



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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Press Release

Victim Advocate of the Year Award to Norfolk's Russell

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Victim Witness Advocate Maureen Russell, center left, accepted the 2016 Advocate of the Year Award from the Mass Office of Victim Assistance on Friday. With her from left are MOVA Executive Director Liam Lowney, Attorney General Maura and Norfolk DA Michael Morrissey.

Maureen Russell, a long serving Victim/Witness Advocate in the Office of Norfolk District Attorney Michael W. Morrissey has been named Advocate of the Year by the Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance.

It is the second consecutive year that the award has been given to a member of the Norfolk District Attorney's Office.

"The work of our advocates, guiding victims and witnesses through the complex and sometimes daunting court process, is at the heart of what we do in the District Attorney's Office," District Attorney Morrissey said after the presentation at Friday's 2016 Victim Rights Conference in Boston. "It is instrumental to the trial process and of enormous import to those who have turned to us for justice. Maureen Russell does that work with compassion, professionalism and diligence."

Russell began her career in the Special Victims Unit working with child and adult victims of sexual abuse and assault. For more than a decade, she has been assigned many of the most complex and difficult cases, including homicides. She was part of the team successfully prosecuting innumerable cases, including Ryan Bois for the murder of his young cousin and Joseph Romano, convicted of killing his wife. The Romano case was the first murder conviction at trial in Massachusetts where the victim's body was never found.

"Maureen was a central member of the prosecution team in not only those difficult and complicated cases, but in every case she has worked," Morrissey said.

"We have long trusted Maureen with many of our most challenging cases, and her work has both assured a smooth trial process and left the victims feeling supported and cared for," Morrissey said. "Maureen's advocacy has helped countless victims and survivors in rebuilding their lives after unfathomable loss. She is a model for others, and well deserving of this award."

MOVA's recipient last year was Alberta DePesa, who later retired as head advocate in Morrissey's Special Victim's Unit.