

# State of South Carolina



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**SCARLETT A. WILSON**

*Solicitor, Ninth Judicial Circuit*

## *News Release*

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### **Solicitor Scarlett A. Wilson earns prestigious Criminal Justice Award**

**Charleston, S.C.** – As part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Victims' Rights Conference 2008, Victim Advocates from the Palmetto State are meeting at the Embassy Suites in North Charleston to take workshops and learn more on how to better assist all victims of crime.

For over twenty years, the South Carolina Victim Assistance Network's (SCVAN) mission has been to insure crime victims receive access to, and assistance from, the criminal and juvenile justice system and related social service providers, to improve the quality of services provided to all crime victims, and to insure the criminal justice system adequately serves crime victims.

On Wednesday, March 26, 2008, the South Carolina Victim Assistance Network presented Ninth Judicial Circuit Solicitor Scarlett A. Wilson with the Criminal Justice Award. This prestigious award is given annually to a member of the criminal justice system who has exemplified true advocacy on behalf of crime victims.

Wilson was nominated for the award by two victims; one of them, Destiny Bendell, presented the award. Bendell was robbed and attacked as she left a Mt. Pleasant church after Bible study in 2005. Bendell was six months pregnant at the time of the robbery. Her attacker was sentenced to 25 years.

The family of Edwina Sims also joined in Wilson's nomination. Sims disappeared while visiting Ronald Coulter, who was her daughter's father, and his family

in Charleston County. Solicitor Wilson proceeded to trial against Coulter despite the fact that Sims' body had not been found. After convicting Coulter of kidnapping and obtaining a 30 year sentence, Wilson and a team of investigators located the body in rural Berkeley County. "I am honored by the award and grateful that we were able to help these victims in their time of great need," stated Solicitor Wilson.

Victim Witness Coordinator Teri Porcel, also a member of the Ninth Judicial Circuit, received the Outstanding Service Provider Award. This award is given to a direct service provider who has gone above and beyond the call of duty to assist crime victims.

For more information on the South Carolina Victim Assistance Network, please visit <http://www.scvan.org/>.

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