

5th, 14th, 35th, & 39th Northwest Police Districts
under the Leadership of Inspector Nicolas Smith

&

Northwest Victim Services Staff

Returning



Home



Northwest Victim Services May Newsletter

A Piece of My Heart



Happy is the day when one can return home to serve! Departing from Northwest Victim Services in 2022 on a positive note allowed me to grow and expand my victim services knowledge beyond expectations. I had the pleasure of working under District Attorney Larry Krasner as the Director of the C.A.R.E.S. Unit. The C.A.R.E.S. Unit was created by Movita Johnson Harell to offer crisis support to family members, friends, and community members on the crime scene. The C.A.R.E.S. Unit Team was phenomenal, and it was a true honor to lead by example working side by side with each of them. My victim services career journey then led me to NOVA in Bucks County. Being the Director of Forensic and Crisis Support Services catapulted by victim services experience beyond expectation. Overseeing the Bucks County Child Advocacy Center (CAC), the Forensic Nursing Program (SANE, Non-fatal Strangulation, and IPV) as well as overseeing the Keystone Crisis Intervention Team (KCIT, statewide program). I attended the best school possible to better serve those affected by crime – the school of real-life experience.

Never disconnecting myself from Northwest Victim Services during my absence I was able to keep my finger on the pulse of the agency. April 4, 2024 the Board of Directors elected me to lead the agency once again. I was truly honored and overwhelmed with gladness. A huge thank you to Tobi Downing, the previous Executive Director who led the agency into a new world with creative and amazing programs for Northwest Victim Services. The Northwest Victim Services staff go above and beyond what is expected of them and their passion to help those affected by crime jumps out of each of them every day. Sometimes we think we will continue on one path when situations arise and cause us to change course.

I am ready to take Northwest Victim Services to the next level. Victims, witnesses, and co-homicide survivors are priority, and everyone is treated the same. It does not matter if someone who is affected by crime knows someone of status in Philadelphia, I will do everything I can for everyone I serve.

I truly understand the power of ONE starts with ME.



Melany P. Nelson
Executive Director

NORTHWEST VICTIM SERVICES STAFF



La'Nita Harris

**Manager - Direct Services and Trauma
Care Coordination**



Wynter Downing

**Youth Engagement Coordinator &
Office Assistant**



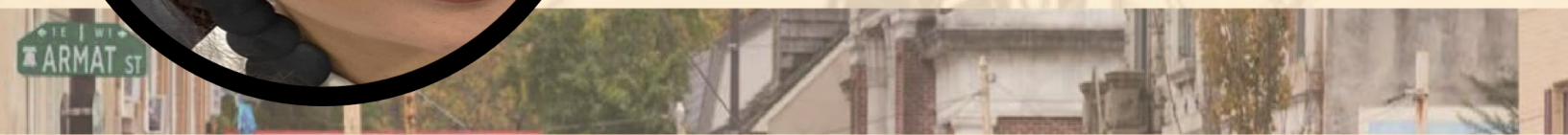
Rysheda Elliott

**Victim Advocate and Peer Support
Specialist**



Rachael Reyes-Vazquez

**Spanish Speaking Court/
Victim Advocate and
Peer Support Specialist**



UNFORGETTABLE

MOTHER'S DAY!

On **Mother's day March 9, 2021** Sebastian Brown called his mother to say "Mom, I'm at the school yard (which was located in Logan 18th & Rockland), I got your Mother's Day gift, I'm on my way to bring it to you, I love you so much mom". An hour passed while Daphne Brown, the mother of Sebastian continued to work after receiving the call from her son. She worked from in her living room of her home. Ms. Brown began hearing screaming from multiple people. Then she heard not "Bash". She immediately went to her front door, opened it and one of her neighbors slowly walked up her steps and said, "Sebastian aka Bash was shot in the head at the playground." Sebastian was attending a ballon release for one of his friends that passed away due to gun violence two weeks prior.

"Get into my car and I will drive you around the corner," the neighbor said to Ms. Brown. Approaching the playground the red and blue lights from the police cars bounced off of the neighbors car and the red flashing lights from the ambulance pierced through the pupils of Ms. Brown's eyes. Everywhere Ms. Brown looked she saw people and more people who were there for the ballon release. Ms. Brown was in a total state of shock. Her **ONLY** child was laying in the middle of a school yard shot once in the back of the head and once in the eye. Sebastian was laying under a white sheet lifeless.

The day before the funeral was the next time Ms. Brown saw her son, he was laying in a casket. "I accepted what happened to my son, and I was calm," Ms. Brown stated. The funeral was well attended, over three hundred youth, family members, church members, and friends along with law enforcement. Law enforcement was in attendance for safety reasons.

After the funeral, the repass, silence, anger, questions, and grief began to set into Ms. Brown's soul. She could no longer reside in her home where she lived with her son. "Come on to your second home my child," is what her parents said to her. Reverend Earl Potter and First Lady Betty Potter welcomed their daughter to stay with them to allow her to grieve in a safe environment without judgement. They showed her unconditional love, unwavering strength, which did not disturb her pathway that she needed to mourn for her son.

Mother's Day of 2024 will mark the three year anniversary of the homicide that changed Mother's Day forever for Ms. Brown. Still in therapy, still crying for her son, still distraught, and blindsided by what occurred.

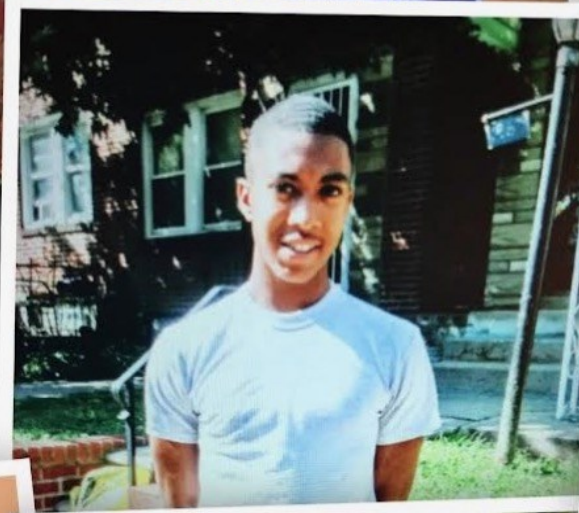
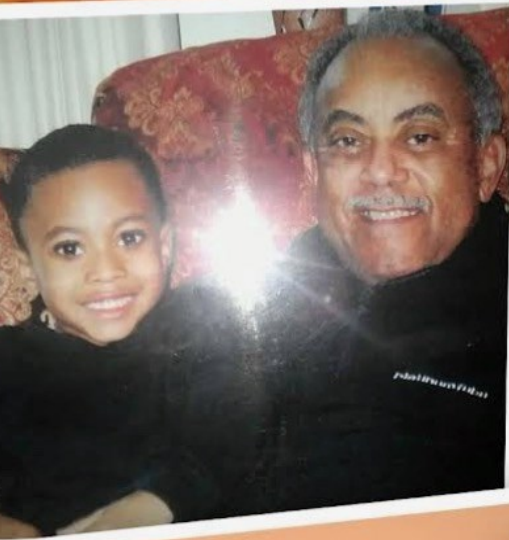
Ms. Brown's Message to Mothers: Please keep your eyes on your children. Know what they are into because sometimes we turn our heads to avoid seeing the obvious.

Ms. Brown's Message to her Son: I miss you; your dad misses you as well as your grandparents. We know you are with God and you are safe. No one can hurt you again and I am waiting for the day when we will be reunited. You still live on in our hearts. There is not a day that goes by that I do not think about YOU, Sebastian.

Your Mother Forever!

Happy Mother's Day to ME!

UNFORGETTABLE MOTHERS DAY!



SAVE THE DATE
**GUN VIOLENCE
AWARENESS DAY**

JOIN

NORTHWEST VICTIM SERVICES

TO RAISE AWARENESS ABOUT GUN VIOLENCE & HONOR THE LIVES OF
THOSE AFFECTED BY CRIME.

JUNE 7, 2024

2:00PM TO 5:00PM

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH OF GOD (FUMCOG)**

6023 GERMANTOWN AVENUE

PHILADELPHIA, PA 19144

#WEARORANGE

Resource Fair

Community Vigil

Gun Safety Awareness

Give-Aways

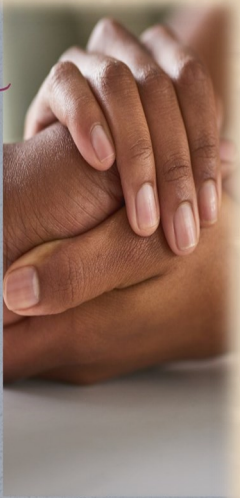
RSVP/Contact Information: yc@northwestvictimservices.org

Wynter Downing, Youth Coordinator

Event supported by Philadelphia Eagles Social
Justice Grant Fund

NORTHWEST VICTIM SERVICES

PEER
support



- DOMESTIC VIOLENCE
- SURVIVORS OF HOMICIDE AND GUN VIOLENCE



Rysheda Elliott
Peer Support Specialist
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www.northwestvictimservices.org



NVS YOUTH COLLECTIVE

Northwest Victim Services (NVS) Youth Collective is a youth-led decision making body created to provide opportunities for young people to engage in violence prevention, community engagement and education efforts in their own communities. Working closely with the NVS Advocate team and counselors, the YC creates and hosts specific in-person and virtual programming and outreach to build awareness around gun/dating violence and other related topics.

NVS NORTHWEST VICTIM SERVICES

FOR MORE INFORMATION



215-438-4410 Ext 105



6023 Germantown Ave
Philadelphia, Pa 19144



YC@northwestvictimservices.org



www.northwestvictimservices.org



NVS Youth Collective

Building Community by
Amplifying Youth Voices

NVS NORTHWEST VICTIM SERVICES

Northwest Victim Services Advocates assist in the compensation process, including helping to determine eligibility and assisting with the application process. You can call NVS at [215-438-4410](tel:215-438-4410) to set up an appointment or approach the Court Advocate at the Criminal Justice Center in courtroom 803 on Tuesday, Thursday, or Friday.

NVS PROVIDES THE FOLLOWING FREE SERVICES:

- **Crisis support** to crime victims, their families, and significant others.
- **Counseling Services** to victims to support them along their path to wholeness and health.
- **Information** about criminal justice/ police procedures and the progress of a case.
- **Advocacy** for victims of crime with the district attorney's office, police, and probation departments.
- **Referrals** to help victims meet immediate emergency needs through other community agencies.
- **Accompaniment** to criminal justice hearings and trials.
- **Assistance** to eligible victims in completing and filing victims' compensation claims.

Speakers on NVS services and crime prevention for community, church, and other groups.

Northwest Victim Services Therapist:

Dr. Janet Etzi, Licensed Psychologist & Trina Dow, Art Therapist, Injured & Survivor Advocate

Northwest Victim Services, 6023 Germantown Avenue, Philadelphia, PA 19144, 215-438-4410

