



National Crime Victims' Rights Week  
Community Awareness Projects  
April 6 - 12, 2014

**"30 Years: Restoring the Balance of Justice"**

CAP TIPS is a series of periodic messages to assist in the planning and implementation of NCVRW Community Awareness Projects. Please feel free to send your individual questions or requests for assistance to Anne Seymour at [annesey@atlantech.net](mailto:annesey@atlantech.net)

## **CAP TIP #1**

### ***To Improve Public Awareness***

***"Be Prepared!"***

### **A "10-Week-Out" Countdown Calendar and Checklist for Success**

#### **Introduction**

Since the National Association of VOCA Assistance Administrators (NAVAA) began managing the National Crime Victims' Rights Week Community Awareness Project (NCVRW CAP) Program in 2007, it has published a very popular "Countdown Calendar" to help CAP programs with their many planning activities. Although 2014 NCVRW is only ten weeks away, it's time to begin thinking about the wide range of tasks that can contribute to the success of your NCVRW activities.

This "countdown calendar checklist" is designed to help you think through *all* your potential NCVRW activities, and plan accordingly to ensure that you have enough human, financial and other resources to ensure their success. It can help you plan your key activities from January until NCVRW on April 6, 2014.

This CAP TIP is designed to offer guidance to you *for two categories* of CAP activities:

- Special events
- Media relations

While *all* previous CAP TIPS, along with those that will be emailed to you in 2014 by NAVAA, are relevant to your planning, this CAP TIP highlights those that are *most applicable* to your planning activities (see "Relevant CAP TIPS to Review.") (Note: All previous CAP TIPS are publicly available at <http://cap.navaa.org/captips.html>. Current 2011 CAP TIPS are distributed only to current NCVRW CAP subgrantees; they are emailed and available online in the "Subgrantees Only" section (<http://cap.navaa.org/subs>.) This "checklist" provides only an overview of key activities; the previous and upcoming CAP TIPS offer much more detail for each recommended activity.

Fifty-seven previous CAP TIPS, published from 2007 to 2013, can be accessed at <http://cap.navaa.org/captips.html>.

The “special events” and “media relations” checklists can be easily adapted to meet your individualized needs in your community or state, and can become your “ongoing reminder” of activities that have been accomplished, and those that require further attention.

NAVAA will notify you when the Office for Victims of Crime 2014 NCVRW Resource Guide becomes available, so that you can incorporate its many suggestions and resources into your “countdown calendar checklist for success.”

## Special Events Checklist

### Relevant CAP TIPS to Review:

- Ø Creating an Effective NCVRW Planning Committee
- Ø How to Promote the 2014 NCVRW Theme (*this will be emailed to you within two weeks*)
- Ø Engaging Crime Victims and Survivors in your NCVRW Activities
- Ø Notable Quotables
- Ø Creative Use of NCVRW Theme Colors
- Ø How to Turn Out a Crowd
- Ø Developing Culturally-competent Resources
- Ø NCVRW Activities for Children
- Ø Engaging Criminal and Juvenile Justice Officials and Agencies
- Ø How to Engage and Involve Teens in Your NCVRW Activities
- Ø Using Volunteers
- Ø Volunteer Recognition
- Ø Working with Libraries to Commemorate NCVRW
- Ø Working with Multi-Faith Communities
- Ø Collaborating with Other Victim-related Commemorations
- Ø Partnering with and Outreach to LGBTQI Communities
- Ø Sponsoring “Green” Events
- Ø Sample sign-in sheets

### January 2014

During January, it’s a good idea to make sure you develop a comprehensive plan for your CAP activities. This includes:

- Ø Establishing a cross-disciplinary NCVRW Planning Committee and schedule for meetings and key planning activities.
- Ø Reviewing your CAP goals and activities with your Planning Committee and volunteers.
- Ø Identifying any technical assistance needs you may have that can be addressed by your NAVAA CAP Project Team; you can email CAP Consultant Anne Seymour for assistance and advice.
- Ø Participating in the NAVAA CAP recipients’ webinar on January 28, 2014 to receive an overview of the CAP Program and assistance available from your CAP Project Team.

### Week of January 26 (10 weeks out)

- Ø Your NCVRW Planning Committee should be established, and include members who can facilitate outreach to *all* potential participants, supporters and funders of your 2014 NCVRW activities. Special efforts should be made to be diverse by gender, culture, geography, profession (including both system- and community-based programs), and sexual orientation, and to include crime victims and survivors.

- Ø Once you review and adapt this “countdown calendar checklist” to your 2014 NCVRW activities, provide copies to your Planning Committee for review and to solicit leadership and volunteers. Sub-committees that address specific responsibilities and duties for NCVRW planning, implementation and evaluation should also be created.
- Ø The roles and responsibilities of your NCVRW activities should be discussed and delegated to Planning Committee members (and any other volunteers who offer special skills to enhance your events and activities).
- Ø A communications plan and calendar should be established to facilitate ongoing communications among Planning Committee (and eventually, Sub-committee) members:
  - In-person meetings (once a month)
  - Teleconferences
  - Listservs
  - Email communications
- Ø Goal(s) and objectives for your NCVRW activities are established that can contribute to the development of performance measures that evaluate “success.”

#### **Week of February 2 (*nine weeks out*)**

- Ø A basic budget is developed and approved by your NCVRW Planning Committee (including the use [and any restrictions] of NCVRW CAP funds).
- Ø Locations of events are determined with the following support activities:
  - Ensure that insurance covers all activities/events
  - Permits are obtained
  - People and businesses in the neighborhood are notified about (and invited to join) your planned activities
  - For outdoor events, alternative plans are made for inclement weather
- Ø Efforts to solicit volunteers should begin now (see “Using Volunteers” and “Volunteer Recognition” CAP Tips for additional information)
- Ø Featured speakers/presenters are identified.
- Ø The involvement of crime victims/survivors is clarified with a plan developed for:
  - Outreach
  - The role of crime victims and survivors
  - Activities to honor victims and survivors
  - Volunteers to ensure that their participation is a positive experience

#### **Week of February 9 (*eight weeks out*)**

- Ø Potential speakers/presenters are confirmed:
  - Confirmation letters/e-mails
  - Participation logistics (including travel for out-of-jurisdiction presenters)
- Ø A “Save the Date” reminder has been emailed to all potential attendees.

#### **Week of February 16 (*seven weeks out*)**

- Ø All co-sponsoring agencies and organizations have been provided with NCVRW artwork and a highlight of your special event(s) to publicize to their constituents and communities, such as:
  - Posters
  - Letter of invitation
  - Reminder post cards

- Language/artwork for "Save the Date" email or snail mail, and listserv dissemination
- Artwork and copy for website publicity (such as a web banner)
- Suggested language for ongoing email "tags" to promote your activities
- Ø Potential participants/supporters rosters are developed:
  - E-mail listing (in a software program such as Microsoft Excel to facilitate effective communications)
  - "Snail mail listings" for direct mail and invitations

#### **Week of February 23 (*six weeks out*)**

- Ø Contact your local libraries to see if they are interested in partnering with you to:
  - Promote 2014 NCVRW
  - Provide space for meetings and/or public events
  - Coordinate to also promote National Library Week, April 13 – 19, 2014
- Ø Develop your strategy for coordination with and outreach through multi-faith communities:
  - Provide faith community leaders with the "sample sermon" that will be provided within a 2014 CAP TIP
  - Discuss ways to promote NCVRW to their congregations (such as posters and other information that can be included in faith community bulletins and on their websites)

#### **Week of March 2 (*five weeks out*)**

- Ø This is your "half-way" point in the NCVRW planning process. During this week, it's a good idea to sponsor a meeting of your full Planning Committee to conduct a "pulse check:"
  - How are we doing?
  - What needs to be done in the next six weeks?
  - Any loose ends?
- Ø **THEN.....TAKE A BREAK!** You've been working hard for five weeks.....it's a good idea to have a week that is totally FREE of NCVRW planning activities!

#### **Week of March 9 (*four weeks out*)**

- Ø The location of special events has been confirmed, and you have a copy of the contract or agreement (*which should be carried on-site to the actual event*). A walk-through has been conducted to:
  - Determine the physical logistics (such as stage, podium or table, seating, resource arena, etc.) and make sure that you have an adequate number of chairs and tables.
  - Finalize any requirements related to hanging things on the walls and/or decorating the stage or venue.
  - Assess and address physical access for persons with disabilities, from transportation and parking to entry into the site, to ensure ADA compliance.
  - Identify a space or "quiet room" and support staff where attendees who may be deeply affected by the proceedings can go for support.
  - Determine where bathrooms and adjunct facilities (i.e., storage, kitchen, etc.) are located
  - Ensure that there is a secure place to hang coats.
- Ø Arrangements are made with event site staff to arrive *at least two hours* (and maybe more) *in advance of the event* to prepare and set up.

- Ø A map to the specific location (with a physical address, directions, and information about public transportation, parking and disability access) is secured in both paper and electronic formats.
- Ø If your location is outdoors, an alternative location has been planned for in case of inclement weather.
- Ø Volunteers to provide security are obtained and confirmed with email and cell phone contact information (local police departments may be a good source for this!).
- Ø Any donated food or beverage orders have been confirmed (**REMEMBER:** CAP funds *cannot* be used for food or beverages!).
- Ø Any entertainment has been confirmed (choirs, singers, color guards, etc.).
- Ø Your budget is reviewed to ensure that you are in line with all expenditures.
- Ø An e-mail roster of potential attendees has been developed.
- Ø If you are sponsoring a Resource Arena, potential participants are:
  - Notified and provided with logistical information.
  - Provided with information about the availability of tables, wall space, etc.
  - Asked to bring a specified number of brochures, posters, and other victim awareness and public education resources.
  - Provided with information about where to go at the actual event (i.e., to the Resource Arena coordinator/sign-in table).
- Ø For all key activities, volunteers have been secured to plan, implement, and clean-up after the event. A list with names, landline and cell phone numbers, and email addresses has been developed.
- Ø If any special event giveaways are planned (such as tee-shirts, caps, pens, squeeze balls, etc.), the order has been confirmed, and a volunteer has been assigned to track its arrival.

#### **Week of March 16 (three weeks out)**

- Ø Interpreters have been secured to facilitate active participation by any Deaf attendees.
- Ø All decorations have been planned and ordered.
- Ø If any awards are being given out:
  - Award recipients have been notified and provided with all information relevant to the special event (including how the awards will be presented, and time limitations on acceptance speeches).
  - Awards have been prepared with the name of the award and recipient.

#### **Week of March 23 (two weeks out)**

- Ø An event schedule with *every minute* timed and designated is emailed to all presenters; and a master/mistress of ceremonies is confirmed, with introductory and segue way remarks prepared in advance.
- Ø An email confirmation/reminder is sent to all key participants and contributors with day/date/time/location and any other relevant information:
  - All potential attendees.
  - All participants in any Resource Arena.
  - Speakers and presenters.
  - Food/beverages and napkins/plates/cups/utensils.
  - Volunteers.
- Ø (*Optional*) A photographer and/or videographer are confirmed.
- Ø Plan for volunteers who can be available to assist any attendees – especially crime victims and survivors – who may need extra emotional support during the actual event.

### **Week of March 30 (one week out)**

- Ø Event programs are finalized (and edited!) and printed.
- Ø A final reminder about your special event with map/directions has been emailed to all potential attendees.
- Ø Sign-in sheets have been prepared and copied (see sample "sign in sheets" at the NAVAA CAP website).
- Ø A "run through" with all key players is hosted, either at your office or at the actual site of the special event, and timed to ensure that you keep with your planned schedule.
- Ø Any audio/visual activities are subjected to a "practice run-through" (such as the NCVRW Theme DVD included in the OVC NCVRW Resource Guide; PowerPoint presentations; and/or a PowerPoint "welcome slide").
- Ø You obtain a final confirmation of food and beverage orders; ensure that the vendors/volunteers have the day/date/time/location of the special event; and confirm cell phone information for delivery.
- Ø All volunteers are confirmed with their assignments, and an email reminder is sent (see below, *Week of April 6, "Prior to and at the Event – Volunteers"*).
- Ø Arrange in advance to have any leftover food delivered to a shelter or other program in the community that accepts such donations (such as a co-sponsoring domestic violence shelter).
- Ø (*Optional*) For confirmed attendees, name tags are prepared in advance.
- Ø For confirmed presenters, name plates are prepared in advance.

### **Week of April 6 (NCVRW)**

- Ø Signage has been prepared to post around and at the event:
  - With arrows pointing to the entrance.
  - With information about disability parking and access.
  - With details about specific sign-in locations (for attendees, volunteers, news media, etc.).
  - Welcome signs (using NCVRW Resource Guide artwork).
- Ø Special event giveaways (such as tee-shirts, caps, squeeze balls, etc.) are nicely displayed.
- Ø A first aid kit has been secured for the actual event.
- Ø A list of emergency numbers is developed for the event (police, ambulance, hospitals, etc.)

### **Prior to and at the event:**

- Ø All decorations have been finalized at least two hours prior to the event.
- Ø You have copies of all relevant contracts and "proof of payment," and emergency contact information for all vendors (i.e., food, sound system, etc.).
- Ø On-site logistics:
  - Tables and chairs are set up for: registration; any food or beverages; resource arena; attendees; speakers on the stage, etc.
  - An audio/visual check is conducted one hour prior to the event.
  - You have copies of three sign-in sheets available as people enter (for attendees, the news media, and volunteers).
  - Logistical signage is posted.
  - Enough copies of the special event program have been duplicated.
  - A list of emergency numbers is available at the registration desk.
  - Prepared name tags and/or name tags and Sharpie pens are available at the registration desk.

- Ø Volunteers are available (and receive a short briefing one hour in advance of the event) in advance, during and following the event on-site to:
  - Haul boxes and other resources into the site.
  - Set up the room.
  - Decorate the room.
  - Facilitate any Resource Arena.
  - Provide security at and around the event site.
  - Meet and greet guests at the front door(s) and provide information and guidance.
  - Staff the welcome/registration table and sign-in sheets.
  - Assist any attendees who may need to visit a quiet space or room and receive comfort and support (have plenty of Kleenexes available!).
  - Coordinate audio/visuals for any presentations.
  - Coordinate distribution of giveaways (tee-shirts, caps, pens, etc.).
  - Coordinate any refreshments.
  - Coordinate media participation.
  - Coordinate welcoming speakers and key participants.
  - Break down the event, and clean up afterwards (you'll want to leave the room in good shape so you'll be welcome back in the future!).
  - Make arrangements to promptly return any borrowed equipment (audio/visual, laptops and LCD projectors, tables, chairs, etc.)
  - Deliver any leftover food to a shelter or other designated organization.

**Week of April 20 (*two weeks following NCVRW*)**

- Ø Remember to thank all the volunteers, featured speakers and others whose contributions made your event a success!
- Ø Snail-mail "thank you's" are preferable to email. You can use the artwork included in the NCVRW Resource Guide to create a lovely 8 ½" by 11" piece of stationary, with standardized artwork and a thoughtful message, and leave room at the bottom of the page for a personalized one-line note-of-thanks and signatures.
- Ø Plan or conduct a post-event debriefing with all key coordinators. Assess what worked and what needed improvement, and document your findings for future commemorations of NCVRW.

**Media Relations Checklist**

**Relevant CAP TIPS to Review:**

- Ø How to Engage the News Media
- Ø Building a Comprehensive Media List
- Ø Writing an Effective Press Release
- Ø Creating Public Service Announcements
- Ø Creating a Social Media Campaign
- Ø Tips for Engaging in Social Media
- Ø How to Localize Crime and Victimization to your State and Community
- Ø Effective Billboard Campaigns
- Ø Sample Media Sign-in Sheet
- Ø 2014 CAP TIP #4, "Commemorating VOCA"

**Week of January 26 (*10 weeks out*)**

- Ø Create a “media and public outreach sub-committee” within your NCVRW Planning Committee.
- Ø Begin to build your news media list:
  - Broadcast.
  - Print.
  - Web-based.
  - Social networking/media sites.
  - Specialized media (victim assistance and criminal justice organizations’ and agencies’ newsletters and websites)

**Week of February 2 (*nine weeks out*)**

- Ø *Prioritize* your news media list:
  - Which are the *top five* news media you want to reach?
  - Which are the *top ten* after that?
  - Identify personnel who can be assigned to each news medium and (preferably) a direct contact within each news medium (news director, editor, reporter, columnist, etc.)
- Ø Develop your social media strategy:
  - Plan and produce any video promotions for social media such as YouTube ([www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)) or photographic promotions such as Flickr ([www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com))
  - Develop your NCVRW presence on sites such as Facebook and MySpace
  - Develop a daily/weekly message for Twitter feeds ([www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)), using sample feeds included in the 2014 NCVRW Resource Guide; the “2014 Notable Quotables;” and feeds that promote your specific activities
  - If you are planning on hosting podcasts for educational and public awareness purposes during 2014 NCVRW, organize your strategy and guest speakers now!

**Week of February 9 (*eight weeks out*)**

- Ø Develop “media pitches” that:
  - Ø Reflect the 2014 NCVRW theme.
  - Ø Provide appropriate spokespersons to deliver your pitches.
  - Ø Reflect your planned activities.
  - Ø Are geared toward the specific type of media (broadcast, print, web-based, and/or social networking/media sites).
- Ø Review and select media strategies from 2014 CAP Tip #4, “Commemorating VOCA,” to recognize the efforts of your U.S. Attorney and FBI Field Office that contribute to the Crime Victims Fund.

**Week of February 16 (*seven weeks out*)**

- Ø Key media resources are *drafted*:
  - Public service announcements (print, audio, visual, etc.).
  - Press advisories.
  - Press releases.

**Week of February 23 (*six weeks out*)**

- Ø Key media resources (see “weeks of February 2, 9 and 16”) are finalized.

**Week of March 2 (*five weeks out*)**

- Ø **TAKE A BREAK!** You've been working hard for six weeks.....it's a good idea to have a week that is totally FREE of NCVRW planning activities!

#### **Week of March 9 (four weeks out)**

- Ø A volunteer has been assigned to document all media relations activities, i.e., press clippings, tapes of radio and television interviews, printouts of web media publicity, etc.
- Ø Your media directory should be complete and documented in an easy-to-use format.
- Ø Your public service announcements should be written, reviewed and edited, and finalized in the recommended PSA format.
- Ø Any quotations or comments to be included in media relations (such as press releases, opinion/editorial columns, etc.) should be obtained from contributors, with proper attribution noted.
- Ø Guidelines for submitting opinion/editorial columns or radio or television actualities, press releases and public service announcements have been reviewed and followed.

#### **Week of March 31 (three weeks out)**

- Ø If any special media recognition award is being given out during NCVRW, the recipient and his/her superior are notified about the award, and when it is being presented (see *Sample Certificate of Recognition* in the OVC NCVRW Resource Guide).
- Ø Your public service announcements are mailed or emailed to television and radio stations (and if you are providing "on air" talent to read the PSA, arrangements for taping should be finalized with the station).

#### **Week of March 23 (two weeks out)**

- Ø Press releases are snail-mailed by Friday, March 28 (or emailed by Monday, March 31).
- Ø Opinion/editorial columns (for newspapers and web media) and actualities (for radio/television) are submitted by mail or electronically (to be received by March 17) with a request to publish during NCVRW (Sunday or Monday is best), and include the author's credentials and contact information.
- Ø Conduct follow-up telephone calls and/or emails to news media representatives to see if they need any additional information, or have any special needs when covering your event.
- Ø All key media interviews have been scheduled and confirmed (day/date/ time/location and who is being interviewed/who is conducting the interview).
- Ø Arrangements are made to publicize and audiotape/videotape key media interviews.

#### **Week of March 30 (one week out)**

- Ø Letters-to-the-editor inviting people to any special events are emailed or snail mailed to local newspapers.

#### **Week of April 6 (NCVRW)**

- Ø A media schedule for NCVRW has been developed and disseminated to all key players involved.

#### **For any special events:**

- Ø A volunteer has been designated to meet and greet the media; answer any questions they may have; and ensure that key representatives are available for interviews.
- Ø A designated (quiet) area or room has been planned for media interviews, and is equipped with ample electrical outlets and/or a power strip.

- Ø The “Media Sign-in Sheet” has been copied and is available on a clipboard at the welcome/registration desk.
- Ø Any special needs of the media have been identified and addressed.
- Ø If a “media recognition award” is being presented, it is ready at the podium, along with information about the recipient.

**Week of April 20 (two weeks following NCVRW)**

- Ø Follow-on notes or emails are sent to media representatives who attended and/or covered NCVRW activities.
- Ø Where relevant, letters-to-the-editor are sent that thank the news media and community members for supporting 2014 NCVRW and crime victims/survivors.

**For More Information**

Please contact National Crime Victims’ Rights Week Community Awareness Project Consultant Anne Seymour via email at [annese@atlantech.net](mailto:annese@atlantech.net); or by telephone at 202.547.1732.