

**FANI T. WILLIS** 

# BACK TO SCHOOL Extraverganza



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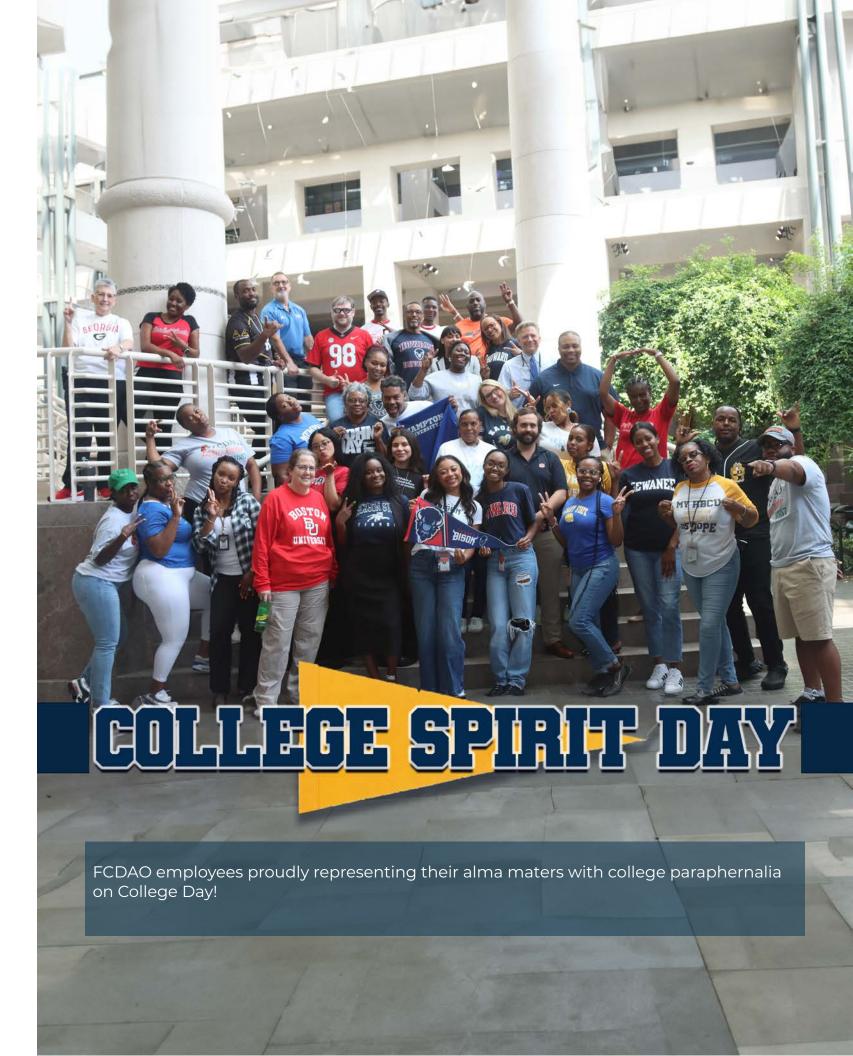
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П **Labor Day** Pay Day Pay Day П M





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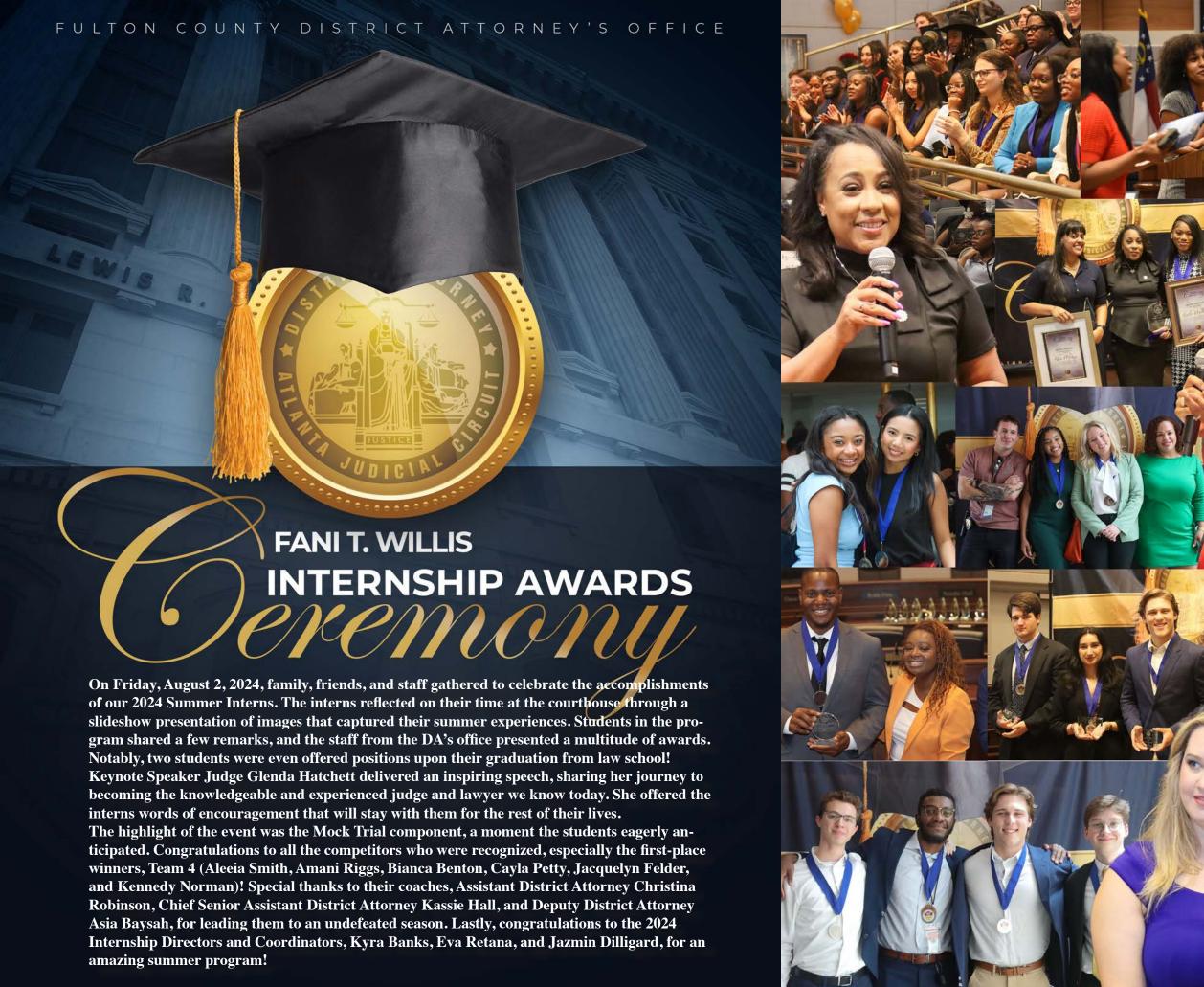


On Thursday, August 3rd, FCDAO employees and summer interns gathered in the Atrium to celebrate a successful summer and showcase their college pride. The event was filled with dancing, strolling, good food, and fun activities, creating a vibrant atmosphere of fellowship.











# TARGET / SANDY SPRINGS



## WELCOME ALL PARK





### Social Media Etiquette in the Workplace: Navigating Personal and Professional Boundaries

Social media has seamlessly woven itself into the fabric of our lives, often blurring the lines between personal and professional relationships in the workplace. You may find yourself wanting to add your colleagues on social media, and while these connections can foster camaraderie, they can also expose aspects of personal life that wouldn't typically surface in a professional setting. Photos or posts revealing personal moments—such as family gatherings or recreational activities—may display aspects of someone's life not commonly shared in the workplace.

This blending of personal and professional boundaries can affect workplace dynamics and privacy. It's important to exercise caution and maintain a professional online presence to prevent personal content from inadvertently influencing professional relationships or causing misunderstandings.

Social media interactions can sometimes lead to misinterpretations or unintended consequences. Being mindful of what we share and how we engage online can help preserve the integrity of our work relationships. Yet, despite these potential challenges, social media also offers valuable opportunities. The benefits of connecting with coworkers on social media shouldn't be overlooked, as these platforms can strengthen bonds beyond the office, fostering deeper connections and team spirit.

Following your colleagues online can also expand your professional network. By gaining access to their connections, you may open doors to future career prospects and collaboration opportunities. Social media can be a powerful tool for team building, allowing you to engage in shared interests, celebrate successes, and nurture discussions outside of work. In doing so, you contribute to a sense of camaraderie, enhance team dynamics, and help cultivate a supportive work culture.

As you navigate social media, remember to balance its benefits—such as networking and team bonding—with mindfulness of individual preferences. Whether posting a photo or sharing a comment, approach these platforms with professionalism, as both your colleagues and the broader community are always observing.

Ilona Rolack
Deputy Victim Witness Advocate



### **How to Deal with Unresponsive Witnesses**

As prosecutors who have the burden of proof at trial, much of our time is spent questioning witnesses on direct examination. This mode of examination requires us to ask open ended questions of our witnesses that do not lead to a desired answer. A "leading" question does just that. See Denson v. Miller, 33 Ga. 275, 278 (1862) (a question is leading when it suggests to the witness the desired answer). Under O.C.G.A. §24-6-611(c), leading questions are generally only permitted during cross examination of witnesses. Therefore, a prosecutor's opportunity to ask leading questions will come when cross-examining defense witnesses after the state has rested their case in chief. However, there are exceptions to this rule that permit prosecutors to ask leading questions during direct examination when it is "necessary to develop the witness's testimony" and/or when dealing with a "hostile witness, an adverse party, or a witness identified with an adverse party." O.C.G.A. §24-6-611(c). The Supreme Court of Georgia recently took up this issue and reaffirmed the ability of prosecutors to ask leading questions when dealing with an unresponsive witness. See Brown v. State, 2022 Ga. LEXIS 183 (2022). In Brown, the Alapaha Judicial Circuit District Attorney's Office were prosecuting the Defendant for the shooting death of the Victim in a parking lot. Witness Tyeesha Gray was present during the shooting and told the police she observed the Defendant shoot the Victim. At trial, she testified on direct examination that she simply saw the Victim get shot but didn't know who shot him. After several questions where she was being evasive and responding "I don't know". the Prosecutor made a motion to treat Ms. Gray as a hostile witness. The Prosecutor indicated to the Trial Court that Ms. Gray was being "clearly non responsive. She's only answering part of the question. She's answering that she knows and then she says she doesn't know, so I'd ask at this time to be able to lead her." The Trial Court granted the motion and permitted leading question. On Appeal the Defendant's attorneys argued

that Ms. Gray's "unresponsiveness" to questions on direct examination did not make her a "hostile" witness under Rule 611(c). The Supreme Court disagreed and indicated that an unresponsive witness can be treated as a hostile witness, citing federal authority to support that assertion. See United States v. Postell, 891 F2d 287 (4th Cir. 1989) (leading questions were permitted to develop witness's testimony where the witness was disinclined to "answer fully the prosecution's questions"); United States v. Brown, 603 F2d 1022, 1025-1026 (3) (1st Cir. 1979) (leading questions permitted where, among other things, the witness's testimony was "replete with lapses of memory").

Gautam Rao
Deputy District Attorney, Training

## SPECIAL VICTIMS DIVISION TRAILBLAZER AWARD CASSIE LUNDY We are thrilled to give a special shout-out to Cassie Lundy, who

F.O.C.U.S. AWARDS We are thrilled to give a special shout-out to Cassie Lundy, who received the Trailblazer Award at our monthly Legal Assistant meeting. Cassie's unwavering commitment and dedication to her work are truly inspiring. Like a quiet storm, her impactful efforts speak volumes, and we are proud to celebrate her achievements.

Congratulations, Cassie! From your SVD Family

CUSTOMER SERVICE

L E G E N D

YOLANDA SHORTHOUSE

Congratulations to the DA's Office's very own Reach Coordinator, Yolanda Shorthouse, for being recognized as a Fulton County 'Community Service Legend.' She was commended by a fellow co-worker for being a consummate professional. According to her colleagues, Ms. Shorthouse is always ready to assist in any way she can, and she does so with a smile. They praised her for being courteous, kind, and consistently going the extra mile, even beyond her job description. Her compassion extends to everyone who visits their office, as well as to the at-risk youth she works with in local schools. Kudos to Ms. Shorthouse!



On July 13th, Senior Assistant District Attorney Seth Brown attended the NBA's Top 40 Under 40 Award Gala, where he was honored as one of the Top 40 Under 40 Lawyers in the nation. To his surprise, he also received the NBA's highest recognition as the Nation's Best Legal Advocate, awarded for his outstanding work over the past five years at the Fulton County DA's Office. This prestigious honor is given to the nominee who receives the highest vote tally from both peers and the Selection Committee, with the committee's vote carrying the most weight.



We are supporting the Partnership Against Domestic Violence, as all race proceeds will go to them. Mark your calendars! Our race is Saturday, October 19, 2024. It is an ALL HANDS ON DECK affair.

ALL able-bodied FCDA staff are encouraged to register. Walkers, joggers, and runners are welcome.

Please encourage at least two friends, family, or acquaintances to register.

Promote our race on your social media.

Volunteers are needed. Sign up on our race website. The password for FCDA is volunteer24.

FCDA employees can join a team. Individuals will be prompted at the registration. FCDA teams are organized by units.

Let kendall.watkins@fultoncountyga.gov know if you have leads for race sponsorships or questions.



partnered with the South Fulton Police
Department to host their annual National
Night Out event. This event provided our
office with a valuable opportunity to
collaborate with one of our law enforcement
partners and engage with the South Fulton
community. Employees enjoyed fun activities,
delicious food, and meaningful conversations
as we came together to create a safer, more
connected South Fulton.



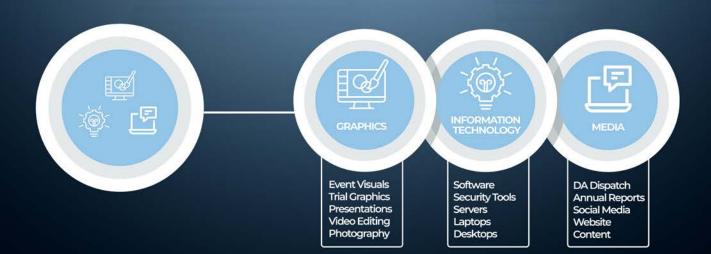


It is with great pleasure that we announce the promotion of Director Michael Makins to the position of Deputy Creative Director, in his new role he will lead our newly established Communications Unit. Which will encompass Graphics, Media, and Information Technology. Marking a pivotal step the continued growth and strategic development of internal and external office communications.

Mr. Makins has consistently demonstrated exceptional creativity and leadership. With 30 years of extensive experience leading productive teams, he is well-prepared to take on this critical role and drive our communication efforts to new heights.

In this new capacity, Mr. Makins will be responsible for overseeing the integration and seamless collaboration of three different units. Which will be instrumental in enhancing our brand presence, compelling visuals and digital experiences while also leveraging technology to achieve our office wide objectives.

### THE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT





## DISTRICT ATTORNEY

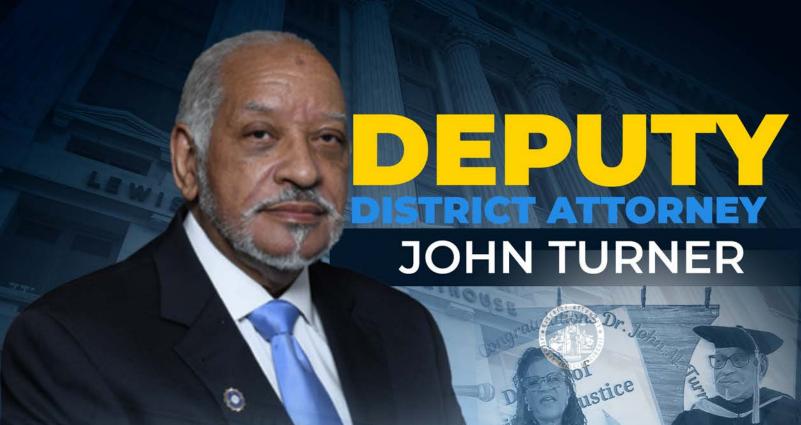
AIMEE MAXWELL

SPECIAL VICTIMS DIVISION CONVICTION INTEGRITY UNIT



Aimee Maxwell is an attorney with almost 40 years of criminal law experience and is one of the country's leading experts in investigating and litigating post-conviction innocence claims. Aimee received her J.D. from Georgia State University College of Law, her Masters of Education from Georgia State University and her Bachelor of Arts in political science from the University of Georgia. As the founding Executive Director of the Georgia Innocence Project, Aimee has litigated innocence claims throughout Georgia. She joined the Fulton County District Attorney's office in 2019 as the director of the Conviction Integrity Unit. Aimee is honored to join District Attorney Fani Willis' administration where she seeks to use her experience, commitment and passion to serve our citizens by ensuring the integrity of the justice system in Fulton County.

Aimee has significant experience handling complex felony criminal cases. In addition to her innocence work, Aimee was a criminal defense lawyer, first in private practice then with the State at the Georgia Indigent Defense Council. She also worked with a labor union representing government employees, including law enforcement officers in Atlanta and Fulton County. Recently, Aimee worked with the Judicial Council of Georgia's Administrative Office of the Courts to promote the integrity of the judicial branch and to improve justice in Georgia. Aimee is active in many bar associations including the Association of Prosecuting Attorneys and the State Bar of Georgia's High School Mock Trial Committee. She previously served as a Past-President of the Georgia Association of Criminal Defense Lawyer and as a former Board Member of the Innocence Network. Aimee currently serves on the Board of Directors for the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence. She is the recipient of the Ben F. Johnson Public Service Award from Georgia State College of Law, the Commitment to the Profession from the Younger Lawyers Section of the Georgia Bar, the Inspiration Award from Emory Law, and the SOAR Award from GSU Law.



**Deputy D.A. John M. Turner** has been conferred a Doctor of Criminal Justice Degree By Saint Leo University

Case Intake Division Deputy D.A. John M. Turner was conferred the degree of Doctor of Criminal Justice by Saint Leo University on December 18, 2023. Dr. Turner's Hooding Ceremony was held on June 1, 2024, at the Sigma Zeta Foundation House in East Point, GA. The ceremony was attended by 100 family members, guests, and members of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity and Zeta Phi Beta Sorority. The Hooding Ceremony was presided over by Clayton County Superior Court Judge Jewel Scott. Dr. Turner previously worked as Judge Scott's Executive Assistant D.A. when she served as Clayton County District Attorney and they practiced law together from 2009-2020 in the boutique criminal defense and family law firm of Scott & Turner.

Saint Leo University is one of a limited number of Universities who offers a doctoral degree in criminal justice. The DCJ is a terminal degree which prepares its holder for administrative, research, academic, or professional positions in the criminal justice field. Compared to the Doctor of Philosophy Degree in criminal justice, which is focused on theoretical research, the Doctor of Criminal Justice degree is primarily a professional, applied degree for criminal justice practitioners. The two degrees constitute overlapping but distinct categories. Whereas the DCJ prepares criminal justice practitioners to problem solve using existing knowledge, the Ph.D. is more theoretical and a traditional social science degree that prepares its holder for careers as a scholar or academic.

Dr. Turner's research and criminal law area of expertise is on the subject of Black serial killers. His dissertation is entitled The Howling of the Wolves: Case Studies on Law Enforcement, Media, Academic and Public Misconceptions on Black Serial Killers Affecting Criminal Investigations and Public Safety. During his previous tenure in the Fulton DA's Office, Dr. Turner prosecuted two Black serial killers, one of which is serving a life without parole sentence, while the second one in on Georgia's death row. Dr. Turner is presently researching a book about a Black female serial killer who lived across the street from his family when he was a young child in Atlanta.

## CONVICTION ALERTS

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### **STATE VS. RICKY LAFARGUE**

Congratulations to the Major Case Unit Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Ricky Lafargue, the Defendant was found guilty on all counts including Murder, Felony Murder, and Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon. Judge Alice Benton sentenced the Defendant to Life without Parole.

Chief Senior Assistant District Attorney Danielle Russell
Assistant District Attorney John Weitnauer
Senior Investigator Joseph King
Legal Assistant Rishia Lee
Victim Witness Advocate Christian Williams



### **STATE VS. ASHLEY MITCHELL**

Congratulations to the Major Case Unit! In the case of State vs. Anthony Shannon, the Defendant was found guilty on all counts including Felony Possession of Drugs and Possession of a Firearm. Judge Nancy Mau sentenced the Defendant to 8 Years to Serve 1.

Chief Senior Assistant District Attorney Brad Malkin Assistant District Attorney Latara Sauri Deputy Chief Investigator Bob Appell Investigator Jeremy Gray



### **STATE VS. EDDIE BYRD**

Congratulations to the Cold and Capital Unit! In the case of State vs. Eddie Byrd, the Defendant was found guilty on all counts including Murder, Felony Murder, and Aggravated Assault. Jugde Paige Reese Whitaker sentenced the Defendant to Life plus 5 years.

Assistant District Attorney Robert Wilson Deputy District Attorney Vincent Faucette Senior Investigator Darnell Kennedy Legal Assistant SaQuez King Victim Witness Advocate Christian Williams

### **CONVICTION ALERTS**



### STATE VS. ANTONIO WILSON

Congratulations to the Domestic Violence Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Antonio Wilson, the Defendant was found guilty on all counts including Malice Murder, Felony Murder, and Aggravated Assault. Judge Scott McAfee sentenced the Defendant to Life without the Possibility of Parole Followed by 15 Years to Serve.

Senior Assistant District Attorney Nalda "Kay" Charles Assistant District Attorney Abigail Potter Assistant District Attorney Michelle Andrews Senior Investigator Emma Mills Deputy Legal Assistant Tammy Jackson-McClendon Legal Assistant Lynette Gilbert Victim Witness Advocate Sandra Jean Louis



### STATE VS. MICHAEL CLARK

Congratulations to the Major Case Unit Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Michael Clark, the Defendant was found guilty on all counts including Murder, Felony Murder, and Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon. Judge Thomas Cox sentenced the Defendant to Life without the Possibility of Parole Followed by 15 Years to Serve.

Deputy District Attorney Kelcee Jones-Connor Assistant District Attorney Donita Morris Senior Investigator Felipe Brown Legal Assistant Rishia Lee Victim Witness Advocate Christian Williams



### **STATE VS. XAVIER BROWN**

Congratulations to the Major Case Unit Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Xavier Brown, The Defendant was tried on the Consolidated trial calendar and the defendant was found guilty of Murder, Felony Murder, and Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon. The Defendant was sentenced to Life With the Possibility of Parole plus 5 years by Judge David Emerson.

Chief Senior Assistant District Attorney Siri Patel Assistant District Attorney Celeste Patten Senior Investigator Chris Davidson Senior Investigator Felipe Brown Legal Assistant Andre Moorer Victim Witness Advocate Christian Williams

### **STATE VS. KATHY WADE**

Congratulations to the Trial Division Team! In the case of State vs. Kathy Wade, the Defendant was found guilty on

### CONVICTION ALERTS



all counts including Aggravated Assault and Possession of a Firearm during Commission. Judge Melynee Leftridge sentenced the Defendant to 10 Years to Serve 5 Years in Prison.

Chief Senior Assistant District Attorney Shaniqua Christian Assistant District Attorney Jacelynn Porter Deputy Chief Investigator Bob Appell Investigator Malik Dean Legal Assistant Kudonna Porter Deputy Victim Witness Advocate Misty Botu



### **STATE VS. CURTIS PATRICK**

Congratulations to the Sexual Assault Unit! In the case of State vs. Curtis Patrick, the Defendant was found guilty on all counts including Rape, Kidnapping with Bodily Injury, and Aggravated Sodomy. Judge David Emerson sentenced the Defendant to Life in without Parole plus 21 Years to Serve in Prison.

Chief Senior Assistant District Attorney Siri Patel Senior Assistant District Attorney Je'Leah Wiggins Chief Senior Assistant District Attorney Christina Robinson Investigator William Ward Legal Assistant Nikayla Sirmons Senior Victim Witness Advocate LaTeeka Montgomery



### STATE VS. JAMON JOHNSON

Congratulations to the Major Case Unit Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Jamon Johnson, the Defendant was found guilty on all counts including Murder, Felony Murder, and Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon. Judge Scott McAfee sentenced the Defendant to Life without the Possibility of Parole Followed by 15 Years to Serve.

Chief Senior Assistant District Attorney Danielle Russell Chief Senior Assistant District Attorney Maria Washington Senior Investigator Terrance Brown Legal Assistant Quentin Wright Victim Witness Advocate Cherrilie Looby-Tonge

### CONVICTION ALERTS



### STATE VS. DEJHAWANN NORRINGTON

Congratulations to the Major Case Unit! In the case of State vs. Marquez Williams, the Defendant was found guilty on all counts including Murder, Felony Murder, and Participation in Criminal Street Gang Activity. Judge Shukura Ingram sentenced the Defendant to Life Without Parole Plus 40 Years to Serve in Prison.

Deputy District Attorney Guatam Rao Deputy District Attorney Adam Abbate Chief Investigator Richard Randolph Assistant Chief Investigator Joe Rickman Assistant Chief Investigator Michael Green Victim Witness Advocate Illona Rolack



### STATE VS. DANIEL WRIGHT AND T'LANI ROBINSON

Congratulations to the Major Case Unit Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Daniel Wright and T'Lani Robinson, the Defendants were found guilty on all counts including Felony Murder and Attempted Purchase of Marijuana. Judge Shukura Ingram sentenced the Defendants to Life.

Assistant District Attorney Christina Robinson Assistant District Attorney John Weitnauer Senior Investigator Nathan Shoate Deputy Legal Assistant Felicia Dickens Victim Witness Advocate Katrina Gill



### STATE VS. ANDREA RIVERS

Congratulations to the Domestic Violence Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Andrea Rivers, the Defendant was found guilty on all counts including Criminal Damage to Property in the First Degree, Felony Murder, and Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon. Judge Scott McAfee sentenced the Defendant to Life to Serve.

Chief Senior Assistant District Attorney Shaniqua Christian Senior Assistant District Attorney Jazmin Willingham Senior Investigator Emma Mills Legal Assistant Tiffany Horton-Best Legal Assistant Nyome Griffin Senior Victim Witness Advocate Beverly Muhammad

### CONVICTION ALERTS



### STATE VS. ANTOWYN SMITH

Congratulations to the Domestic Violence Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Antowyn Smith, the Defendant pled guilty to all counts including Voluntary Manslaughter, Home Invasion /first Degree, and Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon. The Defendant was sentenced to 60 years in Prison.

Chief Senior Assistant District Attorney Shaniqua Christian Senior Assistant District Attorney Jazmin Willingham Senior Investigator Emma Mills Legal Assistant Tiffany Horton-Best Victim Witness Advocate Beverly Muhammad



### **STATE VS. DEQUAVIUS FRANKLIN**

Congratulations to the Major Case Unit Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Dequavius Franklin, the Defendant pled guilty to all counts including Murder, Felony Murder, and Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon. Judge Belinda Edwards sentenced the Defendant to Life.

Deputy District Attorney Asia Baysah Assistant District Attorney John Weitnauer Senior Investigator Joseph King Legal Assistant Brenda Sharpe Victim Witness Advocate Katrina Gill



### **STATE VS. FARDERRIN GRIER**

Congratulations to the Domestic Violence Trial Team! In the case of State vs. Farderrin Grier, the Defendant was found guilty on all counts including Murder, Felony Murder, and Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon. Judge James E. Cornwell sentenced the Defendant to Life plus 5 Years.

Deputy District Attorney Asia Baysah Chief Senior Assistant District Attorney Kassie L. Hall Senior Investigator Ronald Coloma Legal Assistant Nikayla Sirmons Victim Witness Advocate Sandra Jean Louis Victim Witness Advocate Lateeka Montgomery



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FANI T. WILLIS
District Attorney