



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Victim Assistance Program Commemorates National Crime Victims' Rights Week
(April 7 – 13, 2019) with Community Open House and Room Dedication**

On Thursday, April 11, 2019, Victim Assistance Program, in commemoration of National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVRW), is hosting a Community Open House and Training Room Dedication to raise awareness about victims' issues, rights, resources and services available. According to the most recent Bureau of Justice Statistics' National Crime Victimization Survey, U.S. residents age 12 or older experienced 3.1 million violent victimizations. In Summit County, every 7.5 hours, someone is a victim of domestic violence. Every 12 hours, someone is a victim of assault, and every 10 days, someone is a victim of homicide (*FBI's UCR and Ohio Attorney General's most recent 2016 data for Summit County, Ohio*).

Victim Assistance Program will commemorate the advancement of victims' rights and highlight issues surrounding victimization by holding a Community Open House and Training Room Dedication on April 11, 2019 beginning at 4:00pm, located at 137 South Main Street, Suite 300 in Akron, Ohio. Victim Assistance Program will dedicate the new Rev. Dr. Bob Denton Training Facility in honor of Bob Denton, agency founder, at 5:00pm. What began as a grassroots movement to fill the gaps in social services available within the criminal justice system, specifically for victims, soon evolved, laying the foundation for what would become Victim Assistance Program. "We had victims in '71 - '72 asking 'you've got all these services for offenders, what do you do us for us?' Nothing. Absolutely nothing. So, we began to reach out and started the advocacy services early on," said Denton. "And we watched that grow. We took our resources and developed a program that makes sure you don't forget anybody."

Victim Assistance Program will also present the 2019 Rev. Dr. Robert A. Denton Outstanding Victim Service Award to Cuyahoga Falls Fire Chief Fred Jackson in recognition of his faithfulness, dedication, and commitment to victims of crime and trauma. "I am so incredibly proud of Fire Chief Fred Jackson for being honored by Victim Assistance with the Dr. Denton Outstanding Victim Service Award," stated Cuyahoga Fall Mayor Don Walters. "Chief Jackson is the epitome of leadership in action and has dedicated his professional life in service to our community. The honor is both well-earned and well-deserved."

The Office for Victims of Crime (OVC) leads communities throughout the country in their annual observances of NCVRW by promoting victims' rights and honoring crime victims and those who advocate on their behalf. This year's theme – *Honoring our Past. Creating Hope for the Future.* – encourages commemoration, honor, and respect toward the crime victim advocates, allied professionals, and selfless volunteers who have courageously worked for

empowering our community to restore lives impacted by crisis, violence, and tragedy

increased rights for crime victims. The theme also invites us to look toward a future of inclusive, accessible, and innovative resources and services for survivors.

The vision of Victim Assistance Program is a world where all victims are healed. The mission 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 or call 330-376-7022.