

**Arkansas Crime Victims Reparations**  
**2023 Annual Report**

# Survivor Voices

Elevate. Engage. Effect Change.



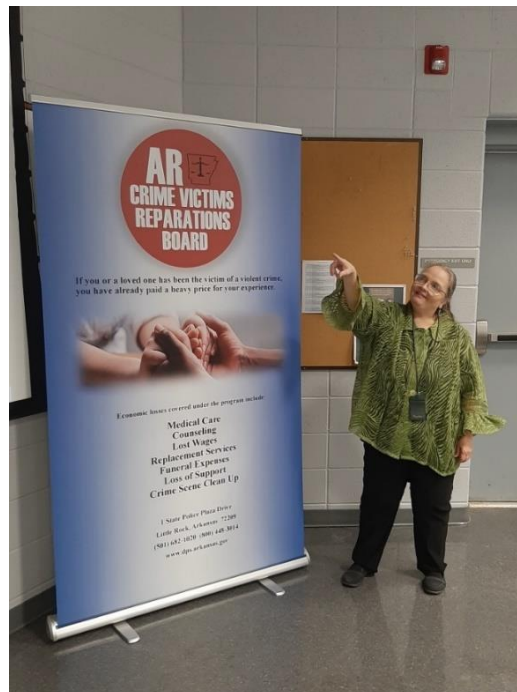
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## **MISSION**

*The Arkansas Crime Victims Reparations Board pledges to serve the needs of eligible victims of crime, and their dependents, who have suffered personal injury or death as the result of a violent crime. The Board and its staff recognize the special needs of those victimized by violent crime and accept the responsibility to provide financial assistance to victims who qualify under program guidelines. In this way, the Arkansas Crime Victims Reparations Board and staff are committed to restoring the lives that have been impacted by violence.*



## **GOALS**

*The goal of the Arkansas Crime Victims Reparations program is to provide compensation for victims' unexpected expenses, such as medical treatment, mental-health counseling, rehabilitation, lost wages, replacement services, and funeral expenses.*

# ARKANSAS CRIME VICTIMS REPARATIONS BOARD

## CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

As a spokesperson for the Arkansas Crime Victims Reparation Board (ACVRB), I thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the 2023 Annual Report. The report covers the activities of the ACVRB from January 1, 2023 through December 31, 2023. The Board and the team always seek to provide timely financial assistance to the citizens or the State of Arkansas, who have suffered personal injury or loss as a result of a violent crime.

This report outlines the ACVRB mission and goals, and identifies Board members and staff, provides a summary of claims received and awarded; and covers total compensation disbursed to Crime Victims and Sexual Assault Victims. Also, the report provides a county-by-county breakdown of the number of awarded claims and compensation received by citizens of each Arkansas county, and some examples of the types of financial assistance paid out by ACVRB and highlights special activities throughout the year.

The ACVRB is listed under the Arkansas Department of Public Safety (DPS), and we are appreciative for their continued leadership and support. We want to thank Colonel Mike Hagar, Director of DPS, Hugh Finkelstein, Chief of Staff, Jesi Feld, Assigned Attorney to ACVRB, Karen Perry, DPS Financial Officer, and Phillip Warriner, DPS Human Resource Administrator.

Starting in 1/1/2023, Mr. Steve Eggensperger was appointed as the Interim ACVRB Administrator. He worked to get approval for some part-time workers to assist ACVRB staff with working on a backlog of Sexual Assault claims.

On 7/3/2023, Ms. Lisette Yang was appointed ACVRB Administrator. During her tenure she has successfully requested and obtained promotions for two team members, trained staff on Child Abuse Mandate Reported, provided the team with Mental Health Vicarious Trauma training, began implementing cross training with all of the ACVRB team, held a meet and greet with the new ACVRB Members; and secured one extra person to help with SA claims backlog and to begin working with CV claims as well. Ms. Yang has also requested and received approval to hire an Administrative Specialist III that will provide needed help to the entire ACVRB team. Also, the ACVRB team provided program training in several counties across the state and completed 67 site visits, trained about 315 staff members, and distributed over 8,530 promotional materials. She and her team has successfully promoted the 2024 ACVRB Advocate of the Year nominations, and increased participation from 5 nominations to 23. At this time, they are working on funding so the Team can attend a National Conference and to redesign and purchase marketing materials to promote the program across the state. In addition, they are working on materials and victim applications so they can be available in Spanish in the near future. The ACVRB fiscal sources are from the following: VOCA Grant, General Revenue (State Funding), Court Fees, Administration Justice Funds and Damage Settlement Fees (Restitution).

Finally, the ACVRB is very honored to have a great competent and dedicated Team. They are Tonya Hooks, Melinda Perkins, Varnell Messer, Gary McGee, Michaela Thomas, and Karen Heer whom work very diligently to serve the citizens of Arkansas. Also, I would like to thank my fellow Board members Paula Steinsiek, Molly Shepard, Bilenda Harris-Ritter, Rebecca Petty, and Jordan Snowden for their tireless service and commitment to the Board and the citizens of the State of Arkansas.

If anyone has any questions about the information contained in this report, or about the operations of the ACVRB, please contact the Arkansas Crime Victims Reparations Board at 501-682-1020 or 501-682-1323.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Eugene Tyree". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Eugene Tyree, ACVRB Chairman

# ARKANSAS CRIME VICTIMS REPARATIONS BOARD



## **EUGENE TYREE**

Chairman  
North Little Rock

**The Arkansas Crime Victims Reparations Board** was created by the legislature in 1987 in order to help minimize the financial burden realized by victims of violent crime. Since its inception, the Board has disbursed millions of dollars to crime victims. Although this financial assistance did not erase the scars left by violent crime, it did help many people to rebuild their lives.

# ARKANSAS CRIME VICTIMS REPARATIONS BOARD



**MOLLY SHEPHERD**  
Member  
(January – September 2023)  
Attorney-at- Law



**PAULA STEINSIEK**  
Member  
Victim Advocate



**JORDAN SNOWDEN**  
Member  
(October 2023 – Current)  
Attorney at Law



**BILENDA HARRIS-RITTER**  
Member  
(October 2023 – Current)  
Attorney at Law



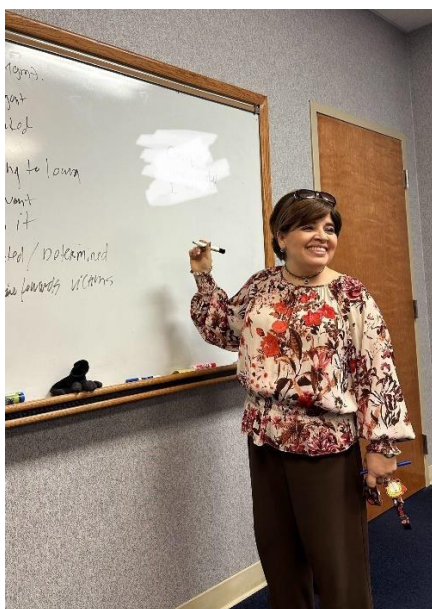
**REBECCA PETTY**  
Member  
(October 2023 – January 2024)  
Victim Advocate

# ARKANSAS CRIME VICTIMS REPARATIONS BOARD

## PAID AMOUNT

| <b>2023</b>           |                 |                |                       |
|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------------|
|                       | <b>Received</b> | <b>Awarded</b> | <b>Amount Paid</b>    |
| <b>Crime Victims</b>  | 691             | 235            | \$995,594.19          |
| <b>Sexual Assault</b> | 1,008           | 1,059          | \$819,715.75          |
| <b>Total Claims</b>   | <b>1699</b>     | <b>*1,294</b>  | <b>\$1,815,309.94</b> |

\*THE NUMBER OF CLAIMS PROCESSED INCLUDES CLAIMS RECEIVED FROM THE PREVIOUS CALENDAR YEAR-DUE TO THE TURNAROUND PROCESS.





# ARKANSAS CRIME VICTIMS REPARATIONS TEAM



**Steve Eggensperger**  
Administrator  
(January – May 2023)



**Lisette Yang**  
Administrator  
(July 2023 - Current)



**Tonya Hooks**  
Sr. Eligibility Specialist



**Melinda Perkins**  
Sr. Eligibility Specialist



**Varnell Messer**  
Sr. Eligibility Specialist



**Michaela Thomas**  
Eligibility Specialist



**Gary McGee**  
Eligibility Specialist



**Karen Heer**  
Fiscal Support Analyst

## **AWARDS BY COUNTY**

|                    | <b>Claims</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|--------------------|---------------|--------------|
| <b>Arkansas</b>    | 13            | \$23,856.47  |
| <b>Ashley</b>      | 3             | \$2,956.25   |
| <b>Baxter</b>      | 27            | \$22,396.20  |
| <b>Benton</b>      | 120           | \$96,763.92  |
| <b>Boone</b>       | 49            | \$42,157.55  |
| <b>Bradley</b>     | 6             | \$21,051.09  |
| <b>Calhoun</b>     | 4             | \$2,895.65   |
| <b>Carroll</b>     | 28            | \$22,981.49  |
| <b>Chicot</b>      | 1             | \$5,449.59   |
| <b>Clark</b>       | 3             | \$1,320.88   |
| <b>Clay</b>        | 6             | \$8,563.87   |
| <b>Cleburne</b>    | 16            | \$12,818.60  |
| <b>Cleveland</b>   | 4             | \$8,700.00   |
| <b>Columbia</b>    | 9             | \$6,040.37   |
| <b>Conway</b>      | 2             | \$1,858.00   |
| <b>Craighead</b>   | 36            | \$37,184.76  |
| <b>Crawford</b>    | 31            | \$16,454.32  |
| <b>Crittenden</b>  | 19            | \$81,802.11  |
| <b>Cross</b>       | 1             | \$154.52     |
| <b>Dallas</b>      | 1             | \$5,796.00   |
| <b>Desha</b>       | 11            | \$20,106.40  |
| <b>Drew</b>        | 4             | \$2,042.06   |
| <b>Faulkner</b>    | 19            | \$18,839.10  |
| <b>Franklin</b>    | 3             | \$1,998.85   |
| <b>Fulton</b>      | 11            | \$7,620.39   |
| <b>Garland</b>     | 43            | \$30,373.26  |
| <b>Grant</b>       | 0             | \$0          |
| <b>Greene</b>      | 10            | \$6,159.34   |
| <b>Hempstead</b>   | 4             | \$15,924.20  |
| <b>Hot Springs</b> | 6             | \$2,831.02   |

|                     | <b>Claims</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|---------------------|---------------|--------------|
| <b>Howard</b>       | 1             | \$650.00     |
| <b>Independence</b> | 21            | \$8,134.42   |
| <b>Izard</b>        | 6             | \$3,282.44   |
| <b>Jackson</b>      | 8             | \$4,687.25   |
| <b>Jefferson</b>    | 45            | \$143,136.07 |
| <b>Johnson</b>      | 3             | \$2,410.88   |
| <b>Lafayette</b>    | 2             | \$1,429.28   |
| <b>Lawrence</b>     | 3             | \$1,918.33   |
| <b>Lee</b>          | 1             | \$7,500.00   |
| <b>Lincoln</b>      | 5             | \$20,870.18  |
| <b>Little River</b> | 6             | \$2,254.40   |
| <b>Logan</b>        | 8             | \$15,589.93  |
| <b>Lonoke</b>       | 48            | \$31,122.80  |
| <b>Madison</b>      | 6             | \$4,758.05   |
| <b>Marion</b>       | 6             | \$5,100.21   |
| <b>Miller</b>       | 11            | \$22,820.82  |
| <b>Mississippi</b>  | 6             | \$10,257.40  |
| <b>Monroe</b>       | 3             | \$8,720.14   |
| <b>Montgomery</b>   | 1             | \$325.87     |
| <b>Nevada</b>       | 0             | \$0          |
| <b>Newton</b>       | 1             | \$892.87     |
| <b>Other State</b>  | 3             | \$1,767.14   |
| <b>Ouachita</b>     | 6             | \$8,122.15   |
| <b>Perry</b>        | 3             | \$16,055.35  |
| <b>Phillips</b>     | 7             | \$11,099.47  |
| <b>Pike</b>         | 5             | \$5,778.13   |
| <b>Poinsett</b>     | 5             | \$3,507.81   |
| <b>Polk</b>         | 2             | \$5,719.14   |
| <b>Pope</b>         | 7             | \$4,614.10   |
| <b>Prairie</b>      | 7             | \$6,325.89   |
| <b>Pulaski</b>      | 218           | \$408,828.84 |
| <b>Randolph</b>     | 3             | \$8,228.00   |
| <b>Saline</b>       | 13            | \$9,076.50   |

|                    | <b>Claims</b> | <b>Total</b>          |
|--------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Scott</b>       | 0             | \$0                   |
| <b>Searcy</b>      | 0             | \$0                   |
| <b>Sebastian</b>   | 74            | \$53,915.78           |
| <b>Sevier</b>      | 4             | \$2,125.80            |
| <b>Sharp</b>       | 18            | \$9,273.76            |
| <b>St. Francis</b> | 24            | \$109,924.55          |
| <b>Stone</b>       | 5             | \$6,794.61            |
| <b>Union</b>       | 17            | \$30,411.48           |
| <b>Van Buren</b>   | 1             | \$443.50              |
| <b>Washington</b>  | 120           | \$176,603.27          |
| <b>White</b>       | 54            | \$107,486.57          |
| <b>Woodruff</b>    | 2             | \$911.78              |
| <b>Yell</b>        | 1             | \$3275.00             |
| <b>TOTAL</b>       | <b>1277</b>   | <b>\$1,815,309.94</b> |





## VICTIM PAYOUTS

- An 18-year-old Chicot County man was shot in the face by one of his friends. This young man lived and the Crime Victims' Program was able to assist by maxing out the claim at \$25,000 towards medical expenses and lost wages.
- A 49-year-old Pulaski County woman was shot and killed by her boyfriend. The Crime Victim's Program was able to assist with funeral expenses.
- A 45-year-old Logan County woman was shot and killed by her son. The Crime Victims' Program was able to assist with funeral expenses.
- A 38-year-old Crittenden County woman was shot and killed by her boyfriend. The Crime Victims' Program was not only able to help with the funeral expenses but was also able to help with lost wages for 5 secondary victims related to her.
- An 8-month pregnant 19-year-old Cross County woman was shot by multiple suspects. The Crime Victims' Program was able to assist with lost wages.
- A 56-year-old Pike County woman located the deceased bodies of her son, daughter-in-law, and 23-month-old granddaughter. The Crime Victims' Program was able to assist with mileage and mental health expenses.
- A 37-year-old Bradley County man was shot in his left cheek while in a verbal altercation/argument. The Crime Victims' Program was able to max out his claim and assist with \$10,000 of lost wages.
- A tender-aged Garland County child was abused by his father and died as a result. The 33-year-old mother of the victim sought out counseling services and the Crime Victims' Program was able to assist with mental health expenses, funeral expenses, and medical expenses.
- A 16-year-old Craighead County girl was sexually assaulted by a coach at her high school. The Crime Victims' Program was able to assist with mental health counseling.
- A 41-year-old Perry County man was attempting to stop an intoxicated driver with a child passenger when he was struck by the vehicle. The Crime Victims' Program was able to max out his claim and assist with \$10,000 of lost wages.

# 2023 CRIME VICTIM RIGHTS WEEK



The Crime Victims' Team participated in many different events during Crime Victim Right's Week. Some of those events included:

**Crime Victim Right's Ceremony**  
*Our previous administrator, **Lynette Parham**, received the **Advocate of the Year Award** (above)*

Candlelight Vigil  
North Little Rock PD Event



# CVRB Team in Action!



In 2023, The Crime Victims Team traveled to Black River Technical College, Law Enforcement Academy (ALETA) and met with new recruits twice to give a presentation and handouts about CVRB the program.

# More Outreach



Throughout the course of the year, the Crime Victims Team traveled to different areas of the state of Arkansas to introduce themselves to the different agencies they work with daily. During 2023, the team visited over 65 agencies and spoke with over 250 staff/people. They also distributed CVRB marketing materials such as 2,105 brochures, 1,925 pocket cards, and 127 posters.



# Arkansas Crime Victim Reparations Board Training & Networking Event



Invites you to attend an in-person Training and Networking Event to better assist Victims of Crime in Arkansas

**Date: August 30, 2023**

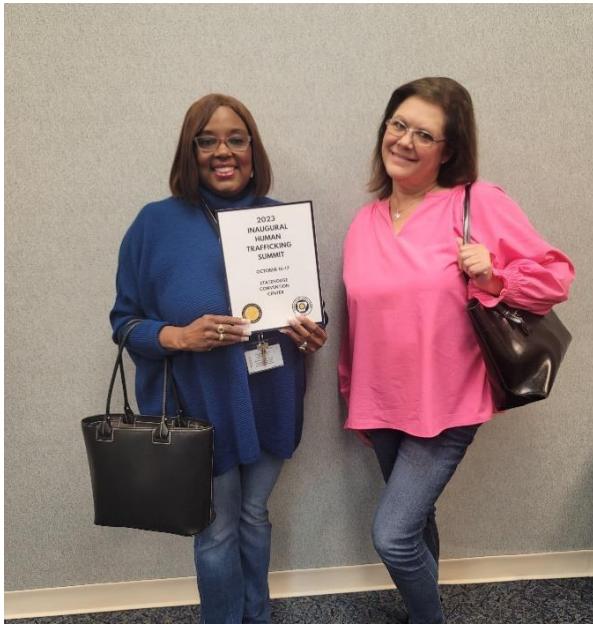
Session 1: Victim Advocates & Victim Services - 9:00-10:30

Session 2: Law Enforcement Officers -11:30-1:00

Session 3: Providers - 2:30-4:00



# 2023 Conferences



**Varnell Messer & Karen Heer** (top left), **Lisette Yang** (picture not captured), and **Tonya Hooks** (top right) with **Keynote Speaker, Jessika Svendgard** attended the 2023 Inaugural Human Trafficking Summit in Little Rock, Arkansas.



**Michaela Thomas** traveled to Chicago, IL to attend the 2023 National Joint Training Conference for VOCA Victim Assistance and Crime Victim Compensation



**OKLAHOMA CITY, OK**  
REGISTRATION IS OPEN

**SAVE THE DATE**  
APRIL 18-20, 2023

**Varnell Messer & Gary McGee** traveled to Oklahoma City, OK to attend the Victim Compensation Claim Specialist Academy