



Parents Of Murdered Children, Inc.
Valley of the Sun Chapter
(For the Families and Friends of Those Who Have Died by Violence)

Mission Statement:

“POMC makes the difference through ongoing emotional support, education, prevention, advocacy, and awareness.”

Vision Statement:

“To provide support and assistance to all survivors of homicide victims while working to create a world free of murder.”

(PAST)

Parents Of Murdered Children, Inc. for the families and friends of those who have died by violence, Valley of the Sun Chapter, was founded in October of 1985, and signed articles of association with our National Organization on January, 14, 1986. The key founders of the chapter included Nancy & Wayne Koger, whose daughter and her boyfriend had been murdered in 1978, along with Carol McFadden of the Maricopa County Attorney's Office Victim Witness Division. The chapter was formed to provide an avenue of support to those who had lost a loved one to murder bringing them together in a safe environment to vent their devastating emotional pain among those who truly understand violence's effects upon the family. Parents Of Murdered Children, Inc., key achievements then were to provide ongoing emotional support for all survivors of a homicide victim and to educate society to the needs of victims of traumatic violence.

(PRESENT)

Today our basic mission remains unchanged. Uppermost we provide support through our monthly meetings across the valley, but we also provide education to the families of those who have died by violence and are enduring the devastating effects of the aftermath of murder, as well as educating the professionals who serve crime victims. What has changed is that violence has increased in our society and our chapter has grown to over 1,700 families of all economic, ethnicity, and social backgrounds because violence does not discriminate. We provide more programs and services such as:

- **Parole Block Program** in which petitions to keep murderers from being released early from prison are sent to parole boards across the United States
- **Second Opinion Services** in which a volunteer board of professionals ie., forensic medical examiners, judges, detectives, and criminal profilers view unsolved cases of members to see if something was missed in the investigation process
- **Murder is not Entertainment**, a program in which we educate society to the things

that make entertainment out of violence, ie., video games, movies, toys, murder mystery weekends, bullet-riddled clothes as a fashion statement and more

- **Silenced Voices:** A program that advocates for the vigorous investigation and prosecution of those responsible for the murder of abused children. *Brandi Conley – nearly six years after the unsolved beating death of four-year-old Brandi, her father has been charged with endangering the girl before her death, and her mother, Donna Conley was found guilty of involuntary manslaughter and child endangerment through the efforts of this program.

- **The Big Turn Off** – a program, held annually the second Wednesday in January, asking citizens to turn off their televisions during prime-time hours that night to protest the violence on T.V. The average child, watching the average amount of television, will witness 200,000 acts of violence by age 18.

- **Monthly Newsletter** with articles on traumatic grief as well as on how to navigate the confusing maze of the criminal justice system

- **Speaker/Information Meeting** in which professionals in the victim service fields ie., detectives, judges, prosecutors, medical examiners, as well as counselors, clergy and media, to name a few, speak to our members

- **Support Meetings:** we provide self-help support meetings each month across the valley in the West, East and Central valley. East Valley is Bilingual

- **Victim Impact Panels** to prisoners in hopes of teaching them the impact of their crimes upon the victims in Arizona. We also provide panels for valley police departments, universities, and other requesting organizations. *New in 2012, we are now providing victim impact panels to the juveniles incarcerated in Arizona at Adobe.

- **Provide Resources and Referrals** to members

- **Court Accompaniment** to those who request it and for our out of town members who must attend court from out of state

- **Lobbying:** Our organization is involved in lobbying for the rights of crime victims, but does not pursue any issues of gun control and or capitol sentencing/death penalty. We strongly believe that taking a stand on those issues would divide our organization and take away from our original mission of support.

- **Events etc.:** We provide an annual Holiday Memorial Service each year in December and for the National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims, (September 25) we have a commemoration event and picnic annually.

- We provide without charge two Courage to Grieve weekend retreats each spring and again in the fall for our members.

TRAINING: Our volunteers, board of directors, chapter leader and meeting facilitators are trained either in house by our reining board of directors or by attending seminars on traumatic grief and conferences on victims' issues. Our National Office provides an "Effective Leadership Training" each year and re-certification at each year's conference. At least one third of a chapter's board of directors must be certified. Most of our volunteers are survivors themselves, who choose to give back to the chapter. We also have had members of the Maricopa County Attorney's Office and Attorney General's Office and Arizona Voice for Crime Victims serving on our board of directors as well as being involved with meeting facilitation.

AWARDS: (for our chapter and our chapter leader)

- August 2002 – National POMC “Dorothy Lobes Memorial Award” (outstanding chapter)
- August 2003 – National POMC “Becky Reed Memorial Award” (Beckie & Don Miller)
- October 2003, Arizona “Hon Kachina” formerly Luke Men’s Award (Beckie Miller)
- December 2003 – Arizona Cardinals Community Quarterback Award (Beckie Miller)
- February 2004 – Special Recognition from Governor Janet Napolitano’s Office (Beckie Miller)
- September 2004, Governors Office & Department of Corrections Award (outstanding chapter service to crime victims)
- 2004, Chapter received “Power of Partnership Award” from the Maricopa County Attorney Rick Romley.
- October 2005, Roots & Wings Human Betterment Award (Beckie Miller) In 2005 Mark Milke, a member of our board of directors received the Nancy & Wayne Koger Award of Excellence through Arizona Voice for Crime Victims for his services to victims of crime.
- January 2006, Strength in Unity Crime Victims Service Award (Beckie Miller) Maricopa County Attorney’s Office.
- In 2007, our chapter received a Certificate of Appreciation from Governor Janet Napolitano for our services for victims.
- In April 2007, Beckie Miller received a Certificate of Appreciation from the National Office for Victims of Crime in Washington D.C. (John Gillis) which was presented to her by Maricopa County Attorney Andrew Thomas as they had nominated her for an award for her service to crime victims for Victims’ Rights week.
- In July of 2007, Beckie Miller was presented the Nancy Koger Award for Service to Crime Victims through Arizona Voice for Crime Victims.
- In August of 2007, our Chapter received the Arizona Attorney General’s Distinguished Service award for 21 years of service to crime victims
- April 1, 2010, our chapter received a Certificate of Appreciation from Governor of Arizona, Janice K. Brewer for our service to the community and the state of Arizona.
- In May of 2011, our chapter was a finalist in the Be More Knowledgeable Award from Channel 8 locally (BE MORE AWARDS) for non-profits. Through our speaker/information meeting in the past 17 years, not only for educating our members about Traumatic Grief and Navigating the Confusing Maze of the Criminal Justice System, but for also educating the professionals who serve victims to the issues they face that have brought about many positive changes in the system.
- April 25, 2013, Beckie received an award from the Juvenile Department of Corrections "Community Partner Award" for involvement in the Juvenile Impact Program speaking to incarcerated youths impacting them to the effects of violence on families and encouraging them to make wiser choices in their lives.
- July 10, 2014 Don Miller was honored as one of six finalists for the ABC 15 Salutes Arizona Veterans event for vets who have gone the extra mile in serving their communities for his work with POMC for the past 21 plus years.
- March 18, 2015, our chapter received a Special Recognition for being nominated for the Governor’s Volunteer Service Award from Governor Doug Ducey.

- At our 2014 Conference in Rochester Minnesota Tracy Wunderlich received the POMC Making a Difference Award for her work with our chapter.
- April 2016, during Crime Victims' Rights Week, Donna Pickering, a member and former board of directors and volunteer received the Governor's "Triumph Over Tragedy" award for her service to crime victims since losing her husband to a drunk driver.
- July 23, 2016 Sue Osolin received the National POMC "Making a Difference" award for her past years on our board of directors serving crime victims.
- April 9, 2018, Beckie Miller was presented with the Governor's "Triumph Over Tragedy" for her 25-years of work with POMC after the loss of her son.

OTHER EFFORTS INVOLVED WITH:

- 1995: Our chapter was instrumental in the Phoenix Police Department's C.E.A.S. (Community Effort to Abate Street Violence) and their Wake-Up Video Campaign. In the video our members provided pictures of their loved ones to help impact the kids to stay away from violence and drugs. The Wake-Up Campaign is in most high and junior high schools in the valley and Wake-Up clubs have spun off as a result of the program. The video itself has won several local, national and one International award.
- 1998 The Phoenix Police Department, under Lt. Sherry Kiyler, implemented the Family Liaison Program (now Victim Services) to be the contact between the families of a victim of crime and the detectives who are not always available for questions and concerns while actively investigating the case. The program came about after a detective, Sgt. Carl Richardson, attended our speaker meeting and learned how often the needs of the victims were not being met.
 - In 2006 our chapter partnered with the Phoenix Suns (grant) and Stepping Stones of Hope (2006)) to provide Children's Grief Healing Sessions at our national conferences.
 - In August of 2000 our chapter hosted the National POMC Conference in Scottsdale. We also hosted the conference in August of 2006 at the Arizona Biltmore and again in 2012 at the Arizona Grand Resort.
 - In spring of 2001 and 2011 our chapter worked closely with Adult Probation in providing a victim sensitivity training to over 200 probationers. In 2012 we began speaking to the youths at the Adobe Youth Facility hoping to impact them to make better choices in their lives.
 - Chapter-leader Beckie Miller is also on the board of Arizona Voice for Crime Victims through which the Crime Victims Legal Assistance Project provides free legal counsel for victims to assert their rights in court. She was elected its president in 2015. Our chapter is also a member of Arizona Coalition for Victim Services with Beckie serving as past Secretary and Vice President and she serves on the Attorney General's Office Victim Rights Advisory Committee and has served through 3 attorneys general.
 - **LAW ENFORCEMENT COLLABORATION:** In early 2004 Detective Jack Ballentine of the Phoenix Police Department and our chapter began a collaboration effort in which more than 200 law enforcement officers attending Detective Ballentine's class to become detectives themselves. We collaborate with Phoenix Police Department who provides a lieutenant at each of our Speaker Information Meetings.
 - **RESTORATIVE JUSTICE:** Our chapter has been involved since 2005 and currently with the Impact of Crime on Victims Classes with the Arizona Department of

Corrections Office for Victim Services. Members speak to incarcerated inmates in Arizona prisons in order to impact them with what their crimes do to the victims and their families. Inmates and staff at ADOC also raise funds for agencies who provide services to crime victims. In 2012 we began also providing impact panels to the incarcerated youth in Arizona prisons through a partnership with Arizona Department of Corrections Juvenile Division. *2016 began with revamped ICVC Classes at Florence.

● **COURAGE TO GRIEVE WEEKEND RETREATS:** Our chapter hosts two retreats (spring and fall) each year in Pine, Arizona. They are intense self-help weekends that examine the emotions of the aftermath of murder and help facilitate healing and acceptance of a new life forever changed and also to find a purpose. Currently we provide this free to members. Beckie Miller is facilitator of these weekends.

● **CHILDREN'S HEALING HURT SESSIONS:** In August 2012 a collaborative effort with the M.I.S.S. Foundation and grant from Cox Charities allowed us to have our "Children's Healing Hurt Sessions at our National Conference in Phoenix. With future funding we plan to have a permanent program for our chapter members surviving and grieving children in place.

● **OPERATION GUARDIAN:** In November of 2016 members from our chapter, Mari Bailey, Carolee Holbrook and Beckie Miller participated in The Guardian Project facilitated by Lt. John White of the Phoenix Police Department in efforts to abate gang violence. Also participating was Bill Montgomery of the Maricopa Police Department and others from the community for an innovative approach inviting gang members to the event. As mothers who lost their children to gun violence we spoke to the gang members in hopes of impacting them to what this loss leaves in families. The presentation was video-taped and is now played in Arizona prisons for the incarcerated inmates.

KEY NEEDS: Parents Of Murdered Children (POMC), Valley of the Sun Chapter, is run solely by volunteers, approximately 15 - 20. Particularly large chapters, such as our own are facing increasing difficulties in obtaining enough volunteer hours to effectively run the chapter and provide services to our families. It is also difficult for an organization such as ours to obtain corporate and other financial aid as the harsh reality of what and who we are about is too uncomfortable for most to face. We exist through donations, fundraisers and grants.

Our chapter works closely with the Maricopa County Attorney's Office Victim Services Division as well as the Phoenix and other Valley Police Departments and Attorney General's Office. We also collaborate with other organizations: The Crime Victims Legal Assistance Project through Arizona Voice for Crime Victims, M.I.S.S. Foundation and founder, Dr. Joanne Cacciatore, valley police agency victim service units, Arizona Coalition for Victim Services, the Arizona Department of Corrections and others.

BUDGET: Our operating budget for the year is approximately \$60,000 - \$65,000. Expenses include but not limited to our monthly 12- page newsletter, office supplies/expenses, two annual grief retreats for members, scholarships to attend the National POMC Conference each year, an annual December Holiday Memorial Service and Dinner and a commemoration event/picnic for the National Day of Remembrance for Homicide Victims on a Saturday nearest to September 25 each year. We do a lot with our limited budget due to a wonderful all volunteer staff. We have no paid staff for the chapter.

(FUTURE)

Our mission will remain the same, but foreseeably we may become more involved with issues for the rights of crime victims. In the future and with continued growth as violence is a part of our society and victims will continue to need support and education to help them cope with the traumatic aftermath of murder, we will ultimately need to have office space manned by paid staff. This will present a need for more staff and or volunteers. We also hope to begin children's grief/trauma sessions in the near future. The emotional recovery and support of our members will circumvent all other needs. Website: www.pomc.com/phoenix VM: (602) 254-8818 FAX: (623) 582-0917 National POMC website is www.pomc.org and number is (888-818-7662)

“Justice will only be achieved when those who are not injured by crime, feel as indignant as those who are.” Solomon (635-577 B.C.)