



Department of Justice



Office of Justice Programs

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Justice Department Honors Native American Shelter for Supporting Abused Women and Children

WASHINGTON—The Department of Justice will recognize Alecia “Lisa” Thompson-Heth with the National Crime Victim Service Award for her leadership in securing comprehensive services for abused Native American women and children, during the National Crime Victims’ Rights Service Awards ceremony Tuesday, April 21, in Washington, D.C.

Heth is the executive director for the Wiconi Wawokiya, Inc. (“Helping Families”) shelter on the Crow Creek Sioux Indian Reservation in central South Dakota, which provides safe housing and social services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and child abuse. She established a complex of facilities offering multidisciplinary victims services, including a battered women’s shelter, a site for forensic and physical interviews and exams for adult and child victims, and a computer center for crime victims to search for jobs and take classes online to help them relocate and restore their financial independence.

Heth also established Wiconi Wawokiya’s satellite shelter, Mita Maske Ti Ki, in Sioux Falls, S.D., which offers culturally sensitive services to Native Americans. The organization’s staff and volunteers donated their time to raise money for victims and raise awareness at the Annual Crow Creek Wacipi (powwow).

At the April 21 ceremony the Justice Department will also recognize 11 other individuals and programs for their outstanding efforts on behalf of crime victims. Descriptions of the honorees are available at the Office for Victims of Crime’s Gallery: <https://ovcnvrvw.ncjrs.gov/Awards/AwardGallery/gallerysearch.html>.

The Department’s Office for Victims of Crime leads communities across the country in observing National Crime Victims’ Rights Week and hosts an award ceremony each year. President Reagan proclaimed the first Victims’ Rights Week in 1981, calling for greater sensitivity to the rights and needs of victims. This year’s observance takes place April 19-25, with the theme *Engaging Communities. Empowering Victims*.

(More)

About the Office of Justice Programs (OJP)

The Office of Justice Programs (OJP), headed by Assistant Attorney General Karol V. Mason, provides federal leadership in developing the nation's capacity to prevent and control crime, administer justice and assist victims. OJP has six components: the Bureau of Justice Assistance; the Bureau of Justice Statistics; the National Institute of Justice; the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention; the Office for Victims of Crime and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering and Tracking. More information about OJP can be found at www.ojp.gov.

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