The Youth Advocacy Corps, a pilot program led by the National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA) with funding from the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), aims to **elevate the next generation of youth leaders in victim services**.

In collaboration with researchers and college campuses, the Youth Advocacy Corps will uplift and celebrate the voices of marginalized youth in victim advocacy by providing student fellows with training, mentorship, and a paid field-placement in a local victim service organization.

The Youth Advocacy Corps will be developed in the Spring of 2023, in partnership with Rainbow Research and five minority-serving campus pilot sites: Aaniiih Nakoda College, Dominican University, University of Texas at El Paso, University of New Mexico, and Coahoma Community College.

The **pilot program will launch in the Spring of 2023 and will continue into the Summer of 2025**. Primary project activities for this three-year pilot include: 1) Assess needs within the victim services field to define the vision and framework for the Youth Advocacy Corps; 2) Develop, launch and evaluate a pilot program shaped by the voices of historically marginalized survivors; and 3) Establish a national model for engaging diverse youth leaders in the victim services field.

Beneficiaries of the program will include historically marginalized survivors and under-resourced community agencies in each of the five pilot communities, as well as the larger victim services movement.

For more information email: youthcorps@trynova.org

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[Albuquerque, New Mexico, April 24, 2023] The National Organization for Victim Assistance (NOVA), a recognized leader in the victims’ rights movement for over 45 years, is kicking-off the first day of National Crime Victims’ Rights Week (NCVRW) by hosting a Youth Advocacy Corps Town Hall for college students, community members, and victim service providers at the University of New Mexico (UNM) in Albuquerque on April 24, 2023. The Town Hall will center the voices of historically marginalized survivors of multiple forms of violence and crime, and address the importance of youth leadership in the field of victim advocacy by announcing the launch of a new service corps program: the Youth Advocacy Corps.

The Youth Advocacy Corps, a pilot program led by NOVA with funding from the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), aims to elevate the next generation of youth leaders in victim services. In collaboration with researchers and college campuses, the Youth Advocacy Corps will uplift and celebrate the voices of marginalized youth in victim advocacy by providing student fellows with training, mentorship, and a paid field-placement in a local victim service organization. The Youth Advocacy Corps will be developed in partnership with Rainbow Research and five minority-serving campus pilot sites: Aaniiih Nakoda College, Dominican University, University of Texas at El Paso, University of New Mexico, and Coahoma Community College.

The Town Hall will be held in UNM’s Student Union Building (SUB) Ballroom B (1 University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM 87106), and doors will open at 9:30 AM MDT. The event will open with tabling from student and community organizations and will feature a performance by UNM’s Something Major A Capella group. Following the performance, NOVA Executive Director Claire Ponder Selib will introduce OVC Director Kristina Rose for opening remarks at
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10:00 AM MDT. The Youth Survivor-Advocate Panel Discussion will commence shortly thereafter and be followed by a brief Q&A before the event closes at 11:00 AM MDT.

The Town Hall and Panel Discussion will be moderated by Abrianna Morales–sexual assault survivor-advocate, founder of Sexual Assault Youth Support Network (SAYSN), and NOVA’s Youth Program Manager–and will feature the following youth survivor-advocates:

- **Brandon Wolf**: Pulse Nightclub survivor and Equality Florida Press Secretary
- **D'Angelo McDade**: Educator and former Executive Director of Chicago Peace Warriors
- **Kaylyn Ahn**: Student Advocate from Northwestern University

Abrianna Morales, NOVA’s Youth Program Manager and a young survivor herself, had this to say about youth leadership in victim services: “Having been a survivor and advocate since I was fifteen years old, I know how important it is to feel that your voice is heard and how empowering advocacy and activism can be. The Youth Advocacy Corps, to me, is a commitment from the current leaders in victim services to transform advocacy as we know it…the Youth Advocacy Corps is a commitment to elevating voices that have been silenced for far too long.

Kristina Rose, Director of the Office for Victims of Crime, remarked: “I’m so excited to watch how the Youth Advocacy Corps develops and inspires the next generation of leaders in victims’ rights and services. I envision a passionate, knowledgeable force spreading throughout the country and working in communities most affected by crime – communities that may not be aware of the rights and services available to them in the aftermath of crime. It’s fitting that the Corps is being announced during National Crime Victims’ Rights Week as their work will no doubt amplify survivor voices in all spaces, especially those where they are seldom heard.”

For Media and Press attendance, please email youthcorps@trynova.org to express your interest in attending.

# # #

Addendum A: Survivor-Advocate Panelists and Project Partner Information Sheet
Addendum B: Youth Advocacy Corps Town Hall Save the Date
Addendum C: University of New Mexico Student Union Building Campus Maps
Abrianna Morales
Abrianna Morales is a sexual assault survivor, activist, and advocate for sexual assault survivors’ rights and empowerment from Las Cruces, New Mexico. After being sexually assaulted at age fifteen, Abrianna was inspired to create the Sexual Assault Youth Support Network (SAYSN): an organization that focuses on the support, empowerment, and connection of youth sexual assault survivors and those that support them. Through her work with SAYSN, Abrianna has had the opportunity to share her story and devotion to advocacy as a speaker at TEDxABQ Women 2017 and as an expert witness for NM Senate Bill 55, a bill brought forward by NM Sen. Jeff Steinborn, to extend the statute of limitations for child sexual abuse during the 2019 New Mexico Legislative Session. In addition to her work with SAYSN, Abrianna also held the title of Miss New Mexico’s Outstanding Teen 2018. A rising senior at the University of New Mexico, Abrianna is majoring in Psychology and Criminology, and plans to pursue J.D. and Ph.D. in Forensic Psychology/Criminology with an interest in conducting research at the intersection of law, psychology, and criminology. Abrianna was recently named as a 2022 Truman Scholar.

Twitter: https://twitter.com/abrielisem?lang=en

Brandon Wolf
Brandon Wolf is a nationally recognized LGBTQ civil rights advocate, leader in the movement to end gun violence in America, and survivor of the 2016 shooting at Pulse Nightclub. After narrowly escaping that night, during what was the deadliest mass shooting in US history at the time, Brandon channeled his life into fighting for a safer world for future generations and honoring victims of injustice with action. He is a frequent face on MSNBC, CNN, Black News Channel, and is a featured voice in CNN digital, Newsweek, USA Today, and others. Brandon has graced the cover of Dazed Magazine and LGBTQ publications nationwide, recently being named one of the Logo TV 30. He has been recognized as one of Huffington Post’s 30 LGBTQ Influencers under 30 and Business Equality Magazine’s 40 LGBTQ Leaders Under 40. Brandon was a national surrogate for Senator Elizabeth Warren’s Presidential Campaign and an advisory committee member for President Biden’s General Election bid. He is a co-founder and current Vice President of The Dru Project, a nonprofit organization that empowers safe spaces in schools for LGBTQ youth, and the Press Secretary for Equality Florida, the state’s LGBTQ civil rights organization. Brandon’s work is done through the same lens of intersectionality through which he experiences the world, centering those living at the crossroads of identity and acknowledging that the simple act of caring for oneself is radical in society today.
D'Angelo McDade

D’Angelo McDade recently served as the Executive Director of the Peace Warrior Organization which empowers youth to create proactive change within their communities. As a student at North Lawndale College Prep (NLCP) of Chicago’s West Side, D’Angelo held the role of Assistant Director of Civic Engagement and co-founded the Peace Warrior Organization Summer Employment program. Prior to serving as the Executive Director of the Peace Warrior Organization, D’Angelo served as Interim Intern Director of Operations at Galapagos Charter School and a Coordinator of Special Learning and Community Projects. D’Angelo is a nationally certified trainer of Kingian Nonviolence Reconciliation. Due to his activism in reforming gun violence, D’Angelo was honored with the Youth Activism Award. He is currently enrolled at DePauw University as a rising senior, majoring in Educational Studies and Leadership in Development and Student Affairs.

Twitter: https://twitter.com/DAngelo4Change

Kaylyn Ahn

Kaylyn Ahn is the queer daughter of Korean immigrants and a survivor of domestic and sexual violence. After their sexual assault case was denied by prosecutors, she helped draft and testified for HB5441 to close a loophole in Illinois criminal sexual assault law. She organized a March For Asian Lives and Say it With Pride: Equality Now! which successfully repealed laws that prohibited dressing in clothing “of the opposite sex.” Currently, she is a sophomore studying Social Policy and Legal Studies at Northwestern University. On campus, she is the Equity Inclusion Chair for the Undergraduate Prison Education Partnership and the Events Chair for SPEAK (for sexual assault awareness). In the winter of 2021, she fled her home due to domestic violence and became a homeless/unaccompanied youth. Kaylyn hopes to conduct research on employment and domestic violence; in her future, she hopes to become a lawyer to advocate for homeless queer youth.

Twitter: https://twitter.com/kaylyn_ahn?lang=en
Youth Victimization

Young children and adolescents are victims of the same crimes as adults (e.g., theft, assault), but as an age group they are also more vulnerable to crimes like neglect, medical neglect, and psychological abuse. This victimization can be difficult to capture. Combined with stringent guidelines regarding data collection from minors, researchers often struggle to gather comprehensive data on childhood victimization. While age and dependence contribute to higher levels of vulnerability among youth, certain environments also pose a greater threat than others. Childhood exposure to victimization increases the probability of experiencing future victimization as well as multiple forms of victimization (polyvictimization), which increases risk factors over time. For more on youth victimization, see the School Victimization and Campus Victimization fact sheets in this series.

CRIME TRENDS

From 1995 to 2015, the rate of violent victimization—robbery, rape/sexual assault, aggravated assault, and simple assault—reported by adolescents age 12 to 17 decreased from 156 to 31 violent victimizations for every 1,000 adolescents. Similarly, the rate of serious violent victimization (which does not include simple assault) also decreased from 43 serious violent victimizations for every 1,000 adolescents in 1995 to 8 per 1,000 in 2015.

A higher percentage (2.4%) of adolescents age 12 to 17 experienced at least one instance of violent victimization compared to people age 25 to 34 (1.6%), and those 35 and older (0.9%). Of those adolescents who do experience violent victimization, 1.5% were victims of a single violent crime and 0.5% were victims of repeat violent crimes.

The rate of other forms of known victimization remained fairly constant between 2009 and 2014. In 2014, about 7 of every 1,000 youth age 0 to 17 were victims of neglect. Fewer than 2 of every 1,000 youth were victims of physical abuse, and less than 1 of every 1,000 were victims of sexual, medical neglect, or psychological abuse in 2014.

DID YOU KNOW?

The National Child Abuse and Neglect Data System (NCANDS) collects and analyzes data on child abuse and neglect in the United States submitted by mandated reporters, as well as reports by family, friends, and neighbors. In 2015, more than 683,000 children were victims of child abuse or neglect, and 1,670 died as a result. NCANDS refers to these deaths as child fatalities. Of child fatality victims in 2015, 74.8% were younger than 3 years old. 31 states reported on preservation services. Of these, 12% of child fatality victims received family preservation services within the previous 5 years.
In 2015, youth less than one year of age were the most vulnerable, accounting for 14% of all known youth victimization. The average rate of victimization for this age group (24.2 per 1,000) was more than 2.5x higher than the rate of victimization for all youth (9.2 per 1,000). The rate of victimization for youth 1 to 10 years of age was greater than the rate of victimization for youth 10 to 16. Youth age 17 were the least vulnerable to victimization.

In 2015, 78% of child victimization perpetrators were parents of the victim. Other perpetrators were relatives (6%), unmarried partners (4%), or multiple perpetrators (4%).

Compared to all measured races and ethnicities, African American and American Indian/Alaska Native youth are the most vulnerable to victimization (14.5 per 1,000 youth and 13.8 per 1,000 youth, respectively). In 2015, the rate of victimization among African American and Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) youth was more than 8x that of Asian youth and more than 1.2x greater than youth of any other race or ethnicity.

At least one parent is responsible in 78% of child fatalities resulting from maltreatment–neglect or medical neglect, or any form of physical, psychological, or sexual abuse. Specifically, in 27% of child fatality cases, the mother alone was responsible, while in 15% of cases the father alone was responsible. In 22% of cases, both parents were responsible.

Sources
C Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Concatenated File, 2015, (U.S. Department of Justice)
The FBI’s Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program and the Bureau of Justice Statistics’ National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) are the two largest and most comprehensive resources for information relating to crime and victimization in the United States. While the UCR and the NCVS use different methodologies and serve distinct purposes, these resources complement each other in a number of ways. The most important distinction between the two is that the UCR reports information regarding crimes known to law enforcement agencies (but cannot reflect unreported crime), while the NCVS, which measures reported and unreported victimizations, helps researchers identify hidden victimizations that the UCR is unable to track—“the dark figure of crime.” Together the UCR and the NCVS provide researchers, policymakers, and the public with a general understanding regarding the state of crime and victimization in the United States.

**UNIFORM CRIME REPORT**

The Uniform Crime Report (UCR), launched in 1929, collects information reported to law enforcement agencies on the following crimes: murder and non-negligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, arson, and human trafficking. Law enforcement agencies also report arrest data for 22 additional crime categories (e.g., forgery and counterfeiting, drug abuse violations, disorderly conduct, vagrancy). Each year, the FBI issues a report on the main UCR findings, titled *Crime in the United States*, as well as several other reports (e.g., *Hate Crimes 2015* and *Law Enforcement Officers Killed and Assaulted, 2015*). The UCR presents crime counts for the entire nation, as well as for regions, states, counties, cities, towns, tribal law enforcement, and colleges and universities. *Its primary purpose is to provide reliable criminal justice statistics for law enforcement administration and management.*

**NCVS CRIMES**

- rape
- sexual assault
- robbery
- aggravated assault
- simple assault
- household burglary
- theft
- motor vehicle theft

**NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMIZATION SURVEY**

The methodology for the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS), which began in 1973, differs from that of the UCR. The NCVS is based on a nationally representative sample of U.S. households. Household members age 12 and older are interviewed by the U.S. Census Bureau every six months for a three-year period. The NCVS collects information on the frequency and nature of: rape, sexual assault, robbery, aggravated and simple assault, household burglary, theft, and motor vehicle theft. *It does not measure:* homicide, commercial crimes, crimes against residents under 12 years old, or crimes against individuals in other residential settings (e.g., nursing homes, prisons) and may exclude transient populations and people who are homeless.

The NCVS gathers information on crimes both reported and not reported to the police, estimates the proportion of crimes reported to law enforcement, and describes the reasons given by victims for reporting or not reporting. The NCVS also includes questions about victims’ experiences with the criminal justice system, possible substance use by offenders, and whether victims received services following their victimization. The NCVS collects demographic information about both victims and offenders (e.g., age, sex, race, Hispanic origin, victim-offender relationship), as well as information about the crimes (including time and place of occurrence, use of weapons, nature of injury, and economic impact). The NCVS also collects periodic supplements on specific crime issues such as stalking or school crime.
While the UCR and the NCVS are important resources for researchers, policymakers, and the public, they cannot address all crimes or victimizations. And though national collection efforts continue to grow, gaps still exist, particularly for emerging crimes, such as elder victimization, human trafficking, stalking, and financial, corporate, environmental, and mass casualty crimes.

In 2015, the UCR Program released a plan to improve and modernize their data collection. Two key aspects of this plan include:

**UCR IMPROVEMENTS**

1. To continue the transition from the Summary Reporting System (SRS) (the current UCR method of data collection) to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), which has many implications for enhanced understanding on issues pertinent to victims and service providers, by 2021.

2. To provide researchers, providers, policymakers, and the general public with information regarding the use of force or the discharge of a firearm by law enforcement officers.

The NCVS is also currently undergoing a redesign. This multi-year effort to fill long-standing gaps in information includes:

**NCVS ENHANCEMENTS**

1. **Providing subnational estimates**: While the original purpose of the NCVS was to provide estimates of victimization at the national level, the NCVS subnational program will generate victimization estimates at the state and local level for the 22 largest states.

2. **Modernizing socio-demographic information** to reflect victimization by sexual orientation, gender identity, veteran status, and citizenship. The update also includes expanding disability status questions to all respondents, not just those self-reporting victimization.

3. **Expanding the information collected** about formal and informal help-seeking behavior, issues related to fear of crime, perceptions of neighborhood disorder and satisfaction with police, and the consequences of victimization.

4. **Expanding the type of crimes collected** in the NCVS, including fraud.

The Bureau of Justice Statistics, in partnership with the Office for Victims of Crime, has also launched the new Victim Services Statistical Research Program (VSSRP), aiming to build a critical body of knowledge for the field by collecting and analyzing data from victims and the diverse entities that serve them nationwide. In addition to data collected from victims as described above, data collected directly from entities that serve victims is important for understanding whether providers have the capacity to meet the needs of all victims seeking services. BJS’s VSSRP includes a number of initiatives to collect information from victim service providers, including the National Census of Victim Service Providers (NCVSP) fielded for the first time in 2017, and the National Survey of Victim Service Providers (NSVSP)—both designed to help define and enhance understanding of all types of providers, from community and justice-system based, to campus, hospitals, corrections, legal aid and others, all playing a critical role in serving victims of crime. The census data will, for the first time, provide quantitative information about how many providers exist, organizational structure, types of services offered, crime types served, staffing considerations, and funding sources.

Other efforts focus on particular types of service providers, such as the collaboration between BJS and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)’s National Center for Health Statistics to develop a new National Survey of Hospital Victim Services to better understand the range of hospital-based and affiliated services available for crime victims in health settings. BJS has also launched pilot programs to examine the feasibility of collecting information related to victim services in homeless shelters, and to better understand the prevalence of victimization and service needs in correctional settings beginning with jails. BJS has also added or is in the development phase of adding questions about victim services to existing BJS surveys, including surveys of law enforcement agencies, prosecutors’ offices, and corrections agencies. **Together, all of these efforts will offer the most comprehensive picture of victim service provision to date.**

**RESOURCES**
