

DAPA 2011 Public Service Award Winners



KIM BOOK

On December, DAPA hosted its Annual Awards Dinner to celebrate outstanding individuals who have made a significant impact through their public service in Delaware. One of the *two* Public Service Award Winners this year is an incredible woman who overcame tragedy and is helping hundreds of Delawareans through a nonprofit organization she founded, Victims' Voices Inc., which gives victims of crime the opportunity to meet with their incarcerated offender.

Kim Book's story of public service begins in 1995, when her only child, 17-year-old Nicole, was stabbed to death in her father's Delaware home by a 16-year-old man she knew. This event shaped Kim's life and is the driving force behind her quest to assist other victims/survivors of crime in their need to meet with their offender to hear them express remorse and responsibility for their crime.

Two years after Nicole's death, Kim began volunteering in the correctional system and participating in prison programs, including the victim-sensitivity program. These programs allowed her to have contact with offenders of severe violence and gain a better understanding of why people commit crimes. It also has deepened her respect for the correctional system.

In 1998 Kim began mediating minor offenses. In 2000 she began studying restorative justice and severe violence–dialogue programs in the United States. In 2002, with the help of the nonprofit agency People's Place and a federally funded VOCA (Victims of Crime Act) grant, Kim was able to implement the Victims' Voices Heard/Severe Violence Dialogue Program in Delaware. The program was then funded by the state through the Administrative Office of the Courts until 2010, when Victims' Voices Heard became its own nonprofit agency.

Kim is a trained mediator and facilitator in cases of severe-violence dialogue. She received her training at the University of Minnesota, under Mark Umbreit, Executive Director at the Center for Restorative Justice and Peacemaking. She has had extensive training dealing with sexual assault and sexual predators and is a trained sexual-assault volunteer. Kim also attended STAR (Strategies for Trauma Awareness and Resilience) at Eastern Mennonite University.

Kim has been trained in the Circles Process. Circles are used to solve programs, support one another and connect to one another. The Circle Process is used in a variety of contexts. In neighborhoods they provide support for those harmed by crime. In schools they create a positive classroom climate and resolve behavior problems. In the workplace they help address conflict.

Kim works closely with victim service providers in Delaware in order to help victims close another chapter in the healing process. She is a member of the Delaware Victim's Rights Task Force, the Sex Offender Management Board (SOMB), and active in the victims' services community of Delaware. At the pleasure of Governor Jack Markell, Kim has been appointed to serve on the State Council for Interstate Adult Offender Supervision Board.

DAPA is honored to have presented Kim with this year's Public Service Award because she has sacrificed so much in her life to serve the people of Delaware in a way that is unique and admirable.

ROY LOPATA

DAPA honored a member of the Newark, Del., community who has given almost four decades of his life to serving the city of Newark. Roy H. Lopata has been serving Newark for over 37 years, 35 of which he was the City's Planning and Development Director. Roy also served as Interim City Manager for Newark.



During Roy's tenure as Planning and Development Director, the department was responsible for the physical and economic development of Newark, including drafting and implementing its Comprehensive Development Plan; evaluating all zoning, subdivision, annexation, and related development proposals; designing and managing the public-transit service; managing on- and off-street parking facilities; administering the city's Housing and Community Development Program; and enforcing the Building Code and property maintenance.

Roy has also assisted the City Manager's Office with labor and personnel relations and provides staff assistance to the city's Planning Commission, the Downtown Newark Partnership, the Community Development and Revenue Sharing Advisory Committee, the Mayor, and City Council.

Roy was born and raised in New York City. He holds a bachelor's degree in History from American University and a master's degree and Doctor of Philosophy in American History from the University of Delaware.

Roy has two married daughters—Wendy, who lives with her husband and two children in Los Angeles, and Rebekah, who lives and works with her husband in Chennai, India. He is also a member of the American Planning Association, which is the organization DAPA partnered with last year for the Annual Awards Dinner.

That Roy Lopata, as Newark Planning Director and in other capacities, has had a rather extraordinary impact on the Newark community made it abundantly clear that he is someone who has in fact made very substantial public service contributions in Delaware. Roy's dedication to the City of Newark and to the public service work he performs as a professional has truly helped make Newark "a wonderful place to live."

DAPA is excited and honored to have presented this year's Public Service Award to someone who is a true role model in municipal government.

—by Corinne O'Connor

photo of Kim Book courtesy of Kim Book, photo of Roy Lopata by Mark Deshon