“How Would You Help?”

The 35th Crime Victims’ Rights Vigil


“It’s important to take time to make sure that we’re honoring those people we have lost, honoring the families and the loved ones that have been left behind and doing what we can to make sure that we’re putting victims first,” Prosecuting Attorneys Association of Michigan (PAAM) President Jeff Getting said.

Muskegon County Prosecutor D.J. Hilson was recognized as the 2024 Champion of Crime Victims by the Crime Victim Foundation. Prosecutor Hilson has worked in prosecution for almost 25 years and has been instrumental in helping victims in the areas of compensation, restitution, and electronic notification. Flint Police Department Sergeant Tanya Meeks received the Beyond the Call of Duty Award.

Prosecutors from around Michigan attended the 35th Michigan Crime Victims’ Rights Vigil at the State History Center on April 17th.

PAAM President Jeff Getting, right, presents the Champion of Crime Victims Award to Muskegon County Prosecutor D.J. Hilson.

continued on page 3
The 2024 edition of National Crime Victims’ Rights Week ran between April 21-27 and prosecutors and their offices honored crime victims in a variety of ways throughout April.

2024 marked the second year in a row that the Cheboygan County Prosecutor’s Office hosted its Crime Victims’ Awareness Walk. The 2024 walk stepped off from the Cheboygan Opera House on the evening of April 18th. “The rain held off and everyone was in generous spirits for our walk,” Cheboygan County Prosecutor Melissa Goodrich said. Prosecutor Goodrich added that the event helped generate the donation of items to the Women’s Resource Center of Northern Michigan in Cheboygan.

In Huron County, Prosecutor Tim Rutkowski and his team marked National Crime Victims’ Rights Week by holding an art contest based on the week’s theme, "How Would You Help?"

“The contest allowed students to think about crime victims and what they can do to help them,” Prosecutor Rutkowski said, “and this event aids in engaging the community as a whole in our effort to support victims of crime.”
Duty Award. Lore Rogers, with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services in the Division of Victim Services, was honored with the Crime Victim Advocate of the Year Award.

After the vigil, Barry County Prosecutor Julie Nakfoor Pratt said prosecutors have a special commitment to victims. “Probably the most important thing is your heart and soul is into it, and that’s why you can walk into a courtroom and advocate the way we do.” Prosecutor Pratt adds that her work requires an understanding of what victims are experiencing. “Victims are in various stages of grief as the case moves through the system. So we have to be ready to meet them where they are in the grief process.”

Click here to see a brief commentary from PAAM’s President about the vigil.

Child Abuse Prevention Month
Blue pinwheels gardens

(Above) Montcalm County Prosecutor Andrea Krause, third from right, joins community leaders to plant a pinwheel garden in Stanton, while (right) Ingham County Prosecutor John Dewane, fourth from left, gathers with volunteers to plant a pinwheel garden in Lansing.