



Warm Springs Fire Management would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas, and a safe and Happy New Year.

Victims of crimes may qualify for compensation

By Leslie Mitts
Spilyay Tymoo

Victims of Crime Services hosted a training last week for local advocates to educate them about the Crime Victims' Compensation Program.

Rebecca Shaw, crime victims' compensation manager with the Oregon Department of Justice, presented the information to advocates with VOCS and two advocates from Madras.

Previously Sammy Bruised-Head and Mark Matthews had both completed the training, and new advocates were able to undergo the most recent training.

This means that victims will be able to work with Victims of Crime Services to apply for compensation from the state of Oregon in some instances.

The state of Oregon founded the program in 1977 to compensate victims of crime and their families.

The program allows the state to ease the financial losses of the victim of a violent crime, and in some cases the victim's family. The only requirement is that the victim must be injured or killed as a result of a compensable crime committed against the victim in the state of Oregon.

Compensable crimes include an intentional, knowing or reckless act by a person resulting in serious bodily injury or death of another person that could be punishable as a crime.

To be eligible the victim must report the crime to law enforcement officials within 72 hours. However, that requirement may be waived with good cause.

In addition, the victim must cooperate fully to apprehend and prosecute the assailant and cannot have been involved in a wrongful act or cannot have provoked the assailant.

Compensable crimes include crimes like robbery, child abuse, assault, rape, domestic violence,

homicide or other serious crimes. Compensation for these crimes can vary, but victims may be compensated up to \$20,000 for reasonable medical and/or counseling expenses.

Other compensation can include up to \$20,000 for reasonable grief counseling expenses or funeral expenses for families of a deceased victim.

Mental health counseling, medical expenses, medically necessary devices, funeral expenses, documented loss of support, documented loss of earnings, rehabilitation expenses, counseling for children who witness domestic violence, and counseling for a friend or acquaintance who is the first to discover a deceased body are all examples of what compensation may include.

About 90 percent of applications received are approved. Those that aren't approved are typically denied because the crime is not a compensable crime.

However, in certain cases the victim may not be eligible. For example, if an injury or death resulted from the victim's own wrongdoing or provocation, they are ineligible for compensation. If an injury or death occurred due to an accident it would also make the victim ineligible.

Crimes that occurred before the program became active in January 1978 are also ineligible.

After the program receives applications, they are processed by obtaining police and medical reports and other necessary information.

Victims can sometimes be compensated without an identified perpetrator of the crime committed. To file an application for compensation, victims may work with Victims of Crime Services. For more information, call 553-2293 or visit www.doj.state.or.us/CrimeV/welcome1.htm.

Strong turnout, participation at Native Nations Institute conference

By Maren Cohn
Warm Springs Ventures

Approximately 50 tribal leaders and employees attended a two-day executive education conference led by the University of Arizona's Native Nations Institute for the benefit of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs.

A wide range of tribal representatives participated, including a strong contingent of younger members. Council Vice-Chair Aurolyn Stwyer attended both days and remarked on "the excellent turnout from diverse programs, branches and enterprises, including both youth and elders." Other Council members and several judges were also present.

Participants were invited to share their thoughts throughout the seminar, including several opportunities for feedback and one session devoted to discussion in small groups that reported back to the whole at the end.

"The conference provided an open forum" said Jefferson Greene, who attended as a representative of Tribal Planning. "The platform was more comfortable and open for giving feedback on how we feel about the economy and letting Tribal

Council know how things have been going."

The sessions began by laying out the foundation of NNI's "nation-building" program, which it has developed in conjunction with the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development.

Over 20 years of research in Indian Country has shown that Native communities thrive not so much because of natural and human resources, but rather due to sound governing structures with good rules, effective procedures, and the trust of the people.

The conference leaders compared the "standard approach to economic development" to the nation-building approach, showing how solid institutions that enjoy popular support can make the difference between success and failure of a nation's economic enterprises.

The nation's same institutions also form the basis for its social programs and community growth.

Trust issues rose to the surface and became an important topic in the conference, especially in the small-group discussions at the end. "That was the most open," said Greene, referring to the breakout sessions. "They all pointed towards the

same issues of trust, respect, authority of those in power, and looking for better communication in all parts of the Tribe."

As an essential building block of trusted government, presenters stressed the importance of a constitutional foundation that matches the people's cultural expectations for how authority should be exercised. Throughout the sessions they illustrated their points with stories from their work with tribes across the U.S.

Other important themes from the first day were articulating a shared vision of the future, setting the nation's own agenda rather than reacting to outside forces, and establishing clear roles and responsibilities throughout the tribal organization, which are then respected and adhered to.

"I think it's going well," said Secretary-Treasurer Jody Calica after the first day. "People are engaged. The remark that really struck me was in the discussion when Anson Begay said, 'I'm hearing a lot of I but I don't hear a lot of we.' As employees and leaders of the Tribe we have an obligation to Council to be working together, and Council has that obligation to the membership."

The second day focused

more on the economy and the respective roles of the Council, boards, enterprises, and citizen entrepreneurs in economic growth.

The final sessions then dealt with the problem of changing course, implementing the new strategies, and creating a self-determined future.

Early in the second day, tribal Appellate Court Judge Floyd Calica spoke for many when he questioned what could be done to prevent the ideas presented at the conference from being forgotten once work resumed its normal course.

"There was a lot of conversation yesterday about things like governance and ethics that hit the nail," he said. "But a month from now it's going to be sitting on the shelf with all the other documents. What do we do to change that?"

The last sessions attempted to address that question by getting participants to talk about how to implement what they learned in the conference. Stwyer is hopeful that new methods will find their way onto Council.

"The gathering gives us the opportunity to communicate and reinforce our vision and gain ideas from others," she said.

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