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**PRESS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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Date: October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015  
Contact: Kimberly Corban Weeks • [kweeks@co.weld.co.us](mailto:kweeks@co.weld.co.us) • 970.356.4010 ext. 4702  
Re: District Attorney's Office Gives Strangulation Presentation to Colorado Organization for Victim Assistance

Keystone, CO –On Monday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, Weld County District Attorney Michael J. Rourke and 19<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Crime Victim Compensation Coordinator Fawn Harmon presented at the Colorado Organization for Victim Assistance Annual Conference on Investigating Strangulation. Their training sought to share local research with victim service providers, and stress the complexity of this particular type of violence, all from a rural perspective.

The research was conducted by Fawn Harmon, after noting strangulation cases coming through County Court with misdemeanor level charges. Her background in community victim services and knowledge about the lethality of strangulation in domestic violence cases prompted her to start conversations about these cases with attorneys and advocates both locally and statewide. On Monday, Harmon stated “We had an opportunity to gather data from affidavits we already collect on a daily basis, and conduct a small study.” Used as a directed study in pursuit of her Master’s Degree from the University of Northern Colorado in Applied Statistics and Research Methods, Harmon gathered information from affidavits involving elements of strangulation collected during calendar year 2014.

The results prompted changes in how cases are handled by the Weld County District Attorney’s Office, and the Office is sharing Harmon’s findings through trainings and presentations at the local level. District Attorney Michael Rourke added “Collaboration between law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and community support providers will ensure improved and more consistent outcomes as these investigations focus on the intimate nature of the crime.”

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