



Minnesota Justice Monthly

Professional Training Conference on Responding to Crime Victims with Disabilities

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RESPONDING TO

Crime Victims WITH Disabilities National Training Conference

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The Council on Crime and Justice received a training scholarship from the Department of Justice to create a multidisciplinary team to attend the 2011 Responding to Crime Victims with Disabilities National Training Conference in Orlando, Florida.



The Council developed a team comprised of our Crime Victim Services Coordinator, Casey Kestler, Vice President Mark Haase, Anna McLafferty with the [National Alliance on Mental Illness Minnesota](#)(NAMI-MN), and [Crisis Intervention Team](#) (CIT) Officer Steve Wickelgren from the Minneapolis Police Department, and Joann Springer from the [Ramsey County Sheriff's Office](#). Together we traveled to Orlando for a week to learn about the unique challenges and opportunities when working with victims with a disability. The training sessions covered a wide range of disabilities including intellectual, developmental, physical, deaf and hard of hearing, mental illness and dual diagnoses.

Together the team learned about these different types of disabilities and discussed issues with response to victimization in their respective fields. The team created an action plan focused on increasing awareness and information surrounding mental illness and victimization. The team will work together to develop and provide training of law enforcement, CIT, Victim Service Providers and mental health advocacy groups. Over the next year the team will meet to identify training needs, and develop curriculum for stakeholders. This may include cross-training of agencies for improved response by agencies when symptoms of mental illness may be present, along with developing response protocols and working as a team to co-advocate for clients. We are excited to be part of this team and look forward to improving our understanding of mental illness and increase awareness on these issues that are affecting so many victims in Minnesota today.