



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Texas Victim Services Association 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and Biannual Conference**

**South Padre Island, Texas** –Texas Victim Services Association (TVSA) announces its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and Biannual Conference, being held May 2-5 at The Schlitterbahn Beach Resort.

TVSA will hold its official conference opening on Wednesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> at 8:30 a.m. in the Hibiscus Room of the Schlitterbahn Beach Resort. Providing a local welcome to the over 175 participants of this year's conference will be South Padre Island Mayor Bharat "Barry" Patel.

TVSA is especially honored to announce that Texas First Lady Cecilia Abbott will be our special guest, to provide welcoming remarks and to officially open our conference.

The conference this year marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the TVSA, founded in 1997 by two victim services providers, who saw the need for a professional organization by and for crime victim services professionals, to support, educate and recognize all those who choose victim services as their career in Texas. This conference, TVSA's 12<sup>th</sup>, will host state and national presenters in workshops on innovations in victim services, advancing victim services, program management, and social equity and justice.

"Crime victim services has evolved from its inception as a movement in the 1980s to a firmly established and recognized profession in the justice system today, not only in Texas, but across our country", said Jose Juan Lara Jr., TVSA conference chair and board president, a Brownsville native now based in Austin. "This year we continue our tradition of providing outstanding training opportunities to those who provide services to crime victims as they move through the often frightening and confusing criminal justice system, while also celebrating all those whose contributions to our organization, through board service and other leadership roles, have sustained and grown TVSA as a welcoming place for learning, mentorship and networking".

"After rotating the conference among many Texas cities for several years, we have now made South Padre the permanent home of our biannual conference," added Natacha Peláez-Wagner, TVSA association director. "Our members love coming to South Padre. With its sun, sand and sea, it provides a healthy balance of self-care for some very deserving persons while they train to return home to their very difficult work."

#### **About TVSA**

TVSA was founded in 1997 as the professional organization serving victim service providers in Texas. Its membership is composed of victim service providers from law enforcement and prosecution agencies,

along with the many non-profit organizations serving crime victims. The mission of TVSA is support, education, and recognition of victim service professionals.

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