

**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DATE:** Wednesday, November 22<sup>th</sup> 2022

**LOCATION:** Akron, Ohio

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**Over 1300 Victims of Violent Crime Remembered**

*Victim Assistance Program hosts its Annual Angel Tree Ceremony – A Memorial of Remembrance for those in Summit County having lost their lives to homicide, vehicular homicide, and violent crimes.*

For over 300 members of the community, Victim Assistance Program's Angel Tree Ceremony has become a holiday tradition that provides healing and a sense of community, gathering friends and family of those who have lost their lives to violence. The ceremony is held on the first Monday of every December in the auditorium of the Public Library in Downtown Akron.

This year, participants can join with Victim Assistance Staff, Domestic Relations Court Staff, and other Community Partners. Speaking at the event will be Denico Buckley-Knight, Akron's new Youth & Community Opportunity Director, who will share how violence impacts the entire community and how we can address the stereotypes regarding young adults. "Young people are our future and we must find ways to deter violence and promote the next generation of our community" says Denico.

Within the Akron Public Libraries Auditorium, the Emmanuel Christian Academy's children's choir will provide uplifting vocal arrangements and light refreshments will be provided by agency volunteers. No tickets or registration are necessary to attend, and all are welcome.

For community members that would like to submit a photo for the 2022 Angel Tree Ceremony memorial video and Wall of Remembrance you may call Victim Assistance Program at 330.376.7022 ext. 218 or email their photo with their loved one's information to [outreach@victimassistanceprogram.org](mailto:outreach@victimassistanceprogram.org).

The Angel Trees and the Wall of Remembrance will be displayed at the Akron-Summit County Public Library, 60 South High Street, throughout the month of December. Family members and friends are encouraged to visit the display to view their loved ones' angel ornaments and photos.

If someone is unable to attend in person, their loved one's angel is placed on the trees with care by Victim Assistance Program advocates. The Angel Tree Ceremony will be streamed on Victim Assistance Program's YouTube ([youtube.com/victimassistanceprogram](https://www.youtube.com/victimassistanceprogram)) and Facebook ([facebook.com/victimassistanceprogram](https://www.facebook.com/victimassistanceprogram)) pages and will be recorded.

The mission of Victim Assistance Program is to empower our community to restore lives impacted by crisis, violence, and tragedy. The purpose of the Agency is to provide 24-hour crisis intervention, advocacy, and education to victims of crime and trauma and the professional community who serves this population. To learn more about Victim Assistance Program's services, and ways to get involved, visit [victimassistanceprogram.org](http://victimassistanceprogram.org) or call our 24-hour hotline, 330.376.0040.

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