

Reaching Victims Mini-Grant Program

2019 Program Overview

Overview

In 2018, the National Resource Center for Reaching Victims – a collaborative effort to increase the number of victims who receive victim services in the United States – launched the Reaching Victims Innovations Mini-Grant Program. The purpose of this program was to address unmet needs and close gaps that prevent survivors from underserved communities from accessing and benefiting from healing services and avenues to justice. We invited applications for projects that sought to better identify, engage, and/or serve survivors from underserved communities or who face particular barriers to accessing victim services.

Priorities

While we considered applications that focused on increasing services to survivors from any underrepresented community, we prioritized funding for projects that seek to better identify, engage, and/or serve survivors from the following communities: children and youth, boys and men of color, girls and women of color, individuals who are formerly incarcerated, immigrants and individuals with limited English proficiency, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender individuals, Native Americans, older adults, people with disabilities, and Deaf people.

320

applications received

14

projects funded

\$657,231

total amount awarded

2,040

victims served

Funding and Support

Grantees were eligible to request up to \$50,000 for a nine-month period. This funding supported three levels of involvement in the Mini-Grant program:

- Specific Project: A specific project that makes a meaningful and lasting contribution to the crime victims field's efforts to identify, engage, and/or serve crime victims from underserved communities. Projects could build upon practices that have shown promise or already proven to be successful, or they could have used innovative approaches that have not yet been tried.
- Learning Community: Grantees also participated in a learning community with other grantees and experts from the crime victims and related fields. The learning community was designed to build capacity through training, and to foster relationship building among colleagues working toward similar goals in the field.
- Mentorship and Support: Each grantee was paired with a someone from the NRC team whose expertise most closely aligned with the project's focus. They provided guidance, made connections to other grantees or experts who were relevant to the project's work, and helped build capacity around grants management.

The National Resource Center for Reaching Victims (NRC) has been an invaluable resource of support and capacity building of the Love More Movement, Inc. The NRC has helped us shape, frame and activate our mission by providing capacity building support for us to replicate to scale through strategic planning, professional development, asset mapping, networking and financial support. We have had capacity building opportunities in the past and this was by far the best experience that we have ever had.

- Dr. Bruce Purnell, the Love-More Movement, Inc., 2019 Grantee

Program Features

One of the central and underlying goals of the Reaching Victims Innovations Grant Program was to provide mini-grants to high-performing organizations that have trust, credibility, and visibility within underserved communities, but face barriers to securing state and federal victim services funding. The Grant Program incorporated many features that were designed to remove the most common of these barriers.

- We leveraged the networks of the NRC's partners to reach the broadest and most diverse group of organizations and people supporting survivors. We also enlisted trusted leaders and community members from the Program's priority communities to promote and share the Request for Proposal in their networks.
- We conducted multiple informational sessions - in English, Spanish, and American Sign Language - to provide organizations who were interested in applying with thorough information about the program and its requirements and to answer questions.
- We specifically encouraged small, grassroots organizations, organizations that serve survivors but aren't considered traditional victim services organizations, and organizations that have yet to receive victim services funding to apply.
- Organizations did not need to have the administrative and financial capacity required to manage state and Federal funding to be eligible to apply or receive funding. They had to commit to working with us to build their administrative and financial infrastructure as part of their funded work and with support.
- We accepted applications in any language. Any applicant could submit a video instead of a written abstract, and American Sign Language users could submit their entire application in sign language through a video instead of an English-based written application.
- We cultivated a pool of 28 peer reviewers who had specific and extensive expertise and practical experience serving survivors from the Program's priority underserved communities. We prioritized peer reviewers who identified as members of those communities and had reviewers who were fluent in English, Spanish, and American Sign Language.
- The application review process focused on the content and concepts of applications, and not their format, delivery, or grammar. The scoring system allowed for a holistic assessment of each applicant and application.

2019 Grantees at a Glance

Overview

14
projects funded

\$657,231
awarded

Key Activities

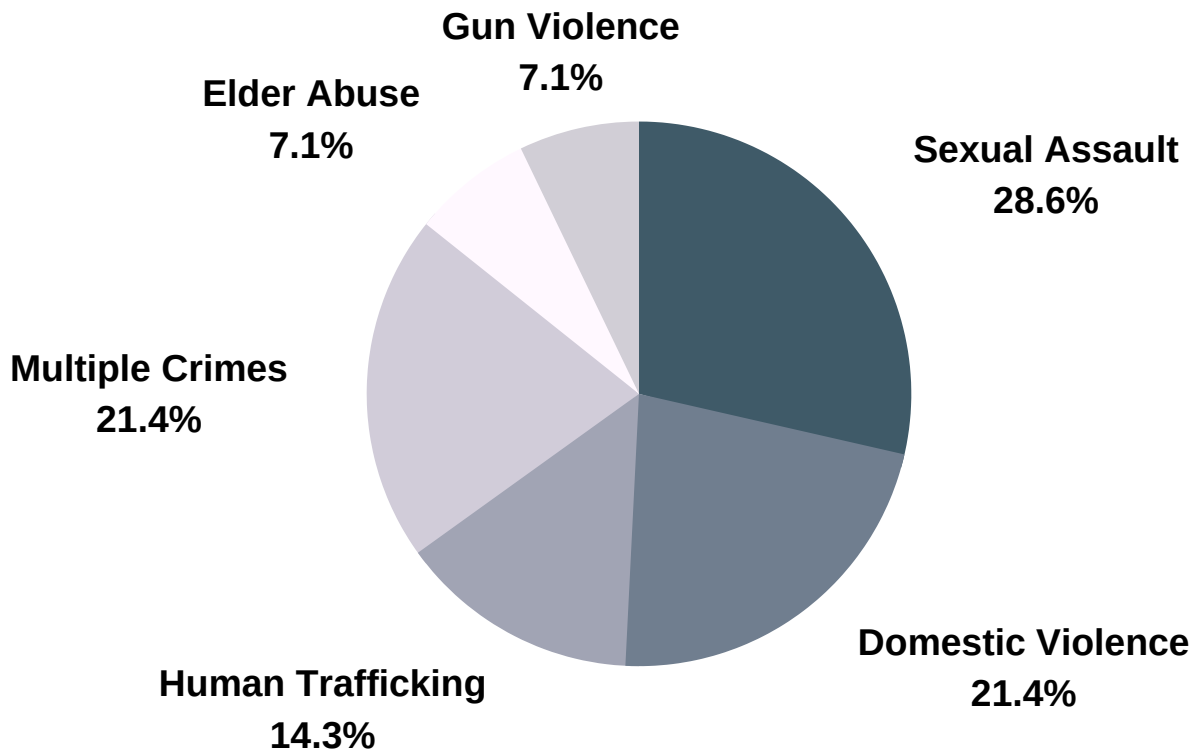
Resource
Development
23.5%

Capacity
Building
35.3%

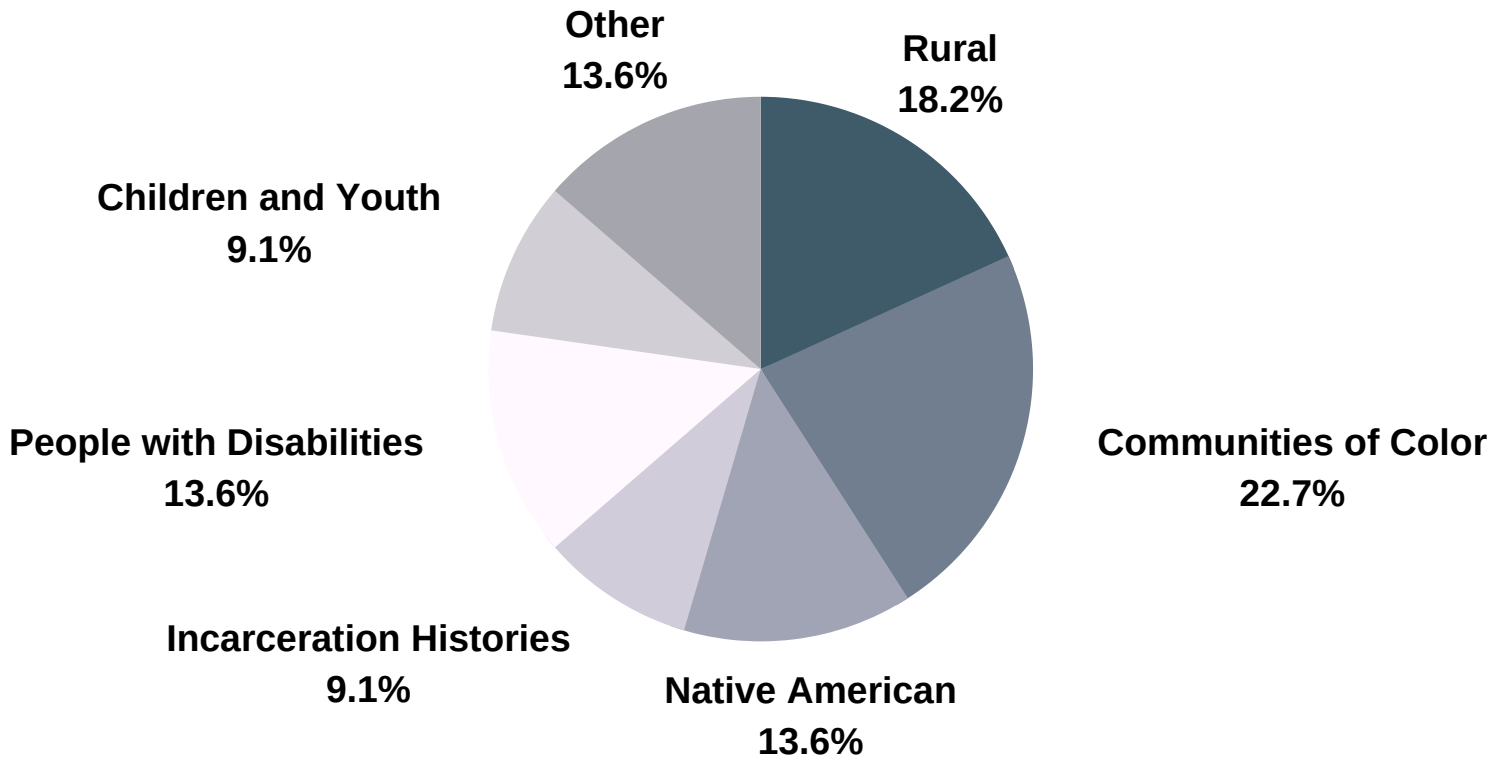


Direct
Services
41.2%

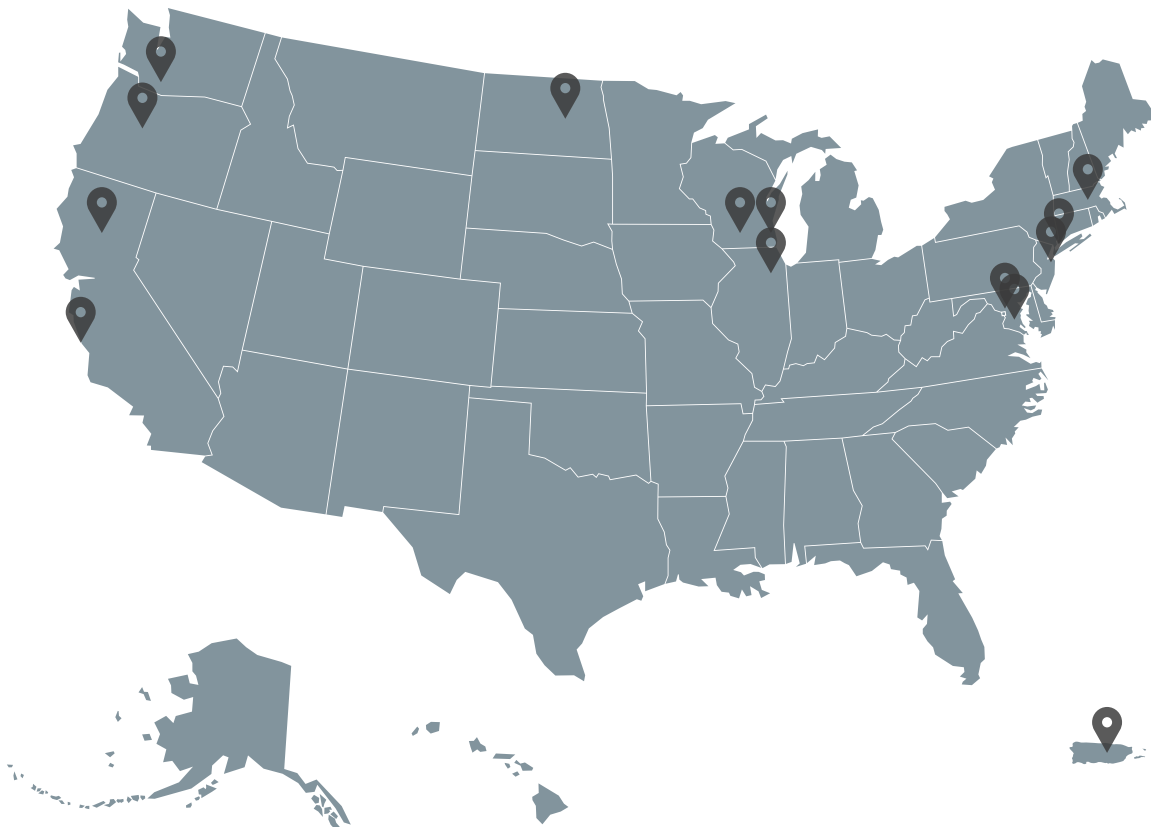
Types of Crime Addressed



Survivor Community Focus

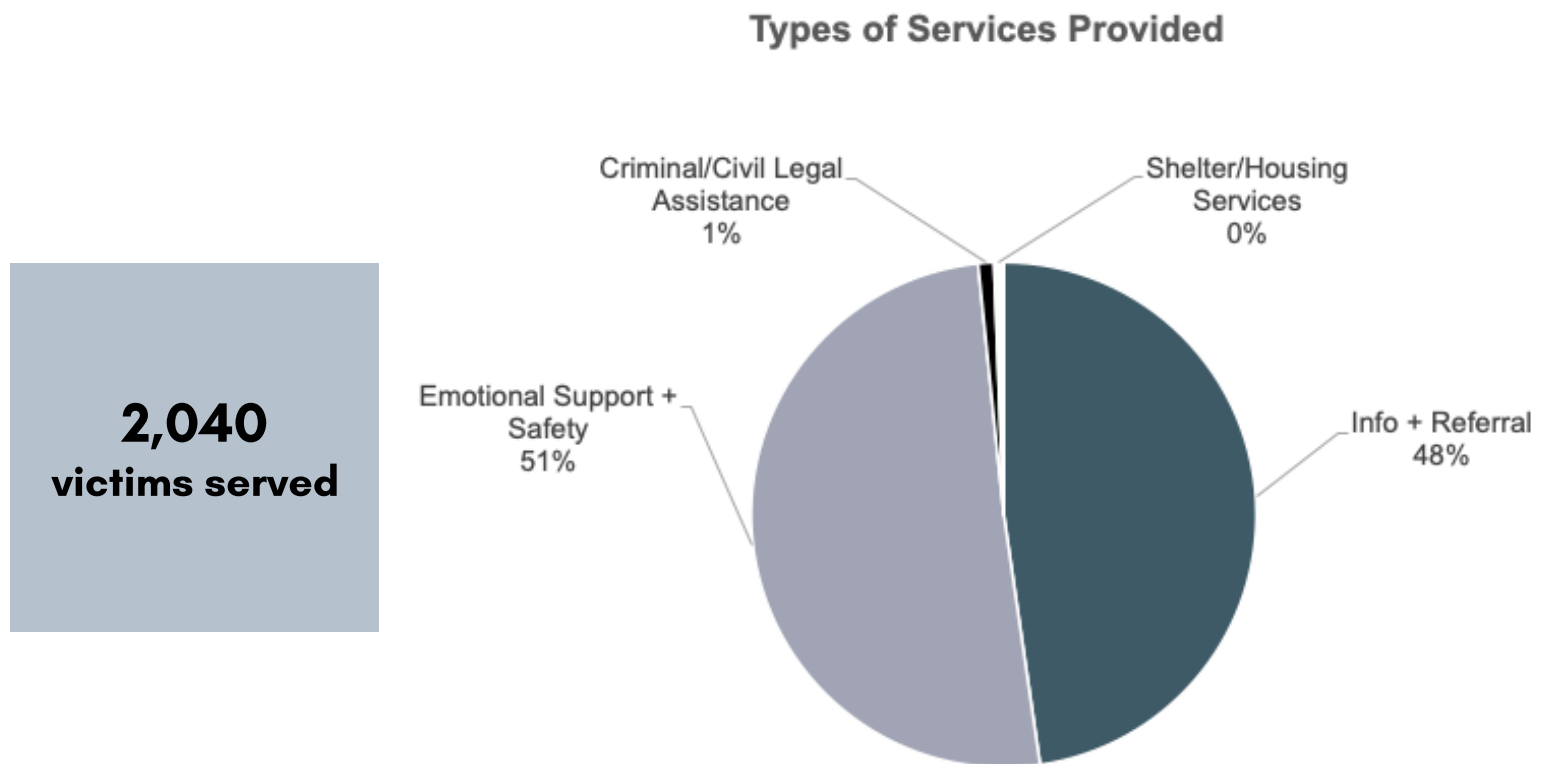


Location



2019 Grantee Accomplishments and Impact

Victim Services



Training and Technical Assistance

- 51** Trainings Conducted
- 896** People Trained
- 208.5** Hours of Training
- 96 %** Satisfied with Training
- 95 %** Change Policy or Practice After Training

One of the best benefits of NRC was hearing the voices of leaders and innovators in multiple marginalized communities. By bringing community leaders together, NRC is able to develop a broad perspective on how those most affected by violence and abuse are in the best position to lead the way on healing and recovery.

- Meg Stone. IMPACT Boston, 2019 Grantee

2019 Grantee Accomplishments and Impact

Example Resources Created

- Human trafficking screening tool for homeless and runaway youth
- Assessment report on screening and management of elder abuse by tribal health care providers
- Toolkit on addressing sexual trauma for people with incarceration histories
- Public awareness campaign for Deaf victims of violence
- Toolkit on human trafficking and people with disabilities

We produced a toolkit through the mini-grant. Our initial draft was way too long and muddled. NRC staff were exceptionally helpful in looking at our draft content, providing substantial messaging and editorial advice, and helped us cut down the content to be as sharp and clear as possible. They were able to help us hone our message, suggested really valuable word choice changes, and were willing to spend hours reading and re-reading our drafts. Our final product is vastly stronger because of their efforts.

- Dave Rini, Boston Area Rape Crisis Center, 2019 Grantee

Impact

For many of these innovation grantees, obtaining funding for their projects to identify, reach and serve marginalized communities of crime survivors had been just out of reach. By filling this gap, and providing a critical resource, these projects began to remove barriers for underserved victims of crime that they would not have been able to achieve otherwise. For some, this meant building their organizational capacity and laying a foundation for their project that they leveraged to procure additional funding to grow and further their work; for others, this meant serving crime survivors that had been historically locked out of services; and yet for others it meant delivering resources that filled a critical space in the landscape of victim services.

2019 Grant Recipients

Alma Center, Inc. - Milwaukee, Wisconsin

The Alma Center, Inc. through the Victims' Healing and Recovery Program, conducted targeted outreach and engagement which increased access to a seamless continuum of evidence-based healing services; promoted trauma resolution and recovery; and reduced incidents of repeat or ongoing victimization, and/or retributive violence to boys and men of color who were victims of gun violence in Milwaukee, WI.

Boston Area Rape Crisis Center - Boston, Massachusetts

The Boston Area Rape Crisis Center, in partnership with the Boston Mayor's Office of Returning Citizens, through the Returning and Healing Project increased the quality of services that formerly incarcerated survivors of sexual assault can access, to ensure that they are able to access safer, more trauma-informed, and more empowering responses, both at reentry services agencies and at rape crisis centers/sexual violence victim services by conducting cross-trainings and developing a toolkit for providers.

Casa Juana Colón, Apoyo y Orientación a la Mujer, Inc. - Comerio, Puerto Rico

Casa Juana Colón, Apoyo y Orientación a la Mujer, Inc., through the Educando para la paz Project, conducted a series of workshops to provide better access to justice by empowering crime victims so they may have the tools necessary in order to familiarize themselves with the law, their rights, and the mechanisms available for exercising them.

Deaf Unity - Madison, Wisconsin

Deaf Unity, through the Paths to Healing in the Deaf Community Project, created a series of videos and supportive materials that give a voice to Deaf survivors of violence and help to frame their stories in a constructive manner by including information on how to heal from the trauma of such experiences.

Girls for Gender Equity, Inc. - Brooklyn, New York

Girls for Gender Equity, Inc. through the Sisters in Strength Program provided youth survivors of sexual violence safe, supportive, and healing environments through a youth focused survivorship circle program for cis girls, trans girls and gender non-conforming young people, centering the experiences of young people of color.

2019 Grant Recipients cont'd...

IMPACT Boston, a project of Triangle Inc. in collaboration with Turtle Mountain Empowerment Self-Defense - Belcourt, North Dakota

IMPACT Boston, a program of Triangle, Inc., in partnership with Turtle Mountain Empowerment Self Defense, through the Healing and Safety Planning for Indigenous People with Disabilities, Women & Girls Project offered a series of programs to promote body oriented healing and practical safety planning skills to indigenous women, girls, and people with disabilities on the Turtle Mountain reservation that were led by members of the Tribe.

Innovations Human Trafficking Collaborative - Olympia, Washington

Innovations Human Trafficking Collaborative, in partnership with Community Youth Services, launched the Improving Crime Victim Identification and Access to Services for Homeless and Runaway Youth Exploited for Labor and/or Sex Project. They developed screening tools and a response protocol to ensure that runaway and homeless youth who experience sex and/or labor trafficking are identified as victims, and that a system is put in place that responds to distrust of institutional authorities and can bridge the gap between victims and access to services.

International Association for Indigenous Aging - Silver Spring, Maryland

The International Association for Indigenous Aging, through the Assessment of Facilitators and Barriers for Tribal Practitioners in Elder Abuse Screening and Management Project, interviewed and surveyed practitioners serving American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) elders to understand current needs and experiences in recognizing and managing elder abuse in their practice in an effort to promote and implement screenings, referrals, and interventions for elders who are victims of abuse.

International Organization for Adolescents - Chicago, Illinois

The International Organization for Adolescents, in partnership with the National Human Trafficking and Disabilities Working Group, through the Trafficking of Children and Youth with Disabilities Outreach & Education Project increased identification and access to services for children and youth trafficking victims with disabilities by developing evidence-based and trauma-informed training, educational and outreach materials.

Korean American Family Service Center - Flushing, New York

The Korean American Family Service Center, through the Engaging Clergy to Reach Korean American Domestic Violence Victims Project, hosted clergy conferences and educational events to engage clergy to better identify and reach Korean American survivors of domestic violence in an effort for more of these survivors to access and engage in healing and justice services.

Monarch Services-Servicios Monarca - Santa Cruz, California

Monarch Services-Servicios Monarca, through the Campos Seguros Project, provided the farm worker community in Santa Cruz, CA access to vital community resources as well as education around sexual assault and workplace harassment, human trafficking and domestic violence by providing outreach services, enhancing policies and procedures of agricultural companies, delivering education to law enforcement on working with the farm worker community, and providing educational workshops on domestic and sexual violence.

Rape Crisis Intervention & Prevention - Chico, California

Rape Crisis Intervention & Prevention, through the Little Feathers Project, enhanced their current rape crisis direct client services and programs by creating community awareness, education and prevention, offering direct client services, and facilitating a State Certified Training to create Sexual Assault Counselors who specifically respond to their Native American community members.

The Love More Movement, Inc. - Hyattsville, Maryland

The Love More Movement, Inc., through the Love More Healing Stations Project, facilitated healing, transformation and trauma informed journeys to release emotional and physical pain, move into cognitive/emotional space of healing and start building the type of resilience and positive motivation that leads to transformation by identifying, engaging and serving survivors of crime, holding healing town halls, and advancing the strategies to develop a media presence.

2019 Grant Recipients cont'd...

Victim Rights Law Center - Portland, Oregon

The Victim Rights Law Center (VRLC), in partnership with the Sexual Assault Task Force, and the Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence, through the Transforming LGBTQ Survivor Access Project, increased adult and minor LGBTQ sexual assault survivors' access to justice in Oregon by identifying barriers LGBTQ sexual assault survivors in Oregon face, strengthening VRLC's staff ability to provide trauma-informed, culturally appropriate legal services and increasing access to those services, and expanding community partners' and other victim service providers' ability to identify and refer LGBTQ sexual assault survivors for legal services.

About the National Resource Center for Reaching Victims

The National Resource Center for Reaching Victims (NRC) is a clearinghouse for victim service providers, culturally specific organizations, criminal justice professionals, and policymakers to get information and expert guidance to enhance their capacity to identify, reach, and serve all victims, especially those from communities that are underrepresented in healing services and avenues to justice. For more information about the NRC and the Reaching Victims Mini-Grant program, visit the NRC's website at <http://reachingvictims.org>.

About the Vera Institute of Justice's Center on Victimization and Safety

The Vera Institute of Justice's Center on Victimization and Safety convenes the National Resource Center for Reaching Victims. The Center on Victimization and Safety works with communities around the country to create healing services and justice options that reach, appeal to, and benefit all survivors. Our work focuses on communities of people who are at elevated risk of harm but often marginalized from the organizations and systems designed to support victims. For more information on the Center on Victimization and Safety, please contact cvs@vera.org.

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