

Annual Report



ARKANSAS CRIME VICTIMS REPARATIONS BOARD

2024



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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.



GOAL

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.



COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

Greetings,

As Chair of the Arkansas Crime Victims Reparations Board, I have the opportunity to provide you with a brief overview of what the Board has accomplished over the past year. Our Board members include Eugene Tyree, Paula Steinsiek, Jordan Snowden, Laura Abbott and myself. We meet six times a year in person and include Appeal hearings in those meetings. We also meet by telephone conference during the intervening months to address cases and other issues that might arise.

It is the Board's statutory responsibility, along with the support of the staff, to provide financial assistance to those Arkansans who are victimized due to violent criminal behavior and/or sexual assault who come within our jurisdiction. The determination of who can receive benefits through our awards is found in our enabling statutes and rules.

Our fiscal sources are VOCA grants, Arkansas state funding from the General Revenue section of the Arkansas state budget, court fees, and Administration of Justice funds.

This annual report sets forth the Board Mission and Goals. It identifies Board members and our staff. Included is a summary of claims received and awarded and the total compensation awarded to crime victims and sexual assault victims. There is a county-by-county breakdown of the awarded claims and compensation dispensed. Examples of the types of compensation and financial assistance are included.

The CVRB Agency is part of the Department of Public Safety. The Department is led by Secretary of Public Safety Colonel Mike Haggard. During the past year he was assisted by Chief of Staff Hugh Finkelstein who was recently appointed as a Circuit Judge by Governor Sanders.

We are fortunate to have assistance from Department of Public Safety Chief Financial Officer Karen Perry, attorneys Tess Bradford, who is the Deputy Legal Counsel, Ryan Roach and Amanda Andrews and our own Board Counsel Julie Chavis, from the Office of the Arkansas Attorney General. This past year we have had the benefit of Joshua Baxter, a Hearing Officer assigned to oversee our Appeal Hearings.

Lisette Yang has served as our Administrator since 2023. She hires, trains (with the support of more experienced staff), evaluates and promotes a great team of investigators and administrative staff. She plans and coordinates program training by the board staff in several counties across the state on a by request or as needed.

During 2024, travel to other counties was difficult, due to staff changes and work schedules. However, some of last year's highlights include a successful completion by the Administrator to an OVC Audit and attendance to the National VOCA Conference for Administrators held in New Orleans, LA. In addition, two in-person meetings with survivors of the Fordyce Mass Shooting to provide application information, and participation and training staff at the Arkansas Department of Corrections Conference in Conway.

The CVRB office provided nearly 3000 printed materials to 75 different agencies and providers in our state. The CVRB staff includes Tonya Hooks, Melinda Perkins, Varnell Messer, Michaela Thomas, Antlesia Smith, Karen Heer, Danielle Shepherd, Ericka Henson, and Susan Beets.

The call for the 2024 CVRB Advocate of the Year nominations was incredibly successful. The Board reviewed 21 nominations and all members were impressed by the caliber of nominees. The Award went to a very deserving individual from a Child Advocacy Center in Northwest Arkansas.

If you would like more information on the work done by the Board and its staff or if you have any questions regarding information in this report, please contact our Administrator, Lisette Yang, at (501) 682-1020 or (501) 682-1323.

Sincerely,

Bilenda Harris-Ritter

Bilenda Harris-Ritter, Chair, Attorney-At-Law



ARKANSAS CRIME VICTIMS REPARATIONS BOARD



Bilenda Harris-Ritter
Chair
Attorney -At-Law

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.

BOARD MEMBERS



EUGENE TYREE
Victim Advocate



PAULA STEINSIEK
Victim Advocate



JORDAN SNOWDEN
Attorney-at-Law



LAURA ABBOTT
Victim Advocate



TOTAL CLAIMS PAID

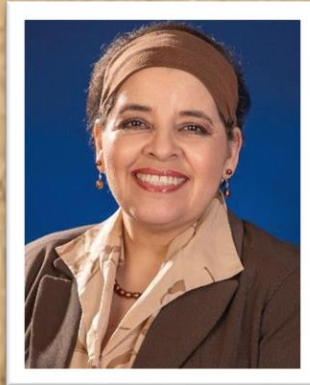


2024			
	Received	Awarded	Amount Paid
Crime Victims	542	398	\$874,904.88
Sexual Assault	1142	1240	\$787,684.21
Total Claims	1684	*1,638	\$1,662,589.09

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



CVRB TEAM



LISETTE YANG
Administrator



VARBELL MESSER
Sr. Eligibility Specialist



TONYA HOOKS
Sr. Eligibility Specialist



MELINDA PERKINS
Sr. Eligibility Specialist



MICHAELA THOMAS
Sr. Eligibility Specialist



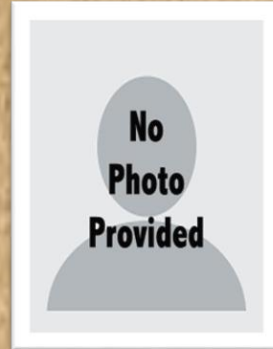
ANTELESIA SMITH
Eligibility Specialist



KAREN HEER
Fiscal Support Analyst III



GARY McGEE
Eligibility Specialist



PATRICIO JARA
Administrative Support



TIFFANY BOYLAND
Eligibility Specialist



DANIELLE SHEPHERD
Administrative Specialist III



ERICKA HENSON
Administrative Support



SUSAN BEETS
Administrative Support

AWARDS BY COUNTY

	Claims	Total
Arkansas	0	\$0.00
Ashley	7	\$0.00
Baxter	10	\$350.00
Benton	133	\$97,130.33
Boone	100	\$81,729.84
Bradley	0	\$0.00
Calhoun	0	\$0.00
Carroll	18	\$0.00
Chicot	2	\$0.00
Clark	123	\$93,180.34
Clay	0	\$0.00
Cleburne	1	\$0.00
Cleveland	0	\$0.00
Columbia	10	\$0.00
Conway	1	\$0.00
Craighead	124	\$91,224.57
Crawford	6	\$15,325.48
Crittenden	27	\$43,947.60
Cross	7	\$7618.34
Dallas	0	\$0.00
Desha	6	\$9,775.14
Drew	6	\$15,000.00
Faulkner	29	\$29,287.19
Franklin	2	\$0.00
Fulton	0	\$0.00
Garland	90	\$33,074.01
Grant	0	\$0
Greene	4	\$9,893.00
Hempstead	1	\$0.00
Hot Springs	4	\$6,397.15

	Claims	Total
Howard	2	\$327.79
Independence	35	\$16,819.11
Izard	3	\$0.00
Jackson	2	\$7,500.00
Jefferson	80	\$162,546.67
Johnson	1	\$0.00
Lafayette	1	\$0.00
Lawrence	0	\$0.00
Lee	3	\$7,500.00
Lincoln	3	\$7,500.00
Little River	5	\$7,500.00
Logan	0	\$0.00
Lonoke	25	\$28,071.97
Madison	3	\$0.00
Marion	0	\$0.00
Miller	41	\$58,427.92
Mississippi	2	\$7,500.00
Monroe	4	\$0.00
Montgomery	0	\$0.00
Nevada	0	\$0.00
Newton	0	\$0.00
Other State	2	\$0.00
Ouachita	5	\$10,000.00
Perry	1	\$0.00
Phillips	18	\$67,844.41
Pike	2	\$7,525.50
Poinsett	5	\$1,505.00
Polk	0	\$0.00
Pope	46	\$14,310.88
Prairie	0	\$0.00
Pulaski	226	\$380,652.15
Randolph	1	\$0.00
Saline	13	\$10,197.01

	Claims	Total
Scott	2	\$7,500.00
Searcy	0	\$0
Sebastian	89	\$78,502.26
Sevier	1	\$1,856.00
Sharp	1	\$10,000.00
St. Francis	10	\$11650.46
Stone	1	\$0.00
Union	52	\$34,782.13
Van Buren	4	\$0.00
Washington	149	\$111,786.64
White	88	\$76,750.40
Woodruff	0	\$0.00
Yell	1	\$0.00
TOTAL	1,638	\$1,662,589.09



CVRB - Dedicated to Crime Victims in our State!

VICTIM PAYOUTS

- A 27-year-old Sharp County woman was shot twice by her husband, who then turned and killed himself. This young woman lived and the Crime Victims' Program was able to assist by maxing out the claim at \$10,000 towards medical expenses and lost wages.
- A 39-year-old Pulaski County man was stabbed and sustained injuries to his neck. The Crime Victim's Program was able to assist with lost wages.
- A 37-year-old Saline County woman was shot and killed by her husband. The Crime Victims' Program was able to assist the family with crime scene cleanup.
- A 59-year-old Boone County woman set on fire and died as a result. The Crime Victims' Program was able to assist with the funeral expenses.
- A 25-year-old Crittenden County man sustained injuries to his mouth and face when he was shot by unknown suspects. The Crime Victims' Program was able to assist by maxing out the claim at \$10,000 towards lost wages.
- A tender-aged Garland County child was sexually assaulted. The Crime Victims' Program was able to assist the child's mother with lost wages.
- A 57-year-old Pope County woman was struck by a vehicle who then left the scene of the accident. The Crime Victims' Program was able to assist with medical expenses.
- A 40-year-old Pike County man was struck by a vehicle being driven by a drunk driver. The Crime Victims' Program was able to assist with funeral expenses.
- A 41-year-old Crawford County woman was shot and died as a result. The Crime Victims' Program was able to assist with funeral expenses.
- A 57-year-old Pulaski County woman sustained injuries to her arm and abdomen when she was shot. The Crime Victims' Program was able to assist with medical expenses and lost wages.

2024 CRIME VICTIM RIGHTS WEEK

The Crime Victim's Team participated in many different events during Crime Victims Rights Week. Including: Crime Victims Rights Week Opening Ceremony and the Candlelight Vigil North Little Rock Police Department Event

Support



Engage



Partner

Collaborate

CVRB Team in Action!



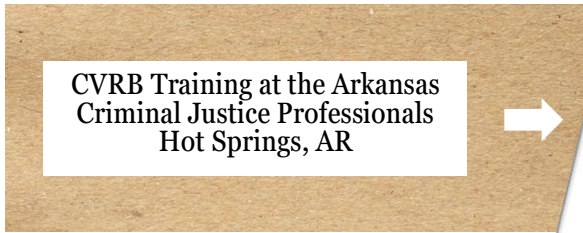
In 2024, The Crime Victims Team traveled to Black River Technical College, Law Enforcement Academy (ALETA) and met with new recruits twice to give a presentation and handouts about CVRB the program.



Outreach at a Glance!



CVRB Training at the Children's
Advocacy Alliance
Conway, AR



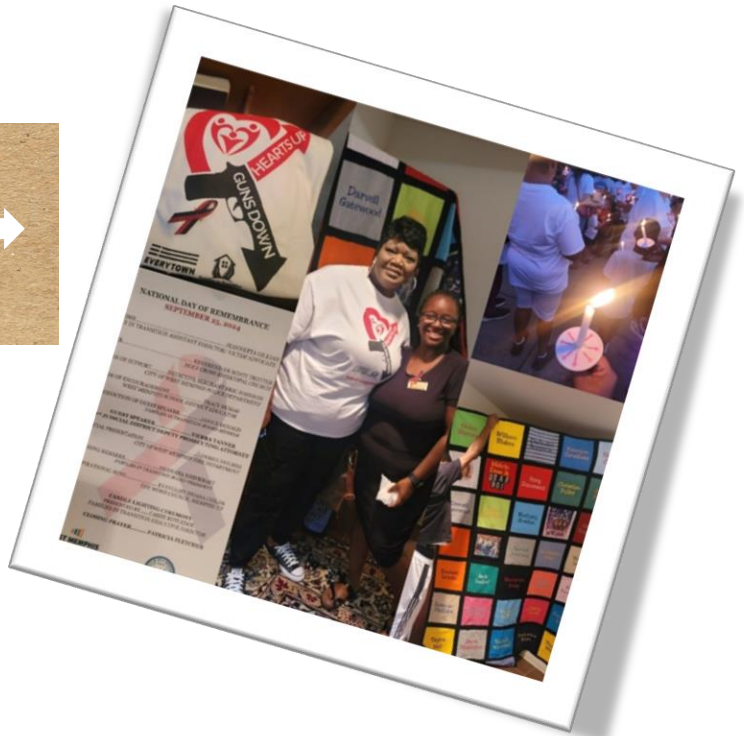
CVRB Training at the Arkansas
Criminal Justice Professionals
Hot Springs, AR



CVRB at the Colonel Glenn
Church of Christ Annual
Festival/Trunk-Or-Treat
Little Rock, AR



CVRB at the National Day of
Remembrance for Murder
Victims Ceremony
West Memphis, AR



2025 Conferences Attendance



CVRB at the 36th
Annual Crimes Against
Children Conference
Dallas, TX

CVRB at the 2024 National
Joint Training Conference for
VOCA Victim Assistance and
Compensation Administrators
New Orleans, LA



ShareMyTable!

The Arkansas State Police Wellness Unit teamed up with the **Crime Victims Reparations Program Food Pantry Initiative** called "*ShareMyTable*" for all DPS/ASP employees.

The *ShareMyTable* program reinforces our agency's values, empathy and support by putting employee's first and by providing assistance to those facing difficult times.

Food collection began in October of 2024 and the first distribution kicked off on November 1, 2024. Bags of collected items are set up every Friday at the Wellness Unit and will continue to be distributed as long as donations and needs stop.



My most sincere gratitude to the CVRB Board for their support throughout 2024.

To the CVRB Team, Thank You for your dedication to the mission of our program and for all the victims we were able to serve in 2024.

A special Thanks to Michaela Thomas for her assistance in putting this Annual Report together.

**Sincerely,
Lisette Yang, CVRB Administrator**

