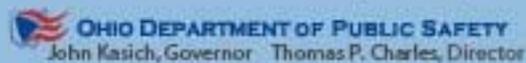




Criminal Justice Weekly

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NEWS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

The U Visa - A Useful Tool for Law Enforcement: Non-reporting of serious crimes makes society as a whole less safe. If the police are not notified about a crime they are unable to investigate it. In recognition of this problem Congress created the U Visa in 2000. In creating the U Visa, Congress had two main goals: (1) improving law enforcement's ability to effectively investigate and prosecute serious crimes; and (2) protecting victims of serious crimes.

The U Visa is available to an immigrant who:

- has suffered substantial physical or mental abuse as a result of being the victim of a serious crime (ex: domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking); and
- has been, is being, or is likely to be helpful in the investigation or prosecution of the crime.

Law enforcement (generally police, prosecutor, or judge) is integral in the process because one of the requirements for the visa is a certification form signed by law enforcement affirming the immigrant's helpfulness in the case. The U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services ("USCIS", formerly INS) counts on law enforcement to help determine the immigrant's helpfulness and that a crime

occurred.

While law enforcement is the signatory of the certification form, USCIS makes the actual decision about whether to approve or deny an immigrant's U Visa petition after considering the certification form and other evidence the immigrant must submit.

An immigrant with an approved U Visa gets a work permit valid for four years. He or she is able to include certain family members in the U Visa status. After three years, the immigrant is able to apply for a green card.

The U Visa encourages immigrants to report serious crimes. It also gives crime victims autonomy, often giving a domestic violence victim necessary support to leave the abuser.

For additional information on U Visas, you may contact Megan Sprecher, Legal Aid Society of Cleveland, at megan.sprecher@laslev.org.

Criminal Justice Commission Bill Reintroduced in Senate: Senator Jim Webb (D-VA) reintroduced his National Criminal Justice Commission Act last month. The bill, S. 306, is virtually identical to the version which passed the House and the Senate Judiciary Committee last year. The bill would create a commission of 14 members, four of whom must represent state and local concerns, to study and report to Congress on

challenges and best practices in the criminal justice system at the federal, state and local level. Webb introduced the bill with 20 co-sponsors. A companion bill has not yet been introduced in the House. View the text (<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/BILLS-112s306is/pdf/BILLS-112s306is.pdf>), fact sheet and section-by-section summary of the bill.

House CJS Holds Hearing on Reentry Programs: Last month, the House CJS subcommittee held a hearing on the growth in federal and state prison spending and successful state reforms to reduce recidivism and cut corrections spending. Adam Gelb, director of the Public Safety Performance Project, testified that spending on corrections is the second fastest growing category of state budgets, consuming more than \$50 billion a year, yet the "public safety return rate" is very low.

Gelb discussed the Justice Reinvestment initiative which works to reduce recidivism and prison populations. He urged Congress to "prime the pump" to aid states in increasing research capacity as well as funding, which promise substantial benefits in the future.

Source: <http://ncja.informz.net/admin31/content/template.asp?sid=23180&brandid=3027&uid=759987652&mi=1089248&ptid=54>

TRAINING/RESOURCES

Free Grant Writing Seminars: OCJS is hosting free Grant Writing seminars in 2011. OCJS's grant trainings provide an overview of identifying grant sources, analyzing program objectives, creating a budget, seeking letters of support, and writing proposals. Federal and state grants available to criminal justice professionals are discussed. Attendees also receive the

OCJS publication, *Grant Writing: Identifying and Applying for Funding in a Competitive Market*. Trainings take place on the following dates: **March 22, April 26, May 3, June 16, July 21, August 18, September 22, October 12, November 7 and December 14**. Please visit http://www.ocjs.ohio.gov/GrantTraining_2011.pdf to view class ti-

ties. All trainings are held from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the Ohio Department of Public Safety's Motorcycle Classroom, located at 1970 W. Broad St., Columbus, on the first floor. To download and print a training registration form, visit: http://publicsafety.ohio.gov/links/ocjs_TrainingForm.pdf

TRAINING/RESOURCES CONT.

Best Practices for Lawyers Assisting Pro Se Victims of Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and Stalking with Civil Protection Order Cases Training: Attorneys who work with victims of domestic violence, sexual assault and stalking will learn how to develop a Pro Se Project and deliver safe effective legal assistance to pro se victims in civil protection order cases.

Attorneys who attend this training institute will be better able to:

- (1) Identify the benefits and limitations of pro se assistance
- (2) Design a Pro Se Project to deliver effective legal services to pro se victims seeking civil protection orders
- (3) Develop victim-specific case strategy incorporating legal and non-legal remedies
- (4) Prepare to file, litigate and enforce a civil protection order case pro se

This training has been carefully created to reflect research and knowledge in adult

learning theory. It is interactive and incorporates a variety of learning activities including small group exercises, demonstrations, role plays, and facilitated discussions. Participants will be working together with faculty to generate ideas and discussion.

This one-day training is taking place prior to the Equal Justice Conference, held by the ABA and National Legal Aid & Defender Association (NLADA) May 19-21. The Equal Justice Conference brings together all components of the legal community to discuss equal justice issues as they relate to the delivery of legal services to the poor and low-income individuals in need of legal assistance. The emphasis of this Conference is on strengthening partnerships among the key players in the civil justice system. Pro bono and legal services program staff, judges, corporate counsel, court administrators, private lawyers, paralegals, and many others attend this event. For more information on EJC please visit their

website:

<http://www2.americanbar.org/calendar/equal-justice-conference/Pages/default.aspx>

When: May 18

Where: Las Vegas Hilton, Las Vegas, Nevada

Registration will close on April 22. To register, visit: [https://abanet.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_4VnoQhTKWsvPdCk<http://e2ma.net/go/6981977513/208485903/219926651/1408433/goto:https://abanet.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_4VnoQhTKWsvPdC](https://abanet.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_4VnoQhTKWsvPdCk&http://e2ma.net/go/6981977513/208485903/219926651/1408433/goto:https://abanet.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_4VnoQhTKWsvPdC)

There are no registration fees to attend the Institute. CLEs will be provided. This training is presented by the American Bar Association Commission on Domestic Violence.

GRANTS/FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

OVW Fiscal Year 2011 Sexual Assault Services Formula Grant Program:

<http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/docs/assault-services-grant.pdf> (<http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/docs/assault-services-grant.pdf>)

DEADLINE: April 5, 2011, 11:59 P.M. Eastern Time.

OVERVIEW: The Sexual Assault Services Program (SASP) was created by the Violence Against Women and Department of Justice Reauthorization Act of 2005 and is the first federal funding stream solely dedicated to the provision of direct intervention and related assistance for victims of sexual assault. The Sexual Assault Services Formula Grant Program (SASP Formula Grant Program) directs grant dollars to states and territories to assist them in supporting rape crisis centers and other nonprofit, nongovernmental organizations that provide core services, direct intervention, and related assistance to victims of sexual assault.

ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS: Applicants are limited to any state of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American

Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

AWARD INFORMATION: SASP Formula Grant Program funds for FY 2011 will be awarded based on the following guidelines: By statute, OVW will award a base amount to each State and Territory. Funds remaining after the allocated base amount will be distributed among the States and Territories based on population, including Tribal populations. The most accurate and complete data compiled by the United States Bureau of the Census are used to determine the populations.

CONTACT: OVW at (202) 307-6026

OVW Fiscal Year 2011 Services, Training, Education and Policies to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking in Secondary Schools Grant Program:

<http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/docs/grant-program-solicitation.pdf>

DEADLINE: April 6, 2011, 11:59 P.M. Eastern Time.

OVERVIEW: The Services, Training,

Education and Policies to Reduce Sexual Assault, Domestic Violence, Dating Violence, and Stalking in Secondary Schools Grant Program, hereafter referred to as the STEP Program, was created by the Violence Against Women Act of 2005 (VAWA 2005) to support middle and high schools to develop and implement effective training, services, prevention strategies, policies, and coordinated community responses for student victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence and stalking.

ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS: 1) Public, Charter, Tribal, or Nationally Accredited Private Middle or High Schools; 2) Schools administered by the Department of Defense; 3) Groups of middle and/or high schools (2 or more); or 4) School Districts

AWARD INFORMATION: Individual Applicants: up to \$350,000 over a 36 month period Consortia Projects: up to \$550,000 over a 36 month period.

CONTACT: OVW at (202) 307-6026

OCJS CONTACT

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