



DC Rape Crisis Center (DCRCC)
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DCRCC Advocacy Director Recipient of the VS “Impact Award”.
Indira Henard recognized for her exemplary leadership on the Sexual Assault Victims Rights Amendment (SAVRAA).

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WASHINGTON, D.C. — DC Rape Crisis Center (DCRCC) is proud to announce that Indira Henard, Director of Advocacy, was selected as this year's recipient of the Academy of Criminal Justice Science's (ACJS) Victimology Section's “Impact Award” for her exemplary leadership in advancing the Sexual Assault Victims Rights Amendment (SAVRAA) of 2014. Nominated for the award by Sherelle Hessel-Gordon, DC Rape Crisis Center’s Executive Director, and Jane Palmer, American University Professor and Director, Community-Based Research Scholars Program and Sexual Assault Awareness and Prevention Task Force Member (at AU), Indira Henard will be honored at the ACJS’s Annual Conference in Orlando, FL in March 2015, after delivering the keynote address.

Each year, the ACJS Victimology Impact Award recognizes one individual who has made a significant contribution to the field of victimology, victims’ rights, or victim services in the past 12 months by advancing an innovative victim-centered policy or practice via scholarship, policy development or implementation, and/or service to the community.

Gordon says, “Henard is a bright light. She is one of the people making the sector better every day. She provided great value ensuring that survivor narratives historically not factored into policy were. As a result of Henard’s leadership, we have an inspired amendment with important statutory improvements to sexual assault survivors' rights when interacting with the criminal justice system in the District.”

The Sexual Assault Victims Rights Amendment (SAVRAA) of 2014 promises new hope, increased fairness and respect for victims. SAVRAA 2014 delivers crucial support including codifying necessary qualifications of and access to sexual assault victim advocates, providing confidentiality protections of communications between victims and advocates, faster processing of rape kits and attention to the rape kit backlog, information-sharing with victims, and increased accountability of the local police department's handling of sexual assault cases and citizen complaints.

Henard reflects on receiving ACJS's recognition: "I am honored to have been a part of the passage of SAVRAA. SAVRAA is good policy helping deliver what every survivor wants, which is self- determination."

Indira Henard, a former aide for Senator Barack Obama D-IL on Capitol Hill, began her service journey as a DC Rape Crisis Center's Volunteer Hospital Advocate for sexual assault victims in 2008. Since then she has worked to ensure that all survivors of sexual assault have access to affordable, compassionate and ethical care. As the Director of Advocacy for DCRCC, Henard helps individuals and communities *imagine a world without rape* and *power a culture of consent* – providing guidance and counsel for campus administrators around compliance obligations under Title IX of the Education Amendments of the 1972 Civil Rights Act and the Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization of 2012 (VAWA), building capacity of faith communities around sexual assault prevention and response and school communities around whole school anti-violence curriculums.

Henard currently serves on the DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence Task Force, Med Star Health Advisory Board, Van Policy Committee and the Fair Budget Housing Training and Technical Assistance Committee. She has received a variety of awards, including the Ralph Bunche Institute Fellowship at Duke University, Congressional Truman Fellowship on Capitol Hill, the Charles Hamilton Houston Fellowship at Georgetown Law Center and degrees from Wheaton College in Norton, MA, and the University of Chicago. She is currently pursuing a Masters of Social Work from Catholic University.

Since 1972, DC Rape Crisis Center has been making a significant contribution to the health, economic, social and cultural well-being of Washington, DC. Dedicated to creating a world free of sexual violence through conscience and action, DCRCC's call to action obliges us to us to build the capacity of the Washington, DC community to respond to survivors of sexual assault with compassion, dignity and respect, regardless of race, class, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, immigration status, ability, age or religious affiliation. In addition to prevention activities, DC Rape Crisis Center programs ensure the provision of crisis intervention services for adult and child survivors of sexual assault –helping to eliminate the long term effects that rape can have on the well – being and health of an individual. For more information on DCRCC's work, please visit www.dcrcc.org.

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