

# 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

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ATLANTA VICTIM ASSISTANCE, INC.



MOVING VICTIMS  
TO VICTORS



# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

**Dear AVA Supporter,**

As 2020 draws to a close, we are pausing to reflect on this tumultuous year and express gratitude for your support of our vital work. For 36 years, Atlanta Victim Assistance (AVA) has been serving victims of crime who are residents or visitors in the City of Atlanta. Since our founding in 1984, we have assisted nearly 130,000 victims of crime by advocating for their fundamental rights with compassion, dignity, and respect, and your funding has been instrumental in our ability to help victims of crime find healing and justice.

And what a year it was! 2020 challenged the city of Atlanta like never before. We witnessed triple crises such as a pandemic, economic recession, and social unrest as a result of protests against racism. Throughout this tumultuous era, AVA has remained steadfast and vigilant in its commitment to stand by victims of crime to help them find peace and healing. AVA's dedicated advocates provided 38,858 services and advocacy for 6,947 victims this year—the largest number of individuals AVA has ever served throughout the history of our organization. We are more committed than ever to continuing this important work in 2021 and beyond.

Although COVID-19 has made providing services riskier, AVA continues to offer healing and tools that help victims overcome traumatic experiences. Our organization responds to victims' needs by providing emergency relief funds that cover unexpected expenses and lost income that results from suffering a crime. While we have seen an increase in domestic violence-related incidents, AVA remains devoted to supplying resources, safety, and security in our community, and we will continue to respond to the mental health needs of the youth that we serve.

Our goal is to cover therapeutic counseling as we continue to offer support groups and advocacy online. As we forge forward into 2021, we remain ever grateful for the support of our community. Our 2020 Annual Report brings to life the impact that we make on victims of crime, turning their pain into participation. I hope that the stories of our committed staff and the survivors we serve will inspire you as much as they have inspired me.

**In service,  
Brenda Muhammad  
Executive Director**



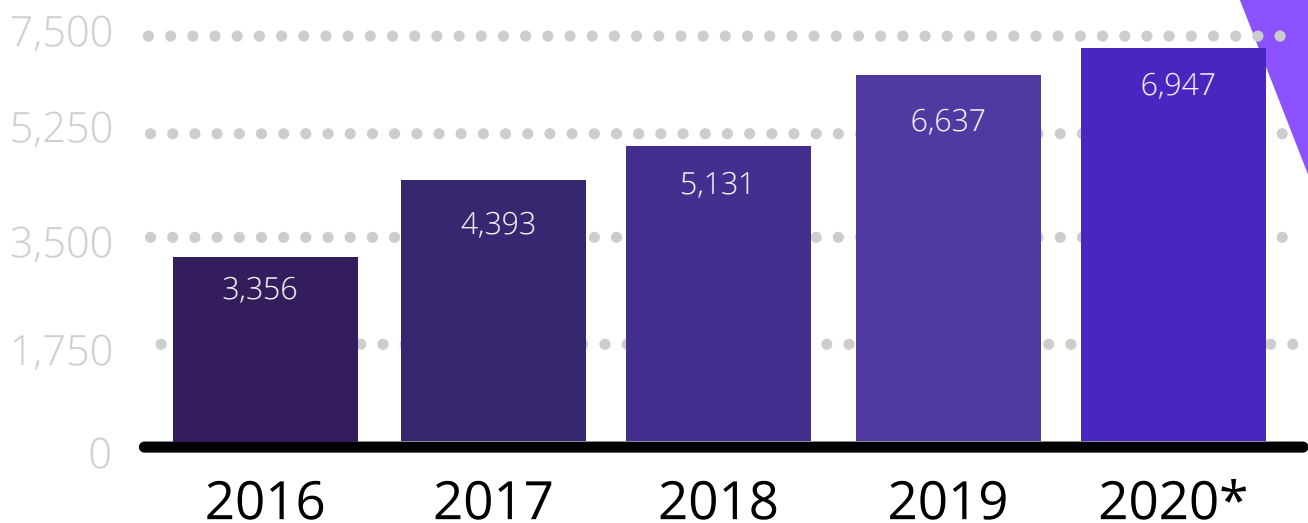
Brenda Muhammad, AVA Executive Director



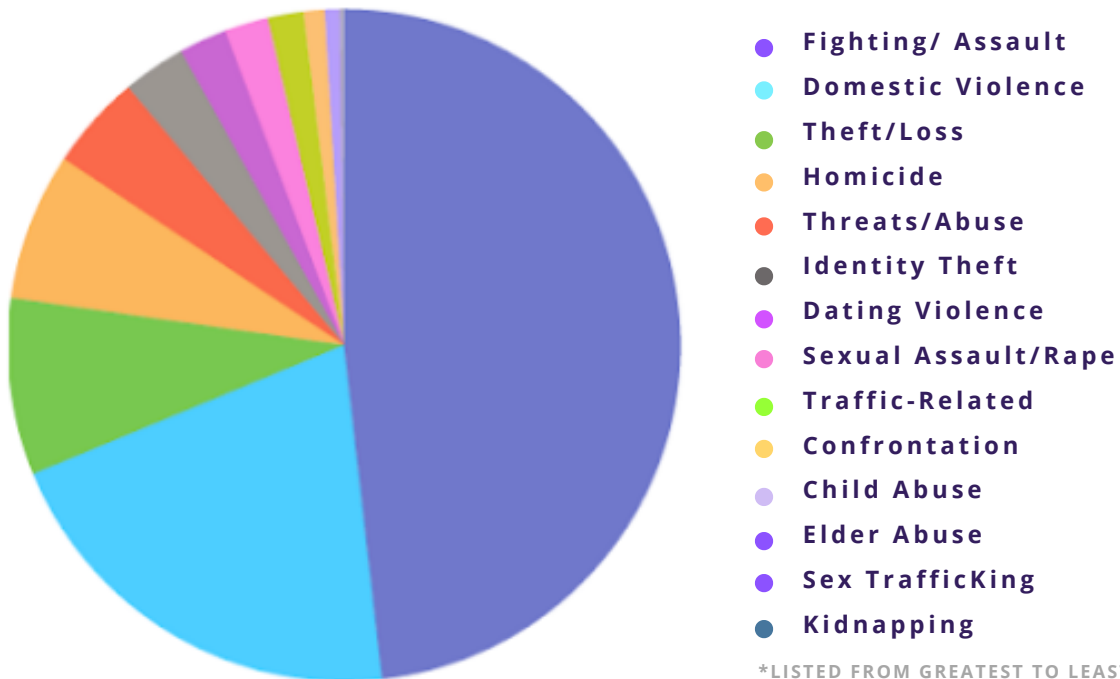
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# CLIENTS SERVED

Atlanta Victim Assistance (AVA) forged forward with our work to serve victims of crime regardless of where they live or the type of crime they have suffered. To effectively serve victims across the city, our staff includes 20 advocates who are placed in Atlanta Municipal Court, Atlanta Police Department Zones and Special Crime Victims Units, and two Title I high schools in the Atlanta Public Schools district. In 2020, we welcomed a Programs Manager to help us manage our growing staff team. This incredible team enabled us to serve more victims of crime than we have ever before in our 36 year history, just in time to meet the demands of a challenging era that led to spikes in crime across the city.



\*ANNUAL AVA CLIENTS SERVED

**\*2020 AVA VICTIMS SERVED BY CATEGORY**

“

“Oftentimes victims are intimidated by the court process, and sometimes they are less likely to come because of that. AVA is a critical link to conveying what’s going on with the victim’s perspective.”

CHRISTOPHER T. PORTIS  
Chief Judge Atlanta Municipal Court



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“The advocates act as a partner and liaison between the investigator and the family,” explains Sgt. April White.

SERGEANT APRIL WHITE  
Atlanta Police Department, Homicide Unit



# AVA SERVICES



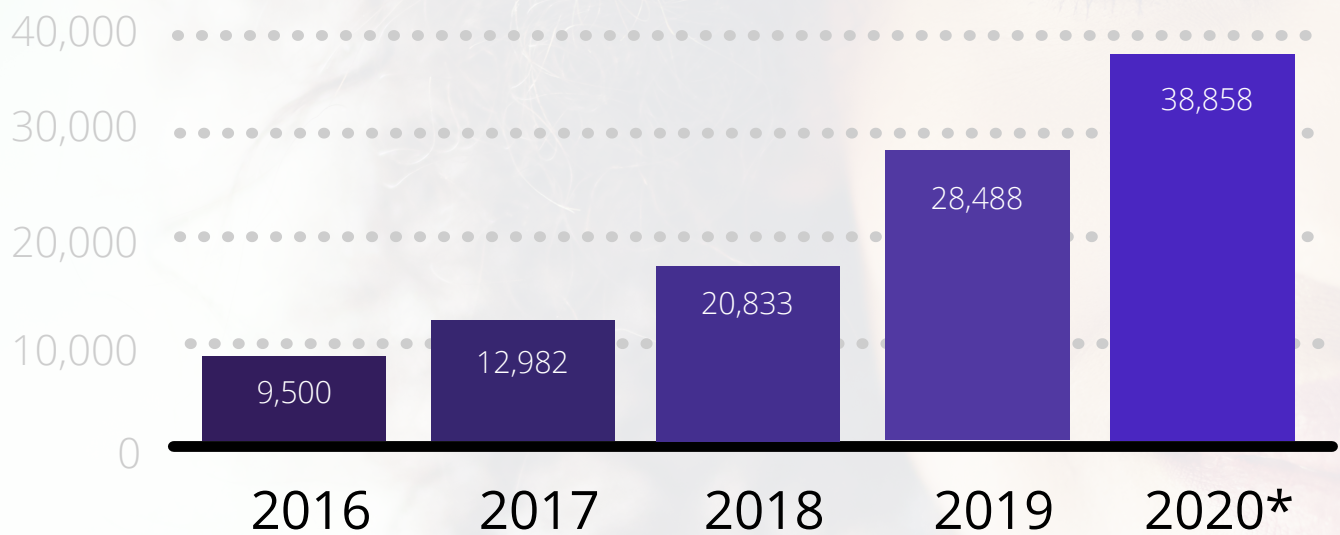
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## PERSONAL & CRIMINAL JUSTICE ADVOCACY

- Secure Victim Rights, Remedies, and Benefits
- Safety Planning
- TPO and Special Condition Bond Order
- Assistance with Interpretation Services for employer, insurance, landlord, creditor, and school mediation
- Court orientation and accompaniment information on court processes and notification of hearing dates
- Sentencing explanation & post-sentencing support

## TYPES OF INFORMATION & REFERRALS

- Counseling referrals
- Referrals to domestic violence shelters
- Referrals for emergency assistance (housing, financial, medical), Legal Aid referrals
- Referrals to immigrant support services
- Community awareness & education on Georgia Crime Victim's Bill of Rights Community Support



\*ANNUAL AVA SERVICES PROVIDED TO VICTIMS OF CRIME



# AVA PROGRAMS



**YOUTH & COMMUNITY SAFE DATES PROGRAM:** Hosted by Warren and Whitehead Boys & Girls Club. Served 40 students/youths within our intervention/prevention programs from the Carver and Maynard Jackson clusters.

**TEEN DATING VIOLENCE RESOURCE FAIR:** Held on February 28, 2020, AVA's Safe Dates team set up a table at the Metropolitan Library. They offered handouts and confidential guidance related to dating violence prevention and intervention services to 15 students from the Carver and Maynard Jackson clusters.

**NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS RIGHTS WEEK COMMEMORATION CEREMONY:** Our annual National Crime Victim Rights Week event was held on June 11, 2020, at the Atlanta Municipal Court and streamed live on Facebook. Due to COVID-19 limitations, the event was attended by 40 participants, in person, and the Facebook Live video was viewed over 380 times.



**HOMICIDE SUPPORT GROUP:** 11 monthly homicide support groups in NPU-V with 127 survivors participated in the 2019 homicide support groups. Due to COVID-19, we had to cancel our annual Celebration of a Life candlelight vigil that we usually hold in December.

**VICTIMS TO VICTORS:** At our Livestream of the National Crime Victim Rights Week event we held on June 11, we were proud to welcome two V2V youth participants who spoke about the adversity they have faced and how V2V has helped them to heal and find peace. Avery Hines and Justin Hawkins both gave powerful testimonials about how V2V was a place of solace where they didn't have to feel so alone. Justin delivered an inspiring, energetic message of hope. Avery suffered an unspeakable trauma when police killed his mother after she killed her daughter, Avery's sister. Through V2V he has been able to forgive his mother and find a place of peace and acceptance. Both of these young men are still dealing with immense pain but they now have the tools and support to do so thanks to AVA and the V2V program.



Justin Hawkins, AVA Survivor & Victor



Avery Hines, AVA Survivor & Victor

Survivors speak about the promise of faith and hope at AVA's National Crime Victim Rights Week event

**VICTIMS 2 VICTORS SCHOOL-BASED ADVOCACY PROGRAM:** In partnership with Atlanta Public Schools and Purpose-Built Schools, AVA has staffed two dedicated school-based advocates to collaborate with School Resource Officers, administrators, and School Social Workers to identify and serve their student body. Advocates provide resources, training, and intervention services to help heal trauma for students who have experienced violence, and help them continue with their lives and focus on their education. V2V served 40 students and parents within our intervention/prevention programs from the Carver and Maynard Jackson clusters.



# DONORS

## 2020 AVA DONORS

AEC Trust  
Crime Victims Advocacy Council  
Criminal Justice Coordinating Council  
Georgia Pacific  
Georgia Power  
Richard C. Munroe Foundation  
The COVID-19 Response Fund of the United Way of Greater Atlanta  
Community Foundation of Greater Atlanta  
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# PARTNERS



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## AVA PARTNERS

City of Atlanta Municipal Court  
City of Atlanta Police Department  
Office of the City Solicitor  
HOPE Atlanta  
Atlanta Center for Self-Sufficiency  
ChopArt  
The YMCA  
City of Atlanta Fire Department  
Georgia Commission on Hearing Impaired and Deaf Persons  
Atlanta Public Schools  
CHRIS 180  
Emmaus House  
Purpose Built Schools-Atlanta  
Partnership Against Domestic Violence  
The Boys and Girls Club



# OUR TEAM

## Board of Directors

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Pamela Smith (Chair)  
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Sheri Oluyemi  
Vincent Velasquez

## AVA Staff

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Brenda Muhammad, Executive Director  
Paula Gaillard  
Stephanie Armelin  
Juanita Burgest  
Andrea Moreno  
Amelia Elola  
Angel Spencer  
Beverly Muhammad  
Charlene Kay  
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Robert Jones  
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Victor Shamlin





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# CONNECT WITH AVA

HELP VICTIMS OF CRIME  
BECOME VICTORS.

Donate today! Send checks to:

**Atlanta Victim Assistance, Inc.**




**150 Garnett Street SW, 1st Floor**

**Atlanta, GA 30303**

Donate online at [www.atlantava.org](http://www.atlantava.org). We also accept donations of supplies, nonperishable food items, and Donor Advised Funds. AVA's EIN is 32-0017011. We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. All charitable donations are fully tax-deductible to the extent of the law.

 Atlanta Victim Assistance, Inc.  
150 Garnett Street SW, 1st Floor  
Atlanta, GA 30303

 404-588-4740  
 [www.atlantava.org](http://www.atlantava.org)

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Atlanta Victim Assistance

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