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*Silence Is Violence:  
Victim Allies Project*

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# What we do



- ❖ SIV social workers respond to violent crime scenes in Orleans & Jefferson Parishes.
- ❖ SIV staff provide Survivors/ Victims and their families with wrap-around support services and case management services.
- ❖ SIV offers clients: grief support, emergency financial assistance, safe housing.
- ❖ SIV provides essential guidance during their journey through the criminal justice system, including navigating the police investigation & process when their case enters the courts.

# The Victim Allies Project



- ❖ The Victim Allies Project begins its work with individual victims and their families at the scene of the crime to mitigate trauma, promote healing, and pursue justice.
- ❖ Each client is assigned a case manager, who creates a program of care based on an individualized needs assessment.
- ❖ Services may include but are not limited to: emergency housing and material support; victim/witness relocation assistance; grief and trauma counseling; logistical guidance and coordination; criminal justice advocacy; and life skills training.
- ❖ Follow-up services may last for the length of the criminal justice process or longer, based on need.

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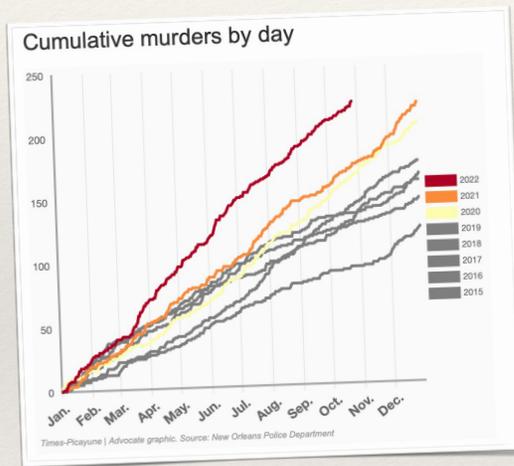
# Who we are

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- ❖ Tamara Jackson, LCSW, MSW, MBA, CA (Credentialed Advocate) is a respected leader in the cultural community, a healthcare professional and a victim-survivor herself.
- ❖ Tamara has led nationally-recognized workshops in survivor counseling and the needs of homicide survivors, including for the National Organization for Victim Assistance and the Louisiana District Attorney Association.
- ❖ Tamara is sought after as a resource and community leader by governmental agencies including the Coroner's Office, the Office of Gun Violence Prevention, and many others.

# Essential needs in 2022



- ❖ Departments across the law enforcement spectrum rely on SIV for the provision of essential victim and witness services. This list includes New Orleans Police Department, Orleans Parish Sheriff's Office, Jefferson Parish Sheriff's Office, Orleans District Attorney, Jefferson Parish DA, and the Orleans and Jefferson Parish Coroners.
- ❖ SIV needs more licensed social workers and peer support specialists to provide immediate help for the increasing number of Survivors/Witnesses.
- ❖ SIV is dependent on private funding, but our community's needs are greater than ever before and increasing.

# SIV crucial to pathway to peace in N.O.



- ❖ SIV's work directly affects the cycle of violence and impacts the progress of work done by police to mitigate violence.
- ❖ One example is safe housing, which is essential when intimidation is used against victims/survivors to impede investigations.
- ❖ As the NOPD has struggled to sufficiently staff its ranks, SIV's work coordinating with survivors/witnesses is even more essential to community safety.

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# Outcomes/deliverables

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- ❖ Our primary short-term goal is that every client achieves a measure of healing and a return to personal functionality following the trauma of violent crime.
- ❖ We measure progress using the PCL-C trauma scale for post-traumatic stress disorder and Beck's Depression Inventory to establish baselines for economic, social, physical, emotional, and mental stability.
- ❖ Monthly reassessments measure personal safety; stable food, housing, and childcare; reliable communications and transportation; employment status and financial stability; and access to physical and mental healthcare.
- ❖ In the long term, we seek to cultivate a sense of safety and stability for victims and witnesses and contribute to increased community confidence in the criminal justice system so that it has a better chance of functioning collaboratively and effectively, and public safety overall is served.

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# Our story

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- ❖ SilenceIsViolence (SIV) was founded in early 2007 as a community-based outcry and call for stronger leadership in response to gun violence in New Orleans.
- ❖ When a surge in violence at the end of 2006 claimed the lives of two prominent local artists, Dinerral Shavers and Helen Hill, resident outrage reached a tipping point. Residents took to the streets in historic numbers to demand stronger leadership and more vocal and respectful recognition of the deep tragedy of each life lost to violence, and each family left to grieve and pick up the pieces of their own lives.

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# Our vision

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- ❖ We envision a New Orleans where every resident's life is treated with equal dignity, and each violent loss of life is grieved with humanity, care, and compassion.

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# Past successes

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- ❖ Published *Practical Guide for Victims of Violence* (third edition, SIV 2018), a handbook that walks survivors through some of the emotional, logistical, and financial challenges that follow a homicide
- ❖ Advocated to cease the NOPD practice of publishing criminal records of homicide victims
- ❖ Lobbied for HB85, ensuring equitable access to crime victim reparations by all crime victims
- ❖ Supported enhanced Victims Witness programs within the criminal justice system, including changes at the Orleans Parish District Attorney, New Orleans Police Department, and Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff's Office
- ❖ Reached 600+ local students and children through Peace Clinics, the first local organization to intentionally activate arts instruction as a direct counter to violent expression
- ❖ Hosted 60+ Peace Walks in different neighborhoods of the city between 2007 and 2019 (paused due to the pandemic), mobilizing thousands of local residents in calls for stronger community safety measures

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# Contact information

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- ❖ Tamara Jackson at [tamara@silenceisviolence.org](mailto:tamara@silenceisviolence.org)
- ❖ Olivia Woollam, board chair at [owoollam@gmail.com](mailto:owoollam@gmail.com)