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## Victims of Crime Honored by Human Services With Memory Tree Ribbon Ceremony

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About 97 ribbons were tied to branches of a tree along Sugar Beach in St. Croix by DHS staff in honor of National Crime Victims' Rights Week. Each color-coded ribbon represented specific acts of crime. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

The Virgin Islands Department of Human Services (DHS) on Tuesday paid tribute to victims of crime with a private memory tree ribbon ceremony in honor of the 40th Anniversary of National Crime Victims' Rights Week, which takes place from April 18-24 this year.

D.H.S. said about 97 ribbons were tied to branches of a tree along Sugar Beach in St. Croix by DHS staff and the administrator of the Criminal Victims Compensation Commission (CVCC).

The display of color-coded ribbons represented a ratio of 2020 data from five specific acts of crime: homicide, survivors of gunshot wounds, physical assault, sexual assault, and DUI's, D.H.S. said. Each single ribbon represents five persons who were directly impacted by an act of violent crime. The Crime Victims Compensation Commission is taking to heart this year's theme: "Support Victims, Build Trust, Engage Communities." DHS said it is moving forward to strengthen the CVCC program by identifying new sources of funding, providing useful referrals, and processing claims for compensation.

"We remember victims and survivors of crime and their families and hope we can work together to build a community where we are all safe from crime," DHS Commissioner Kimberley CauseyGomez said.

The Criminal Victims Compensation Commission provides monetary assistance to innocent victims of violent crime. The CVCC also helps victims of crime and their families with the physical and emotional aftermath of a crime by easing the financial losses incurred by providing reimbursement and financial benefits for expenses such as medical expenses, loss of wages and mental health counseling.

For more information, please call 340-718-2980.