



## **VIDEO CLOSED CAPTIONS FOR LIVE EVENT – SEPTEMBER 23, 2020**

### ***The Importance of Enforcing Victims' Rights***

#### **Meg Garvin, MA**

Victims' rights are a critical part of our criminal justice system. It's the invitation of the victim into the system. It is about making sure that the individual human being who was hurt, has a place in the criminal justice system and victims' rights, give them that place. It gives them an opportunity to say I'm here I get to be heard, and in fact, you have to listen to me. So, victims' rights are really the placeholder for survivor voice in criminal justice.

#### **Julie Hester, MBA**

If you go in with an enforcement mindset, that there is a proactive approach to rights. Not just oh, let's be responsive, but how can we proactively make sure that victims know about their rights, and that other people that interact with victims know about those rights. And that we are proactively making sure that victims are asserting them at a time that's of their choosing, and that they have some agency.

#### **Annie McKavett Smith, MA**

Enforcement matters because we can talk all day about laws and what the laws are. But if people aren't actually following through, and we aren't seeing any action being taken on the laws that are created, then it really doesn't matter. The laws are just words.

#### **Rebecca S.T. Khalil, JD**

You have an advocate and have an attorney who can help talk to you about your rights and what they are. And they can help you stop things if it looks like your rights are going to be violated. They can make sure those violations don't happen in the first place, or if something goes the way it shouldn't, they can help get you a remedy to make sure your rights are respected, even if it means having to redo part of the process to make sure it's done right.



**Siobhan McDonald**

Victim rights are vital because we can only say that justice has been served, if victims have had a voice in the process.

**Annie McKavett Smith, MA**

Enforcement is the teeth to the law, you know, and without enforcement, there's no purpose to what we do.

**Amy Liu, JD**

We see the need when we can't refer victims to attorneys and in some places. And we see the need because we work with attorneys and advocates throughout the country. There's such a shortage of attorneys who can represent crime victims', that every single day we see the need.



***Anna Canzano, Event MC***

Hello and welcome to the National Crime Victim Law Institute's sixth annual Voices For Justice celebration. I'm Anna Canzano, I am your MC this evening for this virtual event and it's such an honor to be here with you to support the work of the National Crime Victim Law Institute. Together we are really writing the next chapter of rights for victims.

Thank you for being here to celebrate the strength of survivors and everyone who fights so hard to create a space for their voices within the justice system. This evening certainly wouldn't be possible without our sponsors who underwrite the cost of Voices for Justice so that every dollar raised tonight can go directly toward programs that advocate for victims' rights. We would like to warmly thank those sponsors right now beginning with our champion sponsor Sean J. Riddell, P.C. Our guardian sponsors the Arizona Voice for Crime Victims, Carol L Hepburn, James R. Marsh, the Law Office of Josh Lamborn, P.C, a and Pickett Dummigan McCall, LLC. Also, our partner sponsors and certified languages International, Eris Conflict Resolution, Pfau Cochran Vertetis Amala Attorneys at Law, thank you to everyone who has contributed to making this event possible.

This evening you'll have the pleasure of hearing from several guests as well as NCVLI's own Executive Director, Meg Garvin. We're honored to be joined this evening by Voices For Justice keynote Reema Zaman. She is an award-winning writer, critical speaker, critically acclaimed memoir, author and actress. She has authored the memoir, *I am yours*. Reema's work has appeared in Vogue, Ms. Magazine, The Guardian, Salon and other leading outlets.

And she was the 2018 Oregon Literary Arts Writer of Color Fellow. She is known for her spellbinding performance with exceptional presence, and she is currently partnering with the International Rescue Committee and Girls Inc. to serve crucial causes and empower the next generation of leaders. Reema is credited with coining the term of immigrant abuse it has joined forces with the nation's leading advocacy organizations to advocate for change in politics that impact immigrants and survivors of abuse. Later we will also hear from NCVLI Board President Jennifer Storm, who is herself an award winning victims' rights expert and current victim advocate for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. For now, please join me in welcoming back Meg Garvin.



***Reema Zaman, Keynote Speaker***

Thank you, Meg for that wonderful introduction and thank you everyone for tuning in tonight to celebrate 20 years of NCVLI's extraordinary work, service, activism and advocacy. My name is Reema Zaman, and it is my profound honor to speak with you this evening. NCVLI's work is very close to my heart. As some of you may know, those who have read my memoir, 13 years ago when I was 23 years old, I was raped. I was living by myself in New York City. I just graduated from college, and after the assault I remember sitting in the dark for 20 minutes in my bedroom by myself, listing my options and weighing the cost of each potential choice. I tried to measure which direction I should take. And in the end, I made the cold, hard conclusion that I didn't have the adequate financial resource or emotional support system to make pressing charges against the man who raped me an amenable choice, much less a successful path.

So, I decided two things. One, I decided that I would get up, wash my face, take a shower, and go to sleep. And the next morning wake up and go to work and pursue my process of healing on my own, without telling a living soul. And two, the other thing I decided was that, although I would not tell anyone, or ask for help, I would use the experience as fuel and fodder to commit my life to a vocational service and career, that is focused on empowering and helping other survivors to heal.

So that is what I did. And I didn't break my silence until seven years later when I published a memoir. And I want to tell you a few things. One, had I known that NCVLI and other resources like you existed, that advocates and allies like you existed, I would have made a different choice. And two, because of your tireless commitment to empowering survivors like myself, you have played a critical role in changing the cultural, political, and social landscape surrounding the narrative about survivors, about assault, about rape, about abuse. Which means that because of your work, you have made it that much more possible and supportive for survivors like myself to speak out and break their silence and pursue justice today.

The world has changed a great deal from 13 years ago, and it is because of you. The thing about assault or abuse or trauma of any kind, is that it settles into the body as a threefold wound. And to truly heal, the survivor needs to address all three parts of that wound. The three parts are: 1) voice lessness; 2) insignificance; and 3) a profound sense of loneliness. And through your work as allies, as well as activists, advocates, and lawyers, you help survivors address all three parts of that wound. One, by surrounding them with community and support, you help them restore their narrative and have claim



over their own voice. So already you are doing so much to help that feeling of voice lessness. Two, by being a network and robust support system, you are helping to alleviate that wound of loneliness. And three, by helping a survivor restore their sense of agency, dignity, and identity, and personhood in this world. You help restore their feeling of human worthiness, value, and, significance. So again, I thank you.

I would like to share with you a rubric I use during the workshops and presentations I hold for survivors, family, and supporters, and allies. And I call it the LOVE method, L.O.V.E. Because one of the questions that I get asked most often by family and friends of survivors is, how do I figure out what's the best thing to say and not to say. I'm afraid of saying the wrong thing or doing the wrong thing. And so I developed the LOVE method. L: Listen. Remember, a profound trauma is felt through the voice lessness that comes through the assault. So, help a survivor restore their voice and reclaim their voice. Listen to them speak their story in their own language, without interrupting with language that you think is more soothing, or with choices you think they should make. There will be a time and place for positive affirmation and encouragement. But, remember to do that in a way that doesn't infringe on the survivor's voice, and the survivor's way of telling their narrative.

Two, O: O stands for ownership. Help them restore their claim over their own voice and personhood. Remember, a huge sense of agency is interrupted in the survivor's life when they are assaulted or abused. Help them regain ownership over their sense of personhood, help them feel their agency again so that they can make their own choices with confidence, peace of mind, to walk toward a life of joy, peace, and success. Do not use language that is victimizing or that affirms a sense of victimhood, pity, or shame. Remember to help a survivor feel greater ownership and confidence in their life.

The next one is V: venturing. And so, although it is tempting to pull the survivor toward the path of healing, venture in and meet them exactly where they are in their process. Perhaps they are wracked with grief, perhaps they are furious. Meet them where they are. If they are still in the deep waters of fury, wade out to them into the deep water and stand with them. Support them. If they're ready to release their anger and walk toward healing and peace, offer them a hand and walk out of the water with them.

Lastly, E: empower. Remember, power is the biggest thing that is taken away from the survivor and all forms of sexual violence isn't about sex, it's about power. So, use every privilege and power in your corner to help uplift, restore, and empower survivors, because that is the true meaning and purpose of power and privilege. Power and privilege misused is abuse. Power and privilege unused is complicity.



Power and privilege, used in service to empower and uplift others without power, that is love, advocacy, action, and justice in the embodied soul.

In closing, I would like to recall the legacy and wisdom of Ruth Bader Ginsburg. She has a wonderful quote that I'd like to quote which is, "dissents speak to a future age. It is not simply to say 'My colleagues are wrong, and I will do this, this way.' But, the greatest dissents do become court opinions and gradually over time their views become the dominant view. So that's the dissenter's hope: that they are writing not for today, but for tomorrow." The dissenter's hope, and I would add the advocate's hope, the lawyer's hope, the survivor's hope, the activist's hope, the ally's hope. That we are acting and speaking today to author, a better, kinder future.

Thank you so much for your generous support and contributions toward NCVLI's robust network of phenomenal activists, advocates, and lawyers. Thank you for being here. I hope, love, and peace, and health surrounds you and your family during these trying times, I think 2020 has proved more than ever that we human beings need each other. Your support and your donations are crucial.

Thank you for being part of this extraordinary legacy. Good night.





## ***Victim Legal Assistance Networks***

### **Bridgette Stumpf**

You cannot replace the value of learning from people that have come before us and have already done the work and the fact that NCVLI was so brilliantly able to bring all those components together for us, is a huge part of why our project I think has been so successful.

### **Mel Fisher**

NCVLI has done an amazing job of facilitating dialogue among all the networks and, you know, encouraging us to be innovative go forward and try harder.

### **Alexandra Smith**

One of the amazing things the NCVLI has really helped us as a network, is uplifting best practices for all of our network partners.

### **Stacy Phillips**

Without their guidance, without their technical assistance, without their vision, being able to network, teach all the different ideas, concepts, bringing everybody in together, it wouldn't be possible without them.

### **Kazi Houston**

Across states, across different systems, nationally, victim legal issues are addressed in a more holistic and meaningful way.

### **Jessica Alas**

I have picked up the phone to say my client needs an attorney in Alaska. Can you help? And they did.



**Ann Cofell**

NCVLI was there every time providing us with the support always providing us the help that we needed to succeed for our clients.

**Remla Parthasarathy**

We felt connected to community. Our success is not just New York success, its success of all the national networks, and the National Crime Victim Law Institute.

**Jennifer Storm, President of the Board of Directors for NCVLI**

Good evening. My name is Jennifer Storm and I have the privilege of serving as the President of the Board of Directors for the National Crime Victim Law Institute, and I want to welcome you to the 20th anniversary celebration – Voices for Justice. Thank you so much for being here with us tonight and taking time out of what we know is a confusing but very busy time in your lives.

I want to talk a little bit about why NCVLI is so important to me. I was a victim as a child, I was raped when I was 12 years old. Back then, we didn't have victim advocates, we really didn't have victims' rights. So, I was left very lost and confused to navigate a system that myself and my family did not understand. It wasn't until much, much, later in my life that I began to embark upon a career in victim services that I truly began to appreciate the importance of victim advocacy, but quite frankly, it was a couple years into my career that I met Meg Garvin. And that's when I really truly started to understand the importance of the value of victims' rights. I didn't realize that crime victims had rights by law. Most people don't unless they're unfortunately required to. And even then, a lot of victim advocates even don't fully appreciate how the rights work and how they should be applied and can be applied to a crime victim or survivor, to ensure that they have full participation in the criminal, juvenile, or civil justice processes.

I was hooked on NCVLI when I met Meg; her passion, her commitment her dedication for victims' rights, made me just want to do more. I began to learn more, I began to get engaged in NCVLI. It's really our job to help victims write the next chapter of what victim services and victims' rights are going to look like. At NCVLI, we provide free, confidential, legal assistance, guidance, technical assistance, and training to attorneys that are on the ground in every state in this nation, and also to victims and survivors who are in need of that guidance and support.

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As a victim advocate, NCVLI was a huge, huge resource for me. And there were so many times where I didn't have another attorney to turn to who truly understood victims' rights, but also how to get creative and innovative in applying those rights to make sure that victims' voices were heard. This is the beauty of NCVLI, it's also what makes NCVLI unique. I'm asking you tonight to please support NCVLI; donate if you can. I am going to make a financial commitment of \$500 tonight to this organization. We have an amazing online auction, please look at the online auction. Bid on items. But most importantly, get involved, get educated, create awareness, be a supporter of NCVLI. There's amazing training and technical resources that they offer you can learn all about us on the web. But once again, just thank you so much, and thank you to the staff and the board and everyone who has made these last 20 years so incredibly meaningful and successful. Now it's up to you. How are you going to write the next chapter for victims.

Thank you.



***Anna Canzano, Event MC***

Voices for Justice is an evening celebrating survivors of crimes and those who fight so hard for their rights. In the past Voices for Justice events, the Voice for Justice Award has recognized Oregon based attorneys, advocates, professionals, and organizations that have made outstanding contributions to ensure that our justice system does in fact honor victims' rights.

This year in honor of 20 years of victims' rights advocacy, NCVLI is celebrating our national community. The culmination of rights work and those involved in it. For every year the NCVLI has fought for the rights of victims, a community member or organization will be recognized in this dedication. We're also reminded through this celebration that no one person or group does this work alone.

Please join me in watching this presentation as NCVLI celebrates those who are nominated by you, from our community.



## ***NCVLI Is***

### **Josh Medina, JD**

If I had to describe NCVLI in one word, it would be empowering. Because we create resources to facilitate the work of legal professionals working with crime victims across the country. And the tools that we give them help to create space for their clients in their cases.

### **Rebecca S.T. Khalil, JD**

I would describe NCVLI, and everyone who works here as passionate and dedicated and smart.

### **Siobhan McDonald**

My word to describe NCVLI is affirmation because NCVLI does an incredible job of affirming that victims' rights matter, that victims matter, and that they do have a voice in the process, and that more of the country is going to be aware of that.

### **Meg Garvin, MA**

NCVLI is innovative, NCVLI is compassionate, and NCVLI is fearless.

### **Julie Hester, MBA**

Determined. We see a road, we see a path, we're determined to get down it, and to make sure that every victim along the way is there on that road with us. And that we're going to fight for every single one of them regardless of what roadblocks or obstacles get put in front of them.

### **Annie McKavett Smith, MA**

I would say NCVLI is the embodiment of resilience and passion and connection.

### **Amy Liu, JD**

Justice, service, and family.



**Ellen Dully, MBA**

NCVLI is powerful, NCVLI is engaged, is present, is listening, is advocating. NCVLI is standing up for victim's rights.