

DA *dispatch*



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MAY 2023

14	15	16	17	18	19 PAYDAY	20
21	22	23	24	25 CPM GRADUATION, ATHENS	26 OFFICE CLOSED	27
28	29 Memorial Day Office Closed	30	31 INTERN ORIENTATION			

JUNE 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 PAYDAY	3
4 HAPPY PRIDE!	5	6	7	8	9 FCDAO VWAP APPRECIATION DAY/GRADUATION	10
11	12	13	14	15	16 ALL DADS LEAVE AT NOON PAYDAY	17
18 FATHER'S DAY	19 Juneteenth OFFICE CLOSED	20	21 Full FORCE FULTON	22 Summer Report Celebration	23	24
25	26 MOVIE MATINEE	27	28	29	30 PAYDAY	

JULY 2023

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2	3	4 Happy Independence Day	5	6	7	8
9	10	11 New Grand Jury	12	13	14	15

SEXUAL ASSAULT AWARENESS MONTH



On April 26th, members of the Fulton County District Attorney's Office stood in solidarity with survivors of sexual assault for Denim Day. Denim Day is more than just wearing jeans. It's a symbol of support for survivors and a call to action for change. We believe in a community that stands up against sexual assault, challenges harmful attitudes, and works towards a society free from violence. Together, we can shatter the silence and create a culture of respect and empathy. Let us stand united, challenging stereotypes, and breaking the chains of victim-blaming. By sharing information, promoting education, and supporting survivors, we can make a lasting impact.

BEYOND *THE* BADGE



Assistant Chief Saul Alter (left) reading to students at Perkerson Elementary School, and Executive Deputy Chief Richard Randolph (right) reading to the students at Cleveland Avenue Elementary School.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH



Deputy District Attorney Lauren McAuley would like to thank all who joined us for FCDA's Wear Blue Day on April 28th! Together, we made a powerful statement against child abuse and showed our commitment to protecting the most vulnerable members of our society.

The **Juvenile Court Unit** *SHOW SUPPORT FOR* Child Abuse Prevention Month

To show our support for National Child Abuse Prevention Month, the FCDAO Juvenile Court Unit participated in planting pin-wheels outside of the Judge Romae T. Powell Juvenile Justice Center on April 28, 2023 to raise awareness. In 2008, Prevent Child Abuse America introduced the Pinwheels for Prevention campaign. Research showed that people respond positively to pinwheels, which represent childlike whimsy and lightheartedness, and a vision for a world where all children grow up happy, healthy, and prepared to succeed in supportive families and communities. <https://preventchildabuse.org/resources/pinwheels-for-prevention>



COURT WATCH



On May 2nd, the Fulton County District Attorney's Office hosted a luncheon at Atlanta City Hall to show our appreciation for the 137 community members who volunteer for the Atlanta CourtWatch Program. District Attorney Fani T. Willis, Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens, APD Chief Darin Schierbaum, and Atlanta Police Foundation President Dave Wilkinson addressed the volunteers and thanked them for their service. DA Willis stated, "It takes all of us to do this. We need the community to be involved, and what this shows is that there are good citizens that love this community as much as I do, and they are willing to take their time and efforts to make sure we all stay safe." As a token of appreciation, the volunteers were awarded a certificate and a CourtWatch lapel pin and had their photos taken with DA Willis, Mayor Dickens, Chief Schierbaum, and APF President Dave Wilkinson.

Shout out to the top staff who provide referrals to our CourtWatch Program!

- Audrey Simmons - Judge Edwards
- Jasmin Willingham - Judge Glanville
- Jana Dixon - Judge Eaton
- Matthew Norwood - Judge Whitaker
- Christinia Clark - Judge Leftridge
- Jacelynn Porter - Judge Leftridge
- Tom Wight - Judge De Foor and Judge Borsky



Special thanks to Aimee Maxwell and George Jenkins for training our new volunteers on court procedures. They have provided three rounds of zoom classes and have trained 137 volunteers for this program!

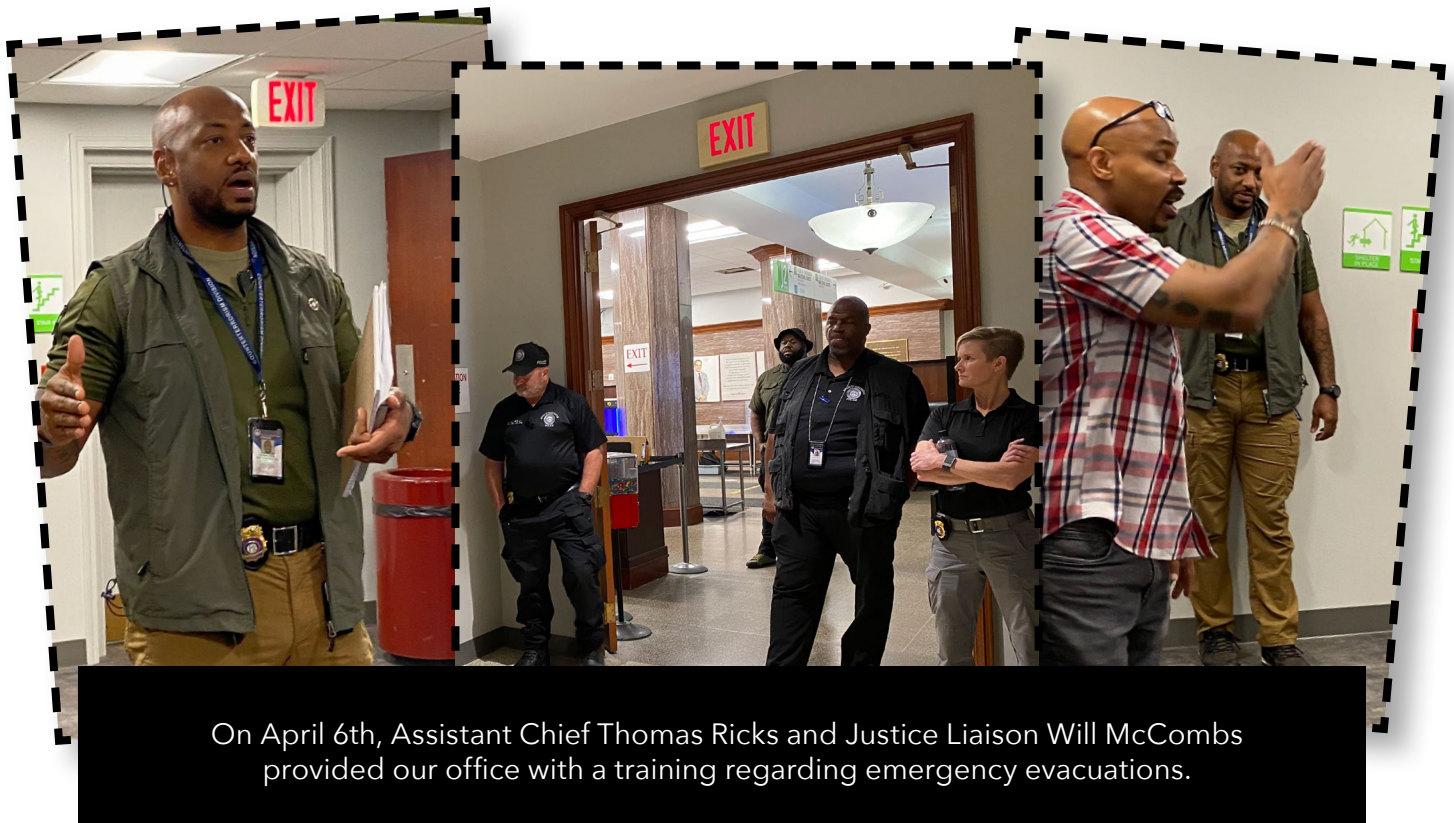
Out On The Town

BUYING HER *Movie Premiere*



Michele Henry, Dilma Dos Reis, Earnelle Winfrey, Michelle Lam, Leenessa Landor, Stacey Burke, and Mychal Scates attended the premier of "Buying Her" - a film and the first documentary to explore the psyche and motivation of those who buy trafficked girls and women for sex.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION TRAINING



On April 6th, Assistant Chief Thomas Ricks and Justice Liaison Will McCombs provided our office with a training regarding emergency evacuations.



A joint victory in Civil Rights and Anti-Corruption!

State vs. Nicholas Golden

On May 5, Senior Assistant District Attorney Sau Chan, Assistant Chief Saul Alter, and Investigator Christy Manos successfully concluded the sentencing in State vs. Nicholas Golden, where the sentencing terms required the Defendant, an operator of a used car sales business in Union City, Georgia, to pay combined restitution of \$20,707.21 to seven victims who had purchased used cars from the defendant based on fraudulent emission certificates generated by the defendant when he was operating as an emission inspector in 2016-2017.

Defendant's wrongdoings were discovered by Investigators with the Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources.

The Defendant's sentencing took place almost four months after he entered a guilty plea in January to all the charges in a 35-count indictment that comprised one count of Racketeering; 17 counts of False Statement; and 17 counts of False Official Certificates or Writings. As part of his sentencing, the Defendant also was ordered to surrender his auto sales business license and to shut down his auto sales business. Thanks to AC Saul Alter for tracking down some hard-to-find victims and Investigator Christy Manos for her dedication.

SHOUT-OUTS



Congratulations to Shaun Pritchett on her new role as Executive Legal Assistant!

Congratulations!! So proud of you. You truly deserve this recognition. You are amazing. - Executive District Attorney Daysha Young



Major Appeals Success in Georgia's Supreme Court

Colleagues,

Please join in congratulating our successful appellate advocates, DDA Kevin Armstrong, Senior ADA Jayna Edwards, Senior ADA Burke Doherty, and Senior ADA Dane Uhelski. FCDAO's Appeals Unit achieved victories in five (5) separate decisions, out this morning from the Supreme Court of Georgia. Importantly, three (3) of these opinions reverse a trial court's decision to exclude State's evidence pre-trial. Tremendous credit goes to trial counsel, CDDA Adam Abbate and DDA Kelcee Jones-Connor, as well, who coordinated and contributed along the way.

- Michael Scott Carlson, Executive District Attorney



The Mission of the Work

I want to thank Chief Deputy District Attorney Adam Abbate and Investigator Jason Anderson for their service yesterday. Last night around at 8 pm, while many of you were at home relaxing they accompanied me to APD related to the issues we watched unfold yesterday. This is not a 9-5 for those of us who truly believe in the mission of the work.

- Madam DA

SHOUT-OUTS



Just Amazing!

Good afternoon, Madam DA –

I wanted to bring to your attention the recent excellent work of Deputy Meredith Fortuna that went above and beyond.

She recently reached out to me about a new serial rape case and specifically asked questions about statute of limitations issues, and as we worked through it, we realized it needed to be a SAKI case. She did some fantastic work on the case initially, that was extremely in depth and detail oriented, including reaching out to the Boston Police Department and getting records from them regarding a connected case. I was extremely impressed not only by how much work she did to make the case a success but the extra mile she went to, that others might not have. Due to all her initial work, it is ensuring my team is able to take the ball and run with it.

Not only did she do amazing work on that case, but she then reached out to me on another case just recently almost immediately after First Appearance because she thought it could possibly be a SAKI case, doing everything she could to ensure we were aware as soon as possible.

I am very grateful for the standard of excellence she sets, and wanted to bring her work to your attention.

Sincerely,

Julianna Peterson
Deputy District Attorney
Special Victims Division | Sexual Assault Kit Initiative Unit



Congratulations to Stacey Johnstone on her new role as Liaison to Clerk of Superior Court and Odyssey Trainer.

CONVICTION *Alert!*

STATE V. LAMORRIS GODFREY

Congratulations to the Major Case Unit Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Lamorris Godfrey, the defendant was found guilty of all counts including felony murder and aggravated assault with a deadly weapon. Judge McAfee sentenced the defendant to 2 consecutive life without the possibility of parole sentences plus 20 years.



Assistant District
Attorney
Danielle Russell



Assistant District
Attorney
Jeffrey Lee



Investigator
Darrion Eshmon



Victim Witness
Advocate
Tameka Kelly



Legal Assistant
Quentin Wright

STATE V. MADRE LEE

Congratulations to the HTICE Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Madre Lee, the defendant was found guilty of five counts including Aggravated Sexual Battery and Child Molestation. Judge Thomas Cox sentenced the defendant to two life sentences plus 60 years.



Chief Senior ADA
Alicia Taylor



Chief Senior ADA
Tarance Miller



Senior
Investigator
Michelle Lam



Victim Witness
Advocate
Leenesa Landor



Chief
Legal Assistant
Daniel Pinilla

STATE V. JASON ROGERS

Congratulations to the Major Case Unit Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Jason Rogers, the Defendant was found guilty of all counts including Felony Murder and Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon. Judge Krause sentenced the Defendant to Life without the Possibility of Parole plus 20 years.



Chief Sr. ADA
Tom Griner



Chief Sr. ADA
Marshal Hodge



Sr. Investigator
Joseph King



Victim Witness
Advocate
Chowan Moore



Legal Assistant
Quentin Wright

STATE V. DIANTE GORE

Congratulations to the Major Case Unit Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Diante Gore, the Defendant was found guilty of three counts including Voluntary Manslaughter and Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon. Judge Ingram sentenced the Defendant to 35 years.



Chief Sr. ADA
Siri Patel



Deputy District
Attorney
Kelcee
Jones-Connor



Deputy Chief
Investigator
DaShawn
Raymond



Victim Witness
Advocate
Chowan Moore

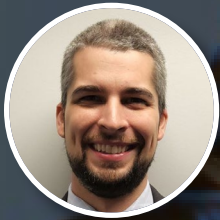


Legal Assistant
Breanna Barrett

CONVICTION *Alert!*

STATE V. TYRIK BUSH

Congratulations to the Major Case and Capitol and Cold Case Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Tyrik Bush, the Defendant was found guilty of three counts including Felony Murder and Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon. Judge Richardson will sentence the Defendant on June 5.



Chief Sr. ADA
Jeffrey
Hawkins



Chief Sr. ADA
Nailah
McFarlane



Sr. Investigator
Jess Pironis



Victim Witness
Advocate
Tameka Kelley



Legal Assistant
JaTrenton
Gillyard



Legal Assistant
SaQuez King

STATE V. CHARLES REYNOLDS

Congratulations to the Major Case Unit Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Charles Reynolds, the Defendant was found guilty of all counts including Felony Murder and Aggravated Assault. Judge Leftridge sentenced the Defendant to life +5 years.



Chief Sr. ADA
Shaniqua
Christian



Chief Sr. ADA
Matthew Holmes



Sr. Investigator
DaJuan Walker



Victim Witness
Advocate
Chowan Moore



Legal Assistant
Andre Mooror

STATE V. TIANYVE STITTS

Congratulations to the Major Case Unit Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Tianyve Stitts, the Defendant was found guilty of all counts including Felony Murder and Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon. Judge Krause sentenced the Defendant to Life with Possibility of Parole plus 10 years.



Chief Sr. ADA
Tom Griner



Senior ADA
Dion Peeples



Investigator
Joseph King



Sr. Investigators
Jess Pironis



Victim Witness
Advocate Katrina
Gill



Legal Assistant
Quentin Wright

STATE V. DONTRELL WIGGINS

Congratulations to the Major Case Unit Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Dontrell Wiggins, the Defendant was found guilty of all counts including Rape, Aggravated Assault, and False Imprisonment. Judge Adams sentenced the Defendant to 30 years to serve in custody, followed by Life on Probation.



Senior ADA
Abigail Potter



Deputy District
Attorney
Yolanda Mack



Sr. Investigator
Kenneth Rucker



Sr. Investigator
DaJuan Walker



Victim Witness
Advocate
LaTeeka
Montgomery



Legal Assistant
Caderrius
Armstrong

STATE V. JOHNATHAN PITTMAN AND CARLOS WHITE

Congratulations to the Major Crimes Division Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Pittman and White, the Defendants pled guilty to all counts including Felony Murder, Aggravated Assault, and Influencing Witnesses. Judge Barwick sentenced the Pittman to 30 years to serve and White to 20 years to serve 15 years.



Deputy District
Attorney
Vincent Faucette



Chief Sr. ADA
Megan Nix



Sr. Investigator
Alfred Martin



Victim Witness
Advocate
Chowan Moore



Legal Assistant
Keira Jackson

CONVICTIONAlert!

STATE V. DEMARKO MOSS

Congratulations to the extraordinary Domestic Violence trial team in State v. Demarko Moss, 18SC163871. The defendant was found guilty on counts of Murder, two (2) Counts of Felony Murder, Aggravated Assault, Possession of a Firearm During Commission of a Felony and Possession of a Firearm by a 1st Offender Probationer. Judge McAfee sentenced the Defendant to LIFE without the possibility of parole + 15 years to run consecutive to serve following the trial. Special thanks to Deputy District Attorney Gautam Rao, Senior Assistant District Attorney Jazmin Willingham, Deputy Chief Johnna Griffin, Assistant Chief Paula Duprey, Sr. Investigator Shaniece Withrow, Sr. Investigator Christopher Davidson and the rest of the Investigative Team in helping us secure a very difficult and material witness.



Sr. Assistant District Attorney
Donita Morris



Interim Deputy District Attorney
Asia Baysah



Sr. Investigator
Shaniece Withrow



Sr. Investigator
Christopher Davidson



Victim Witness Advocate
Carolyn Tyus



Legal Assistant
Tiffany Horton



Legal Assistant
Caderrius Armstrong



Deputy District Attorney
Gautam Rao



Sr. Assistant District Attorney
Jazmin Willingham



Deputy Chief
Johnna Griffin



Assistant Chief
Paula Duprey

STATE V. TERRY LAMAR CAMERON

Congratulations to this amazing trial team in State v. Terry Lamar Cameron. The defendant was found guilty on counts of hijacking, Kidnapping, Armed Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Possession of FA During Commission. Judge Krause sentenced the defendant to 20 years to serve, 18 years balance probated.



Senior Assistant District Attorney
Isabella Lugo



Senior Assistant District Attorney
Caitlin Adcock



Sr. Investigator
Briayna Mabry



Deputy Victim Witness Advocate
Misty Botu

FOCUS AWARDS



Congratulations to Legal Assistant Damien Lyles, Legal Assistant Gabrielle Sellers and Executive Deputy Chief Richard Randolph on their Focus Awards for efficiency and leadership.

ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS EVENT at Zion Hill Baptist Church



On May 16 Jill Hollander conducted an educational presentation for seniors and clergy at Zion Hill Baptist Church. This interactive event walked through common schemes and scams and best practices to avoid falling victim. The Animal Cruelty and Elder Abuse unit (ACE) frequently speaks to seniors throughout the metro area in the hopes of shining a light on crimes that happen in the shadows. Statistically, only 1 in 41 instances of elder abuse is reported. By meeting seniors where they are we hope to prevent crimes before they occur, but also encourage reporting by openly discussing these crimes to reduce the stigma



NEW HIRES

WELCOME TO THE FULTON COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE



Javoyné Hicks
*Chief Senior Assistant District Attorney
Civil Rights Division*



Jennifer Hartline
*Chief Senior Assistant
District Attorney
Case Intake Division*



William Hutchinson
*Senior Investigator
Trial Division
Complex Unit*



Ronald Thompson
*Senior Investigator
Case Intake Division*



Shawn Albea
*Senior Investigator
Special Victims Division
S.A.K.I. Unit*



Shameka Duncan
*Senior Investigator
Major Crimes Division
Major Case Unit*



Katrina Gill
*Victim Witness Advocate
Major Crimes Division*



Robert Jones
*Victim Witness Advocate
Trial Division
Non-Complex Unit, First Appearance*



Carolyn Tyus
*Victim Witness Advocate
Special Victims Division*



SWEARING IN

WITH SHERIFF LABAT



Congrats TO OUR NEWEST CLASS OF **Master Legal Assistants**



The graduates completed a 10 week training program where they learned the skills required to be a successful and beneficial legal assistant. The dedication of these 2023 graduates are the future of this office!

Analla Reid | Angel Muhammed | Cassie Lundy
Damien Lyles | Jinneturis Montgomery | Latonya Gates | Lynette
Gilbert | Nikayla Sirmons | Nyome Griffin
Raymond Carpenter | Tesha Nedd

**Shout out to Nikayla Sirmons
for perfect attendance! What a way to shine!**

HealthyPETS FULTON



On May 12 the Fulton County District Attorney's Office, in partnership with Lifeline Animal Project and Commissioner Abdur Rahman, held "Healthy Pets Fulton" at the Westside Reservoir park. The event offered a veterinary exam with vaccinations, microchipping, and spay/neuter vouchers for dogs and cats. Residents were also offered pet supplies such as food, leashes, collars, bowls, and toys. All services were completely FREE! District Attorney volunteers provided important information regarding domestic violence, human trafficking, record restriction, adult diversion, and elder

abuse. We also distributed informational magnets to educate the public about safe pavement temperatures and the dangers of unattended cars to pets and children.

The event provided services to **835 dogs and cats**. By alleviating the financial stress related to basic care we hope prevent unnecessary surrenders and keep pets in homes that love them. Crimes against animals are closely related to crimes against humans and often act as a precursor to escalating harm. The information provided to attendees educate about the risks and provide contact information for safe reporting of these offenses.



REACH ONE TEACH ONE



"On May 2nd, we witnessed the bold idea of a partnership between the Fulton County Schools, Superintendent Dr. Mike Looney, and the Fulton County District Attorney's Office to create the first transformational youth mentorship program within the school day. With the commitment of our mentors within the Fulton County DA's Office ranging from ADA's to Investigators, we saw 110 young leaders graduate from our Reach program. That's 110 kids that were not in the streets or caught up in the judicial system. With the leadership of Madam DA, we have set a goal to reach over 390 students next year. All I can say is let's gooooo!"
- Aakeem Woodard, Director of Juvenile Youth Services



SELF CARE FAIR



On Saturday, April 29, Madam DA and the FCDAO's Victim Witness Assistance Program hosted the inaugural Fani T. Willis Self-Care Fair. Victims and their families from all across Fulton County enjoyed a day of pampering & empowering during National Crime Victims' Rights Week! Services provided included reiki therapy, yoga, self-defense classes, haircuts, massages, writing workshops, gun safety, meditation, empowerment sessions, and strength training. Attendees also received gun locks, steering wheel locks, gift cards, and more. None of this could have been possible without our partners, who donated their time, expertise, and giveaway items!

The goal of the Fani T. Willis Self-Care Fair was to positively impact the lives of crime victims, empowering them to heal, grow, and reclaim their lives. Together, we can uplift and empower those affected by crime, making our community a safer and more supportive place for all.

BUSY BEES of VWAP!



During National Crime Victims' Rights Week, the FCDAO's Victim Witness Assistance Program hosted numerous educational classes open to crime visits as well as FCDAO staff in preparation for our big event on Saturday, April 29th, the Fani T. Willis Self-Care Fair.

District 5 Commissioner Marvin Arrington's

FAMILY FUN DAY



Records Supervisor Edwina Sellan, Deputy VWA Dilma Dos Reis, VWA Katrina Gill, and Deputy DA Rewa Collier attend in support of District 5 Commissioner Marvin Arrington, Jr.'s 8th Annual Family Fun Day. Commissioner Arrington kicked off Mental Health Awareness Month with his annual Family Fun Day event. Over 285 District 5 residents attended, who enjoyed food, bowling and basketball, live performances, live experiences with reptiles from Bear Creek Nature Center, face painting, and much more.

FEATURED



ARASH JAFARY

Born in Tehran, Iran, Arash Jafary moved to Vienna, Austria, when he was 14 years old with his family. Arash then moved to Atlanta, Georgia, on October 2000, and he has been a Georgia native since.

Arash loves music and dancing. He was a member of a professional musical band, and he toured with his band to other states.



LORI LOBEL

Seasoned investigator Lori Lobel says there's no age limit when it comes to passion, resilience, and a desire to serve.

In her 50s, she attended the police academy in her unwavering commitment to public service and personal growth. She's a versatile public safety and criminal justice professional with a successful history in law enforcement, investigations, security, and fraud detection. She has had positive collaborations with federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies during her career and she brings to her job a unique perspective, exceptional work ethic, and the ability to connect with people from all walks of life.

Outside of work, she has a profound passion for baseball. From playing softball as a child to following the Atlanta Braves, she appreciates the values of teamwork, discipline, and strategy that embody the sport. She also attends Falcons and Hawks games in her spare time. Her love of sports instills in her a sense of fairness and integrity.

She has four rescue dogs who are her joy. Her empathy and understanding of the bond between humans and animals propel her to seek justice. She understands that true justice encompasses investigating and prosecuting crimes and protecting the most vulnerable, including animals. Her goal is to create a safer and more compassionate community.



STANLEY MASON, SR.

A self-proclaimed "Bleeding Green" Philadelphia Eagles fan, Investigator Stanley Mason was born in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He's a member of Case Intake, where Grand Jury presentations are the favorite part of his job: "I enjoy the opportunity to interact with citizens and answer their questions or just shoot the breeze. Grand Jury presentations are a perfect time to showcase the hard work and commitment put forth every day throughout the District Attorney's Office."

As for the office in general: "I love it here. At 61, I realize that I have more time behind me than I do in front of me so I just try to do the best I can each day. I may not change the world but every time I open one of those folders or present a case to Grand Jury, I get a chance to make a difference for that one person."

Stan has two grown children Alexis and Stan, Jr., in Waco, Texas, and two grandchildren (Elise and Dontay.) He has been living in Georgia with his wife Michele since 2019. Born in February 1962, Stan enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and served three tours in Korea, one in Japan, two in Saudi Arabia, including Desert Storm. After 11 years, Stan left the Air Force with an Honorable Discharge and moved to Waco, where he joined the Waco Police Department on November 15, 1993, after scoring the highest civil service score in department history - 99 percent - a record that still stands.

After his first year, he was selected Rookie of the Year in 1994, marking the first time a minority has won that award. In 1998, the citizens of Waco petitioned the City Council, and a City Proclamation was issued for "Stan Mason Day." Stan also received the City of Waco Customer Service Award (the first time a police officer won it). In 2001, Stan was awarded the People's Choice Officer of the Year Award by the Waco Rotary Club. He retired in February 2019 having served all 25 years of his service in Patrol on midnight shift (by choice).



KAYLA BROOKS

Born and raised in Saginaw, Michigan, Kayla Brooks is the third-youngest of nine siblings. In the sixth grade, she realized she wanted to become the first attorney in her family and never gave up on the dream. After graduating from Michigan State University (GO GREEN!) with a Bachelor's Degree in Political Science, she attended Western Michigan University's Thomas M. Cooley School of Law, where she was the Marketing & Research Editor of the Journal of Practical and Clinical Law. She graduated Cum Laude in 2012 and moved to Atlanta, Georgia, where she took the bar and began her legal career. Kayla is sworn into the Georgia Supreme Court and the Georgia Court of Appeals.

Kayla initially worked in a law group with other attorneys learning Georgia's legal system, handling traffic offenses, minor personal injury cases, DUI, and other misdemeanors. She then ventured into private practice and became a Guardian Ad Litem in Cobb County and handled appointed dependency matters. In 2015, she joined the City of Atlanta, Office of the Public Defender, focusing on DUI defense, where she remained for more than six years before joining the Fulton County District Attorney's Office. She is happy to be a member of this office, where she is currently assigned to the Non-Complex Unit but will soon transition to the Complex Unit.

Kayla enjoys traveling with her husband, spending time with family, and her seven-year-old fur baby, Jade. Baking, hiking, and shopping (she loves finding a good deal) are among some of her other favorite activities. Something many do not know about Kayla is that she is very competitive and loves a good challenge. Many would describe Kayla as self-motivated, approachable, and always willing to lend a helping hand.



JACELYNN PORTER

Born in Virginia and raised in Georgia, JaCelynn Porter is a proud Georgia Peach transplant. She graduated in the top 10 percent of her class from Columbia High School's Math, Science, and Technology Magnet Program in Decatur, Georgia, while studying as a joint-enrollment student at Georgia Perimeter College. After graduating from Georgia Southern University, JaCelynn returned to the Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia area with aspirations of becoming an attorney. She obtained her Juris Doctorate and Master of Business Administration from Howard University School of Law.

While at Howard, JaCelynn interned for the Honorable Anita Josey-Herring of the D.C. Superior Court and Homeland Security (TSA). She had the opportunity to visit the White House during a joint conference that focused on how airport security measures affected the Sikh community. As a full-time student, JaCelynn also worked part time at the administrative office for the Office of Fair Employment Practices, where she had the honor of meeting Justice Sandra Day O'Connor during a women's day celebration. JaCelynn is a licensed attorney in New York and Georgia. She has no plans to sit for another bar exam (like never again).

In her spare time, JaCelynn volunteers as a brief grader and judge for the Charles Hamilton Houston Moot Court team. She also dedicates time to being her nephew's personal chauffeur.

Beyond work and family commitments, JaCelynn is an avid traveler, recently exploring Cartagena in Colombia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, where she visited a local village and walked alongside one of the Seven Natural Wonders of the World: Victoria Falls. Additionally, JaCelynn has zip-lined in Honduras, snorkeled inside cenotes in Tulum, Mexico, walked a mile on the Great Wall of China, and visited the Taj Mahal, which houses the tomb of Mumtaz Mahal. Her goal is to visit every continent, including Antarctica.

When not traveling, JaCelynn can be spotted at music festivals and concerts. Some of her recent concert experiences include Janet Jackson and Key Glock. Of course, JaCelynn is a member of the exclusive bey-hive and will be attending Beyonce's Atlanta concert in August.

National Crime Victims' Rights Week in Fulton County and Self-Care

National Crime Victims' Rights Week (NCVRW) has been celebrated each April since its inception in April 1981. This year, the event took place in the last week of April with the theme - Survivor Voices: Elevate. Engage. Effect Change. The event urged communities to amplify survivors' voices and to commit to creating an environment where survivors are heard, believed, and supported (Office for Victims of Crime, 2023).

This year, the Victim Witness Assistance Program created a committee comprising advocates, survivors, and crime victims. Victims and survivors agreed that they did not want another event that would leave them sad or upset; they wanted to feel empowered and uplifted. They also did not want more speeches from community officials. Thus, this year's event developed into a self-care week.

- April 24: Meditation Monday.

Meditation is very beneficial for self-care because it can assist with reducing stress and anxiety along with other health benefits (Corliss, 2014). Participants enjoyed aromatherapy, soothing sounds, and engaging in relaxing body motions.

- April 25: Self-defense class.

Self-defense fits with self-care as it can bolster an increased sense of personal safety and awareness. The instructor provided techniques to assist with releasing oneself from restraint if an individual is being strangled or grabbed involuntarily. The instructor also provided tactics and tips and allowed class participants the opportunity to practice. The tactics were beneficial in both public and private settings.

- April 27: Firearm safety class. This education is beneficial for self-care by increasing personal safety and awareness. The instructor had everyone discuss their plan of action if an intruder enters their home. Most participants had never thought about or created a plan of action for a home invasion before. The instructor had all students practice how to safely handle and unload a weapon - a must for those who own firearms or plan to purchase a firearm. Each participant was given a free firearm lock to prevent

accidental discharge.

The main event on April 29 was the Fani T. Willis Self-Care Fair. The event brought together victim-service providers and vendors, including massage therapists, barbers, make-up artists, a meditation specialist, and caricature artists. A popular vendor created treats and provided decadent and delicious fried Oreos. More than 130 victims, survivors, and staff members participated in this event that aimed to provide emotional, mental, and physical benefits.

Self-care is important to everyone, including employees of this office and the community. It would be beneficial to participate in any of these activities. Occasionally, we all get busy and do not stop to take care of ourselves while taking care of others. As always, for additional support, reach out to the Fulton County Employee Assistance Program. EAP services can be accessed 24 hours a day, seven days a week by calling 800-999-7222 or visiting www.AnthemEAP.com (password: Fulton). All employees of Fulton County are entitled to up to eight free sessions.

References:

Coliss, J. (2014). Mindfulness meditation may ease anxiety, mental stress. <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/mindfulness-meditation-may-ease-anxiety-mental-stress-201401086967>

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In homicide cases, prosecutors usually introduce what is called an “in-life” photograph of the deceased - a carefully selected photograph provided by the family to introduce into evidence when the case goes to trial.

It’s an opportunity to humanize the victim, who would otherwise be nothing more than a name, a case number and a corpse in autopsy photographs.

But the purpose of the in-life photo is not simply to provide an emotional connection for jurors. It has a legal purpose. The Supreme Court of Georgia has held that in a murder case, “a photograph of a victim in life may be relevant to prove an element of the corpus delicti, that is, that the person alleged to have been killed is actually dead.” *Ragan v. State*, 299 Ga. 828, 832 (2016); see also *Walker v. State*, 312 Ga. 232, 238 (2021). Essentially, an in-life photo is relevant to prove the victim was “alive” at one point prior to being killed. Typically, as in the cases cited above, defense attorneys will object to the introduction of the photograph on the basis that it is impermissible character evidence or not relevant. Should the trial court

be persuaded that you are trying to tug at emotional heartstrings, you can provide the judge with these case citations to show why the photo is relevant to the prosecution.

The Supreme Court in *Walker* does provide guidance on steps that should be taken to ensure the probative value of the photo is not substantially outweighed by any unfair prejudicial impact.

The Supreme Court stated that these photographs should only depict the victim and that it is encouraged that the photograph be introduced through a fact witness, if possible, rather than having a family member testify for the sole purpose of introducing the photographs to avoid an understandable emotional reaction from the family member.





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