

**NATIONAL CRIME  
VICTIM LAW INSTITUTE**

## **Strategic Plan**

**APPROVED MARCH 25, 2015**

The Board of Directors of the National Crime Victim Law Institute (NCVLI) is pleased to issue this Strategic Plan as NCVLI embarks on its 15th year. The priorities established by this Plan are designed to strengthen the foundation of NCVLI, ensure its mission is furthered, and achieve its vision.

## I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

NCVLI was conceived in 1997 and established in 2000 as a national resource for crime victim lawyers, advocates, allied professionals, and victims to support the assertion and enforcement of victims' rights. United States Senators Jon Kyl, Diane Feinstein, Ron Wyden and Gordon Smith supported the first congressional appropriation to provide financial support to NCVLI. In 2003 NCVLI incorporated as a private nonprofit and it continues as the only national nonprofit focused on victim law (i.e., the body of law that covers the broad array of legal issues victims confront in the aftermath of victimization). As a legal research, education and advocacy organization, NCVLI works in all arenas of victim law (i.e., criminal, civil and administrative), with particular expertise in crime victims' rights enforcement in criminal cases.

## II. MISSION, PURPOSE, AND VALUES RE-AFFIRMED

### *Mission:*

NCVLI actively promotes balance and fairness in the justice system through crime victim centered legal advocacy, education and resource sharing.

### *Vision:*

NCVLI promotes a society in which:

- Every crime victim has comprehensive and meaningful legal rights and can access a knowledgeable attorney for representation;
- Every crime victim's attorney has access to education, training, and technical support from a community of experts;
- Everyone in the justice system is knowledgeable about and respects the legal rights of crime victims;
- Crime victims' rights are routinely enforced to facilitate meaningful participation in the justice system; and
- Every right of every crime victim is honored in every case.

### *Values:*

At the core of all of NCVLI's work is recognition that:

- Building a system that supports victims' rights requires participation of crime victims in achieving the mission; and
- Enhancing fairness and justice for victims requires a process of social change, which is built on a balanced approach of three efforts: legal advocacy, training & education and public policy.

### III. STRATEGIC DECISIONS

Throughout 2013 and 2014, as NCVLI's 15th year came on to the horizon, NCVLI undertook a strategic planning effort. This effort included review of NCVLI's existing Strategic Plan (originally adopted on May 20, 2007), executive summaries of progress on that plan, staff analysis of NCVLI's current position, and constitution of an Advisory Council to ensure partner voice in NCVLI's work. In addition, NCVLI engaged consultant Jon Ulsh to facilitate a Board strategic discussion at a June 2014 retreat. Ultimately, the Board re-affirmed NCVLI's mission, purpose and values, and articulated three areas for strategic decision-making. In fall 2014, Staff provided further input on the three focus areas. Based upon all available information, the Board reached the following decisions which will guide NCVLI's work in the coming years.

1. **Building capacity in the area of resource development is NCVLI's top organizational priority.** Because resource development is the single most critical factor for advancement of NCVLI's mission and plays directly into future sustainability of the organization and its ability to secure an improved justice system, building capacity in this area is critical.
2. **A fundamental value of NCVLI's Board is individual board member engagement with organizational development efforts.** 100% Board participation in efforts to create a stable financial foundation for NCVLI is critical to advancing victims' rights.
3. **A strategy of predominately indirect victims' rights work in the form of amicus curiae participation, legal technical assistance (i.e., research, writing, strategic case advice), trainings, and public policy advancement through model laws, complemented by select moments of direct legal representation of victims and public policy advocacy continues to be the optimal approach to advancing victims' rights.** While building the field's capacity to effectively and consistently protect and advance victims' rights can be achieved through indirect victims' rights work, at times strategic advancement of mission requires direct legal representation of victims and/or direct public policy efforts. Analysis of when to engage in direct work is a determination made on an issue-by-issue or case-by-case basis with an eye toward strategic mission advancement and judicious use of resources.
4. **A strategy focused predominately on filling the gap in victim services regarding rights enforcement in criminal cases, complemented by work protecting victims' rights in other arenas (i.e., civil and administrative), continues to be the optimal approach to advancing victims' rights.** While the field continues to have a significant gap in victims' rights work in criminal cases that NCVLI is uniquely positioned to fill, at times strategic advancement of mission requires focused work in the civil and/or administrative arenas. Analysis of when to engage in this work is a determination made on an issue-by-issue or case-by-case basis with an eye toward strategic mission advancement and judicious use of resources.

## IV. STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

### 1. Resource Development

- To secure organizational growth and stability, NCVLI's development work will prioritize capacity building efforts.
- Viability of NCVLI's Alliance of Victims' Rights Attorneys & Advocates (NAVRA), specifically its technological aspects (e.g., NAVRA website and online resource databases) is critical to building capacity and therefore securing funding for this work is a priority.
- Continued diversification of organizational funding will be achieved in four ways:
  - 1) Solicitation of diverse government funding, including state funding as appropriate.
  - 2) Increased earned revenue through NAVRA.
  - 3) Increased earned revenue through continuing legal education offerings (CLEs) both in conjunction with and independent of NAVRA.
  - 4) Increased earned revenue through referral agreements, when appropriate, and direct recovery of legal fees.

### 2. Board Commitment

- Board growth will include recruitment of individuals with fundraising capacity and expertise.
- Each Board Director will demonstrate an annual commitment to participation in organizational capacity building efforts, leveraging his/her unique capacities and talents.

### 3. Direct Victim Services Work

NCVLI's direct victim services work will continue to focus on discrete rights enforcement issues, integrating and leveraging law students as possible. Key areas of representation will include privacy, appeals of compensation denials, and criminal appellate cases that are likely to have significant impact. To ensure efficient use of NCVLI's resources, cases upon which such work is undertaken will generally be those referred to NCVLI by partners (e.g., prosecution-based victim-witness coordinators, other social service agencies).

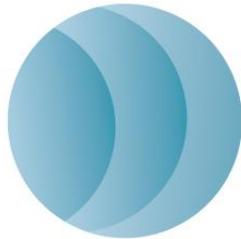
### 4. Work Across Systems

Fundamental to NCVLI's mission and vision is protecting victims' access to and meaningful participation in justice; thus, when these are at risk NCVLI acts properly to protect victims' rights whether such action is taken in criminal, civil or administrative processes. To ensure efficient use of NCVLI's resources, cases upon which work is undertaken in civil or administrative processes will be those that leverage or amplify NCVLI's rights enforcement work, including issues related to victim privacy, access to

justice (e.g., securing interpreters) and education (e.g., Title IX), and administrative compensation to ensure full financial recovery.

## V. CONCLUSION

The Board of NCVLI is pleased to share this strategic plan with partners, funders, and the many supporters interested in our work. We are excited about the future of NCVLI and victims' rights. We hope this plan provides insight into NCVLI's direction. Ongoing input from the community is invaluable. Please continue to let us know your thoughts and suggestions as together we move forward in this important work. You can reach us at:



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