

Crime Victims’ Rights Week April 18-24

As the nation grieves yet another mass shooting last week in Indianapolis, this week we focus on Crime Victim’s Rights Week.

Yes, another focus for April that demands we pay attention. Since 1981, National Crime Victims’ Rights Week (NCVRW) has been observed. This year on the 40th anniversary of NCVRW focus is geared towards April 18-24.

It is a time to acknowledge the achievements in victim services and allied professions, to honor those who have gone above and beyond in their service to others, and to remember crime victims and survivors.

This year’s theme is: — Support Victims. Build Trust. Engage Communities. — intended to emphasize the importance of leveraging community support to help victims of crime.

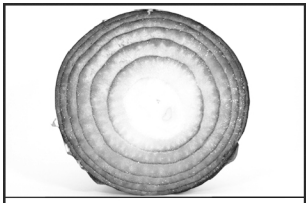
As Indianapolis law en-

forcement and the FBI investigate why the gunman came back to his previous employment and killed eight people, injured five and then killed himself, families grieve.

The eight families, friends, co-workers and each of us, wonder why did this senseless crime occur? Some I would imagine wish the gunman had not killed himself so possibly a definitive answer could be given as to why? Others are probably feeling vindicated that at least the gunman killed himself because there will be no trial that may linger and further victimize the families who have to hear and relive the tragic details.

As we work through this tragedy and begin to take additional precautions at home and work, we need to take this opportunity to look at the root causes of violence.

We need to focus on what we each are capable of doing to stop the violence.



A SLICE OF LIFE

Linda Wilk



One thing we know about the Fed Ex shooting is that the killer previously had suicidal thoughts that included involving others in his plan.

“In a statement, FBI Indianapolis Special Agent in Charge Paul Keenan said a shotgun was seized from the gunman after his mother told

authorities in March 2020, he might try to get himself killed by a law enforcement officer. The shotgun wasn’t returned to him, Keenan said, according to news accounts.’

So, what lesson can we learn from this tragedy?

In many cases of mass shootings there has been someone who had some inkling that something bad was going to happen.

As I write this column, I have not heard or read anything stating that the killer had written or told anyone of his plans, and he may have not. So, in no way am I saying someone should have done more to stop the mass killing, because I do not know that.

However, I will say, we as a society, a community, a family, friend, relative, co-worker need to pay attention to each other a little more.

We need to be open to listen, really listen to others and

be willing to act if we believe there may be potential for harm.

We cannot stick our heads in the sand and hope someone else will do something. If we see something, we must say something.

Our mantra during this pandemic has been, “We Are All in This Together!” I would add that beyond the Covid-19 pandemic and during this pandemic of violence, we must work together to figure out how to stop the killing.

Sometime after Sept. 11, 2001 mass killings, a community person created an active shooter compact trauma kit, which in looking on the internet, there are now several variations and kits someone could buy.

Sad to think that there may come a day when families routinely give their loved ones such a kit for a gift.

Not that we should not be prepared in case of a mass

shooting, however, I would like us also to focus on strategies to curb the violence.

I would say first and foremost we must turn to God in prayer and ask Him for guidance.

We must then pray relentlessly for each of the families who have lost a loved one in any form of violence. And then, we must rally together and work to support each other emotionally, physically and spiritually.

As we band together to try and stop the violence, let us focus on one of many quotes from famous people collected for Crime Victims Rights Week such as this one from American Professional Tennis Player Andre Agassi:

“This is the only perfection there is—the perfection of helping others. This is the only thing we can do that has any lasting meaning. This is why we’re here—to make others feel safe.” Agassi said.

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in not only seeing students ultimately achieve their degree, but also discovering their passion, following their dreams, and finding a job that enables them to grow and develop as human beings.

“I’ve had an opportunity to work with a lot of working adults, and as an educator, you’re not just a teacher, you are also a counselor, you are a parent, you are a confidant, you are all of these things.

So when you are in that classroom, you have the opportunity to get a snapshot of what that particular student is facing. For me, ultimately, the driving force is to see them walk across that stage...and there is a huge gratification when you see them land a position that will allow them to grow and support their families.”

Prior to Ivy Tech, Jackson worked with a nonprofit organization called Starfish Initiative, which focuses on college bound students who face unearned adversity and helps them to transition from high school to the collegiate ranks. Additionally, she served as the associate director of graduate medical education at the IU School of Medicine.

However, when the opportunity arose to lead the CCEC initiative at Ivy Tech — Marion, Jackson jumped at the chance to be a part of an ever-growing institution.

“I love what Ivy Tech stands for. I love their voice in the community, and wanted to be a part of that,” Jackson said. “Many of the organizations I have worked for serve the same demographic, and so because I love education and servant

leadership so much, it was a perfect combination.”

And for Ivy Tech Chancellor Dr. Alex Huskey and other members of leadership, Jackson was the perfect fit.

“This is transformational work. As we looked at this, we were looking at who can really come in and engage with the community, but also engage with our students and help them develop the skills that they need to be successful,” Huskey said. “When we all interviewed Tracey, one of the things we found is that she had the skill sets that really can help transform this work for our students.”

The Career Coaching and Employer Connections will serve Ivy Tech, and the community of Marion, in a variety of ways.

One, it will facilitate students’ success in the workforce by helping them develop a career development portfolio, by helping them polish skills such as time management and decision making, by assisting them in creating resumes and cover letters, and by providing one-on-one coaching.

“One of the things that this approach does is that it allows us to use data driven strategies to best work with students and employers,” Huskey said. “It also provides us the opportunity to connect well with students and develops a clear process for engaging students within the work force and help them be more prepared in the areas they choose to work.”

Secondly, the initiative will help strengthen relationships between the institution, the students, and potential employers.

“It is going to lead training initiatives, and it’s also going to connect the community with the students as well as the employers,” Jackson said. “This position is going to allow the opportunity to focus on the student, the community, and the employer. [It will] not just offer sustainability within our relationships, but also expand and fulfill training, education with business industries, the government, and the community.

“[This initiative] will strategically build our alliances where those relationships are more long term. That is what we are after with this initiative.”

Jackson has officially started in her role as the Executive Director, working tirelessly to put her team together, while simultaneously gaining familiarity with both the Ivy Tech and Marion communities. Jackson will be filling several positions focused on students, employers, and work-based learning, as well as meeting with different organizations and becoming known in the community.

Additionally, every student at Ivy Tech will be able to take part in the initiative. The goal is for students to complete both an academic plan and create a career plan while working with the CCEC team to make their dreams a reality.

“I am excited to be in this role because I know firsthand, from experience, what a role in a department like this can not only do for the campus, but for the community,” Jackson said. “It’s going to be a full circle with what we will be able to ac-

complish. I’m ready to get started.”

“I’m just so happy to be able to launch CCEC,”

Huskey concluded. “I’m so happy to be able to have Tracey on the team leading this effort, and I think in

time, we will realize the benefits of having something like this. I’m excited.”

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