



**LAURA AUSTIN THOMAS
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PRESS RELEASE – FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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On Thursday, July 20 2016, at the Oklahoma District Attorneys Association's statewide summer conference, Payne & Logan County Victim Witness Coordinator, Lori McDougal was awarded Outstanding Victim Witness Coordinator of the Year for the State of Oklahoma. During the Awards Luncheon at the Petroleum Club in Oklahoma City, Laura Austin Thomas, District Attorney for Payne & Logan County presented the award.

Lori has served four elected District Attorneys, since commencing her employment in 1985. She became the victim witness coordinator for both counties fifteen years ago and has worked with hundreds of crime victims and witnesses to criminal offenses since that time, assisting with victim compensation claims, parole board hearings, court appearances and a myriad of other victim services. Since October 2014, Lori has been tirelessly working through victim compensation claims for the many victims of the OSU parade killer, answering their questions and coordinating the timely dissemination of updated case information.

In presenting the award Austin Thomas said, "Lori found her passion as our victim witness coordinator always advocating for the victims of crime, and quoted writer, Elie Wiesel, "We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented." Austin Thomas said, "Lori is an exceptional individual and employee. She does her job with intelligence, graciousness and always towards empowerment of the victim. Her work ethic is unsurpassed. She has a passion for her job and intense loyalty to our mission. District Attorneys are a reflection of the quality of their employees. I could not be more proud to present this award to her, and I and our entire offices thank her for her service."



Victim Witness Coordinator Lori McDougal (right) pictured with District Attorney Laura Austin Thomas