



A MESSAGE FROM THE
OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 16, 2013

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**DJJ Honors Crime Victims during
National Crime Victims' Rights Week in April**

Atlanta, GA – “New Challenges and New Solutions” is the ‘2013-theme’ for National Crime Victims’ Rights Week across the state and across the country this April 21 through 27. “It’s an important opportunity for all us to pause and remember victims who have suffered as a result of crime,” said Commissioner Avery D. Niles of the Georgia Department of Juvenile Justice.

“Victim advocates from a task force of twelve state agencies we call our ‘Multi-Agency Victim Services Partnership’ are inviting crime victims everywhere to attend Georgia’s annual Victims’ Rights Week ceremony and Open House,” said Commissioner Niles.

The event is scheduled Tuesday, April 23rd at State Offices South, at Tift College in Forsyth. The ceremonies begin at 10:00AM in Roberts Chapel, followed by the Open House at noon.

This annual ceremony and event are held to honor crime victims and to increase public awareness about victims’ rights. Then from 12:00 to 4:00PM, the Open House is designed to allow victims and the public to learn more about important services offered by each participating state agency. DJJ Commissioner Niles said crime victims can meet with Department of Juvenile Justice leadership and staff.

“At DJJ we work 24-seven to maintain secure facilities for Georgia’s juvenile offenders – and to preserve public safety for Georgia citizens,” said the Commissioner. “As we hold Georgia’s most violent youth accountable for their actions, we can never lose sight of the victims of their crimes.”

Thousands of Georgia families are affected by crime every year. Crime victims in attendance will have opportunities to meet with leaders from all the sponsoring state agencies at the Open House and to receive information on many victim services:

(MORE MORE MORE)

(PAGE TWO)

- Learn how to submit Victim Impact Statements
- Register to receive notifications on offender's status
- Learn how to complete claims processing
- Receive current offender information, including inmate location and maximum release and parole dates.
- Learn how to navigate the Department of Corrections and State Board of Pardons and Paroles' websites

On April 23rd, the Georgia Office of Victim Services also conducts a "Victims Visitors' Day" in conjunction with the annual ceremony and Open House for the Department of Corrections and the State Board of Pardons and Paroles'. Each year, crime victims come to register for notifications about offender's status and to receive information about claims processing. Victims who want to meet with DOC and PAP agency staff to discuss offender information should contact the Department of Corrections and Parole Board's Office of Victim Services by calling 404-651-6668 or 1-800-593-9474.

The Department of Juvenile Justice will also have staff available to help educate crime victims about their rights and the juvenile justice process, and to provide information about referrals to community services.

"DJJ is responsible for rehabilitating young offenders," said Commissioner Niles. "But it's also our job to protect the victims of juvenile crime so they too can begin to rebuild their own lives. As victim advocates we recognize that about 50-percent of crimes go unreported so only a fraction of victims may get all the help they need. In Georgia, we'll continue to reach-out and afford victims the fairness, dignity and respect they deserve."

The Multi-Agency Victim Services Partnership: Administrative Office of the Courts, Commission on Family Violence, Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, Department of Corrections, **Department of Juvenile Justice**, Department of Public Safety, Georgia Bureau of Investigation, Governor's Office for Children and Families, Governor's Office of Highway Safety, State Board of Pardons and Paroles, and the Prosecuting Attorneys' Council of Georgia.



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