to respond accurately.

As the case moves through court, advocates serve as liaison between deputy prosecutors carrying high case loads and victims who want to know what to expect next with their case. Advocates may intercede with prosecutors when they see that a victim cannot handle a given situation, or may argue for a victim's point of view about how a case should be handled. In turn, they may help a prosecutor explain why a case was declined, why a plea bargain was offered or why a case was charged differently from what the victim expected or wanted. When the case goes to court, an advocate may go with the victim as moral support or to answer questions. At times, the advocate may make comments or suggestions about trial strategies or points to strengthen to the prosecutor handling the case.

When a pre-sentence investigation is ordered, the advocate may explain that process to the victim and provide assistance in contacting the corrections officer writing that report if direct input about the impact the crime had on his or her life is desired. The advocate may assist in preparing for such a meeting or might even attend the meeting with the victim.

Finally, the advocate may assist the victim in filling out the Victim Impact Statement and getting it before the judge, or in preparing an oral presentation for the court. The victim may also need help to prepare restitution papers and documentation so the court can enter an order of restitution.

Advocates may assist victims even after a case is concluded and the sentence is being served. In the event an appeal is filed,

the advocate may help answer questions from the victim. When an offender is about to be released on furlough to a work release facility or from total confinement to community supervision, or if an offender escapes, the advocate may help locate or directly notify the victim. And when a case comes up for a parole or change of custody status, the advocate may contact, inform, and help prepare the victim for the hearing.

There are a number of points where victim advocates and corrections officers come into contact. The earliest may be when a pre-sentence report is ordered. Advocates may provide crime victims information about the Department of Corrections and about specific personnel they will deal with there. Advocates may also receive calls from the Department's staff needing help locating victims to interview, and may ask for an "introduction" by the advocate so the victim will agree to talk to the community corrections officer. In addition, advocates will almost certainly be explaining sentencing guidelines and practices to victims, including how determinant sentences are calculated, what good time is allowed and the circumstances under which it may be gained or lost, how the prison system operates (including institutional programming and what types of offenders are eligible for what types of services), how offenders are processed into and through the system and how release and escape notification works. Restitution is also a likely topic of discussion, and may include information on the responsibilities of the Department, alternate means to establish and collect restitution, how to contact a corrections officer when questions about the offender or the payment of restitution arise, and who else to call if there are complaints about how the case is being handled by the Department.

In order to be able to provide accurate information to crime victims, it is important for our advocates to have regular and positive professional contact with Department staff. We are fortunate in that regard, having a number of officers and administrators who are open to communicating with our office about operating policies and changes within the Department. Whether they meet in court at a sentencing, in a copy room over a criminal file or at staff or community meetings, our advocates and Department staff always seem to have issues to discuss and information to share. When laws change or court decisions are handed down that affect either of our operations, it is not long before the questions and answers begin to flow back and forth. When community policies or protocols are developed around victim or offender issues, advocates and officers participate in that process.

Two specific examples of this come to mind. During the early part of this decade the prosecutor's office spearheaded an effort to develop a set of community standards to serve as a guide to how sexual assault cases should be handled. The Department provided a senior community corrections officer to the workgroup, and in January of 1994 the group published *Snohomish County's Victim-Centered Protocols for Responding to Sexual Assault*. One of the fifteen chapters of this manual is devoted to corrections protocols. Since 1994, a training program called "Walk a Mile in the Hat I Wear" has been developed. This program cross-trains all professionals who work with sexual assault victims. Six training sessions have been held and more are planned. The Department has provided staff as trainers at each session.

A second example came from a State Supreme Court ruling on the setting of restitution. *State v. Krall* was a disaster for crime victims, holding that the law as written was an absolute guide to the timeliness of setting hearings, and that those conducted beyond sixty days were invalid. This hit sexual assault victims especially hard because it is often months, if not years, before a victim is able to start treatment, and final bills cannot be determined until a much later date. Fortunately, the legislature established a statutory fix for this problem, which of course always leads to other problems and a period of adjustment. Through discussions with the Department and some research and training by our office, it appears that we have made a successful adjustment to the new statute. It also became clear that Department staff felt there were some kinds of advice about restitution they could not give to crime victims, such as how to go about filing a small claims suit against an offender or even where a client lived (generally) so that a victim could file a claim on their own.

We are still working on solutions to those problems, but one potential solution will be the development of a brochure describing the various ways victims might seek restitution in addition to expecting the Department to collect what is court-ordered.

VICTIM AWARENESS IN ADULT COMMUNITY SUPERVISION

by
Richard Lasater
Community Corrections Officer
Washington Department of Corrections
Spokane, Washington

Twenty minutes into the first class of the Spokane Pilot Project in Victim Awareness, I was questioning my sanity and intelligence for getting involved. The resentment and hostility of my 17 students was thick enough to feel and smell. Thirty minutes later we almost skipped our first coffee and cigarette break, as these students, all convicted felons on community supervision in Spokane, Washington, challenged each other and the facilitator regarding correct answers to pre/post attitude test questions.

They were still resentful of spending three hours on a Monday night in class. Some remained hostile, but they were talking to each other and they were involved. They argued their opinions as to why it was true or false that "all crimes have victims" or "being a victim of a crime does not change peoples lives," as well as the answers to the other 58 questions of the 60 questions which focused on attitudes and beliefs.

The three-hour class did end. Time did not drag on, it ran out even though many students remained resentful of our use of their time. I couldn't sleep that night. Concerns about the anger and resistance frightened me. The energy of their emotional involvement excited me. One complaint was "Why didn't I get this class before I was in trouble?" I loved that complaint, one I have now heard many times.

This all began three years before when the Victim/Witness Notification Program Manager, Bill Stutz, was able to spearhead the initiation of Victim Awareness Education classes in selected prison and work release programs in Washington. The success of the program with incarcerated offenders triggered his curiosity about trying the Victim Awareness Education Program (VAEP) with offenders on community supervision.

Once Spokane was selected as the site for the pilot project, marketing began by meeting with representatives of the various agencies and organizations directly and indirectly involved with victim issues. The response of the 30 or so representatives was about 90% positive. The greatest concern was for the guest speakers, primarily victims of crimes, who would be the foundation of the VAEP. Would they be safe? Would they be emotionally re-victimized by the classroom of offenders. Would they be physically protected. Guest speakers addressing incarcerated offenders do not live in the community with the offenders as would the guest speakers addressing a classroom of students on community supervision.

This marketing continued with presentations and requests for support from the Superior Court Judges, Prosecutor's Office, Public Defender's Office, Spokane County Probation, and the entire staff of the Spokane Department of Community Corrections.

We received only tentative support. Both pessimists and optimists alike adopted a "wait and see" attitude. Many skeptics questioned the confidence of these few idealists, who believed they could plant the seeds of awareness and sensitivity in convicted felons. But the argument that community safety is best served when attitudes, and consequently behavior of offenders changes in a positive manner prevailed. VAEP was sold as one avenue to provide offenders with tools for positive change. VAEP also focused on the concerns and trauma of victims of crime and victim issues, an arena where our Agency has been working hard to improve.

Marketing efforts were comprehensive. For example, agency management decided all Department of Corrections staff working in the Spokane area should not only be informed about the pilot project, but also should experience VAEP first hand. To accomplish this, numerous informational sessions were presented, and a key VAEP classroom exercise called the "Domino Effect" was conducted at each and every session. This exercise is used early in the program to confront offender denial about the impact of crime on victims.

The Domino Effect exercise is part of a two-week orientation stage, and precedes the in-depth exploration of individual crimes around which the heart of VAEP is built. During this exercise, students divide into small groups of no more than two to four participants. Each group is assigned to a victim or co-victim role such as: "You are the father of an 11-year-old daughter killed by a drunk driver" or "You were beaten and raped by four strangers." I prefer to assign the rape-victim role to males, specifying this victim is a man who is raped by other men. Men unanimously hate this role, regardless of whether they are offenders, co-workers, community corrections officers, or college students.

In their assigned roles, participants discuss the impact of the identified offense in order to generate a list of the physical, emotional, and financial impacts this crime would have on

them and their lives. During the discussion period, participants almost always become emotionally involved. The intensity is raised even more, when each small group reports their feelings and findings to the class, with the requirement they make only "I" statements during their presentation, like "I felt used, hopeless, terrified, guilty, ashamed."

Despite the extent of our marketing efforts, and our great expectations, success of the program would have been beyond our reach without the active involvement of real crime victims. They are the most powerful ingredient of VAEP. While the classroom experiences provoke empathy, each offender has a well-developed denial belief system when it comes to their own crimes. Some believe they committed a "victimless crime," while others engage in elaborate lies, rationalizations and minimizations in order to remain emotionally detached enough to continue their criminal lifestyles. Only actual victims of violent crimes can bring into the classroom the immediacy necessary to overcome offender denial. Guest speakers are VAEP's most powerful tool for confronting offender denial. Guest victims need only tell offenders the truth about what actually happened to them, for the pain and damage of victimization to become real for the offenders. Once their denial has been confronted and overcome, VAEP facilitators have an opportunity to challenge and change the false beliefs and values which have previously permitted these offenders to commit crimes.

Developing a healthy pool of guest speakers is critical to VAEP's success. I was fortunate that Christi Hamilton, the VAEP facilitator at nearby Pine Lodge Pre-Release, had already broken the ice and begun to build a pool of effective guest speakers. She had already won the support of several victims agencies and support groups in Spokane, and they had been participating in VAEP at the institution for some time. However, the risk factors faced by a victim speaker in an institutional setting are quite different than the risks of contact with a group of offenders in the community where you live.

When guest speakers choose to risk speaking to a classroom of offenders, they do so for their own reasons. Many victims believe talking about the impact of their victimization helps them in their struggle to overcome the trauma. Others wish to share their experiences in hopes that victimizers, other victims, and the public in general, will learn and profit from their experience. Some are seeking some good that can come from the wrong they have endured. All victims want it known that victims of crime face immediate and long lasting damage and forced lifestyle changes as a result of crimes against them. Frequently, they suffer long after the offender is tried, convicted, sentenced, has served their sentence, and been released back into the community.

Almost all victims of crime agree that the victimization continues long after the crime is committed. For example, a rape victim is required to go over and over the events of the rape, reliving it for doctors, investigators, prosecutors, and juries. Too often they are made to feel like nothing but a piece of evidence. The lack of awareness and insensitivity to victims by professionals they have contact with is a form of revictimization.

The best guest speakers have received help in working through some of their fear and anger, and are not addressing the VAEP class to get even or to attack the offenders. They

must have the support and concern of the VAEP facilitator. An important part of facilitating a VAEP class is keeping the classroom safe for guests, facilitators, and students. The strongest most successful classroom impact in VAEP is through good guest speakers.

Next in effectiveness are good videos that stick to the victims' point of view and depict real victims rather than dramatizations. Other very effective tools that open a class, generate energy, trigger ideas and discussions, are class exercises and tests that generate questions, plant ideas, and invite class involvement. The quickest way to bring involvement to a screeching halt, however, is by lecturing or focussing on definitions and statistics.

In the week between my first and second class, I visited Christi for advice on how to deal with student hostility. She advised me to acknowledge the anger and resentment, allow it to be expressed, address it rather than confront it and use the offender's anger, frustration, and resentment to demonstrate the point of view of victims of crime and their anger, frustration, and resentment.

I also contacted Bill Stutz in Olympia who encouraged me, assured me, laughed with me, and laughed at me. Many such phone calls and meetings occurred over the next year. Thanks Bill.

In addition, I begged and bribed Jack Bradford, Spokane Corrections Mental Health Counselor, until he agreed to co-facilitate with me.

Class number two was a success. Once we worked through the "Domino Effect" exercise, our 17 offenders were involved, questioning, and had an investment in the class.

The role Jack and I play has continuously progressed from instructor to facilitator, and both offenders and guest speakers teach us something new every class. We facilitate with each other, facilitate with the guest speakers, watch the guest speakers teach awareness and sensitivity, and watch the offenders teach each other.

Facilitating with the guest speakers, even on a very subtle level, is one more way of giving security and support to the guest speakers and makes the classroom a safe environment for guests. We also have been informed by guest speakers that they frequently want and need to debrief with us after they have addressed the class. We attempt to spend time with them before and after they speak.

Once the two orientation classes are completed, we address specific crimes, with the focus always on the victims' point of view. In the pilot project we held a total of 12 classes, three hours each. This is too much for working people, so we have modified it to two-hour classes. We always devote at least one class to property crimes, robbery and assault, vehicular homicide, domestic violence, child abuse, rape, child sexual abuse, and homicide. Frequently, we spend two classes on child abuse, child sexual abuse or rape, depending on how ready the class is to move on. Some classes need more time to bring closure to a given topic. Allowing this closure to occur enhances the learning and helps keep the classroom a safe learning environment for students.

As facilitators, our expectation is that students attend all classes, be on time, work to keep an open mind, leave each class with a new or renewed thought, allow feelings, and have a better understanding of damage to victims. Jack and I apply

these rules to ourselves, as well as the class. These rules require us to show respect for each other and for guests. We keep these ground rules posted in the classroom at all times, and refer to them whenever necessary. They are simple rules, like "make 'I' statements," "be specific," "don't interrupt," "allow all opinions," "keep your offenses private," "use first names," and "no obscene language."

The use of first names and keeping offenses private assists in keeping the classroom a safe learning environment. Allowing all opinions creates confrontation and discussion; but as in group therapy, the students challenge each other's thinking errors quite effectively.

Allowing all opinions is a test of the facilitator. In the first few classes most of the offenders expect us to put them down or insult them if they say what they really think or feel. It is sometimes difficult for me to resist the urge to put on my community corrections officer's badge, and just tell students what they should think and how they should behave. Over time, however, I have learned to trust the group (class) and the learning process to correct wrong thinking far more effectively than I could myself.

We have conducted both "closed" and "open entry" classes. I prefer closed classes because of a very high trust level and group energy, a kind of "esprit de corps," that develops in the class when the group is together for the entire 12 weeks. Too, the honesty level in a closed group is greater. We have also learned a class size of 10 to 16 students creates a lot of energy, and still allows involvement of all the students.

We began to realize the impact of the VAEP classes when students in the class, whose offenses ranged from burglary to child molesting and rape, began asking permission to bring guests to class. We have had brothers, daughters, sons, spouses and friends attend class with the offenders, and have even graduated wives and girlfriends.

Some community corrections officers have referred over half of their caseloads to VAEP. Stacey Vandemark, who has now been trained to facilitate VAEP classes, found the offenders who completed VAEP were easier to supervise. They were more open to discuss their past crimes and behavior and less in denial. They were also more realistic about goals and planning.

Todd Wiggs, a lead officer in Spokane, also has a very high referral rate to VAEP. He feels, among other positive results, attendance of VAEP helps his clients grow beyond their own circumstances and take more personal responsibility for their actions, past and present.

A local polygrapher reported that VAEP graduates are easier to test and more clear about victim identification, victimizing, and victim issues. The two primary agencies in Spokane that work with sex offenders support the involvement of their clients in VAEP.

After having facilitated over ten VAEP classes in the past 18 months, I am a believer. Yes, I am convinced this works. Co-workers have suggested that I should videotape the classes, and that the supervising community corrections officers would be amazed to see what the offenders on their caseloads are really capable of. They are getting in touch with their feelings, they are challenging their belief systems, they are growing.

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

ROBINSON RESIGNS AS BOARD MEMBER

Long time member of the NAPE Board of Directors John J. Robinson recently resigned as the Central Region representative. In his letter of resignation to President Ronald P. Corbett, Robinson wrote:

During the past several years I have thoroughly enjoyed working with you on behalf of NAPE. I believe that the Association's work is extremely important and I have taken great pride in being a part of that work. Recently my professional and personal responsibilities have increased to a level that inhibits my ability to make a meaningful contribution to the Association. It is because of these responsibilities that I am submitting this resignation.

Robinson has been an ardent supporter of NAPE. He has worked tirelessly on membership recruitment and has played a key role in the direction the organization has taken. His counsel in the governance of the Association will be sorely missed.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE CENTER JOINS THE WORLD WIDE WEB

The Criminal Justice Center at Sam Houston State University has recently acquired a home page on the World Wide Web. The Center's address is <http://www.shsu.edu/cjcenter>.

Web browsers can access information about the Center's history and programs and post information on the feedback page. Also found at this address is information about the Correctional Management Institute of Texas, the Association's Secretariat, and the National Association of Probation Executives.

NEW MEMBERS

Since the Summer 1995 issue of *Executive Exchange* was published, five new members have joined the National Association of Probation Executives; they are listed below in alphabetical order:

Susan Lamberson Blackburn	Joseph Paesani
Director	Director
Somerset County Probation and Youth Services	Division of Probation and Parole
Somerset, Pennsylvania	Wilmington, Delaware
Eurial K. Jordan	Tedra L. Plane
Administrator	Assistant Chief
Division of Probation and Parole	Adult Supervision
Madison, Wisconsin	Administrative Office of the Courts
Robert E. Kelsey	State of New Jersey
Deputy Chief	Bridgewater, New Jersey
Bucks County Adult Probation and Parole Department	
Warminster, Pennsylvania	

We welcome these new community corrections executives to our organization and encourage their active participation.

LETTER FROM GEORGE KEISER

Executive Exchange recently received a letter from George M. Keiser, Chief of the Community Corrections Division of the National Institute of Corrections. The text of his letter is as follows:

December 6, 1995

Dan R. Beto, Director
Correctional Management Institute of Texas
Criminal Justice Center
Sam Houston State University
Huntsville, Texas 77341-2296

Dear Dan:

I received the packet of materials you forwarded recently. I have devoured the editions, highlighted what I knew was their significant content and circulated them to the Division staff.

For all the complaints of deterioration of professionalism in our business, many of these materials contradict that assertion. I'm extremely impressed with this issue of the *Executive Exchange*. The content is extremely valuable in terms of practical information that's provided, starting with Tim Flanagan's summary of the National Crime and Justice Survey. When would we have thought we would have seen such a thoughtful article on "collaborative sanctioning" written by a district attorney and appearing in a probation publication?

These things don't happen by accident and it requires energetic leadership to create achievable results. Certainly the recognition of Tamara Holden as Executive of the Year, the initiative of Ron Corbett to create a forum for Presidents of National Associations (reflections from the message from the President), and your own personal leadership to tie many of these individual loose ends together into a coherent context, says that professionalism is alive and well. More importantly, it's a professionalism born in doing the right things rather than merely doing things right.

We look forward to a long working experience with you and your colleagues.

Respectfully,

George M. Keiser, Chief
Community Corrections Division

We are extremely pleased with George's comments regarding the initiatives and deliverables of our Association.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PROBATION EXECUTIVES

Who We Are

Founded in 1981, the National Association of Probation Executives is a professional organization representing the chief executive officers of local, county and state probation agencies. NAPE is dedicated to enhancing the professionalism and effectiveness in the field of probation by creating a national network for probation executives, bringing about positive change in the field, and making available a pool of experts in probation management, program development, training and research.

What We Do

- Assist in and conduct training sessions, conferences and workshops on timely subjects unique to the needs of probation executives.
- Provide technical assistance to national, state and local governments, as well as private institutions, that are committed to improving probation practices.
- Analyze relevant research relating to probation programs nationwide and publish position papers on our findings.
- Assist in the development of standards, training and accreditation procedures for probation agencies.
- Educate the general public on problems in the field of probation and their potential solutions.

Why Join

The National Association of Probation Executives offers you the chance to help build a national voice and power base for the field of probation and serves as your link with other probation leaders. Join with us and make your voice heard.

Types of Membership

Regular: Regular members must be employed full-time in an executive capacity by a probation agency or association. They must have at least two levels of professional staff under their supervision or be defined as executives by the director or chief probation officer of the agency.

Organizational & Corporate: Organizational members are agencies, corporate or individual sponsors.

Honorary: Honorary memberships are conferred by a two-thirds vote of the NAPE Board of Directors in recognition of an outstanding contribution to the field of probation or for special or long-term meritorious service to NAPE.

Subscriber: Subscribers are individuals whose work is related to the practice of probation.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME _____ TITLE _____

AGENCY _____

ADDRESS _____

TELEPHONE # _____ FAX # _____ DATE OF APPLICATION _____

CHECK	Regular	☐	\$50 / 1 year
MEMBERSHIP		☐	\$95 / 2 years
DESIRED:		☐	\$140 / 3 years
	Organizational & Corporate	☐	\$500 / 1 year

Please make check payable to **THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PROBATION EXECUTIVES** and mail to:

NAPE Secretariat
ATTN: Christie Haney
Correctional Management Institute of Texas
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TAX # 58-1497263