



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY  
TWENTIETH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Michael T. Dougherty, District Attorney

For Immediate Release  
October 16, 2023

Contact: Shannon Carbone  
Phone: 303-441-3804  
scarbone@bouldercounty.org

### **District Attorney Victim Advocate Awarded**

A recently retired Victim Advocate of the District Attorney's Office is the proud recipient of an award from the Colorado Organization of Victim Assistance (COVA). Every October, at its annual conference, COVA announces an award for Colorado's Outstanding Victim Advocate in the Public Sector. This year it was awarded to Victim Advocate Carolyn French. It is the perfect end to an outstanding career in public service and victim advocacy.

Carolyn attended the University of Colorado (Boulder) and graduated in 1960 with a degree in Finance, she subsequently obtained her Master's Degree in Social Work in 1980 from the University of Denver. In 1985, Carolyn became a Victim Advocate for the District Attorney's Office. Her first stint in the District Attorney's Office ended in 1990 when Carolyn left to develop the University of Colorado's first Victim Assistance program. This program forever changed the face of victim's assistance for the thousands of students who attend CU-Boulder. After developing the program, Carolyn held key positions with victim providers including as the Executive Director at MESA and the Executive Director at Blue Sky Bridge's Child Advocacy Center before returning to our office to provide direct victim services.

As a victim advocate in the Office of the District Attorney for twenty-three (23) years, Carolyn distinguished herself with her empathy and compassion for victims, informed by her decades of knowledge on victim dynamics. These same skills and knowledge led to her being relied on for successful advocacy on many homicides and major cases over the years.

Chief Deputy Trial Attorney Adrian VanNice stated, "I personally had the pleasure to work with Carolyn on a multitude of cases over the course of the 20-plus years I have been in this office. As a young Deputy District Attorney, I had very little knowledge about, or experience with, working with victims of crime. Early in my career, I would become exasperated by behaviors I didn't understand and trauma I didn't know how to cope with. It was Carolyn who carefully guided me in my journey to learn how to respond to individuals in trauma, assisting me to understand what before had been incomprehensible and helping me learn to better care for myself while providing care and support for others who found themselves unwillingly ensnared in a criminal justice system, they themselves found complex and frustrating. I was not alone in

receiving Carolyn's excellent mentorship. Carolyn has had a profound impact on multiple generations of prosecuting attorneys raising the level of advocacy, care, and support received by victims of crime in Boulder County (and elsewhere) exponentially."

District Attorney Michael Dougherty stated, "This award is a wonderful and well-deserved honor for Carolyn. It is a testament, and the perfect ending, to her many years of outstanding public service and advocacy for victims. Carolyn supported, guided, and inspired so many prosecutors, including me, in our work with victims. This office and our community will be forever grateful to Carolyn French."

