

Thank you for allowing me just a few minutes to update you on the VOCA grant funding

You have been approving the grant for several years now and I wanted to ask you if you actually know what a victim coordinator does?

My job is to support victims and witnesses of violent and/or felony crimes during the criminal prosecution of the offender. This includes victims of assault, child physical abuse, child sexual abuse, domestic violence, adult sexual assault, survivors of homicide victims, elder abuse, burglary, kidnapping, lewdness, robbery and a whole slew of others.

What does that practically mean?

I'm a liaison between the victim and the Deputy County Attorney. That means I make phone calls, attend in-person meetings, email exchanges or meeting victims or witnesses at the courthouse to help them through what can be a scary process.

Sometimes I even get the privilege of taking a child on a court-room tour so they can visualize what the room will look like when they testify. I also help victims receive restitution when they've suffered a financial loss due to a crime.

So while I do pass along information to victims, my main goal is to provide emotional support. Especially to children. Maybe you have a daughter or a granddaughter who you can imagine becoming a victim of a violent crime. I'm there to meet with them every time they come into the office to meet with an attorney, every time they have to go into court and face the person who abused them. I'm a friendly and familiar face that hopefully provides some sort of comfort to them in an emotionally charged time.

UPDATE ON VOCA FUNDING:

The grant funding committee has asked us to break down all of our goals and objectives into four quarters. We've finished the first quarter this year and I wanted to tell you how we've fared.

Goal 1: make initial contact with 1100 new victims

Our goal for this quarter was 275 and we passed that by far and made contact with 420

Goal 2: phone or email 5000 victims to answer questions or offer support

Our goal for this quarter was 1250 and we achieved 1848

Goal 3: Meet with 1000 victims in person or in court to provide them with support

This quarter's goal was 250 and we helped 262 victims.

Goal 4: Tell victims about Utah Office for Victims of Crime and help them filling out applications

We helped 129 and our goal was only 30.

Goal 5: Help 600 victims with restitution matters.

Our goal was 150 and we helped 519 this quarter.

Goal 6: Make contact with and inform 100 victims of the defendant's sentencing date and the victim's right to speak at sentencing if they wish.

This quarter's goal was 25 and we helped 28 victims

Goal 7: Refer 60 victims to other agencies to better assist their needs.

This quarter's goal was 15 and we ended up referring 21.

Goal 8: Continue our volunteer program to offset costs for the county and to strengthen and broaden our victim assistance.

Done – Tinesha Zandamela!

So as you can see, we've not only met our goals in every area, we've exceeded them by far in some cases. I think the unfortunate trend for Utah County is crime is rising as our population rises and the number of victims is increasing.

Thank you for your support of the grant process every year which enables us to continue helping and supporting victims every day.