

## **BJS's 50th Anniversary Celebration of the National Crime Victimization Survey – Morning Session**

KEVIN SCOTT: Good morning. I am Kevin Scott; I am the Principal Deputy Director of the Bureau of Justice Statistics, and the acting head of the agency. I would like to welcome everyone to the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the National Crime Victimization Survey. [applause] It is an honor to have so many of you here in person today, attending in person, and now that it's working, attending virtually as well. This is a monumental occasion for BJS, the Office of Justice Programs, and the Department of Justice. It is also a significant event for the U.S. Census Bureau, and for all of those, including researchers, victim advocates, and law enforcement, to name a few, who in some capacity have had a role in the development and use of the NCVS to inform criminal justice programs and policies, promote community safety, support victims, and reform and strengthen the criminal and juvenile justice systems. That the NCVS has continued survey operations for 50 years is a testament to those who conceived of its need and laid the foundation on which the modern NCVS has continued to evolve. It is also a testament to the many people who have worked to keep the NCVS relevant and credible, two of the key foundations of federal statistical agencies. Today, we celebrate both the survey itself and the people whose hard work has made it an example of what the federal government can do to inform policy and practice on crime. The NCVS's longevity also speaks to a continuing commitment to the importance of objective data collection, analysis, and dissemination. We at BJS appreciate that commitment and look forward to sustaining it.

We have an exciting lineup for you today. This morning, you'll hear from leaders across the federal government on the significance of today's milestone. And this afternoon, we will reconvene at OJP, where BJS experts will share insights from the first 50 years of NCVS, and student researchers will give us a preview of the next generation of statistical leadership.

Before we begin our agenda this morning, a couple of housekeeping items. At the Department of Justice, we have rules to follow. Please be mindful that you need to be escorted by a DOJ employee during any movement around the building. Please see anyone with the blue staff tag ribbon on their name tags for assistance. I can escort you too. I'll share overall guidance on exiting the building at the end of our program.

At this time, I'm pleased to welcome Assistant Attorney General Amy Solomon, who leads the Office of Justice Programs, where BJS is housed. Amy often describes herself as a subscriber of BJS's work. I'm so grateful for her support of the important work that BJS does and honored to welcome her here today. [applause]

AMY SOLOMON: Thank you, Kevin, and good morning. It is great to see everyone. I loved the spirit early on, with the celebration of 50. I am so pleased to help welcome everyone to the Department of Justice to celebrate this milestone in criminal justice science. I want to congratulate and thank Kevin, our very capable, and I will say beloved, leader at BJS. And want to thank him and his whole team for their tremendous efforts, putting together this event, but more importantly, the work they do on the National Crime Victimization Survey, over so many years. The BJS team, along with our wonderful partners at the Census Bureau, continue to build and evolve, execute, and report, on the NCVS using the highest standards of statistical rigor. I want to give a special shout-out to Deputy Director Doris James. I don't see her. She tried to edit herself out of my remarks, but I can see her back there she deserves a lot of credit here. [applause] And I also want to give a shout out to BJS Deputy Director Heather Brotsos, and the amazing team of statisticians in the Victimization Statistics Unit at BJS. You're going to hear from many of them this afternoon at OJP. Heather and her team are behind so much of this important work.

They're coordinating with partners inside government, outside government; they're refining the survey; they're working through a major redesign and will give us, that will give us an even more textured and in-depth look at criminal victimization in America. I also want to take a minute to recognize a few very special guests here, welcome them back to the department, and thank them for their work over many years, designing, redesigning this important survey. We have, I believe six distinguished former BJS directors here in the room or on livestream. Joining us are Jeff Sedgwick, who is also the former AAG; we've got Jim Lynch over here; and Alex Piquero, who we miss very much. So glad that you could join us today. [applause]

And joining us virtually are Bill Sabol, Larry Greenfeld, and Jan Chaiken, who was the BJS director when I first worked at NIJ, so I'm so glad that they could join us as well. And we're also joined by John Laub, former Director of the National Institute of Justice. And Laurie Robinson, our former Assistant Attorney General may sneak in here as well, and we're just so pleased to have you all here and so many former uh, BJS, uh, scientists. It's been really fun to see you in the hallways and in this room, and we're so proud to have you here today. I've had the great privilege of working with so many of you over many years and our interactions, uh, frequently involved consulting the data from the National Crime Victimization Survey. In my three tours of duty here at OJP, and in all of my jobs and roles in between, as Kevin alluded to, I've leaned heavily on BJS data tools, reports, spreadsheets. I am an avid consumer of BJS over many, many years and just so appreciate the work that this incredible organization does. For all of us and for our nation, the National Crime Victimization Survey has been a consistent and reliable source of insight into the state of public safety in our country, and it tells us so much of what we need to know to make informed decisions about policy and practice. And I am grateful, and I know you are too, that this resource comes with the BJS stamp of reliability.

More than 50 years ago, President Johnson's Crime Commission said that among the many challenges of the administration of justice was quote, "the greatest need is the need to know." Then, the National Crime Survey, which, as you know, was renamed the National Crime Victimization Survey, stepped in to help fill the gap. And today it remains indispensable to our understanding of crime, justice, and victimization in this country. So our ceremony today is more than an anniversary celebration. It is an affirmation of the central role of this key data to our work to protect communities, serve victims, and ensure justice for all Americans. So thank you all for your commitment to this vital mission and for joining us to celebrate and commemorate today.

And as a reflection of just how important this data is to the Department of Justice, we are really honored to be joined today by the third-ranking official in the Department of Justice, Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta. Associate Attorney General Gupta is a champion of evidence-based policy and practice. She believes strongly in the power of data to shape public safety policy. She is a staunch supporter of our science agencies, and she is a serious data consumer herself. So I couldn't be happier to have her with us today. Please welcome the Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta. [applause]

VANITA GUPTA: Thank you, Amy. It is wonderful to join you today and to be among so many former DOJ officials here, too. I am really honored to be part of this milestone celebration marking 50 years of the National Crime Victimization Survey. I also want to thank Kevin, uh, and the outstanding team at the Bureau of Justice Statistics for their efforts in putting together this event. And really, for their excellent stewardship of the vital National Crime Victimization Survey. BJS manages a rich collection of data ranging across the public safety spectrum, and the National Crime Victimization Survey is among their largest and highly regarded data collections. Let me also thank Rob Santos, uh, and our friends at the Census Bureau for their longstanding partnership. They're the ones responsible for interviewing almost a quarter million people in some 150,000 households every year to collect the data for the survey. It is a

massive undertaking, and it is always carried out with the greatest professionalism and integrity, and we're really grateful for all that they do.

Informed decisionmaking depends on having accurate and thorough data, and we have and continue to rely on data to help formulate policies to address our nation's most pressing public safety challenges. And the information we learn from that data also guides us as we strive to ensure that policies are equitable and just.

For many years, the only information we had about crime and violence was what was reported to the police. Service calls and arrest reports were our sole source of data, and while information from law enforcement agencies across the country is critical to our understanding that, of the challenges facing our communities, we've really come to appreciate over time that relying solely on that information doesn't tell the full story. Fifty years ago, our nation took a major step to fill in the narrative. The story of the National Crime Victimization Survey began in 19 in January 1965, when President Lyndon Johnson established the Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice. The Commission, which was chaired by Attorney General Nicholas Katzenbach then, conducted a pilot survey on crime victimization, a prototype for the National Crime Victimization Survey. Through the survey, the Commission uncovered a significant gap between victims' self-reporting of crimes and crimes reported to law enforcement authorities. It recommended that this victimization survey, then named the Crime National Crime Survey, be carried out on a continuous basis, given what the Commission said was its great potential for discovering the extent and the nature of unreported crime.

The first full year of the data collection was 1973, and for the past 50 years, it has been the nation's primary source of information on criminal victimization. It provides vital data about when and where crime occurs, who commits those crimes, the circumstances surrounding those crimes, and the impact on victims. Through the survey, we're able to get data that we would otherwise lack: the reasons why a victim did or did not report the crime, the ripple effects of victimization on a person's health and economic well-being, whether they were able to access the victim services to address the impact of their experience. These are just a few examples of the types of insights that the survey provides. The past 50 years have brought innovations in data collection methods. New survey content to address emerging categories of crime and detailed, uh, statistics on crimes reported and not reported to the police, all made possible by BJS. But one thing has remained constant, and that is the need for reliable, credible data to drive our public safety policies and improve our criminal and juvenile justice practices. Over the years, BJS, working with our partners at the Census Bureau, has taken important steps to improve the survey's design and reduce the burden on respondents, while increasing data collection on emerging crime types such as identity theft, fraud, and stalking. The dedication to the continued refinement, uh, has established the National Crime Victimization Survey as the gold standard of criminal justice modernization, which was laid out in the Crime Commission report that first influenced its development. BJS and the Census Bureau have also worked with others to sustain and enhance this invaluable source of information. An expert panel of researchers and academics have provided input on key advances over time, including ways to improve the measurement of crime and the development of community safety measures. Many of these contributions will be reflected in the redesigned instrument that will be used in the field next year. Other partners in the federal statistical community have worked with BJS to help inform what's collected in the survey and to report out significant findings. To take a few examples, for decades, the National Center for Education Statistics and BJS have jointly reported on school crime and safety. The Bureau of Labor Statistics and BJS have worked together to report on workplace violence. And internally, in our Office of Justice Programs, the Office for Victims of Crime

provides financial support for the survey, as well as a National Census and the National Survey of Victim Service Providers.

In this anniversary year, President Biden recognized the importance of the federal statistical system, with a report on leveraging federal statistics to strengthen evidence-based decisionmaking, which was published alongside the FY 23 President's budget. And Congress acknowledged the importance of good data and data systems when it passed the Foundations, uh, for Evidence-based Policymaking Act of 2018. The Evidence Act sets up new requirements and processes for federal agencies to modernize our data management practices, evidence-building functions, and statistical efficiency, all of which informed evidence-based policy decisions. It's really no exaggeration to say that the National Crime Victimization Survey is an essential part of the federal statistical system. It provides reliable data to support strategies that promote public safety, increase community trust, and ensure equitable delivery of services. The survey can be used to understand not only differences in crime patterns across communities, but also how the impact of that crime varies for different people and households. And notably, with the New NCVS instrument, these measures will be expanded to holistically understand respondents' perceptions of community safety. With this information, we're better able to and better equipped to recognize and meet the distinct safety needs of each community across the nation.

So as we commemorate this anniversary and look ahead to the next 50 years, we can rest assured that the National Crime Victimization Survey is doing what it intended to do: to give a more complete picture of the victimization experiences of Americans. The survey is a cornerstone of the Justice Department's statistical collections, but more importantly, it is foundational to guiding our response to crime, including our efforts to fill gaps and provide improved services and support to victims of crime. I'm really proud of how the National Crime Victimization Survey has so faithfully captured our evolving public safety challenges of our time. And our criminal and juvenile justice professionals, our victim services providers, our researchers and think tanks, our legislators and policymakers, and the American people at large, are better informed and better served, thanks to this survey. So thank you again for all that you do every day to promote safety and well-being in our communities, and thank you for the partnership and support. [applause]

AMY SOLOMON: Thank you so much to Associate Attorney General Vanita Gupta. She needs to join her next meeting, but we're so grateful that she could be with us here today. And now it is my great privilege to introduce our next speaker. Census Bureau Director Rob Santos is a rockstar in this field, and we are so fortunate to have him leading the Census Bureau. You've heard they are the key partner to BJS in designing and implementing and fielding this survey, and we're just so glad he was able to join us here today. Director Santos came to this position with more than 40 years of experience in survey research, statistical design and analysis, and I first came to know of the great Rob Santos when we worked together at the Urban Institute, where for 15 years, he served as vice president and chief methodologist. So Director Santos has had other jobs, leadership positions in several top research survey organizations over the years, and his areas of expertise are broad and impressive. It's an honor to have him here with us today, so please give a warm welcome to the Director of the Census Bureau, Rob Santos. [applause]

ROB SANTOS: Well, good morning, everyone. I have a huge smile on my face because the NCVS is an absolutely amazing study. I've come to appreciate it over the years, and I'm going to tell you a little story of how that happened. But first, let me say, *felicidades*. Congratulations for half a century of work. Um, this, what I wanna do is, I wanna tell sort of like, let's humanize the NCVS and what we're trying to do. Um, in terms of contributing statistical evidence to the phenomena that need to be captured with

regard to unreported crime. Ah, and the story I'm going to tell you actually starts with my long-time colleague, Nancy La Vigne. We worked together, and in fact, I, she was my client when I had a private social science, um, research company in Austin, Texas, back in the early 2000s. And, lo and behold, I happen to win a contract from Nancy, who was at the Urban Institute, on a reentry project in Texas. This was a survey of prisons and jails where we would go, I would go with my little team, all over the state. We'd hit the state prisons, and we'd hit the jails, county jails, and such. Go in a couple of days before the folks who were incarcerated were about to be released. Assemble them, hand out some self-administered interviews, get them to participate, collect them, and then go follow them up. You know, several months later, and then a year later. To look at the issues, and what are they experiencing now that they're out and such. And there's something that happened that just really impacted me in terms of my understanding and appreciation for the NCVS. And it happened at a female prison in Texas. So I went there, and of course, I don't know if you guys know about this, but you have to sign your life away when you go into those things, because the state of Texas does not negotiate for hostages. So you have to waive all those rights and such. And then you go in, and in this case, it was a female prison. They brought the people in, and we did our thing, like yes, this is a really important study. Please try to sell the salience, and, you know, that only goes so far. Um, but we were successful. We got most of the folks to participate. And we were working on the recalcitrant folks, and this woman said to me, she said, "No, I'm not going to participate unless I talk to you." I said "OK." So we went off to the side and we had 5 minutes together so I could talk to her about the importance of the study and how it could really help people like her understand recidivism and, um, and help prevent that. And over the course of just 5 minutes, she ended up telling me her life story. And it involved and it featured early familial domestic violence. And then that went on to she had a boyfriend, live-in boyfriend. domestic violence. And then it even went, got even worse, because when they got arrested in a in the event that led to her being in the prison, she said that they had a cache of drugs, and the boyfriend convinced her to take them. Because, he said, females get off easier than males and they'll just throw me, you know, put me in jail and throw away the key type of thing. So she accepted that. And she found herself in that situation, and she was really distraught about it. I showed my understanding. We talked about it, and she eventually took the survey. So we were really pleased to be able to have her voice in that. But it occurred to me that, um, there were too many stories like that. I mean, hers was just one story of someone who ended up getting incarcerated, who was not able to tell their side of what domestic violence and other unreported crimes feels like, and how they had to endure it, or they felt they had to, in order to get by. And it seemed to me that those stories really needed to be told so that we can have an understanding of how, it's not just that, you know, there was domestic violence and these things happen. But, how did society get to a place where we have collections of people and families that don't get the opportunities that others have in education, in jobs, in social support among neighbors even, in community reinforcement? Those stories need to be told. And NCVS allows people to tell those stories. It allows us to quantify prevalence of these type, various types of things happening to people. And it allows us to maybe reveal some of the inequities that are associated with the prevalence of some of these, the incidents of some of these types of things. That's why I think this study is so incredibly important, because it is the only annual survey, and a pretty large sample size, yay, uh, that that can capture unreported crime and unreported violations on a whole series of things, and the list keeps expanding. So I have, based on my research experience, a deep appreciation for the NCVS. Uh, the Census Bureau, and all the staff, they have their appreciation.

In fact, um, we have a few field representatives here today, that actually go out and knock on doors and convince people to participate and answer really sensitive questions. And I'd like to shout, give them a shout-out, and ask them to stand up, OK? Ray Posh, is here? Jane Callen. Steve Bloomberg. Michael McNultr(?)y. And Michael O'Neill. Thank you so much, folks. We owe it all to you.

They are incredibly important parts of the overall team that brings together BJS, the Census Bureau, our technical staff, our field staff, our clerks, everything, or even our contracts before, it all, we all come together to make sure that we can create this infrastructure that's so desperately needed, and for which BJS has the pride to be able to say we are helping the American public. So ,thank you very much for that. Um, so I wanted to, to also acknowledge that there are other folks, other departments that benefit and partner with us on that. There are folks from the Department of Health and Human Services. Is there anyone here from there? I wouldn't necessarily think so. How about Department of Education? There you go. Shout-out. [laughter] So thank you very much for all of us coming together in response to this really important, uh, issue that needs that for which we are able to provide the evidence base upon which we can develop programs and we can help society. Um, now, if you, you probably don't know this, or some of you don't, probably everybody else does, the um, we're actually going through a redesign of the content of the, of the National Crime Victimization study, and it's really important because as society changes, so too do our measures need to change, so too do our methods. We need to catch up with that. You know, it's even things like race and ethnicity, or SOGI status. We all need to be taking, taking continuous looks. We're in that process, BJS is with partners, research contractor partners, and we're helping out, as well. So we're looking forward to the next improved version of the the NCVS. So anyway, that's all I had to say today. Thank you very much. I very much appreciate the honor of being here with you and celebrating, uh, this wonderful moment on these gleaming hall floors and beautiful venue. And exceptional scientists and people and contributors. So thank you very much, everyone. [applause]

KEVIN SCOTT: About this time next year, with the Census Bureau as our partner, BJS will be launching the Survey of Inmates in Local Jails for the first time in about 20 years. Maybe you can do refusal conversion. Alright? Thank you, Rob, and thank you, Amy. We're going to do a bit of a switch, uh, to move over to our panel. And so I'm going to let Amy and Rob if they, they're welcome to stay, but they can step aside as they want, but I wanted to introduce our roundtable participants, an impressive panel of distinguished researchers and federal government officials. And I'm introducing them alphabetically, no other kind of precedence. Just, sorry, Bob. The first panelist is Janet Lauritsen, a Curators' Distinguished Professor Emerita in the Department of Criminology and Criminal Justice at the University of Missouri – St. Louis, whose research has included work on the NCVS. Nancy La Vigne, who is the director of the National Institute of Justice at the Office of Justice Programs and a nationally recognized criminal justice policy expert. Jim Lynch, a research professor at the University of Maryland and former BJS director, whose research includes work on victims, victim surveys, including the NCVS. Kris Rose, the director of OJP's Office for Victims of Crime, and whose career includes several positions in the Department of Justice, including at NIJ and the Office on Violence Against Women. And Bob's Sivinski, who is in the Office of the Chief Statistician of the United States in the Office of Management and Budget, and, among other things, the BJS desk officer there for the past several years.

This discussion will highlight the relevance of the NCVS and the federal statistical systems, system, importance of the NCVS in establishing criminal justice policies, research using NCVS, and the past, present, and future uses of the survey. So please join me in welcoming our distinguished panelists. [applause]

Feels a little bit like Jeopardy. So now I get to ask the questions. [laughter] Alright, let's start with Jim, if that's OK?

JIM LYNCH: Sure.

KEVIN SCOTT: Alright.

JIM LYNCH: I didn't know I had a choice. [laughter] Uh, the question that was posed to me was to describe the NCVS and compare it to police administrative records that have been used historically to measure crime. And so there are many people in this room, Mike Rand, particularly who knows a lot more about this than I do, but I'll give this a shot. The National Crime Survey, Victimization Survey is, as most of you in the audience already know, it's it's a, uh, it's a survey of the residential population of the United States, 12 years of age and older, uh, and those people who are in the sample are asked to report on their crime experience in the previous 6 months. They are also, those who are victims, are asked to describe the nature of the event and the consequences that occur. And so this is, this is what BJS uses to make estimates of crime and victimization, uh, on an annual basis using the survey. So in contrast, the police administrative records obviously are taken from what's proposed to be a population of police agencies in the United States with arrest powers. I'm talking specifically about the summary system of the Uniform Crime Reports, and now, NIBRS. And so that you can see the major difference, I think, between the two systems is their source of data. The NCVS uses the self-report experience of victimization of victims, and the administrative record data uses the administrative records that are in the police department, which result from their service to the public in response to crime. So I think the major difference, I would say, obviously was pretty obvious to everybody in the room, is that, is that one, it includes crime that is unreported to the police, whereas police administrative record will only include those crimes that are reported to the police. So the "Dark Figure of Unreported Crime" is really the major utility, of the, it's not the only, but the major utility, of the National Crime Victimization Survey, in our crime statistics system.

I should say that there there are many other small differences between these two types of records. But, uh, for instance, the scope, there's no victimless crime, so loitering, public, public order offenses, all these kinds of things are not included in the NCVS. Murder, as well, as people know most most often. Some people— If you call back six times, you actually get the dead, so I don't know, [laughter] but but that kind of, um, those, that kind, there's an overlap, so the common law crime that we're used to: rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft, that core of common law crimes is shared between the administrative record data and between the, uh, survey data, uh, but other other crimes are in the NCVS, not in the police statistics and vice versa. So they're really meant to be, for years they were competing with each other to see who could get the first release in September of every year. But over time, people have begun to realize that these are complementary. They're meant to be used to complement each other not to compete with each other, similar to the way the administrative records and the surveys are used, uh, in our labor statistics for the unemployment rate. So what one doesn't get the other gets, and they should be used in parallel, not necessarily running in parallel, so I think that's all we have to say about that. I feel like Forrest Gump.

KEVIN SCOTT: OK. Janet, the next question is for you. And I'm not requiring [unclear], you're absolutely welcome to. But Janet, you've worked with crime statistics throughout your career. What is unique and important about the NCVS and what that it, what it can show compared to other data sources?

JANET LAURITSEN: Thanks. I'll I'll say a few things about, uh, what's unique about it. But many of them were mentioned briefly in prior remarks. Just want to first make the point that the survey has critical indicators that are important for any informed public discussion of crime victimization in the United States. And the societal value of the survey goes beyond the critically important issue of of having, um, crimes that are not reported to police as well as having the reasons for why those crimes are and are not reported. So uh, simply put, um, without the NCVS, we would not have a nationally representative,

ongoing data on crime and victimization with extensive details on victims and incidents, on the consequences of victimization on the persons, the perpetrators committing the crimes where there is direct contact between the victim and offender, nor would we have data on the context of the event, such as the victim-offender relationship or the place of a current, of occurrence of the event. Um, we would also not have information on the costs of crimes that, financial costs of crimes, as reported by victims of property crimes. The nature of the police response when the victims call or someone calls on their behalf. Um, the the details on distress, uh, emotional and physical distress as a result of the victimization. And these are all critical to decisions we make about, um, or choose to make about how we're going to respond to crime.

Um, I also, um, it's been mentioned briefly that because we have this, we can also study disparities in all of these features of crime in ways that just simply don't exist in police data. There is an attempt to make some of that possible with the NIBRS transition, the um, ongoing NIBRS transition, but, but again, there is much more richer detail about persons that allow us to study disparities in risk, such as between disabled and not disabled people, between, uh, groups of different races and ethnicities, gender and, um, LGBT groups, age groups, marital status groups, etcetera, so we really get a rich sense of the context of these events, and we can, um, discuss better what we should do about it. And one other thing I'll mention is the periodic supplements to the survey are critical to discussions about crime in other areas. The School Crime Supplement is the only nationally representative survey of crime in American schools. The Police-Public Contact Survey, a supplement, important supplement of the NCVS, tells us about the nature and the amount of contact between the public beyond crime, between the public and the police; that's a very important supplement. And then there have been other supplements that are addressing emergent forms of crime over the last decade or two such as identity theft, uh, and various forms of financial fraud, as well as a stalking supplement. None of this is available anywhere else for the United States, so. I could go on. But I think that hits the main points of what's unique.

KEVIN SCOTT: Ah, Nancy. How has NIJ-sponsored research used NCVS data? And what have we learned from that research?

NANCY LA VIGNE: That's a great question. I'm so glad you asked it. Um, let me start by saying that NCVS has been a treasure trove for researchers at large. It's just provided so much information to explore so many important and pressing questions that have direct relevance for, um, victim experiences, how the police respond to them, and so forth. And then, uh, NIJ is BJS's beloved, I know, sister agency. It's really a great example of how complementary our two agencies are that you all generate this important data and then we can help fund research that enables people to explore the data and answer pressing questions. And so I polled my team members, and they gave me more examples than I have time to share about specific grantees and projects. I'm going to lift up two of them.

Ah, one is a project that researchers at the University of Massachusetts - Lowell conducted, and they were looking specifically at victim-police interactions in the context of hate crimes, and specifically, LGBTQ hate crimes. They were interested in seeing whether there were differences in victim-reporting based on the specific types of crimes, as well as in police response. And of course, that's important because you want police response to be equal, regardless of the nature of the crime and the nature of the person who's experiencing the victimization. What they ended up finding was promising. They found that there were no significant differences in the way, in both reporting rates for people who experience sexual orientation bias victimizations and other types of victims, and no difference in police response. So that was a really positive finding.



The other study I want to lift up is university, uh, researchers at the University of Missouri – St. Louis who linked the NCVS data with the Police-Public Contact data to explore whether past contact with law enforcement predicted the degree to which someone who experienced a victimization would report that experience. And it also looked at some procedural justice kinds of dynamics, as well. So not just whether they had a past experience, but about how they felt about that past experience. And what's interesting there is that they didn't see any main effects for person crimes. But when I came to more household-based crimes, um, there were some real negative effects in past contact with law enforcement, particularly for people who reside in high-crime communities of color. So those are just two examples of many where we're able to explore some important questions and generate findings that have real implications for how, maybe, we can see improvements in law enforcement response and other aspects of serving victims of crime.

KEVIN SCOTT: BJS is a proud member of the federal statistical community. And so I want to ask Bob, who is, works, in the Office of the Chief Statistician of the United States—rolls off the tongue. [laughter] You work with many of the other statistical agencies across the federal government. What can these agencies learn from the NCVS to improve their own data collections, and—small twist—what can BJS learn from those other agencies to improve the NCVS?

BOB SIVINSKI: All right. Thank you. And thank you for the curveball I wasn't able to prepare for. [laughter] Uh, so I think there's obviously a lot that federal agencies can learn from BJS and from NCVS specifically, and the first one is, is pretty obvious, right? It's the collection of extremely sensitive data, and that's, that's a word that gets thrown around a lot. But with the NCVS we're talking about very personal, private, traumatic experiences that you're asking people, members of the general public, to share with a stranger from the federal government. And, uh, I'm glad that we have a couple of those folks here in the room. I think this must just be an incredibly challenging job and really the secret of the success of the NCVS. But, uh, but really the, and I do, I send other federal statistical agencies to BJS staff all the time, and say talk to BJS, talk to the NCVS staff about how to do this, and it's really, um, a manner a matter of the policies and the protocols, right? So you have to have the right policies in place on how you're going to do things, and how you're going to talk to people, and the protocols, whether that's the electronic data collection, how you're collecting the data, how you're reassuring people that you're going to be able to keep their data private. And there's also some really thorny ethical issues there, too. I think, right, if people are telling you something about what your duty to report that maybe. And so it's a very difficult thing to navigate on a lot of different fronts, and the NCVS has a very mature and a successful and well-established way of doing it. And so I send federal agencies to you all the time to get advice on how to do it in their own programs.

The second thing is also been mentioned here today already, I think, which is just the constant evolution and growth. Um it's really an attitude I think of BJS in the NCVS where this is not just a production survey that's constantly cranking out the same data widgets year after year. This is really kind of an ongoing research project. And the BJS staff is always looking for ways to improve, whether it's through the protocols and policies, or the actual data that gets collected, or the use of technology. It's just a really constant process, and then there are kind of big waves of redesign and content redesign and things like that, but even just during normal production cycles, they're, they're constantly looking at ways to improve, which is really challenging in the federal government when everyone's kind of flat-funded and trying to keep their head above water to really maintain that spirit of research and evolution.

And then maybe the last thing I'll mention in terms of what agencies can learn from BJS is, uh, I think they do an excellent job of reaching out across the federal community with other statistical agencies and other agencies. So we mentioned the Census Bureau, of course, longtime partners on NCVS and other studies. But there are also partnerships in place with, I think Rob mentioned HHS, and Education, and Treasury. You know, there are all different kinds of crime out there that affect different federal departments. And from OMB, one of the first things we usually ask agencies, we'll say, "Well, did you talk to this other agency when you came up with this question?" And it's just nice. I always know BJS, the answer is going to be "Yes, we thought this through really carefully, we engaged with our partners, and we are confident that this is going to, you know, provide the best data for decisionmakers." So those are the things I wanted to highlight.

Um, what BJS can learn from other agencies? You know, BJS is one of my favorites. I got, I got to say. All of the stat agencies are my favorites. But BJS is my favorite. Uh, you know, I think that's that's a tough one. I have a much longer list of things that that other agencies should be looking to BJS for, um, I don't want to, I don't want to criticize anyone in the room here. But but yeah, I think we all have a lot that we can learn from each other, right? I mean, as we're all facing a looming shutdown and all kinds of crises together, uh, you know, well this is one benefit of the federal statistical system: all the agency heads get together once a month, and they're able to talk to each other, and they really can share some experiences. And I think there's, there's hardly anything that I've seen come up in my eight years at OMB that is coming up for the first time or unique and so just the willingness to participate in these, uh, in these environments in these groups and let people know what you're going through and what's happening and getting advice. I think we can all really learn from each other, and the system as a whole benefits from that when there's a united front, and we all have a similar approach, and we're talking to each other. So I will give that general answer.

KEVIN SCOTT: Thank you. All right. Kris. One of the focuses of the NCVS has been on access to victim victim service resources. And so we know from the NCVS how many people who are victims of crimes seek out and receive victim services after the victimization. But there's another side to that. And so, can you tell us a little bit about how the NCVS has informed work in the priorities in the Office for Victims of Crime?

KRIS ROSE: Is my microphone working? OK, um. I want to start, though, by just saying how nice it is to be invited to be on this panel. Um, one of my first jobs when I got out of graduate school was working at the National Criminal Justice Reference Service. And I was a statistics information specialist for the BJS Clearinghouse. This is quite a while ago, and my job was to answer the 800 line and respond to questions about BJS data and other statistics around crime and justice. So I developed this early appreciation for the NCVS and we, and my colleagues, we just totally nerded out on, you know how awesome the NCVS was. It was, it was a lot of fun, and we took such pride in being able to help people figure out how the NCVS could, um, you know, inform the work that they're doing. And we talked to practitioners and policymakers and students and the media, and researchers, and it was quite an education. It was almost like going through graduate school again. Um, I think coming from the perspective of, and by the way, if I had known 30 years ago when I was answering that 800 line that I would be sitting up here with these amazing people, talking to some of my dearest colleagues, um, in criminal justice, I don't think I could have imagined that. Um, but what I do know is that the NCVS has really helped victim service providers understand the nature of crime victimization and has for a long time, because it captures such detailed information about victims and offender relationships. Um the the demographic information, um. But more importantly, the NCVS, for the victim services field has been the, if you'll excuse the term, ammunition, that they needed in talking to state legislatures and in

talking to federal policymakers about the need for funding for victim services. And without that, um, you know, we would not have had a such a strong case for that. At OVC, one of our highest priorities is expanding access to services for victims of crime. And one of the things that we have learned from the NCVS is that victims of violent crime have received assistance from a victim service provider only 9% of the time. And for us at OVC, that is a call to action. And we would not have known that, had it not been for the NCVS. So we are grateful for that. [applause]

KEVIN SCOTT: I want to say, I think the 800 line is gone. [laughter] But, one of my favorite things about BJS, and I honestly couldn't believe this when I started at BJS, is we have an email address, and you can email us. It's AskBJS@usdoj.gov. And if you email us, we will answer your question. Uh, so we still do that, we still nerd out. Sometimes we're surprised at how many people ask us questions, but I think it's a good sign that people are asking us questions about our data, and it's good to see that people had good experiences answering the 1-800 line.

Nancy. How can BJS and NIJ, as the statistics and research agencies of the Department of Justice, partner together to advance research, data, and statistics on criminal justice?

NANCY LA VIGNE: That's a great question, and it kind of leads, and I think there's another question coming, and I'm going to answer both at once, which is, because it's forward looking, right? Um, we team up a lot. We coordinate, we'll get proposals where people say they're going to do national surveys. We always check with you and your team first, make sure that that's not redundant, or overburdening certain respondents or agencies, but, and you know this, but I'm I've been long obsessed with—I'm not a victimization person. Let me just start there. I don't, I haven't done a lot of research on victimization. I'm a crime-in-place person, and what I know, and I think what we all know, because it's easy to know about reported crimes, that, you know, crime is very, very local phenomenon, right? And it's, and, you know, we talk about hotspots of crime. We know it's concentrated, but it's super concentrated, even at the community-level, even at the neighborhood-level, even at the street-segment level, you will have some street segments that have a lot of concentration, and others that have next to no crime. This is the reported crime, right? So the question in my mind is, what are the concentrations of victimization? We know so little because this is a national survey. It's expensive. I know that the end is pretty good, but it's pretty good at the national-level. It's pretty good at the state-level. It's kind of good at the regional-level, and then when we get to jurisdictions and neighborhoods, we can't even know anything. And, or we could, but we couldn't, because then it would be identifiable and we don't want that, right? So I think that there is an opportunity and maybe it's not through NCVS or maybe NCVS can do more oversampling in certain geography so that at least we can see this experiment to see what those concentrations might look like. Um, so that's one idea. But also maybe just learning from you all in how we can launch something a little bit different, but complementary that really lifts up the experiences of people who reside in specific communities, because what we know, I think we know, is that we really routinely underrepresent the experiences and perceptions of people who are living in the highest crime communities and often at the most, the least well-resourced communities and often the communities that, um, are populated by people of color. And then we ask them things like, "What do you think about police?" And, you know, they're not responding. And so then we say, "Oh, you know, most people really like the police. They want more policing." Well, we don't know that because it's underrepresented, so I'd love to see some ways that we can team up and try to crack that nut.

KEVIN SCOTT: On it. We're at a moment, I think, for the NCVS, and for the federal statistical system more generally, um, obviously it's 50 years for us, and we're launching into the redesign of the NCVS, which will be in the field next year in a split-sample approach. But the next 50 years is something that we always have to be thinking about.

And so, Bob. Looking forward, what are some of the challenges and opportunities that you see from where you sit for the NCVS and for the federal statistical system more generally, and any thoughts you have about solving those, we'll take them.

BOB SIVINSKI: How long do we have? No. Ah, so I think a lot of the large benchmark surveys across federal government are facing a similar set of challenges. We have many, many years now of relatively flat budgets, but we've also got inflation during that time and increasing costs in that response rates are going down. And so we're paying more per case that we want to keep our sample size up. Things are getting more expensive. So that's I think the first main challenge. Um, and then, and then, the second is that there are there's kind of a proliferation of other data sources out there that we're grappling with now, so whether this is, um, I mean, actually, DOJ and BJS have long had administrative data as a staple, so it's less new for you than for others, but there's also kind of big data things like credit card data and cell phone tracking data that will probably become relevant to you all in the next 50 years. So how do you, how do you navigate that relationship also, and I think there's an opportunity there on both of those challenges for federal statistical agencies to really focus and communicate on their unique strengths, so there will always be data that is critical and can only be collected by the kind of large survey apparatus that you have here, that really needs kind of boots on the ground and people knocking on doors and having conversations because the things that you're measuring through the NCVS don't leave any other sort of data footprint, right? This is, this is the magic of NCVS. This is unreported crime. So, uh, so I think there's an opportunity here to really communicate that, to brand that, and to embrace it as an agency to say, these are the things that only we can do 50 years from now, it's still going to be a thing that only something like the NCVS can do, and so figuring out how to prioritize that when it's time to make tough budget decisions, to make sure that you're focusing on the strength and kind of letting go of the things that maybe could be done differently elsewhere.

KEVIN SCOTT: Sorry. Kris. Um, how can BJS and OVC continue to partner, particularly to advance research on victim services?

KRIS ROSE: Well, OVC and BJS have had a long-standing partnership and we value that so much. Um, I think it's since 2015, OVC has been fortunate enough to be able to provide funding for the NCVS to the tune of about over \$117 million. And that funding has gone toward modernizing the NCVS, the providing subnational estimates, expanding what we know about formal and informal help-seeking behavior, and helping to understand satisfaction that people have with their police encounters. And as Janet mentioned earlier, you talked about the supplements, and we have been able to support supplements on stalking, and fraud, and identity theft, and—fun fact—is the stalking survey, um, I was able to work with the wonderful Mike Rand and Katrina Stone, who are in the audience today, on the very first stalking supplement to the NCVS, and that was pretty amazing because that was in response to the field. They wanted data on stalking, and no one really knew how to put a name on it. And the part that I think is significant about BJS and the NCVS and the Census Bureau is that they were very conscious of being able to, when asking the questions in the supplement, use, I don't even think we were calling it this then, but, use a trauma-informed approach in doing so. And they allowed us to create a training video so that we could show that to all the people that were administering the supplement so that they would understand the impact of the questions they were answering and what kind of trauma people may have endured up to that point, so I, that to me was just a, um, an indication of the that it just it goes beyond the data for BJS and the Census Bureau.

KEVIN SCOTT: Next question is maybe a little bit, written a little bit more broadly, the answer could take three hours and would be the subject of several general exams. So I want to be careful about this one. For Jim and Janet, in whichever order you want to handle this. You can negotiate.

JIM LYNCH: Age before beauty.

KEVIN SCOTT: What impact has the NCVS had on the field of criminology? Start with that question. Again, 300 words or less.

JIM LYNCH: Janet, Janet had already threatened me, uh, not to steal her lines, so I'll keep this very brief. I think, I think the survey opened up, um, an entirely different view of criminology. For the longest time, criminology focused on the offender and punishment. The survey opened it up so it focused on the victim, uh, and the things that could be done to reduce the opportunity for crimes. So I think that was a massive that, that was going on, but it was really the flames were fanned by the availability of the state and the increasing data that's been added to the survey. So I think that's that one thing, and I think the other thing are responses to victimization. So, uh, calling the police. Um, calling the police has been a major preoccupation of criminologists. Why do people call the police? For many years people would believe they'd say, "If it's serious, they'll call." That's not true. You know, it's much more complicated than that and various things. And so I think that's another area where the survey has created a whole new field, and within that there are so many things that that people have done creatively using the longitudinal aspects of the survey and other things. So I think it's really difficult to calculate the massive change that has occurred because this this gem is ongoing, so. Did I steal enough?

JANET LAURITSEN: No, thank you. Um, I think the impact has been, it's hard to overstate the impact of the NCVS in the field of criminology. Um, the structure of the data and the richness of the data have allowed for detailed questions to be analyzed by academics that beyond what BJS can do in its reports by, you know, by looking at hypotheses, for example. The individual that you can study individual at so many levels of analysis that you get a richer picture of the context ranging all the way from the individuals and the repeatedness of victimization during, uh, their interview period, to the situations and the outcomes of those situations, to community factors using Census, uh, Data Center measures of where the, um, respondents live, you can you can develop, under secure conditions, the confidential data that would allow you to give to make an assessment of community variation and the nature of crime and reporting to police across communities. I think that's going to be very important with the new redesign. You can look at policy questions with the NCVS. You can do macro-level trend analysis with the NCVS. You can, it is, it's its um, methodological approach, carefully managed by BJS and the Census Bureau, of the way in which questions are vetted and focus-grouped and developed over time. The methodology is so, um, it's textbook. It's textbook methodology that gets, um, it's whose methods get disseminated to to the field, should they choose to look. And I also think it tells an important lesson about data transparency and usability and the level of detail that's important to know about any research project; the devil is in the details for what we're measuring, and that's what the NCVS has done, um, become so enmeshed in the field that it's taken for granted sometimes.

KEVIN SCOTT: One of the things that I learned in my first visit to an annual meeting of the American Society of Criminology is that the NCVS has a fan club. Not formally. [laughter] But there are so many graduate students and so many criminologists who have done what BJS does not, cannot do, because our job is to, we get, I think focused on collecting and reporting some of the basic findings of the data, but those data are available, sometimes in a public file, sometimes under restricted conditions, for really deep contextual research and can inform not just kind of the academic understanding of victimization

and its consequences, but also can inform the policy as well. And that's one of the really, I think, nice things about the federal statistical community, and its kind of commitments to commitment to providing the data that we collect to the people, the taxpayers who paid to collect those data, and so that's the value proposition from our perspective.

All right. The second part of that question, there was a second part that I didn't ask, um, can we talk a little bit about how the NCVS, um, Jim and Janet, but if anyone else wants to weigh in, about the impact of the NCVS on victimization surveys in the international, the non-US kind of context? I'm watching Jim and Janet figure out—I should've let you sit next to one another so you could.-

JANET LAURITSEN: Um, Jim and I have been at many of the same meetings and have many of us similar conversations with people from other countries over the years, but he has more years on me, so he probably knows more about this, but I can just say [laughter] I can just say that I know that the Survey was the first survey of its kind in the world, uh, 1973. It wasn't until the early 80s that it was done in Great Britain, and I know there's there have been many conversations between the people who worked on the survey in England and Wales and the Americans and NCVS BJS. People have been around probably can list many other countries, but I know I've had conversations myself with France, Italy, the Netherlands, Canada, Mexico along with Jim, so it, it's a, it's a community of people who keep their eye on what the Americans are doing, what the NCVS and BJS are doing, with their survey so that they can adopt for their own needs the best practices and what didn't work as well. When they try to measure new things.

JIM LYNCH: Yeah, I agree with Janet. I think that the major contribution, I think, of the NCVS, was to show that this methodology worked. Al Bitterman and Al Reese, when they did those, those pilots, in 1968, no one knew whether or not there was enough, the volume of crime was high enough to be detected by a survey of normal size. And so, and the answer was yes, there was, you know. And so I think that was a big contribution. I think after that, things diverge a little bit in the sense that the NCVS has taken a sort of a social indicator focus, so this is a serious effort to get a crime rate. That's why they had two redesigns trying to find out better ways to screen the population so they get more complete reporting. So that kind of rigor is expensive. And there's only a certain number of countries who have embraced this, you know, uh, because they have the resources and the need to do in Mexico, for example, England obviously. So where they have the major statistical agency conducting the survey and doing with the same rigor that Janet was talking about. So other people have taken have less money to spend. If you have less money to spend you buy less, and what they've done is gone more towards the social intelligence device. The esti- estimates of victimization rates are not so good in those surveys because their samples are small and and so on, but, but they do get a lot of information around the idea of crime, much like the NCVS increasingly picking up, so it's a different strategy. Many of the other nations have, have taken that strategy because they couldn't afford to do the other one, I think, anyway. So there are about 28 countries doing victimization surveys now. The UN has a Centre of Excellence, which brings much of those data together throughout Latin America, and other places. And whenever people are, when systems are under stress, where they don't believe the police statistics anymore. That's not necessarily the case here, but certainly Mexico had that problem and others. They turned to what's turned to be a tried-and-true methodology that was really pioneered by the NCVS. Actually there's a guy in Finland who claims he did it first, but no one believes him. [laughter]

KEVIN SCOTT: All right. So we're at 50 years? We've got at least 50 years to go. Um, so my last question, I think is one for all of you. Uh, and Nancy, I'll start with you and just kind of go down the line, if that's OK. Today we are comme- commemorating the 50 years of data collection under the NCVS. And this is

where I start to take notes. What one piece of advice do you have for BJS to successfully administer the NCVS for the next 50 years?

NANCY LA VIGNE: So I already answered that question. I'd like to see uh, data collection at a more local level, so I'm going to, I'm going to turn the tables and ask you a question. [laughter] So as you look ahead to the redesign, how are you thinking about balancing new questions based on new opportunities for perpetration and new victimization experiences, and just, you know, how the world has changed, with tremendous value that you get from that longitudinal data collection? So you start messing around with the questions then you can't look at change over time. How are you balancing that tension? How are you thinking about it?

KEVIN SCOTT: We're out of time. [laughter] I have two answers. The first is, stay tuned for this afternoon's session for a more detailed answer to that question, but I think this is the fundamental challenge of the NCVS as you redesign. The nature of crime, and the nature of victimization is always changing and is always evolving, and the opportunities to commit crime or to be a victim are different now than they were 20 years ago. We have to deal with, you know, Internet-enabled, or Internet-only crime. How do we measure that? Can we measure that? And kind of answering those questions so that we still are able to do that, but also acknowledging one of the values of the NCVS is its series, is that we need, we start every bulletin with the trend. And to be able to continue that trend, but to also be able to ask questions in ways that respondents in 2023 can answer or in 2033, that may not have been a ways that respondents in 1973 were able to answer that question. So it's a little bit of science. A lot of research, a lot of investment in research, and you know, if you ask the questions this way, do you get different results than if you ask the questions this way? But then at the end of the day, you have to have faith that you've done that research, that you trust the team that did all that work, that you're balancing the challenge of the continuity and the need to kind of continue to measure the moving nature of crime as it changes over time. But the real answers are coming this afternoon and in the in the coming years.

NANCY LA VIGNE: That's a great answer and you didn't even know the question in advance, unlike some people on this panel. [laughter]

KEVIN SCOTT: You're right. So before we work down the line, is there anybody else who's going to ask me a question? [laughter]

BOB SIVINSKI: I considered it, yeah. [laughter]

KEVIN SCOTT: Jim, what would be your one piece of advice for the next 50 years, and it can be more than one if you want.

JIM LYNCH: Well, thanks because I was going to get sneaky and sneak more in. I think I think that the, in the next 50 years you should be as at least as innovative as you've been in the last 50 years. You know, that I think the innovation should think about technical issues that Bob sort of brings up, the idea of blending estimates. You have this new incident-based police administrative records system. You know, I would think that there would be blending where the division of labor for the collection of information would be shared, where estimation would be used both sources of data. I think that that would be a great thing to do. I think that the other thing I think would be to institutionalize certain partnerships. That have sort of, you know, Kris has talked about hers, which has flourished. But other partnerships. NCVS has a big price tag. Everybody's looking at it, trying to take a piece of it, and do something good

with it. I think that NCVS is, that BJS is going to have to be innovative to to stay ahead of the debt collectors, you know. And that's good because it says you're looking for relevance. So you're looking for people who you have relevant data for and are willing to help you continue to collect that data. So those two areas, I think, are the places where I hope in 50 years that we've worked out partnerships technically and partnerships economically and substantively that can keep the survey going.

KRIS ROSE: My turn?

KEVIN SCOTT: Sure, as long as you're not asking me a question.

KRIS ROSE: I have no question for you. [laughter] So I, my advice is pretty simple. And that is to keep hiring smart, passionate people at BJS. Most people assume—no offense—that statisticians are just kind of nerdy...people, um, that only care about the numbers, but I have never, ever found that to be the case with the BJS statisticians and the BJS leadership. That they have a profound interest and passion for the work that they're doing, and they see the data as more than just numbers, and they know that those numbers represent a victimization or a person, so that would be my advice is to continue to do that. And, um, the victim services field will thank you for it.

BOB SIVINSKI: All right. I will send my questions later on formal letterhead, but, [laughter] uh, so one thing I've noticed about BJS, compared to some of the other statistical agencies, is that it's relatively small in terms of staff and budget both, but it gets a lot of requests that border on demands from Congress, from you know, lawmakers, from administration officials inside the Department of Justice and outside and this is, it's a good thing, right? I mean, it's a sign that you're trusted and that the work you're doing is relevant and important. And so these are all good signs, but I think like per employee, the number of requests and demands for new data is really high at BJS. Um, I will pass along a piece of good advice that I got when I started at OMB, which is also kind of a small office that gets a lot of demands. And, um, when I was hired, the chief statistician at the time, Katherine Wallman, she told me, "We don't say 'no', we say 'yes,' but here's how we have to do it." So, uh, I've tried to take that attitude when I'm working with folks who want, you know, they want evidence, they want data. This is all a good thing, and you just have to figure out how to how to get it for them, so I would encourage BJS to continue with that approach. I think you've done an excellent job of it so far, and I think it's earned you a lot of champions and a real fan club on The Hill and elsewhere.

JANET LAURITSEN: Um, well I don't- I won't pretend to know what's going to happen in the next 50 years. I will say, though, that I think we can expect um, with new forms of data development, scraping, Web-based AI, and the like, that there will be a proliferation of advocate of advocacy of many different views of particular narratives about crime and victimization. And that for BJS, um, to maintain the respectability and the attention of the public, I think would be useful to let them know often about their, your adherence to the principles and practices of the federal statistical agency, and your commitment to transparency of methodology and relevance. Um, and your even-minded, not saying much about anything approach, but the numbers. That would be my advice.

KEVIN SCOTT: Thank you all. I appreciate this and certainly appreciate the kind words about the NCVS and the BJS staff from the panelists. And I appreciate your time. Thank you.

So I'll talk while the screen can finish, finishes its roll down. All right.



Over the past 50 years, the NCVS has adapted and evolved, all while maintaining its position as a flagship survey of BJS. This short video highlights the key milestones and NCVS's 50-year history.

VIDEO: The National Crime Victimization Survey, along with its predecessor, the National Crime Survey, has been generating victimization statistics since 1973. The history of this survey, and its evolution to where it is today, is a testament to the hard work of the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the U.S. Census Bureau, and the countless criminal justice experts, statisticians, and survey methodologists who are involved in the survey's inception, and its continued enhancement over the past 50 years.

In 1968, Congress passed the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act. This legislation was designed to assist state and local governments in reducing the incidence of crime. An important part of this act was the creation of the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, which was established to assist state and local governments in reducing the occurrence of crime. Responding to unmet data needs, the LEAA planned to administer a victimization survey called the National Crime Survey, or the NCS, and first launched it in 1973.

For the next 6 years, the NCS continued under the sponsorship and guidance of the LEAA. Then in 1979, the Justice System Improvement Act shifted responsibility of the survey to the newly created Bureau of Justice Statistics. From 1980 to 1991, BJS made numerous enhancements to the NCS, including the addition of a school crime supplement, based on a partnership with the National Center for Education Statistics. But beyond these enhancements, the core instruments remained the same until the first major redesign of the survey, which was implemented in 1992. The Bureau of Social Science Research and a consortium of organizations conducted research to inform this first redesign. The consortium recommended a series of changes to the survey, including a redesign of the screener to help with recall of less-memorable crimes, and the addition of content to better understand interactions between victims and offenders. The revised instruments were fully implemented for BJS by the Census Bureau in 1992, and the study was renamed the National Crime Victimization Survey, or the NCVS. The NCVS continued using the 1992 design for about 2 decades. Many modifications and enhancements were introduced over that period, including the creation of a Spanish version of the instrument in 2004, and incorporating a statistical adjustment as a method of bounding in 2006.

Around 2010, BJS started to consider the next phase of the NCVS. Since 1992, much has changed, both in the level of public acceptance of surveys and in the nature of crime. For the past decade, BJS and its partners have been conducting a wide array of research projects to investigate ways to increase survey cooperation, reduce costs, improve measurement, and enhance the utility of the data to the NCVS stakeholder communities. During this timeframe, BJS also worked to make enhancements for its data-user community. Starting in 2016, the NCVS program redesigned the NCVS sample to produce subnational estimates. And in 2021, BJS released an online analytic tool, the N-DASH, that provides stakeholders with the user-friendly means of generating statistics without the need for statistical software or programming know-how. And now in 2023, we have arrived at 50 continuous years of data collection. In the coming years, the NCVS will undergo its next major redesign. The new instruments will be administered through a split-sample design in 2024, and the full implementation is scheduled for 2025. BJS is excited about this next chapter for the National Crime Victimization Survey. We are proud of our lead role in guiding this critical tool for tracking crime statistics in the United States. We and our many partners look forward to another 50 years. [applause]

KEVIN SCOTT: On the list of things that would not have made sense in 1973 is the following sentence: For your viewing pleasure, the NCVS video will be available on the BJS YouTube channel [laughter] following our afternoon program at OJP.

In my opening remarks this morning, I mentioned this was a significant occasion for those who have had a role in making the NCVS a success in some capacity over the past 5 decades. Now, in addition to those recognized already by Assistant Attorney General Amy Solomon, and by Census Director Rob Santos, I would like to recognize a few others who have joined us in person for this event. And, as I recognize you, I'm going to ask you to stand.

First, the greater NCVS team, both at BJS and at the Census Bureau. There are many people here today representing those two groups. We also have our students who were selected for the NCVS Student Spotlight, who may be here 50 years from now, for their innovative research using the NCVS. If you could, please stand. Current and former BJS staff, would you please stand? OJP colleagues and alumni. Would you please stand? Other friends across DOJ components, primarily outside of OJP, if you're here, if you would please stand. Members of the federal statistical system, including the head of the Bureau of Economic Analysis, and the Director of the Census Bureau, if you would please stand. The person who gets the award for flying the furthest, our international colleagues, as were referenced below include—earlier— including representative, a representative from Mexico's National Institute of Statistics and Geography — has joined us today, and I want to thank him for joining. Finally, criminal justice practitioners, advocates and the entire research community, feel free to stand. Thank you for being here. [applause]

One thing that I was not allowed to say in my remarks, got edited out of my remarks too for some strange reason, is I want to give a special thanks to the BJS staff who helped make this event possible today. Amy gave a nod or a shout-out to Doris, who's hiding in the back. And Heather, but they were joined, particularly by Priscilla, Grace, and Jenna, who helped plan this event today. And so if the five of you wouldn't mind standing, some of some of them are standing down on the mezzanine. But absolutely. [applause] Thank you. All right. All non-DOJ attendees should exit through the Constitution Avenue Visitor Center and return the special events badge to the officer upon exit. That's the entrance that way, basically. Our volunteers will be in place to direct you. For those of you who are joining us this afternoon up at OJP, we'll see you there. Please remember to budget time to get through security again at the OJP building before the afternoon program begins at 1 p.m. Once you come through security at OJP, we'll escort you up the elevators and into the OJP Ballroom.

If you're on the fence about whether you should come this afternoon, in addition to some fascinating in-depth presentations, there is cake. [laughter] Um, priorities. So you get both; you both get engaging conversation and a delicious dessert. I want to thank you all for attending, both in person and online, this morning. I look forward to seeing many of you this afternoon, and I look forward to the next 50 years of the NCVS. Thank you. [applause]