CRIME VICTIMS' INSTITUTE

Executive Director: Mary M. Breaux, Ph.D.

October 2026

CVI Updates **P.1**
Upcoming Conferences **P.2**
Upcoming CVI Publications and Events **P.3**
Board of Regents and Advisory Board Directory **P.4**
Resources **P.5**

Our Mission

The mission of the Crime Victims' Institute is to:

- Conduct research to examine the impact of crime on victims of all ages in order to promote a better understanding of victimization.
- Improve services to victims.
- Assist victims of crime by giving them a voice.
- Inform victim-related policymaking at the state and local levels.

New Addition to the CVI Team:



Graduate Research Assistant: Zoe J. Hayes began the doctoral program in the Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology at Sam Houston State University in the Fall of 2024. She received an M.S. in Forensic Science in May 2023 and a B.S. in Forensic Biology from Alabama State University. Her research focuses broadly on victimization, the victim-offender overlap, life-course outcomes, and translational justice. In Summer 2026, she was one of two doctoral students selected to participate in the Alliance of NGOs summer program at the United Nations Headquarters in Vienna, Austria. This two-week experience allowed her to attend the 35th Session of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ), visit international crime organizations, learn about current transnational crime-prevention trends related to human and drug trafficking, and engage with practitioners and researchers.

Former CVI Research Assistant Moves to Oklahoma Attorney General's Office:

Former CVI research assistantCristalHernandezhas begun hervictimservices career and nowserves asthe Research and Training Coordinator with the Victim Advocacy Services Unit in the Oklahoma Attorney General's Office. She will work closely with the Domestic Fatality Review Board to help identify gaps in the domestic violence prevention and protection system and propose recommendations aimed at improving the coordinated response of the individuals, organizations, and agencies that comprise the domestic violence prevention and protection system in Oklahoma.

Team CVI wishes Cristal the best of luck in her new position!

Domestic Violence Awareness Month Event at SHSU:

Sam HoustonStateUniversity hosteda Domestic ViolenceAwareness Month presentation onOctober 6th in the Hazel B. Kerper Courtroom. Madison County District Attorney Courtney Cain and Madison County Victim Assistance Coordinator Heather Reeves explored the criminal justice system's response to domestic violence and the vital role of victim advocacy.

Team CVI Across the State of Texas:

In September, CVI team member Mayra Peña attended the Conference on Crime Against Women (CCAW) Summit in South Padre Island, TX, to exhibit and raise awareness of the CVI, its mission, and its upcoming third annual CVI conference. Mayra also shared information about academic programs in the College of Criminal Justice at Sam Houston State University. While at the Summit, Mayra attended workshops on domestic and sexual violence, human trafficking, trauma-informed practices, and emerging challenges facing professionals working to prevent and respond to violence against women.





At the end of October, CVI team member Zoe Hayes will attend the Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV) Statewide Conference in Round Rock, TX. The TCFV Conference centers on the theme "I'm OK, Are You OK?" to reinforce community networks that wrap survivors in support. Zoe looks forward to representing the CVI, connecting with practitioners, as well as gaining new insights into advocacy, survivor-centered practices, and strategies to strengthen support for survivors and communities.

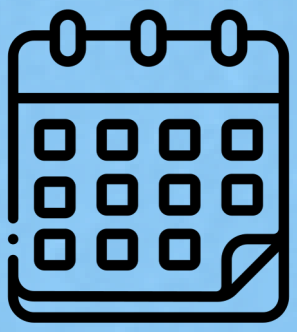
tcfv
TEXAS COUNCIL ON FAMILY VIOLENCE

Look for upcoming publications and fact sheets from the Crime Victims' Institute:

The CVI will produce a three-part Fact Sheet series on missing, endangered, and abducted persons (MEAP) in Texas.

- Understanding Vulnerability and Victimization Risk (October)
- Families and Secondary Victims Across the Disappearance Lifecycle (November)
- Evidence-Informed Responses, Promising Practices, and Long-Term Justice (December)





Other commemorative events/upcoming activities this month:

- **October 18-24, 2026:** America's Safe Schools Week
  - This observance focuses on school safety, violence prevention, and creating safe learning environments.
- **October 19, 2026:** Domestic Violence Survivor's Day
  - The Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV) is holding a survivors' rally at the Texas Capitol in Austin from 11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m., featuring survivors and legislators speaking in support of survivors of domestic violence.
- **October 22, 2026:** Raise 'Em Up for Texas Annual Gala
  - Crime Stoppers of Houston hosts this gala, which brings together community leaders and supporters of victim services, advocacy programs, and crime prevention initiatives.

Crime Victims' Institute Advisory Board

Heather F. Ayala
Grand Prairie
National Director of Victim Services, Mothers Against Drunk Driving

Hon. Lee Ann Breading
Denton
District Judge, 462nd Judicial District Court

Melissa Carter
Bryan
Victim Assistance Coordinator, Brazos County District Attorney's Office

Hillary A. England, MSW
Pflugerville
Deputy Director of Victim Services and Prevention Programs, Office of the Governor

Matthew L. Ferrara, Ph.D.
Austin
Forensic Psychologist

Elizabeth "Libby" Hamilton
Austin
Crime Victim Liaison, Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles

Hon. Joan Huffman
Houston
State Senator for District 17 & Chair of the Committee on Finance

Chief Emmitt R. Jackson, Jr.
Argyle
Chief of Police
Argyle Police Department

Lindsay M. Kinzie, Esq.
Keller
General Counsel, The Gatehouse at Grapevine

Forrest A. Mitchell
Corpus Christi
Retired Director of Operations, Nueces County Medical Examiner's Office

Alexis J. Nungaray
Houston
Student, Lone Star College

Brandi L. Reed
Amarillo
Director of Education, Family Support Services of Amarillo, Inc.

Jeffery "JD" Robertson
Wimberley
Independent Consultant & Retired Major, Texas Rangers

David E. Schwartz
Bellaire
Retired Pharmacist

Hon. John Smithee
Amarillo
Texas State Representative District 86 & Chair of the Texas House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee

Hon. Erleigh N. Wiley
Forney
Criminal District Attorney, Kaufman County

Texas State University System Board of Regents

Stephen Lee
Chairman
Bastrop

Tom Long
Vice Chairman
Dallas

Charlie Amato
Regent
San Antonio

Duke Austin
Regent
Houston

Sheila Faske
Regent
Rose City

Russell Gordy
Regent
Houston

William F. Scott
Regent
Nederland

Alan L. Tinsley
Regent
Madisonville

Johnny R. Weisman
Regent
New Braunfels

Elizabeth Diaz Arreola
Student Regent
Beaumont

Resources

• Aging and Disability Resource Center	855-937-2372
• Cyber Civil Rights Initiative	844-878-2274
• Mothers Against Drunk Driving	877-623-3435
• National Child Abuse Hotline	800-422-4453
• National Domestic Violence Hotline	800-799-7233
• National Human Trafficking Hotline	888-373-7888
• National Sexual Assault Hotline	800-656-4673
• National Suicide Prevention Lifeline	988
• Texas Abuse Hotline	800-252-5400
• Texas Council on Family Violence	https://tcfv.org/survivor-resources/
• Texas Association Against Sexual Assault	https://taasa.org/get-help/
• Victim Connect Resource Center	855-484-2846
• Victims Of Immigration Crime Engagement (VOICE)	1-855-48-VOICE (1-855-488-6423)





@cvi_shsu
crimevictimsinstitute.org

Sam Houston State University
MEMBER THE TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM