

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National Leaders, Survivors, and Advocates Convene at the Library of Congress for CommUNITY Day During National Crime Victims' Rights Week

Washington, DC (April 21, 2026) — Survivors, advocates, policymakers, and national leaders will gather at the Library of Congress for CommUNITY Day, a featured event commemorating National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVRW). The event will take place from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM ET, bringing together voices from across the country to highlight survivor-centered, community-driven solutions that expand access to victim services.

Hosted in partnership with the U.S. Congressional Crime Survivors & Justice Caucus, this event is part of a field-generated NCVRW initiative co-led by the National Organization for Victim Advocacy (NOVA), Crime Survivors Speak, MUSC National Crime Victims Research and Treatment Center and the National Center for Victims of Crime. Together, these organizations are advancing a shared "CommUNITY" framework that centers collaboration, innovation, and survivor-informed approaches across the field.

The day will include the Caucus Awards Ceremony, followed by a national panel discussion focused on innovative approaches to supporting survivors and advancing victims' rights.

The **CommUNITY Innovation Panel** will feature:

- Moderator: Aswad Thomas, Vice President, Just Safe and National Director, Crime Survivors Speak
- Brenda Glass, Founder/CEO, Brenda Glass Multipurpose Trauma Center
- Gloria Aguilera Terry, CEO, Texas Council on Family Violence
- Aparna Bhattacharyya, Executive Director, Raksha, Inc.
- David Adams, Partner, Parnall and Adams Law

Attendees will also hear from Mary Fetchet, founder of Voices Center for Resilience, whose work following the September 11 attacks has supported thousands impacted by mass violence.

"This moment calls for more than awareness, it calls on all of us to meet the moment," said Claire Selib, Executive Director, NOVA. "CommUNITY Day is about bringing people together across sectors to elevate what's working, learn from one another, and move forward with a shared commitment to survivors."

The event will be held in person at the Library of Congress and livestreamed nationwide, ensuring access for advocates and communities across the country.

National Crime Victims' Rights Week, observed April 19–25, 2026, is a time to honor victims of crime, recognize those who support them, and recommit to advancing rights, protections, and services for all. For more information, a list of our collaborating partners and to view livestream details, visit: <https://www.uniteforvictimrights.org/>

Voices from the Field



“This moment is important because it uplifts the voices of crime victims everywhere who otherwise have not been heard. This moment lends credence to the suffering of those silenced by external forces.”

— **Brenda Glass, MSSA, LISW-S, Founder and CEO,
Brenda Glass Multipurpose Trauma Center**

“For those of us who work alongside survivors of violence every day, community is built on trust, safety and a shared responsibility to one another, principles that become even more essential as AI becomes more integrated into our lives.

Technology can absolutely improve our communities, but we must listen to the people within them, ensuring survivor and advocate voices are reflected in how these systems are designed and deployed.”

— **Gloria Aguilera Terry, Chief Executive Officer, Texas Council on Family Violence**

“Here we are, almost one year to the day, when many of our victim-serving grants were terminated. It is important for us to be here together for National Crime Victims' Rights Week because our movement for victims' rights came from the community and it will take us as a CommUnity to weather the storms that are eroding and taking away the rights and support systems we have taken years to build. It is in CommUnity that we heal and find our strength, voice, and power.”

— **Aparna Bhattacharyya, Executive Director, Raksha, Inc.**

“Together, we must continue to challenge the systems and individuals that cause harm to our most vulnerable communities and be the fire for the voices they try to silence. Resilience is more than a word, it is a way of life, and changing the narrative of our collective story is not only possible, it is necessary.”

— **David Adams, Partner, Parnall & Adams Law**

Panelist Biographies

Brenda Glass, MSSA, LISW-S, is Founder and Executive Director of the Brenda Glass Multipurpose Trauma Center, where she leads the delivery of holistic, trauma-informed services for individuals and families impacted by violence. A licensed clinical social worker with over 25 years of experience, she has advanced innovative trauma recovery models that address the root causes of violence, including systemic inequities, mental health challenges, and community instability. Her work integrates clinical expertise, faith-based support, and culturally responsive practices to help survivors heal and thrive.

Gloria Aguilera Terry, CEO of the Texas Council on Family Violence (TCFV), leads Texas's only statewide coalition dedicated to ending domestic violence. Under her leadership, TCFV advances policy at both the state and national levels, strengthens local service providers through training and technical assistance, and drives prevention efforts in partnership with schools, law enforcement, and communities. Since 2013, she has grown TCFV into one of the largest coalitions in the country and helped shift cultural conversations around safety, accountability, and healthy relationships.

Aparna Bhattacharyya, Executive Director of Raksha, Inc., has led efforts since 1998 to support survivors of domestic violence within immigrant and refugee communities. With a background in criminal justice and victim advocacy, she has developed culturally specific programs that address the unique barriers faced by underserved populations. Aparna is a nationally recognized leader in advancing services for immigrant survivors and has played a key role in founding and advising organizations focused on gender-based violence and human trafficking.

David Adams, Partner at Parnall & Adams Law, brings extensive experience in prosecuting violent crime and advancing justice for survivors. A member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, he previously served as an Assistant U.S. Attorney and Tribal Liaison to 22 Pueblos and Nations in New Mexico, where he worked to enhance public safety and address violence against women. Recognized by the U.S. Attorney General for his leadership, David now works at the intersection of law and advocacy and trains professionals nationwide on best practices to strengthen responses to victims and promote accountability.

Event Schedule

CommUNITY Day | April 21, 2026 | Library of Congress, Members Room

10:00 AM – Doors Open

10:30 AM – 12:00 PM – Congressional Crime Survivors & Justice Caucus Awards Ceremony

12:00 PM – 12:45 PM – Lunch + Networking

12:45 PM - 2:00 PM - CommUNITY Innovation Panel

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Photos and video from the event are available upon request.

The National Organization for Victim Advocacy (NOVA) is a recognized leader in the victims' rights movement, with a mission to champion dignity and compassion for all victims of crime and crisis.