

DA DISPATCH

FANI T. WILLIS, District Attorney



APRIL IS
**PREVENTION OF
ANIMAL ABUSE**
MONTH

The Fulton County District Attorney's Office

APRIL IS
**SEXUAL ASSAULT
AWARENESS** pg. 12

AND

**CHILD ABUSE
PREVENTION** pg. 3

MONTH

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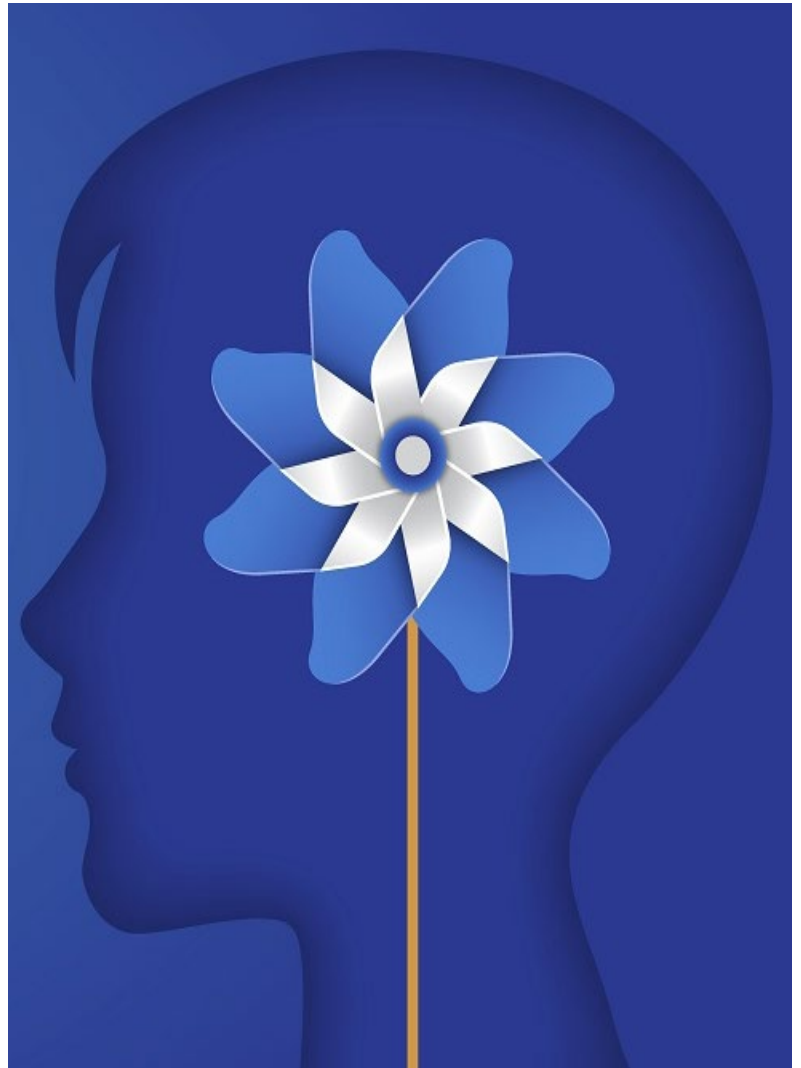
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April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Every April, Georgia participates in National Child Abuse Prevention Month,¹ an initiative aimed at protecting the state's most vulnerable and precious citizens: our children. During this time, pinwheels – representing the playfulness and joy of children – are often planted.² The cause of child abuse and neglect cannot be reduced to a single factor. Often times, there are multiple elements that can be related to the individual, family, community, and society.³ In 2021, Georgia ranked 38th for child and family wellbeing in the United States.⁴

Spreading awareness about child abuse will help create safe and healthy environments for children to live with supportive families and engaged communities. President Jimmy Carter declared the first National Child Abuse Prevention Month in 1979.⁵ The initiative came about through the efforts of Childhelp founders Sara O'Meara and Yvonne Fedderson.⁶ In 1983, April was formally established as National Child Abuse Awareness and Prevention Month under President Ronald Reagan's administration.⁷



¹ <https://dfcs.georgia.gov/services/prevention-and-community-support-section/initiatives/april-child-abuse-prevention-month>

² <https://www.pcain.org/get-involved/pinwheels/>

³ <https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventionmonth/>

⁴ <https://gafcp.org/2021/07/12/georgia-ranks-38th-in-the-nation-for-child-and-family-well-being-3>

⁵ <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/proclamation-4704-national-child-abuse-prevention-month-1979>

⁶ <https://www.childhelp.org/our-founders/>

⁷ <https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/archives/speech/proclamation-5802-national-child-abuse-prevention-month-1988>

At least **1 in 7** children have experienced child abuse or neglect in the past year in the U.S.




The total lifetime economic burden in the U.S. associated with child abuse and neglect about



<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/childabuseandneglect/fastfact.html>

Important Dates and Special Events

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
APR 2022	APRIL <i>National</i> CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH		Sexual Assault Awareness MONTH		April has been designated "Prevention of Cruelty to Animals month"	 Go Orange for the Animals
10	11	12	13	14 Child Abuse Awareness Event WEAR BLUE DAY! Legal Asst. Training Attorney Training Wellness - Trinidad Toby	15 Chat & Chew Major, SVD, Anti-Corruption & Civil Rights	16
17	18  MANDATORY DNA Zoom Training	19  New ADA/Inv. Swearing-In Wellness - Trinidad Toby	20 Chat & Chew Case Intake, Trial, Investigations, Operations, Programs & Records	21 Legal Asst. Training Attorney Training Wellness - Trinidad Toby Kickball vs. FC Solicitor Child Abuse Protocol Signing - 1-3 pm	22 LAW DAY! Family Feud Competition Fulton County PayDay	23 Rights, Access, and Equity for all Victims 1-3 pm 141 Pryor Street
24	25  Adult Diversion Orientation Monday Matinee Movie Day!!	26 Wellness - Trinidad Toby	27 WEAR DENIM DAY! Sexual Assault Awareness Event Inv. Training VWAP Training	28 Legal Asst. Training Attorney Training Wellness - Trinidad Toby CAC & Sex Assault Forum Panel - Zoom 7-9 pm	29	30

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
MAY 2022	2  Adult Diversion Orientation	3	4 VWAP Training	5 Legal Asst. Training Cinco de Mayo Spring Report Celebration	6	7

LAST CLASS!

INVESTIGATOR TRAINING



WEEK 10:

Health and Wellness
April 27, 2022

Contact

MICHAEL GREEN

Deputy Chief of Investigations
404.613.2400
michael.green@fultoncountyga.gov

CONTINUING 11-WEEK COURSE
(through April 2022)

ATTORNEY TRAINING



WEEK 09:

Jury Selection Issues **April 14, 2022**

Contact

KEVIN ARMSTRONG

Chief Senior ADA / Training
404.358.7599
kevin.armstrong@fultoncountyga.gov

Week 10 | 4/21
Identification and Confrontation Probation Revocation

Week 11 | 4/28
Ethics and Professionalism

11-WEEK COURSE (through May 2022)

VWAP TRAINING



WEEK 6:

TBD | TBD

DV and Strangulation /
Danger Assessment and
Safety Planning

Week 7 | 4/27/2022 | BOC Assembly Hall
Maximizing Odyssey and Tracker

Week 8 | 5/4/2022 | TBD
Cultural Diversity / Personality Assessments and working with Diverse population

Week 9 | 5/11/2022 | BOC Assembly Hall
Community Partnerships

Week 10 | 5/18/2022 | TBD
Victim's Compensation Overview

Week 11 | 5/25/2022 | BOC Assembly Hall
Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders

Contact

CHANDRIKA DERRICHO

Victim-Witness Assistance Program Director
678.362.9188
chandrika.derricho@fultoncountyga.gov

9-WEEK COURSE (through May 2022)

LA MASTER CLASS TRAINING



CLASS 5:

April 14, 2022
BOC Room
Odyssey

Contact
LORA.ANDREWS@fultoncountyga.gov
WHITNEY.MEYER@fultoncountyga.gov
QUINASHA.PRITCHETT@fultoncountyga.gov
FELICIA.DICKENS@fultoncountyga.gov

Class 6 | April 21, 2022 | Odyssey

Class 7 | April 28, 2022 | Transcriptions

Class 8 | May 5, 2022 | Record Room & Record Restriction

Class 9 | May 12, 2022 | Q&A Session

GRADUATION | May 19, 2022 | BOC Room

April
2022

Chat & CHEW



April 15th

Major Crimes
SVD
Anti-Corruption
Civil Rights

April 20th

Case Intake, Trial
Investigations
Operations
Programs & Records

Celebrating FCDA Staff



VALENCIA YOUNGER

Chief Legal Assistant - Records Restriction

Join us in celebrating our very own Valencia Younger, National Association of Black Legal Assistants and Paralegals' Post

NABLAP LEGAL PROFESSIONAL SPOTLIGHT

Title: Chief Legal Assistant: Records Restriction Unit

Length of time in the legal field: 5 years

Current employer: Fulton County District Attorney City, State: Atlanta, GA

Why do you enjoy working as a Paralegal/Legal Assistant?

I wanted to become a legal assistant/paralegal because I wanted to help people. I enjoy learning the intricate parts of the law. It does have its demands but also there is so much reward when you get the results that you desire. As well as always learning and enhancing your communication skills. As a Records Restriction legal assistant in the District Attorney's office, I assist people in gaining second chances. My team and I have a significant impact on the people and the community we serve to review their cases for restriction. Legal Assistants/Paralegals have the privilege of guiding and advocating for clients in challenging legal matters. While legal assistants/paralegals cannot provide legal advice, their skills serve as respected tools in diverse communities to contribute vital assistance to the community.



To a Truly Amazing Team of Legal Assistants!

I am so thankful to have this opportunity to work alongside each of you! Your enthusiasm, motivation, passion and support has been so inspirational to me. You guys truly make my day to day brighter and I am so happy and thankful to have such an amazing team!

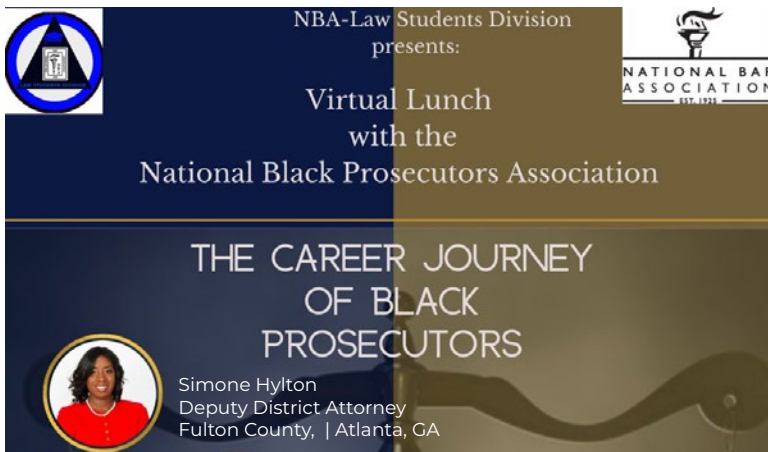
"A GREAT CO-WORKER IS HARD TO FIND, DIFFIULT TO PART AND IMPOSSIBLE TO FORGET"

FOR ALL YOU DO.....THANK YOU!

-Shaun



FCDA Trainings



National Black Prosecutors Association (NAPA) Virtual Lunch

CAREER IN CRIMINAL PROSECUTION

On March 10, 2022, Simone Hylton was a speaker in the National Bar Association Law Students Division virtual lunch panel discussion, done in partnership with the National Black Prosecutors Association, aimed at informing law students about a career in prosecution. Topics included a “normal” day in the life of prosecutors, challenges that black prosecutors face and differences between prosecuting in larger and smaller jurisdictions.



TEMPORARY PROTECTIVE ORDER: Virtual Training

Deputy District Attorney Simone Hylton hosted a Temporary Protective Order (TPO) virtual training on March 11, 2022, in partnership with the Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation – Safe Families Office. The training provided information about procedures for obtaining a temporary protective order – especially important for units that handle Aggravated Stalking and other temporary protective order violations.

Prosecuting Attorneys’ Council of Georgia: LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE

From March 9-11, 2022, Executive District Attorney – Trial Division George Jenkins and Chief Deputy District Attorney – Major Crimes Division Pat Dutcher attended the program, which focused on leadership skills and providing ways to be a more effective leader.



Employee of the Month



2022



Fani T. Willis
FANI T. WILLIS
District Attorney

MARCH
employee of the month

TEMPERANCE STODDARD
Investigator
Crimes Against Children Unit

I would like to nominate Tempie Stoddard.

She handles all of child fatality review (which involves coordinating 20 schedules for a meeting once a month and sending out detailed agendas prior to the meeting) in addition to her investigator assignments.

She is constantly covering for other investigators and taking on extra responsibility, without complaint. She also VOLUNTEERS for special projects, stays late to make sure things are covered, and follows up on issues independently.

She also came in to the office after she took a fall because she was worried that CAC would not have enough investigators to present to GJ.

Tech Corner

Welcome to the newest section of our DA Dispatch. Here you will be introduced to the FCDA Information Technology staff as well as helpful IT tips and tricks in future issues!



TRACEY STOKES

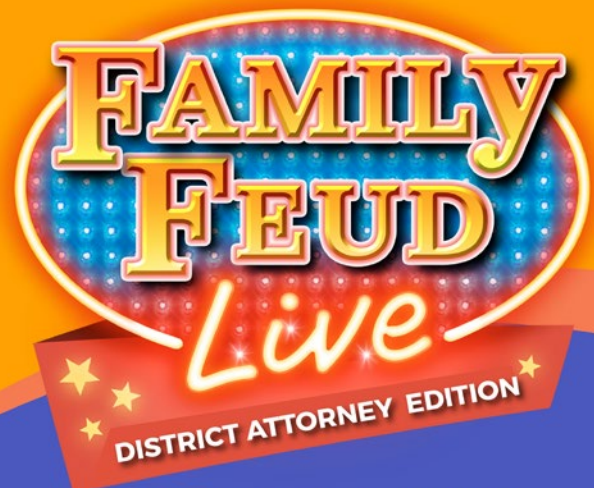
Tracey Stokes is an IT Specialist whose responsibilities include technical help for desktop computers, TVs, laptops, cell phones, copiers, and software apps/ Tracey has a Bachelor's Degree in Computer Information System from Saint Leo University. In his spare time, he enjoys gardening in his backyard

and spending time with his son. Tracey is also a DJ; he speaks Spanish and provides algebra tutoring.



DIANNE HAYWOOD

Network specialist Dianne Haywood has spent 20 years in the Fulton County District Attorney's Office. Originally from North Carolina, Dianne has lived in other places in the U.S. besides Georgia. In her spare time, she likes to read, sing, and listen to jazz, old school, and gospel music. She also likes to eat out and spend time with her family.



LAWDAY
celebration

April 22, 2022

Giving back to our community

Youth Symposium at Bear Creek Middle School



From Left to Right: DDA Simone Hylton, ADA Jamell Hamm, LA Jayson Chavis, Community Resource Specialist LaRhonda Maiten, ADA Jawara Mars, Social Service Coordinator January Towles, Dependency & Diversion Coordinator Bryant Brinson, Justice Liaison Will McCombs, Youth Advocate Aakeem Woodward, Jason Cade (W.A.V.E.), Principal Felipe Jackson (Principal Bear Creek Middle), Durante Partridge (Criminal Defense Attorney), LA Jeremy Gray, Tekesia Shields (Credible Messenger), ADA Travis Thomas, Community Resource Specialist Gregory Ware, Investigator Lloyd Owens, ADA Seth Brown, Executive Assistant Donald Moore

On March 25, 2022, the Fulton District Attorney's Office led a Youth Symposium at Bear Creek Middle School, organized by Deputy District Attorney Simone Hylton.

The DA's Office began the first of many ongoing enrichment opportunities to impact the lives of young Fulton County students.

In attendance were speakers from our office, WAVE, Credible Messengers, as well as other community partners. Each speaker encouraged students by sharing personal experiences and best practices for decision-making.



Youth Advocate Aakeem Woodward engaging the students at Bear Creek Middle School.

Career Day with Deputy District Attorney Yolanda Mack and Superior Court Judge Paige Whitaker



March 23, 2022
THOMASVILLE HEIGHTS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



March 24, 2022
CHAMPION MIDDLE SCHOOL

Giving back to our community

FCDA gives back at WAVE's "Eggstravaganza"

On Saturday, April 9, 2022, our office joined up with City of South Fulton Councilwoman Helen Willis and WAVE to stuff and hide eggs and to deliver Easter baskets to South Fulton children. Many employees dipped into their own pockets to make sure the children will have a happy holiday.



Left to Right; First Row: DC Inv. Raymond Baez-Nieves, CS ADA Shannon Trotty, DDA Simone Hylton.

Left to Right; Second Row: Edwina Sellan, LaRhonda Maiten, Yolanda Shorthouse, Madam DA Fani T. Willis, Vanessa Condry, DLA Whitney Meyer, ADA Kimberly Carey, Inv. Shaniece Withrow, Sheila Francois, DDA Rewa Collier, Rewa's Daughter Kayla Collier.

Left to Right; Back Row: Councilwoman Helen Willis, Inv. Lloyd Owens, Deonté Pollard, ADA Peter Faile, DVWA Dilma Dos Reis, DC Inv. Johnna Griffin, ADA Jawara Mars, DDA Cara Convery, DDA Adam Abatte.

Not Pictured: Enenwan Akpan-Iquot, Jasmine White, Bryant Brinson, and Keira Jackson, January Towles, Mychal Scates.



DDA Simone Hylton, Social Media & Brand Manager KaVon Arnold,
Adult Diversion Director Epiffany Henry.

"I am so proud to work with a team of people that show up and show out constantly to give back to the community."

-Madam DA Fani T. Willis

Giving back to our community

Commissioner Natalie Hall "Empowering Young Men to Excel"



On March 23, 2022, the Fulton County District Attorney's Office was honored to mentor young men from high schools all over the county. The Empowering Young Men To Excel Youth Conference was hosted by District 4 Fulton County Commissioner Natalie Hall.

The DA's office was well-represented by Assistant District Attorney Jawara Mars and Youth Advocate Aakeem Woodard who were on a panel of professionals providing valuable insight and practical advice that enriched the lives of our future leaders.



Youth Advocate Aakeem Woodard and ADA Jawara Mars.

Fulton County District Attorney's

SHINING *stars*



ADAM ABBATE

Deputy District Attorney
Major Case Unit
Major Crimes Division



SONYA ALLEN

Deputy District Attorney
Anti-Corruption Division



Inv. Joseph Rickman



VWA Misty Botu



Inv. Shea Corso



CLA Helen Bastien

DA Family,

Congratulations to the Major Case Trial Team for **State v. Glenn Goolsby.**

Guilty on all counts! Sentenced to Life without Parole + 50 years to serve consecutively!!!

- Madam DA Willis



ROBERT SHAPIRO

Assistant District Attorney
Complex Unit
Trail Division



ADA Tom Wight



Inv. Fatimah Winston

HERE HERE,

I want to announce the great work of Robert Shapiro in his 1st jury trial in **case of Raymond Starr** 26+ count indictment please join me in congratulating Mr. Shapiro in this important effort and win, also want to thank Tom Wight, Fatimah Winston and our entire trial division team.....well done !!!!

-George Jenkins
Executive District Attorney,
Trial Division



FURHAWN SHAH

Assistant District Attorney
Crimes Against Children Unit
Special Victims Division



ADA Maria Hunter



Inv. T. Stoddard



LA Alicia Scurry



VWA Amanda Turner

DA Family,

Congratulations to ADA Furhawn Shah, ADA Maria Hernandez, Investigator Tempie Stoddard, Legal Assistant Alicia Scurry & Victim-Witness Advocate Amanda Turner for their guilty verdict.

-Lauren McAuley
Deputy District Attorney,
Crimes Against Children Unit - SVD

State v. Brian Peterson

Judge Adams (4E)

Count 1: Rape

Count 2: Incest

Count 3: Child Molestation

Count 4: Sexual Battery

Sentence: Life plus 35 years

Fulton County District Attorney's

SHINING *stars*



DEMETRIUS SMITH

Assistant District Attorney
Gangs Unit
Major Crimes Division



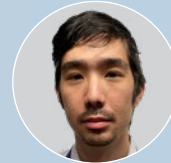
ADA Thomas Griner



Asst. Chief Barry Hunter



Inv. Dashawn Raymond



LA Matt Riggs



VWA Vanessa Bullard Carr

DA Family,

Congrats to our dynamic team! Senior ADA Demetrius Smith, Chief Senior ADA Thomas Griner, Assitant Chief Barry Hunter, Senior Investigator Dashawn Raymond, Legal Assistant Matt Riggs, Victim Witness Advocate Vanessa Bullard Carr.

Thank you all for your hard work and dedication. We appreciate you fighting for the victims in our community. They received a **guilty verdict** to felony murder, aggravated assault, possession of firearm, cruelty to children 3rd degree.

- Madam DA Willis



SHANIQUA CHRISTIAN

Assistant District Attorney
Crimes Against Children Unit
Special Victim Division



ADA Matt Homes



Inv. Kenneth Rucker



LA Alicia Scurry



VWA Amanda Turner

DA Family,

Congratulations to ADA Shaniqua Christian, ADA Matt Holmes, Investigator Kenneth Rucker, Legal Assistant Alicia Scurry & Victim-Witness Advocate Amanda Turner for their guilty verdict.

State v. Luis Buenrostro

Judge Ellerbe (8B)

Count 1: Aggravated Child Molestation

Count 2: Aggravated Child Molestation

Count 4: Aggravated Child Molestation

Count 5: Aggravated Child Molestation

Sentence: Life to serve 25 years, Life on Probation

-Lauren McAuley

Deputy District Attorney, Crimes Against Children Unit - SVD



SIRI PATEL

Assistant District Attorney
Crimes Against Children Unit
Special Victims Division



ADA Christina Robinson



Inv. Natalie Brunner



LA Patricia Stewart



VWA Nicole Santos



VWA Amanda Turner

DA Family,

Congratulations to ADA Siri Patel, ADA Christina Robinson, Investigator Natalie Brunner, Legal Assistant Patricia Stewart & Victim-Witness Advocates Nicole Santos and Amanda Turner for their **1-hour guilty verdict!**

-Lauren McAuley

Deputy District Attorney,
Crimes Against Children Unit - SVD

State v. Tonie Baker

Judge Ingram (7E)

Count 1: Rape

Count 2: Aggravated Sodomy

Count 3: Aggravated Sodomy

Count 4: Child Molestation

Sentence: Life Without the Possibility of Parole

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month

April is Sexual Assault Awareness Month. The mission of this month is to raise awareness about sexual violence around the world, educate communities on how to prevent it, and take action against sexual assault.

SAAM is also a campaign that aims to increase awareness about the causes and risk factors for sexual assault and empower individuals to take steps to prevent it in their communities. Since 2001, the National Sexual Violence Research Center has coordinated annual programming, developing materials and resources for organizations and agencies to use. The SAAM campaign works with a variety of non-profit organizations and foundations to spread the message of awareness and prevention through educational programs, public events, and petitions for legislative action.

SAAM traces its history to the 1970s when activists first began organizing on a national scale to reduce sexual assault and violence against women. Advocates fought tirelessly to bring a topic that was once taboo for public discussion out of the shadows and shed light on the widespread problem of sexual assault. It was also in 1970 when survivors of sexual violence came together and began to speak out against the atrocities they suffered. They held rallies and public speak-outs, and as a result, created a movement to end sexual violence. Organizing for what was then called Rape Awareness Week

in Washington State was one of the original purposes of WCSAP.

The first rape crisis center in the U.S., Bay Area Women Against Rape, opened in 1971, with the dual goals of providing counseling and advocacy to survivors and educating the community.

In 1976, the first Take Back the Night rally brought increased visibility as activists organized more public events. Take Back the Night, a series of marches organized to protest rape and sexual assault broadcast the message that women shouldn't be afraid to be out at night. By the 1980s, the National Coalition Against Sexual Assault was mobilizing groups across the country to take action at higher levels. In 1994, after a long campaign, Congress passed the Violence Against Women Act, the first legislation to require law enforcement to treat domestic violence as a crime and not a private matter. In 2001, the first official Sexual Assault Awareness Month once again brought the issue into public consciousness and reinvigorated a national network of events and support groups that raise awareness and provide resources to survivors and those at risk. The Rape, Abuse, & Incest National Network (RAINN) supports a network of over a thousand rape crisis centers. In 2009 President Barack Obama became the first President to officially declare April National Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

More than **1 in 3** women experienced sexual violence involving physical contact during her lifetime.



Nearly **1 in 4** men experienced sexual violence involving physical contact during his lifetime.



Estimated Lifetime Cost of Rape



National Hotlines:

Sexual Assault (800-656-4673) **Domestic Violence** (800-799-7233)

Information above found here:
www.ncedsv.org | www.asp.org | www.nationaltoday.com

Illustration provided by
Centers for Disease Control (cdc.gov)

IN THE PRESS

Repeat Offender Task Force

On March 29, 2022, Fulton County District Attorney Fani T. Willis joined Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens, Fulton County Sheriff Patrick "Pat" Labat, Atlanta Police Chief Rodney Bryant, U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Georgia Kurt R. Erskine, and others to announce the creation of a joint Repeat Offender Task Force.

"We will be working hard together to take dangerous repeat offenders off the streets of Atlanta and make all parts of the city safer for everyone." -Madam DA Fani T. Willis



From Left to Right: Fulton County Sheriff Patrick "Pat" Labat, Atlanta Police Department Chief Rodney Bryant, Mayor of Atlanta Andre Dickens, Fulton County District Attorney Fani T. Willis and Atlanta Police Foundation President and CEO Dave Wilkinson.

FCDA Gang Unit's Commendable Work

The Gang Unit was mentioned in the Insider Advantage on March 24, 2022:

"Meanwhile, Fulton County DA Fani Willis increased gang-charging rates since taking office in 2021. Her office proposed enhancements to the gang laws empowering all GA prosecutors to better tackle gang crime. Although really, many of these improvements were originally included in Kemp's 2020 HB 994. Why not then?"

The 2022 anti-gang legislation, SB 359, along with a companion bill, HB 1134, garnered bipartisan support in the name of public safety. These real criminal justice reforms were met with Kemp's 2022 budget funding a statewide Gang Unit at the GA Attorney General's Office and a commitment from new Atlanta Mayor Andre Dickens and Chief Rodney Bryant to look at increasing the Atlanta Police Department's gang unit."



March 17, 2022

St. Patrick's Day Celebration



Case Intake Division: Large Division Winner



White Collar Division



Accountability Court:
Small Unit Winner



Juvenile Unit



Grants Unit



Investigation Division



March 17, 2022

St. Patrick's Day Celebration



Diversion, Records, Record Restriction



Civil Rights Unit



Operations Division



Special Victim Division



THE INAUGURAL
LGBTQ+ ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Reception

March 22, 2022



THE INAUGURAL
LGBTQ+ ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Reception

March 22, 2022



CONGRATULATIONS Vanessa Condry on receiving the District Attorney Fani T. Willis LGBTQ+ Advisory Committee Ally in Action Award.



Performer Drew Friday.

WCCPA Day

CELEBRATION

March 28, 2022



WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION

March 28, 2022



WCCPA Women's Day CELEBRATION

March 28, 2022



FCDA Women's Day CELEBRATION

March 28, 2022



Women's History Month Trivia Winners
Week 1: Kyra Banks; Week 2: Kevin Armstrong;
Week 3: Furhawn Shah; Week 4: Kara Lawrence

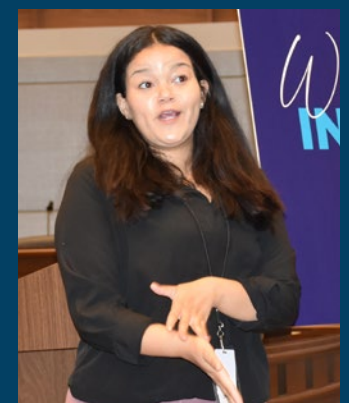


Peter Faille reciting the poem he wrote for this special occasion titled "WOMEN."



Summer 2022 Intern Information Session

The Fulton County District Attorney Leaders presented to potential summer interns on April 1, 2022.



Major Case Division Training & Lunch

April 5, 2022





LaTonya Gates

Legal Assistant - Conviction Integrity Unit

Originally from Gary, Indiana, LaTonya Gates ran track, swam, and played the flute and piccolo because sports and the arts were important to her family. At a young age, she broke the record for the 200 meters at the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) Track and Field National Championship. She also won multiple music competitions performed and solo during concerts. She continued with track and music through high school.

After visiting relatives for the summer, she took a leap of faith in 1995 and moved to Atlanta, where she graduated from Georgia State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Speech and a minor in Psychology. She taught Pre-K, Kindergarten, and Special Needs for 13 years in both the private and public sectors until she was no longer passionate about being in the classroom. She decided to take a year's sabbatical to travel and do some soul searching before continuing her education and receiving her Master's Degree in Liberal Studies, which focused on human ideas, social and cultural differences and behaviorism.

LaTonya realized her passion for advocacy while interning at the Women's Resource Center for Domestic Violence. In 2018, she joined the Fulton County District Attorney's Office as a Victim-Witness Advocate in Juvenile Court. She then became a Paralegal in the Conviction Integrity Unit, where she's the unofficial Program Manager, Office Manager, Victim Advocate, Event Planner, IT, and office decorator.

LaTonya believes in change and giving back to the community. She's a Community Ambassador for YouthSpark, which targets human trafficking, and a Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) for children in foster care. She teaches behavioral therapy to her warrior students, proctors the ACTs and SATs for high school students, and volunteers for the general and special elections.

A late bloomer to "Game of Thrones," LaTonya is obsessed. Her favorite character is Tyrion Lannister; one of his quotes is: "I drink and know things." She also enjoys a good series, thrillers, action, and sci-fi, and she's a sucker for love stories. She calls herself a "sort of a foodie" and she considers rice and pasta her kryptonite! She's always open and eager to try new restaurants. Of course she enjoys the arts, so she can be found catching a local play at the Horizon Theater, a concert in the park, or Broadway at the Fox. Her favorite shows thus far are Hamilton, Kinky Boots and The Lion King.

She's the mother of two smart adult children. She loves to travel and spend time with family and friends. She chooses to moon gaze rather than watch the sun rise. She prefers dark chocolate over milk chocolate, tea over coffee, and Pepsi over Coke. Persistence is her super power and compassion is her strength. When she's under stress, she gets a tattoo and she listens to house music on her way to work. She believes what one puts in the universe will return and she tries to live by the words of Gandhi: "Be the change you wish to see in the world."



Thomas Coxe Investigator - Evidence

Born in Miami, Thomas R. Coxe divided his time between Riverdale, Georgia, and Florida after his parents divorced. Growing up, he adored the police. He couldn't get enough of them, from watching television shows, such as CHiPs and Adam-12, to observing actual officers on daily patrol. As a young man, Thomas prided himself on defending those who were harassed and taking the punishment for intervening. It was no shock that he became a law enforcement officer, spending 30 years as an Atlanta police officer.

He and his wife have been together for about 30 years and married for 26 years. They have two daughters, Heather and Alexandra, and three granddaughters, Hayden, Mckenzi and Amaris.





Timothy Pennington

Assistant District Attorney - Case Intake Division

Raised in Cobb County by a mother from the mountains of North Carolina and a father from southern Ohio, Tim Pennington graduated from South Cobb High School, playing both basketball and tennis while there. He then attended Emory University on an academic scholarship before transferring and graduating from Amherst College with a degree in Geology and English. While at Amherst, he learned to appreciate different perspectives, as well as how much fun learning can be.

After college, Tim took a position with the Federal Transit Administration in San Francisco. He had never been to San Francisco or been involved with government, but branching out and doing something different was part of the appeal. Enjoying being part of both, he eventually decided to go to law school, staying in California and attending Stanford Law School. Although a different experience than college, he enjoyed the camaraderie that came through students having the shared experience of studying law. He took a wide variety of courses and initially planned to go into litigation, summering at Quinn Emanuel in Los Angeles, but in his third year of law school he became interested in corporate law.

Initially working at Quinn Emanuel as a litigator after law school, he eventually decided to explore his interest in corporate law and took a position at Kirkland and Ellis in San Francisco as a private equity associate. While there, he learned more about how companies work, but perhaps even more impactful, he gained an appreciation for jumping into and fully immersing himself in a matter. Eventually, he took another corporate role, this time at Willkie Farr and Gallagher in London, where he saw a broad variety of corporate matters. He loved living in London, not only for the easy travel around Europe, but also for a window into a world with a different center.

After leaving law for a time, Tim eventually decided to step back into the legal profession after getting called to jury duty. He was intrigued not just by criminal law, but also by the underlying facts and the interaction between prosecutors and officers. He now works as an Assistant District Attorney in the Case Intake Division of the Fulton County District Attorney's Office. In his spare time, he enjoys hanging out with his friends and family, as well as his two aging but still energetic dogs, Blue and T.J., both Brittanys. When the weekend weather is nice, and sometimes even when it is not, he likes to get outside, often on a golf course.



Linda Long Records Clerk

Born and raised in Atlanta, Linda Long joined the Records Room/Records Restriction Team in September as a three-month temp. Since then, she has become a permanent and valuable member of the “BEST” team in the office. She worked in the commercial insurance business for 41 years before coming to the Fulton County District Attorney’s Office. She loves what she’s doing now as much as insurance. She is starting what she calls her second phase of life and she knows there are a lot more things to accomplish!

She has two adult daughters. One works in the DA’s office as a member of SVD. The other works as a Grant Specialist with CJCC (Criminal Justice Coordinating Committee) for the State of Georgia. Linda is Nana to three beautiful grandkids and GiGi to two of the most adorable great-grandkids.

A self-described foodie, Linda loves to eat and explore different foods. Her favorite meal is steak with lobster (AKA surf and turf). She has a passion for cooking and baking, with her specialty being sweet potato pie, which works well with her favorite holiday being Thanksgiving. She’s a dog lover, but she hasn’t felt the energy to get another one since her beloved Maya passed.

Since 2010, Linda has participated in the Atlanta Track Club’s annual AJC Peachtree Road Race, and she has the T-shirts to prove it! When she’s not pounding the pavement, she can be spotted in a shoe department at the mall on weekends. She recently started learning how to knit. Although she believes she’s not very good at this skill, she finds it relaxing nonetheless. The beach is her idea of paradise, so she never turns down an opportunity to get to one.





CaseLaw

By: Chief Senior ADA - Training
Kevin Armstrong

MOTIONS FOR OUT-OF-TIME APPEALS. The Georgia Supreme Court abolished the State's out-of-time appeal procedure, held that motions for out-of-time appeal should be dismissed, and held that this outcome applies to every matter in which the direct review of the case remains pending or if the case is otherwise not final.

Cook v. State, ___ Ga. ___, Case S21A1270 (Mar. 15, 2022).

This is a significant alteration of Georgia's post-judgment jurisprudence. However, the overwhelming majority of that falls on Appeals, which is aware. Just know that if you see a motion for something that is "out-of-time," you should ask Appeals or Training if it is a matter which should be dismissed. (Unless it is misnamed, the greater likelihood is: yes, it should.)

CLOSED COURTROOMS. The Georgia Supreme Court reaffirmed a prior holding which had determined that, when a defendant faults his trial attorney for failing to object to a closed courtroom, a defendant must show both prongs of a traditional ineffective assistance of counsel claim (including both deficient performance and prejudice).

Alexander v. State, ___ Ga. ___ (S21G0112, Mar. 15, 2022). Please know that if a defendant preserves an objection to an improperly closed courtroom, that is **structural error** which will result in reversal irrespective of harm.

The Sixth Amendment to the United States Constitution provides that "the accused shall enjoy the right to a . . . public trial[.]" Before excluding the public from any stage of a criminal trial, the party seeking to close the courtroom "must advance an overriding interest that is likely to be prejudiced" if the courtroom remains open. (Citation omitted.)

Presley v. Georgia, 558 U. S. 209, 214 (130 SCt 721, 175 LE2d 675) (2010). In addition, "the closure must be no broader than necessary to protect that interest," and "the trial court must consider reasonable alternatives" to the closure, even "when they are not offered by the parties." (Citation omitted.) *Id.* The trial court "must make findings adequate to support the closure." (Citation omitted.) *Id.* The Sixth Amendment right to a public trial is applicable to the states.

See Purvis v. State, 288 Ga. 865, 866 (1) (708 SE2d 283) (2011).

Alexander, *supra*, slip op. at 8-9. There is also a state constitutional right to an open courtroom / public trial. See Ga. Const. 1983, Art. I, Sec. I, Para. XI (a). So: if your judge wishes to close the courtroom during any part of your trial, including jury selection, suggest any and all alternatives you can imagine and have the judge consider them and make a record why they are insufficient. Even then, avoid a closed (or partially-closed) courtroom if you can.

MERGER. If they arise out of the same conduct, and without a deliberate interval, aggravated assault with a deadly weapon merges with an armed robbery accomplished using the same weapon, Gibson v. State, ___ Ga. App. ___ (2a) (Case A21A1221, Mar. 15, 2022), and aggravated assault with intent to rape merger with criminal attempt to rape, *id.* at (2b).

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