



Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center, Inc.

A warm welcome to all and Happy New Year!

Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center has been providing free services and referrals since its inception in 1983. You may be wondering what we have been up to during the COVID-19 pandemic? Court and other governmental services have been closed, then opened, then closed. It has been confusing, frustrating and disheartening for the victims we serve. MCVRC has remained open throughout to answer questions, provide court representation, and offer referrals for other needed services. Along with the rest of the world, MCVRC is adapting to keep its doors virtually open as we work remotely doing our part to prevent the spread of the virus.

MCVRC attorneys have provided legal representation, information about the ever-changing status of cases, and reminding courts that victims are part of the process. Victim advocates are available daily to provide referral services, court accompaniment (when court has been held), assistance with financial questions related to the crime and generally provide emotional support. Without our services, victims are struggling to connect with the appropriate resources to help them understand the court process and find benefits appropriate to their situation.

Case highlights

One of the cases in which MCVRC has achieved great success for victims' rights in Maryland is the Antoine case. Gary Antoine was viciously assaulted just outside of the high school where he teaches by Dorian Bostic, a professional boxer. He was first maced and then struck repeatedly with an aluminum baseball bat as he walked towards his car. Because of an impatient court, the victim was unable to provide his impact statement prior to the court's acceptance of a plea and sentencing. Without the benefit of the victim's statement, the court sentenced the defendant to a one year unsupervised probation before judgment. In other words, no criminal conviction and no jail time.

The victim contacted MCVRC, and senior appellate attorney, Victor Stone, filed an appeal on the victim's behalf and argued before the Court of Special Appeals that the statutory right of the victim to be heard at sentencing must be upheld. The Court of Special Appeals agreed and ruled that the lower court was incorrect in sentencing the defendant without first hearing from the victim. Because of Victor's arguments and MCVRC's involvement, the victim's right to be heard has been successfully defended and preserved. This victim (and future victims) will now be able to tell the court how the crime has impacted his life. Winning the right to appeal and winning the appeal are huge positive results for victims' rights in Maryland. The consequences of this ruling will be felt statewide as State's Attorneys' offices and judges are now on notice that entering into plea agreements and sentencing defendants without having first heard from the

victim will result in the voiding of the plea and sentence. MCVRC's representation in this case is just another example of our commitment to insuring that victims voices are heard.

Current events

MCVRC has suffered the loss of two positions in the last year and a half due to COVID-19 cutbacks and other budgetary constraints. We lost a victim advocate position and an in-house social worker. With budget cuts expected due to the soaring financial burdens related to COVID-19, MCVRC has been working diligently to find additional funding sources. Several small grants and donations have been received along with a surprise \$10,000 anonymous gift, all of which have provided a boost to MCVRC's resources. One emergency grant has provided funding for a victim advocate. Plans to provide necessary social work/counseling services are being developed. Senior management is looking to find annual corporate sponsorships to fill gaps in our grant funding and ensure that MCVRC can continue to provide representation and services statewide to victims of crime in Maryland. For corporate giving please contact [Jennifer Abell](#), Director of Finance and Operation.

Buy a brick

To pave the Garden of Remembrance with your quote or name of your loved one. The garden is located at the Prince George's County Justice Center. Email [Ellie Jones](#), Coordinator of Victim Services, for more information.

MCVRC is always looking for donations in any amount. Our need is greater than ever. Budget cuts related to COVID make planning for the future very difficult. We could use some help so that we can keep helping! MCVRC is a 501(c)3 corporation and relies on donations to provide free services to victims of crime in Maryland. Your contributions, large or small, make a difference. Please consider MCVRC when you are making your donations.

[MAKE A DONATION >](#)
