

# ADVOCATE

ad'·vo·kāt'

(verb): to support, assist others on a cause or issue of concern; to act as an advocate for others.



## A NOTE FROM OUR MLKY STATE DIRECTOR

Friends,

As we head into May, I keep reflecting on the month of April: a month designated for raising awareness of child abuse, sexual assault prevention, and crime victims' rights. In that spirit, Kentuckians engaged in thoughtful, important dialogue on the issues, and demonstrated their unity and support for one another through powerful public events and memorials.

On the following pages you'll learn about the many awareness activities that occurred during April. You also will read about the MLKY Silhouette Project that we unveiled during National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

With the close of April, we want to recognize the many advocacy organizations and countless individuals across the commonwealth who step up daily to ensure that programs are utilized, resources are leveraged, and support is available to victims of crime.

I always feel so energized after NCVRW, as do many of you. Yet, as a crime victim advocate remarked to me during a very moving public gathering last month: "After this powerful event the challenge will be to take this moment with me for the next 11 months." And that is a challenge I hope we all face head on during the year to come.

In gratitude,  
Emily

## UNITED WE STAND, SILENCED WE FALL

During NCVRW, we were very excited to launch our brand new Silhouette Project - United We Stand, Silenced We Fall. This awareness raising campaign features a collection of life-sized silhouettes that serve as a symbolic reminder that victims of crime often walk among us unseen and unheard. Each silhouette included a written message, along with a QR code that guided event attendees to information about victims' rights and resources.





# CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

On March 30, Family & Children's Place kicked off Child Abuse Prevention Month with its annual Rally to End Child Abuse. We were thrilled to attend this annual rally in Louisville as it helps bring awareness to the community about the impact of child abuse and neglect across the state. During the event, Mayor Craig Greenberg and Lt. Governor Jacqueline Coleman shared their appreciation for the ongoing work of Family & Children's Place, as well as the desire of the community to continue to fight for the health and safety of our children.

"Our proven programs help nearly 4,000 kids and family members every single year," Family and Children's Place President and CEO Pam Darnall said. "We help them overcome challenges and celebrate successes. We estimate we've served about 260,000 kids and family members since we opened our doors all the way back in 1883. But you know, there are so many more kids who need us, and so much more to do."

***Kentucky ranks sixth in the number of child abuse cases, and last year the Child Fatality and Near Fatality Report said that 67 percent of all cases reviewed involved a child four years old or younger.***

For more information about Family & Children's Place, [click here](#).



# NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK ACROSS KENTUCKY



**Survivor Voices**  
Elevate. Engage.  
Effect Change.

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**National Crime Victims'  
Rights Week | April 23–29, 2023**

The theme for the 2023 National Crime Victims' Rights Week was Survivor Voices: Elevate. Engage. Effect Change. Events over the course of the week emphasized there must be collaboration among the entire community: neighbors, advocates, law enforcement, government officials, etc. We all play a role in elevating survivor voices, engaging in this discussion, and allow that to effect change.

This NCVRW, we were very excited to launch our brand new Silhouette Project - United We Stand, Silenced We Fall. This awareness raising campaign features a collection of life-sized silhouettes that serve as a symbolic reminder that victims of crime often walk among us unseen and unheard. Each silhouette included a written message, along with a QR code that guided event attendees to information about victims' rights and resources.

It was very meaningful to launch the Silhouette Project for the very first time at the Statewide NCVRW event hosted in Frankfort by the Kentucky Attorney General's Office of Victim Advocacy. The following day, the Silhouettes were featured during the Fayette County NCVRW 2023 event. If your organization would like more information about utilizing the Silhouette Project as part of an upcoming program or event, please contact Emily Bonistall Postel - [ebonistall@marsyslaw.us](mailto:ebonistall@marsyslaw.us).

## NCVRW IN FRANKFORT

Marsy's Law for Kentucky was honored to be part of awareness events hosted across the state during NCVRW. On April 26, we joined partner organizations for the 2023 Elevate Survivor Voices Awareness and Resource Fair, presented by Attorney General Daniel Cameron's Office of Victims Advocacy. We enjoyed the opportunity to meet with Aimee Clymer-Hancock, J.D., the new Deputy Executive Director of Victims Advocacy for the Kentucky Office of the Attorney General. We talked with her about her new role, priorities, and experiences as an advocate for crime victims.

## In the News

[Lexington Community Marks Victims' Rights Week](#)

[Attorney General Daniel Cameron Holds Awareness Resource Fair](#)

[Survivors Share Stories During National Crime Victims' Rights Week](#)

[Lexington Recognizes Crime Victims' Rights Week with Proclamation](#)

# MEET AIMEE CLYMER-HANCOCK



## **What were you doing prior to joining Attorney General Daniel Cameron's Office of Victims Advocacy?**

*I previously served as First Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney for the 52nd Judicial Circuit. In that role, I created and led a specialized unit of prosecution entitled the "Vulnerable Victim Unit" which focused on the prosecution of child abuse, domestic violence, and sexual assault cases. The word "vulnerable" resonates with this work because victims of these horrific crimes are often vulnerable to their perpetrator in unique ways. Because of the nature of the abuse and exploitation experienced, these victims deserve a specialized response. It was my honor to serve victims and survivors as a prosecutor, and to fight to ensure truth and justice throughout the prosecution of their perpetrator.*

## **And that led to your role within Attorney General Cameron's Office of Victims Advocacy?**

*Yes. It was through my work prosecuting crimes of sexual assault that I first met Robyn Diez d'Aux, Executive Director of Victims Advocacy. Robyn is an extraordinary resource and we communicated multiple times on prosecutions involving Sexual Assault Kits (SAKs). Prior to her role as Executive Director, Robyn served as the Deputy Executive Director and, prior to that, as the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative (SAKI) program manager. While serving as the SAKI program manager, Robyn coordinated the completion of Kentucky's previously untested SAFE kits.*

## **What are the primary responsibilities of the Attorney General's Office of Victims Advocacy?**

*Attorney General Cameron's Office of Victims Advocacy (OVA) works to champion dignity and compassion for crime victims by providing trauma-informed, victim-centered training, resources, and assistance to law enforcement, prosecutors, and victim advocates across the Commonwealth.*

*OVA provides specialized professional development training to criminal justice professionals to ensure victims of crime receive a trauma-informed investigation, advocacy, and prosecution. While we have multiple trainings being planned, our next training offered is in August. It is specifically tailored to the needs of prosecution-based victim advocates. This training is focused on "Best Practices" for victim advocates both in their direct response to victims and in their work with prosecutors.*

*OVA believes that every crime victim deserves to be met with professionals who offer an educated, specialized, and articulate response to their victimization. From Fulton County to Pike, Boone to Monroe, we offer criminal justice professional training and development for the good of crime victims across all 120 counties of the Commonwealth.*

*In addition to providing direct advocacy in assigned conflict cases through our victim advocates Aaron Ash and Erica Paske, OVA also manages the appellate notification process for crime victims. Lastly, OVA is home to the Sexual Assault Kit Initiative Program Manager, Kelly Wells and the Law Enforcement Development and Training Specialist, Jim Root.*

*Finally, OVA offers a Resource and Referral Line to assist all victims with access to community-based support and services. Any victim or survivor of crime can call the OVA Resource and Referral line at: 502-696-5312. Important information regarding victims' rights is also available by calling our office or on Attorney General Cameron's website: [ag.ky.gov](http://ag.ky.gov)*



# MEET AIMEE CLYMER-HANCOCK

## Thus far, what has been your favorite part of this new role?

*I am humbled by this important role and honored to have been given the opportunity to serve. It is a privilege to learn about the unique needs of every county and to have the opportunity to invest in the way each jurisdiction responds to their most vulnerable victims. I am grateful for the dedicated professionals throughout the Kentucky Office of the Attorney General and I pray our collective work can ease the pain of Kentuckians impacted by violent crime.*

## How do you see Marsy's Law and OVA working together moving forward?

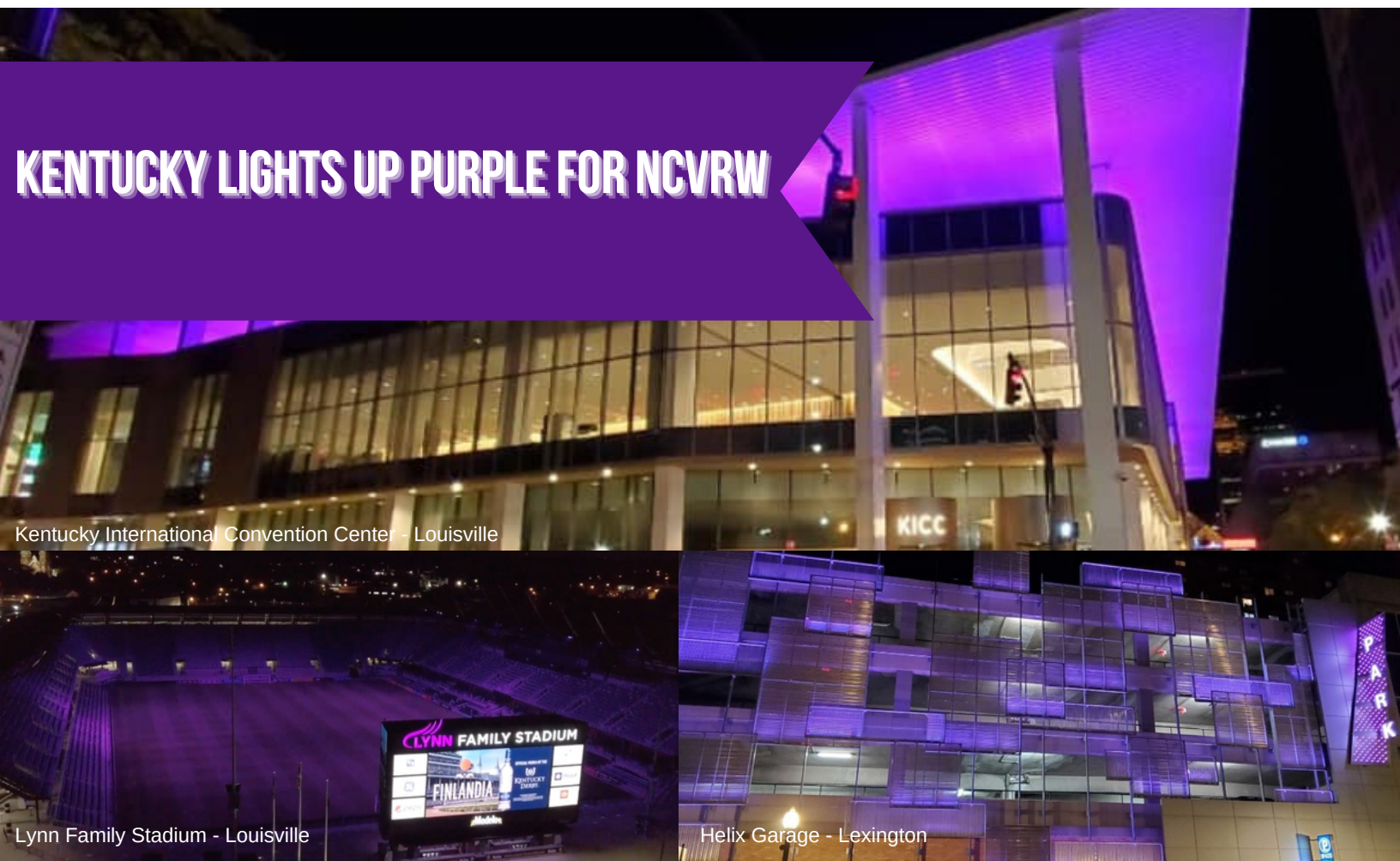
*Because OVA's comprehensive work is rooted in the mission of enhancing the systems that support crime victims, OVA is especially grateful for our partnership with Marsy's Law for Kentucky. Pursuant to KRS 421.500 and Marsy's Law, victims have important legal rights and General Cameron is committed to safeguarding the rights of all Kentucky crime victims.*

*"My commitment is to make sure we are doing everything we possibly can to improve the public safety outcomes of the men, women and children of all 120 counties."*

*– Daniel Cameron, Attorney General*

*\*To contact Attorney General Daniel Cameron's Office of Victims Advocacy please call: 502-696-5312 or (800) 372-2551.*

*\*Contact Aimee Clymer-Hancock: [aimee.clymerhancock@ky.gov](mailto:aimee.clymerhancock@ky.gov)*



## KENTUCKY LIGHTS UP PURPLE FOR NCVRW

Kentucky International Convention Center - Louisville

Lynn Family Stadium - Louisville

Helix Garage - Lexington



# ELEVATE. ENGAGE. EFFECT CHANGE

## NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK - FRANKFORT





# NCVRW IN LEXINGTON

On April 26, Fayette County hosted its NCVRW event to honor crime victims and survivors. Lexington Mayor Linda Gorton delivered a proclamation to commemorate the week in Lexington, and survivors Mary Krueger and Tiffany Michelle Brown shared their experiences with the community. Read more [here](#).

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*If, as survivors, we are willing to tell our stories - I believe we can rise above the constant noise about the accused and their rights. We are more than mere spectators or “facts” in a criminal case; we are hurt, grieving, and confused victims and families in a situation we did not ask for. We need to tell our stories to ensure that all survivors are visible.*

*-Mary Krueger, Survivor*



**Lexington Mayor  
Linda Gorton  
presented a  
proclamation during  
the 2023 Fayette  
County Crime  
Victims' Rights Day**





# WOMEN OF TOMORROW PODCAST: DENIM DAY

MLKY State Director Emily Bonistall Postel had the opportunity to serve as moderator for the Women of Tomorrow Podcast featuring Paige Adams-Gellar from PAIGE, Laura Bell Bundy from the Women of Tomorrow Foundation, and Amy Andrades who is the Director of the National Sexual Assault Hotline for RAINN. The event shared what Denim Day is all about, provided educational snippets on victim-blaming and rape myths, and elevated survivor voices. Check out the episode [here](#)



## SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS & PREVENTION MONTH

During April, there were numerous events throughout the state to raise awareness of Sexual Assault Awareness & Prevention Month (SAAPM). The Kentucky Association of Sexual Assault Programs kicked off the month with its annual event celebrating the accomplishments of anti-sexual violence professionals as well as the resilience of survivors and continued those advocacy efforts with the presentation of the statewide documentary, "Believe Me," which aired on KET three times during April. For a list of upcoming air times, click [here](#).

Silverleaf Sexual Trauma and Recovery Services, Lotus Children's Advocacy & Sexual Violence Resource Center, and The Center for Women and Families were among many Kentucky agencies that hosted or supported SAAPM events. Denim Day, Wear Teal Day, and Chalk the Walk were a few events organized to raise awareness and provide support for local survivors of sexual abuse.

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS & PREVENTION MONTH



### LEARN MORE

[KASAP](#)

[The Center for Women and Families](#)

[Silverleaf Sexual Trauma and Recovery Services](#)

[Lotus Children's Advocacy & Sexual Violence Center](#)





# Marsy's Story

Marsy Nicholas was a beautiful, vibrant University of California Santa Barbara student who was stalked and killed by her ex-boyfriend. Only one week after her death, Marsy's mother walked into a grocery store where she was confronted by the accused murderer. The family, who had just come from a visit to Marsy's grave, was unaware that the accused had been released on bail. In an effort to honor his sister, Dr. Henry T. Nicholas III has made it his life's mission to give victims and their families enforceable, constitutional protections and equal rights.

[www.marsyslawforky.com](http://www.marsyslawforky.com)