

Brian S. Mason
District Attorney



17th Judicial District
Adams & Broomfield Counties
District Attorney's Office

For Immediate Release:
Chris Hopper
Director of Communications
chopper@da17.state.co.us
da17media@da17.state.co.us
(303) 835-5639

April 26, 2021

**17th Judicial District Attorney's Office Honors Local Heroes During
National Crime Victims' Rights Week Awards Reception**

The annual reception is an opportunity to acknowledge those who serve victims and survivors

Adams County— Today, 17th Judicial District Attorney Brian S. Mason announced the award recipients from the annual National Crime Victims' Rights Week Awards Reception which honors individuals who dedicate their lives to the service of victims and survivors in Adams and Broomfield counties. On Thursday, April 22, 2021, six individuals and organizations received awards during a virtual reception.

"I am proud to give these awards to these distinguished individuals and teams," said District Attorney Brian Mason. "Their selfless dedication to victims makes our community a better place. We are all truly grateful for what they do."

Ray McKinnon Award (Outstanding Volunteer Service to Victims):

Honoree: Sparkling Kindness

Sparkling Kindness is a 501(c)3 that assists law enforcement and community groups throughout Adams County. In 2020, they compiled and distributed 3,071 kits and supply bags for families in need. The items were donated to hospitals, community-based programs, law enforcement victim services units, and homelessness programs.

Dale R. McLaughlin Award (Outstanding Service to Victims in a Law Enforcement Setting):

Honoree: Colorado State Patrol Vehicular Crime Victims Unit and Victim Advocate Lori Brown

The Colorado State Patrol Vehicular Crime Unit and Victim Advocate Lori Brown have shown what it means to go beyond the call of duty. This team of individuals has exemplified the ability to navigate difficult circumstances and still provide the necessary support to victims and survivors in need.

Edward Towey Award (Outstanding Service to Victims in a Criminal Justice Setting):

Honoree: Jennifer Duarte, 17th Judicial District Attorney's Office

Senior Deputy District Attorney Jennifer Duarte is a longstanding and valued member of the 17th Judicial District Attorney's Office. Her commitment to victims and survivors is unmatched. Jennifer is usually the first attorney in the office to review a case when it is submitted, and serving victims is always her top

priority. Jennifer's expertise, dedication, and victim-first mentality make her richly deserving of this award.

Thomas Green Award (Outstanding Service to Victims in a Non-Profit Setting):

Honoree: Sulma Mendoza Rios

In 2006, Sulma Mendoza Rios founded the Justice and Mercy Legal Aid Center. Sulma's expertise as an attorney allows her to use her skills to promote and increase awareness of injustices victims regularly face. Sulma uses her knowledge base to inform others of the intricacies of domestic violence and victimization. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Sulma formulated a plan to help victims who were adversely affected by the virus.

Gayle Voyles Award (Outstanding Direct Victim Services):

Honoree: Brighton and Commerce City Police Victim Services Unit

Despite a global pandemic, the Brighton and Commerce City Police Victim Service Unit reached new heights in their ability to assist victims and survivors. In 2020, the Brighton and Commerce City VSU opened 2,513 new cases, served 4,502 victims and witnesses, and completed 1,398 crisis responses. That was a 26% increase over 2019 in the number of cases opened and a 38% increase in the number of victims and witnesses served. The Brighton and Commerce City VSU was truly a model organization during a tumultuous year.

Sean May Award (Outstanding Leadership):

Honoree: Ashley Harrington

For seven years, Ashley Harrington has served the Rocky Mountain Immigrant Advocacy Network with honor and dedication. Ashley is a champion for advancing the rights of immigrant children and families who have been the victims of crime. Ashley is the Managing Attorney for the Children's Program. She leads a team of 12 attorneys, paralegals, and advocates who are on the front lines of ensuring these families have access to free expert-level legal representation in their immigration cases.

###

District Attorney Mason assumed the oath of office on January 12, 2021. The 17th Judicial District Attorney's Office prosecutes and seeks justice in criminal felony, misdemeanor, and traffic cases for the citizens of Adams and Broomfield counties.

*AdamsBroomfieldDA.org, Facebook: [@da17colorado](https://www.facebook.com/da17colorado) Twitter: [@da17colorado](https://twitter.com/da17colorado)
Instagram: [@da17colorado](https://www.instagram.com/da17colorado) YouTube: [ColoradoDA17](https://www.youtube.com/ColoradoDA17)*