



Westchester County, New York  
Office of the District Attorney  
**MIRIAM E. ROCAH**

# 2024 Annual Report

A pair of ornate, silver-colored scales of justice is the central focus of the image. The scales are positioned on a dark, rectangular base. The background is a blurred, blue-tinted image of a classical building with columns, suggesting a courthouse or government building. The overall tone is professional and legal.

Justice  
Integrity

**Transformation**

# Our Mission

The Westchester County District Attorney’s Office—with 132 Assistant District Attorneys, 34 criminal investigators, and more than 90 support personnel—is one of the largest prosecutorial agencies in New York. The Office partners with more than 40 local police departments across Westchester County, along with the New York State Police, and works closely with state and federal agencies on a daily basis to keep Westchester safe. The mission of the Office is to provide the fair, effective and efficient investigation and prosecution of criminal offenses committed in Westchester County to keep our communities safe, while working in collaboration with government and community partners to prevent violence and reduce recidivism. The Office prioritizes seeking justice for crime victims, building greater trust between law enforcement and the communities it serves, and protecting those who are most vulnerable, while ensuring those who inflict harm are held accountable.



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# Final Message *from* District Attorney Rocah

I am proud to present the 2024 Annual Report, a closer look at some of the incredible outcomes we've had this year at the Westchester County District Attorney's Office.

In this report, you will see results of the hard work of our prosecutors, investigators, analysts and support staff working together with our law enforcement partners in the county and throughout the state to secure justice for crime victims, as well as some of our significant achievements beyond the courtroom.

As an Office, we continued to have several firsts in the history of the Office and Westchester County:

- we secured an indictment against a contractor for a fatality of a laborer in a trench at a construction site;
- we secured an indictment for murder and for inflicting torture upon a 27-year-old woman by her intimate partner;
- and as one of the only prosecutors offices in New York with an in-house dog that regularly works with victims and witnesses, we utilized a certified support animal to accompany a very young victim of sex abuse to testify against her abuser in court leading to a successful conviction.

We also saw measurable successes with the expansion of groundbreaking initiatives and efforts that began when I took office in 2021:

- the Violent Criminal Enterprise Bureau's coordinated work on search warrants with our many law enforcement partners throughout the County resulted in some of the largest seizures of illegal firearms and ghost guns;
- our Discovery Bureau processed more than 11,000 hours of body-cam video to keep this Office compliant, efficient and effective;
- we diverted approximately 500 individuals out of our criminal justice system through our innovative diversion program, Fresh Start, for low-level and first-time offenders, and used our problem-solving courts for youth, veterans, and those with substance use disorder or mental health treatment needs;
- and we launched the County's first pre-arraignment substance abuse diversion program, OPT-In, for low-level offenders with substance use disorders.

These are noteworthy highlights of a transformed, modernized DA's Office.

When I announced in late 2023 that I would not seek re-election in 2024, I promised that I would focus in this final year as District Attorney on solidifying the transformative changes and progress we've made together. Change comes from more than just re-writing handbooks and changing certain policies and procedures. Change is most meaningfully achieved through changing culture. Through the new ADAs we hired (now more than 60% of the Office) and the revamped, and expanded training they received as part of our restructuring of the Office, I am confident that many of our changes are now part of the culture of the Office. Among other things, we placed an increased emphasis on timely and consistent victim outreach; a culture of robust approaches to violent crime and diversion balancing fairness and public safety; and living up to my motto to "do the right thing, in the right way, for the right reasons."

Serving as the 67th Westchester County District Attorney has been an honor of my lifetime. I am grateful to the talented and inspiring members of this Office, and our colleagues in law enforcement who have been excellent partners in keeping Westchester County safe.

In gratitude,



Miriam E. Rocah, Westchester County District Attorney



Leila Sutton Photography

**EXECUTIVE TEAM**

Miriam E. Rocah

*District Attorney*

Amy Finzi

*Chief Assistant District Attorney*

Tarek Rahman

*Counsel to the District Attorney*

Berit Berger

*Executive Assistant District Attorney  
– Policy and Strategic Initiatives and  
Chief Ethics Officer*

**DIVISION CHIEFS**

**Appeals & Special Litigation**

Steven Bender, *Division Chief*  
William Milaccio, *Deputy Division Chief*

**Trials & Investigations**

Christine O'Connor & Diego Hernandez  
*Co-Division Chiefs*

**Local Criminal Courts & Training**

Anthony J. Molea, *Division Chief*  
Shameika Mathurin, *Deputy Division Chief*

**Special Prosecutions**

Fredric I. Green, *Division Chief*  
Michelle Lopez, *Deputy Division Chief*

**Criminal Investigations**

Daniel P. McKenna, *Chief Investigator*  
Andrew Grascia & Wade Hardy, *Deputy Chief Investigators*

**Administration**

Charles Forzano, *Chief Administrator*

**Public Affairs**

Jin Whang, *Director of Public Affairs &  
Communications*



*Courtesy of James M. Rose, Scarsdale, NY*

# Serving All of Westchester County, New York

## MAIN OFFICE



Westchester County Courthouse  
111 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr Blvd,  
White Plains, NY 10601  
(914) 995-3414

*In addition to the main office, seven branch offices throughout the county help local courts and police departments better serve victims and witnesses in our communities.*

## NORTHERN WESTCHESTER

1940 Commerce Street, Suite 208  
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598  
(914) 862-5140

*\*The Westchester County District Attorney's Office consolidated the Yorktown and Mt. Kisco branch offices into the Northern Westchester Bureau located in Yorktown.*

## GREENBURGH

188 Tarrytown Road  
White Plains, NY 10607  
(914) 995-4075

## WHITE PLAINS

City Court  
77 South Lexington Avenue  
White Plains, NY 10601  
(914) 422-6265

## RYE

3010 Westchester Avenue, Suite 205  
Purchase, NY 10577  
(914) 813-7257

## YONKERS

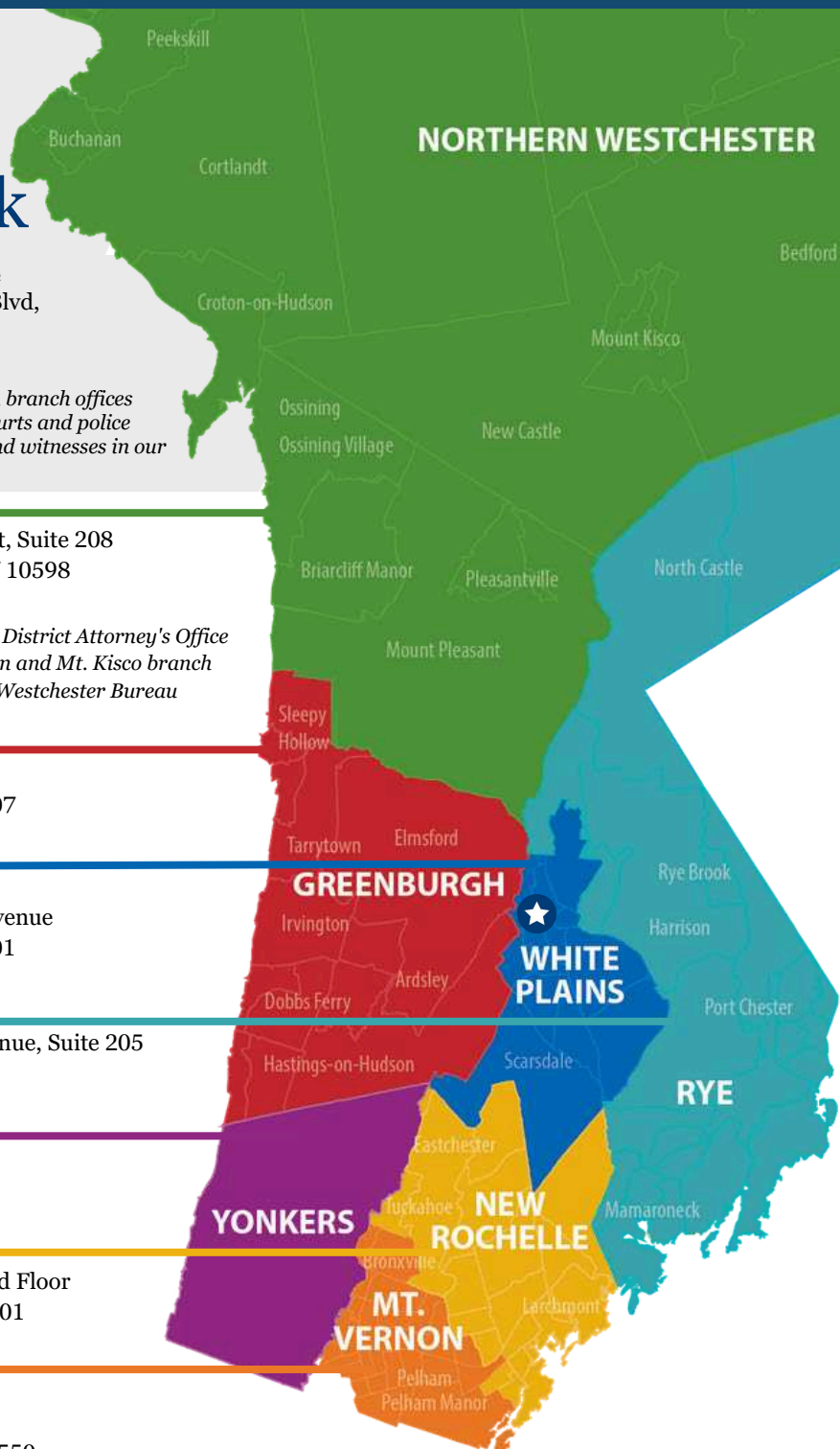
104 South Broadway  
Yonkers, NY 10701  
(914) 231-2700

## NEW ROCHELLE

475 North Avenue, 2nd Floor  
New Rochelle, NY 10801  
(914) 813-5800

## MOUNT VERNON

City Court  
Roosevelt Square  
Mount Vernon, NY 10550  
(914) 813-5025



# 2024 Highlights



**Prosecutions:** 17,464

**Investigations:** 3,452

**Trials:** 18 Felonies  
63 Misdemeanors

## Gun Safety

**318** Illegal guns seized

**178** Guns surrendered at community buybacks

## Felonies Charged

**15** Homicides

**189** Firearms

**325** Narcotics

## Special Prosecutions

**1,823** Domestic Violence charges filed

**883** Victims and witnesses served by the Victims Justice Center

**66%** New victims served

## Investigations

**234** Hate Crimes

**66** Public Corruption

**422** TIPS Line complaints (up 28% from 2023)

## Conviction Integrity

**14**

Wrongful convictions vacated following Conviction Review Unit investigations

## Discovery

**21,737** Processed body-worn camera videos

**11,028** Hours of bodycam footage

**65%** Increase from 2023

## Diversion

**404** Fresh Start participants (first-time, low-level charges)

**84** Participants in problem-solving courts for mental health, substance abuse, veterans

## Appeals & Special Litigation

**40** Briefs

**145** Motions

## In the Community

**133** Law Enforcement Trainings at Police Academy & Departments

**80** Public safety presentations in community and schools

The data on this page is a representation from January 1 through November 30, 2024.



# NOTABLE CASES

Strengthening Public Safety, Obtaining Justice for Victims



## Nearly 30-Years-Old Cold Case Closed

Sentences totaling at least 26 years in prison combined for two men responsible for the 1995 Christmas Eve fatal stabbing of Michael Jones inside Sing Sing prison concluded this decades-old open homicide.

Allah-Son-Allah (formerly Gwyn Cancer), 54 of Albany, was sentenced in October to 20 years and Steven Smith, 60 of Salisbury, North Carolina, who cooperated and testified against Allah, was sentenced in November to six to 12 years.

After years of investigators traveling to multiple states to interview several witnesses who were incarcerated at Sing Sing during the same time as the defendants, it was determined that the defendants and the victim were allegedly members of The Five-Percent Nation, also known as The Nation of Gods and Earths, a Nation of Islam breakaway group established in the 1960s.

At approximately 8 p.m. on Dec. 24, 1995, after a feud within the organization, Allah-Son-Allah used a buck knife to stab Jones in the chest, puncturing his heart, which caused Jones to bleed to death.

*Senior Trial Counsel Brian Bendish, Cold Case Bureau Chief Daniel Flecha, New York State Police*



## People

### N.Y. Woman Was Allegedly Tortured for Months Before She Was Strangled — and Prosecutors Say There Are More Victims

Kenya Tilford, 41, is accused of murdering 27-year-old Concetta Morton



## Torture Murder Charge A First For DA's Office

Kenya Tilford, 41 of New Rochelle, was arrested and charged in an 18-count indictment in July for the alleged torture killing of her intimate partner Concetta Morton, 27, whose body was found in a storage bin. It is alleged that the defendant tortured the victim for three months and, ultimately caused her death by asphyxiation before concealing the victim's body inside the storage bin at her Franklin Avenue apartment. During this period, the defendant was captured on surveillance video purchasing a hooded coverall, bleach, tarps, paper towels, rubber gloves, a chainsaw and the storage bin. The defendant was also charged with intimidating one individual, threatening another individual with a knife, physically and sexually assaulting one intimate partner, and sexually assaulting and attempting to physically assault another intimate partner who she also allegedly intimidated.

*Homicide Bureau Chief Lana Hochheiser, Assistant District Attorney Courtney Johnson with assistance from Homicide Bureau Senior Trial Counsel Brian Bendish*

## Multi-Agency Pattern Burglary Crackdown

A burglary task force of 17 Westchester police departments, including the DA's Office, launched high-tech investigations in 2022 in response to a string of burglaries targeting Asian American business owners from Tarrytown to White Plains. The investigative work of the task force successfully descended on a group casing Asian-owned businesses, following the owners home, then unlawfully entering the properties to steal cash and jewelry when they knew the owners were at work. The following defendants were convicted of burglary and/or attempted burglary, and sentenced to prison:

- John Jamer Carmona Arteaga sentenced in August to 5 years
- Diego Alexander Martinez Franco sentenced in April to 4 years
- Jose Javier Garcia Ortega sentenced in June to 3 years
- Victor Alfonso Lopez Restreo sentenced in April to 2 1/2 years

*Assistant District Attorney Celia Curtis, Violent Criminal Enterprise Bureau Chief James Bavero, High Tech Crimes Unit, New York State Police, FBI Safe Streets Task Force, Tarrytown, White Plains, Greenburgh, Mount Pleasant and Westchester County police departments*

### The Hudson Independent

## Multi-Agency Task Force Brings Down Burglary Ring Targeting Asian-Americans



## Prison Sentence for Embezzlement

ToniAnn Rosado, 54 of Mohegan Lake, was sentenced to a term of two to six years in prison, following her guilty plea in April, for stealing more than \$340,000 from a North Castle-based paint supplier where she was employed as the controller. The defendant was ordered to pay \$170,000 in restitution to the North Castle-based CR Wallauer & Company, Inc., where she was employed from 2017 to 2019 to oversee their accounting and finances.

*Senior Assistant District Attorney Nicole Gamble, Forensic Accountant Michael Frenza, Criminal Investigators Steven Sassone and Joseph McGann*



Crime & Safety

## \$340K Embezzlement From Employer Lands Westchester Woman In Prison

She stole company funds over a two-year period, while employed as an executive at a North Castle-based business.

Posted Tue, Oct 1, 2024 at 2:08 pm ET | Updated Tue, Oct 1, 2024 at 9:16 pm ET



Prioritizing gun prosecutions as part of her broader countywide gun safety agenda, the District Attorney in 2021 created the Violent Criminal Enterprise Bureau inside the Office to focus on shootings, felony assaults, firearm possession and trafficking. The efforts have resulted in large-scale weapons seizures and holding offenders accountable for incidents of gun violence in the county.

## People v. Jianqiao Lu

Following a 113-count felony indictment charging him with illegally possessing more than a dozen guns, including assault weapons, and 86 high-capacity magazines in his Hastings-on-Hudson home, the defendant pleaded guilty in August. He faces a minimum of five years to a maximum of 10 years in state prison and awaits sentencing.

Senior Assistant District Attorney Catalina Blanco Buitrago

### Hastings-On-Hudson Man Illegally Had 'Arsenal' Of Weapons, Magazines Without Permit: DA

A Westchester man faces more than 100 felony counts for illegally possessing several assault weapons and dozens of high-capacity magazines in his home without a permit, officials said.

DAILY VOICE



## People v. Jose Valle

The defendant, who had prior felony convictions, was sentenced in February to seven years in state prison for illegal possession of a 9mm pistol that police found on him after he attempted to flee from a routine traffic stop in December 2022.

Senior Assistant District Attorney Adrian Murphy

### NYC Man Gets 7 Years After Being Caught With Illegal Gun In Harrison

Patch

The 35-year-old, who fled from a traffic stop, had a 9mm pistol loaded with seven bullets in his pant leg.



## People v. Hani Saleh

Following his 2023 arrest for driving around in his swastika-marked car and forged license plates, the defendant, 47 of Elmsford, pleaded guilty in December to illegal possession of semi-automatic weapons, ammunition and gun paraphernalia found in his car and seized from his home in accordance with an Extreme Risk Protection Order (ERPO). He awaits sentencing of a promised two years in jail.

Assistant District Attorney Brianna Ciuffi

NEW YORK POST

METRO

### Westchester man driving swastika-covered car arrested for illegally carrying loaded gun

By David Propper

Published Oct. 26, 2023, 8:25 p.m. ET



## People v. Brandon Brois

After a five-week trial, a jury in October returned guilty verdicts convicting the defendant for possession of an arsenal of illegal firearms, including two assault weapons, a machine gun, two rifles, two pistols and a shotgun. They are among illegal firearms seized in January 2022 from the Armonk home where the defendant resided with his father and mother, both of whom were also prosecuted in this case. The defendant awaits sentencing of a range of seven to 15 years in state prison.

Senior Assistant District Attorney Courtney Johnson, Violent Criminal Enterprise Bureau Chief James Bavero



The 39-year-old defendant was charged in a 27-count indictment in March following the January attempted murder of his ex-girlfriend in her Sleepy Hollow home where he allegedly forcibly entered in violation of an order of protection, and shot her in the presence of her young children. The victim was treated at an area hospital for gunshot wounds to her neck and hand.

*Domestic Violence Bureau Chief Joyce Miller, Domestic Violence Deputy Bureau Chief Janelle Armentano with assistance from Assistant District Attorney Omar Youssef*

The defendant pleaded guilty in October to attempted murder in the second degree for the November 2023 shooting of an off-duty NYPD officer in Yonkers. He awaits a promised sentence of 10 years in state prison.

*Major Case Bureau Chief Nadine Nagler, Senior Trial Counsel Brian Bendish*



Attempted Murder

## People v. Phillip Ferrell

Following a four-week trial, a jury on Nov. 22 found the defendant guilty of manslaughter in the first degree for the March 2023 death of 14-year-old Zaire Fernandez in Mount Vernon by providing a 9mm pistol to his 21-year-old stepson, Tyrese Coghiel, to carry out the shooting. Coghiel was also convicted for acting in concert in the fatal shooting. Both defendants await sentencing.

*Homicide Bureau Chief Lana Hochheiser, Senior Assistant District Attorney Adrian Murphy*



## People v. Emanuel Valentin Perez

The defendant, who pleaded guilty in August 2023 to manslaughter and assault, was sentenced in January to 10 years in state prison for the 2021 shooting death of 32-year-old Manuel Salazar, a Sleepy Hollow father of two.

*Senior Assistant District Attorney Catalina Blanco Buitrago, Trial Counsel John O'Rourke, Senior Felony Counsel Perry Perrone*



Homicide

## People v. Netaly Pena-Camilo, Jose Gregorio Olivo-Feliz, Pedro Junior Olivo-Feliz

The three defendants were sentenced in March to a combined 31 years in state prison for selling more than 30 ghost guns that they trafficked from Washington, D.C. to Yonkers in 2022. This prosecution was a result of a multi-agency investigation that shut down an "Iron Pipeline" of illegal firearms flowing into New York state.

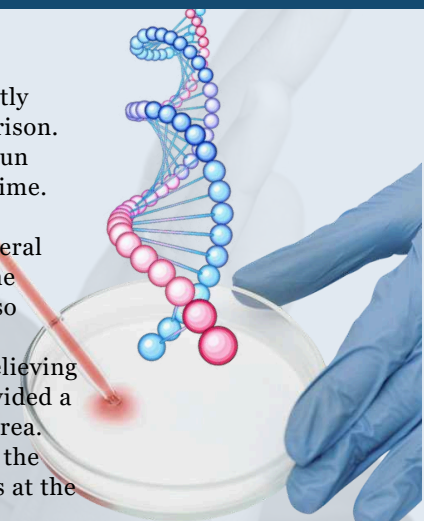
*Senior Assistant District Attorneys Rachel Ehrhardt and Kevin Jones*



Gun Trafficking

## People v. Cristian Panza

Cristian Panza, 43, who was convicted for a 2021 rape of a woman in Peekskill and subsequently implicated by DNA in a 2018 attempted rape, was sentenced on Nov. 14 to 16 years in state prison. The defendant was also sentenced to 20 years post-release supervision for the 2021 crime to run concurrently to 15 years in state prison with 15 years post-release supervision for the 2018 crime. The conviction followed the defendant's guilty plea in September to rape (first degree) for the September 2021 incident where he took a 20-year-old woman to a bar in town and bought several drinks for her until she became highly intoxicated. Under the pretense of driving her home, the defendant took the victim to Depew Park where he strangled and raped her. The defendant also pleaded guilty to attempted rape (first degree) for the 2018 incident where he encountered an intoxicated 39-year-old victim in a Peekskill bar, followed her and offered her a ride home. Believing the defendant was a cab driver, the victim entered the rear of the defendant's vehicle and provided a destination address. Instead of driving her to that address, the defendant drove to a wooded area. When the victim demanded to know where he had taken her, defendant climbed to the rear of the vehicle, strangled and attempted to rape her. After the defendant's arrest in 2021, prosecutors at the Westchester DA's Office noticed a similar fact pattern to the unsolved 2018 assault case and proactively moved to request lab comparison testing of the defendant's DNA developed from a cup he drank from at police headquarters following his 2021 arrest. The DNA matched.



*Special Prosecutions Division Deputy Chief Michelle Lopez with assistance from Sex Crimes Bureau Chief Wendy Parra and Senior Assistant District Attorney Marissa Morra-Wynn*

## People v. Richard Olmino

Richard Olmino, 22 of Port Chester, was sentenced in June to 15 years in state prison for sexually assaulting two teenagers during separate attacks in Rye. The defendant pleaded guilty in April to felony sexual assault charges for attacking and sexually abusing the two female victims in a park and on a street in Rye under the pretense of needing their help.

*Special Prosecutions Deputy Division Chief Michelle Lopez, Sex Crimes Bureau Senior Assistant District Attorney Mollie O'Rourke with assistance from Senior Crime Analyst Toni Garcia, Clinical Trauma Therapist Stacey Nolan Meaney*

## People v. Luis Urgilles

Following a three-week trial in which the defendant was found guilty of engaging in sexual conduct with a child for nearly a year, Luis Urgilles, 45 of Peekskill, was sentenced to 16 years in state prison. As detailed during the trial, the defendant, a cab driver in Peekskill, met the victim's family while they were passengers in his cab. The defendant befriended the family and began grooming the then 10-year-old victim in order to sexually abuse and assault her.

*Child Abuse Bureau Chief Christine Hatfield and Senior Assistant District Attorney Mollie O'Rourke*

RYE CITY

### Port Chester man who sexually abused two Rye teens sentenced to 15 years in prison



Crime & Safety

### Hudson Valley Man Has Sex With 10-Year-Old, Gets Prison Sentence



The DA said that the survivor in this case, who is just a young child, demonstrated remarkable resilience and courage in coming forward.

Michael Woyton, Patch Staff



### People v. Christian Rosado

After a three-week trial in which he was found guilty of assault in the second degree, Christian Rosado was sentenced in December to seven years for physically attacking his girlfriend in a Pelham Manor parking lot in August 2023. As detailed during the trial, the victim, who was being choked and bitten in the face by the defendant, revved the engine of her parked car during the attack, which alerted nearby Pelham Manor police officers. When approached by police, the defendant fled and a police pursuit ensued until additional officers were called to help apprehend and handcuff the defendant who was resisting arrest.

Domestic Violence Bureau Chief Joyce Miller and Assistant District Attorney Arlene Ramezanzadeh



### People v. Wilton Rojas

Wilton Rojas, 30 of Yonkers, pleaded guilty in November to one count of course of sexual conduct against a child in the first degree and awaits sentencing to 15 years in prison. The defendant was indicted on sex crime charges against a child over a five-year period following his arrest in April.

Child Abuse Bureau Senior and Assistant District Attorney Charlotte Gudis

### People v. Wilson Frias

Former NYPD Detective Wilson Frias was sentenced in December to five years in prison for the March 2023 sexual abuse and endangerment of a young child in his Briarcliff Manor home. He was convicted by a jury in October following a two-week trial, in which the victim testified in court with the support of a court-certified support animal, Eddie, a 2-year-old Labrador Retriever. It was the first time in Westchester County, and only the second case in the state, where the use of a support animal was granted by the Court to accompany a victim in a criminal trial.

Child Abuse Bureau Senior Assistant District Attorney Charlotte Gudis and Assistant District Attorney Morgan Helfman

### Dog Helps Young Victim Testify Against Former NYPD Detective From Westchester In Sex Abuse Case



In a groundbreaking trial, a court-certified support dog named Eddie helped a young child testify against former NYPD detective Wilson Frias, leading to his conviction on charges of child sexual abuse in Westchester County.



*“This sentence won’t erase the nightmare endured by a very young child and her family who had to relive the trauma during trial. The just outcome of this case is testament to their extraordinary bravery, and the commitment of prosecutors and police working together to bring this defendant to justice..”*  
—DA Rocah

Who to Call for Help  
**(914) 995-3000**  
Special Prosecutions Division

Continuing the commitment to conviction integrity, the independent Conviction Review Unit concluded several years-long exhaustive investigations and examinations leading to the District Attorney supporting more than a dozen vacatur this year.

*“Addressing wrongful convictions is a necessary step in maintaining the integrity of future prosecutions and the public trust in the criminal justice system.” –DA Rocah*

## 1983 Armed Robbery Conviction Vacated

More than 40 years after Jeffrey Koonce was charged in an armed robbery in Mount Vernon for which he served eight years in prison, a judge on Dec. 27 overturned his conviction and dismissed the underlying indictment. Mr. Koonce, 67, has always maintained his innocence. District Attorney Rocah supported the defense motion for vacatur following her Conviction Review Unit's investigation and newly-discovered evidence, including false testimony by one of the Mount Vernon Police Department (MVPD) Robbery Unit's lead detectives on the case, Daniel Salottolo, and improper photo identification methods used by Salottolo and Detective James Garcia. Garcia and another investigator on the case, Lt. Robert Astorino, were subsequently convicted of federal corruption charges in 1994. The CRU investigation also revealed inconsistencies between the testimony by the single victim-witness in the case and statements made to CRU investigators. In his remarks granting the motion, New York Supreme Court Justice James McCarty, cited "credit to all the people who worked hard in this case so that justice can be done."

*Former CRU Chief Anastasia Heeger, former Senior Assistant District Attorney Alexandra Keeling and Criminal Investigators James Mention and Jon Jennings*



Jeffrey Koonce (in hat), with his attorney Karen Newirth and son Dejuan, speak to press following the overturning of his conviction in Westchester County Court on Dec. 27, 2024 Frank Becerra Jr./The Journal News

## 12 Vacatur Follow CRU Examination of Cases Linked to former Yonkers Detective Convicted of Perjury

DA Rocah announced in November that judges vacated convictions and dismissed underlying narcotics-related charges for 12 individuals in cases connected to former Yonkers Police Department Detective Christian Koch, who was convicted of perjury in 2015. Following a thorough examination by her Conviction Review Unit (CRU), the District Attorney supported vacatur for five felony and seven misdemeanor convictions out of Yonkers between 2011 and 2014 that were conclusively tainted by Koch's compromised credibility. The CRU's determinations were based on Koch's perjury conviction, factual discrepancies found in police records, and damning admissions he made under oath in a civil lawsuit suggesting he did not understand his responsibility for the truth and the facts in his affidavits. The 12 convictions stemmed from prosecutions that relied on sworn statements, and/or signed search warrant affidavits, by then-Detective Koch regarding certain narcotics transactions between a confidential informant and the accused individuals who were later arrested.

*Former CRU Chief Anastasia Heeger and former Senior Assistant District Attorney Alexandra Keeling*

## CRU Investigation Leads to Court Vacating 1999 Murder Conviction of Bronx Man Who Served 20 Years

Following a credible witness recantation of testimony and discovery of new evidence discovered by the Conviction Review Unit, a Bronx judge in September vacated the murder conviction of Antonio Mallet, 54, for the fatal shooting of a man at a Bronx supermarket parking lot in September 1996. The CRU's investigation began in March 2022 after the Westchester County District Attorney's Office was appointed special prosecutor by the Bronx County Supreme Court due to the Bronx District Attorney's previous involvement in some of Mr. Mallet's post-conviction proceedings as a presiding judge.

*Former CRU Chief Anastasia Heeger, former Senior Assistant District Attorney Alexandra Keeling, former Assistant District Attorney Charity Brady, Criminal Investigators James Menton and Jon Jennings*

## People v. Robert Scott

City of Peekskill Common Council member Robert Scott, 44, was arrested by the DA's Office and charged in April with filing designating petitions containing forged signatures for a seat on the Westchester County Board of Legislators in the June 2023 Democratic primary election.

*Public Integrity & Law Enforcement Integrity Bureau*

**METRO**

### NY Democrat faked signatures on election petition — including 3 dead people: prosecutors

By Alex Oliveira  
Published April 18, 2024, 6:55 p.m. ET



## People v. Peter DeLucia

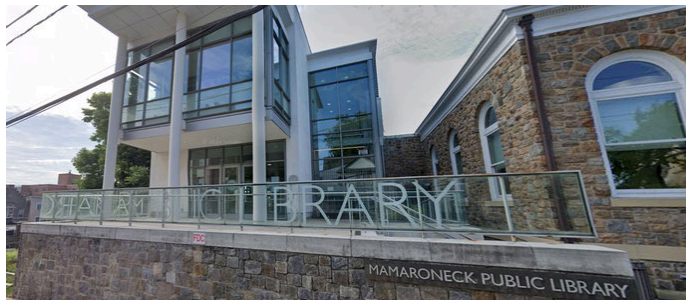
Westchester County Department of Health Assistant Commissioner Pete DeLucia, 54 of South Salem, was arrested by the DA's Office and charged in March with three felony counts related to failing to disclose to the Westchester County Board of Ethics more than \$95,000 in income he received from an environmental health consulting firm with business before the Department of Health in 2020, 2021, and 2022.

*Public Integrity and Law Enforcement Integrity Bureau: Assistant District Attorney Renee Hassel*

## People v. Mary Soto

Former business manager of the Mamaroneck Public Library, Mary Soto, 62, was sentenced to three years of probation for stealing more than \$43,000 from the library between 2016 and 2023 following her guilty plea in April to felony grand larceny in the fourth degree. As part of her plea agreement, the defendant paid full restitution in the amount of \$43,940. She resigned from the library in March 2023 after 27 years.

*Public Integrity and Law Enforcement Integrity Bureau with assistance from Forensic Accountant Michael Frenza*

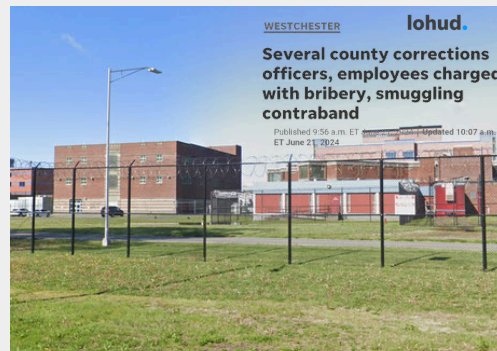


WESTCHESTER COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

## County Correction Officers and Civilian Employees Charged with Accepting Bribe Payments and Smuggling Contraband Into Jails

Westchester County Department of Correction officers and civilian employees were arrested by the DA's Office Criminal Investigators Squad in June on charges of accepting bribe payments and smuggling contraband to incarcerated individuals at the Westchester County Jail in Valhalla. A civilian employee with the Mount Vernon Police Department was also charged with smuggling contraband into the Mount Vernon Police Department Cell Block.

*Public Integrity & Law Enforcement Integrity Bureau*



## Mount Vernon City Employee, Former Employee Arrested and Charged in Alleged Deed Theft Scheme

City of Mount Vernon Building Department employee Damon Davis and former employee Charlene Humphreys were arrested by the DA's Office and charged on Dec. 18 in connection with an alleged deed theft scheme. According to a felony complaint, Davis and Humphreys allegedly falsified documents for the deed transfers of two residential properties in Mount Vernon, including signing the name of a deceased individual for one of the properties. As alleged in a second complaint, Humphreys attempted to transfer deeds for two abandoned single-family homes in Mount Vernon to an LLC she controlled. Humphreys was arraigned in White Plains City Court. Davis received a desk appearance ticket. Both defendants are due in court on Jan. 7, 2025.

*Public Integrity & Law Enforcement Integrity Bureau*

## People v. Vincent Pappas

The 63-year-old defendant was sentenced to one year of incarceration after pleading guilty in February to a misdemeanor hate crime charge for repeatedly harassing and threatening a 13-year-old boy, who is of Guatemalan descent, in Dobbs Ferry. During this period, the defendant repeatedly said he hated people from Guatemala and would kill the victim if he didn't leave the country. The defendant was also sentenced to six years for his conviction connected to assaulting two teenagers at a Dobbs Ferry restaurant, sending one of the victims through the storefront glass window.

*Assistant District Attorney Sheila Horgan under the supervision of the Hate Crimes Unit*



## People v. Ahmed Al Jabali

A 34-year-old Yonkers man who allegedly attacked a Jewish barber at his business on Yonkers Avenue in August was indicted in October on attempted murder as a hate crime and other charges. It was alleged that the defendant attacked the victim in the face, body, arms and hands with a pair of barber's scissors while saying "I want to kill you, you [expletive] Jew." The victim called police and was treated at a local hospital for wounds sustained from the attack. The defendant remains remanded in Westchester County Jail.

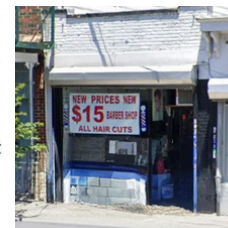
*Major Case Bureau Chief Nadine Nagler in conjunction with the Hate Crimes Unit*



### 'He wanted to kill me.' Victim of alleged Yonkers hate crime speaks out

Ahmed Al Jabali pleaded not guilty in Yonkers City Court last Friday and is being held in County Jail without bail, according to his case file.

Jonathan Gordon • Sep 4, 2024, 12:46 PM • Updated 99 days ago



Report an incident

### Talk to a trusted adult:

- Teacher
- Guidance Counselor
- Coach
- Principal or AP
- Family member, babysitter
- Librarian



Silence = Acceptance  
Speak Up, Speak Out



Get to a safe place



Do the right thing

## People v. Juan Carlos Sierra Gonzalez

The defendant, 48 of Queens, was indicted in April on charges of burglary as a hate crime in connection to a September 2023 incident where he and two other Queens men unlawfully entered the Ossining home of a local business owner he targeted based on stereotypes he believed about Asian Americans' wealth. The Ossining Police Department, with the assistance of multiple law enforcement agencies, converged on the victims' home and arrested the defendants during the incident in what was a coordinated takedown of pattern burglaries in the area.

*Assistant District Attorney Celia Curtis*



### 3 Indicted After Ossining Police Foil Home Burglary

Prosecutors alleged one of the men chose the victim because of ethnic stereotyping.

## People v. Michael Bagley

Following his conviction for felony robbery charges including robbery as a hate crime for a hate-fueled violent assault of an Asian store owner, Michael Bagley, 34 of Suffolk County, was sentenced to an indeterminate term of 14½ to 29 years in prison. The defendant pleaded guilty in July for two robberies and a burglary involving multiple victims in New Rochelle and White Plains, and awaits sentencing for prior felony convictions in Suffolk County.

*Hate Crimes Unit Deputy Bureau Chief Catalina Blanco Buitrago with assistance from the New Rochelle Branch*

NEW ROCHELLE

### Suffolk man sentenced for robbery spree, hate crime against New Rochelle store owner

Jonathan Bandler  
Rockland/Westchester Journal News





# DA Rocah 2021-2024

A Retrospective of Transformation and Impact



## Gun Safety

In creating the Violent Criminal Enterprise Bureau, DA Rocah set out to prioritize investigations and prosecutions of gun-related crimes in the county. As a result, the Office has conducted large-scale search warrant seizures removing hundreds of illegal firearms, including ghost guns and ammunition, from our streets.



Simultaneously, the Office conducted training with law enforcement, school district superintendents and medical practitioners on the state's expanded red flag laws (ERPOs).

## Police Accountability

Within months of taking Office in 2021, DA Rocah called upon DOJ to investigate the Mount Vernon Police Department for pervasive and persistent civil rights violations. The Southern District and DOJ's Civil Rights Division of New York on Dec. 12 announced findings of illegal strip and cavity searches, use of excessive force and other concerning conduct.

### The New York Times

*Mount Vernon Police's Strip Searches Were Unconstitutional, U.S. Says*

A report by federal prosecutors found that a Westchester County police department violated the Fourth Amendment "on an enormous scale."



U.S. NEWS

**NY police force strip searched nearly everyone it arrested, DOJ says**

## Conviction Integrity

After establishing the county's first independent unit dedicated to conviction integrity, the DA moved to exonerate or supported to vacate wrongful convictions, including two large-scale vacatur connected to police officers accused of misconduct or convicted of perjury.



*The Conviction Review Unit ADAs (from left) Alexandra Keeling, Charity Brady, DA Rocah and Chief Anastasia Heeger*

### People

**DNA Exonerates Man 47 Years After Wrongful Rape Conviction: 'Injustice Hanging Over My Head'**

### THE CITY

**Westchester DA Moves To Vacate 26 Convictions Following Release of Police Whistleblower's Secret Recordings**

## Diversion

DA Rocah achieved creating groundbreaking alternatives to prosecution and incarceration for first-time, low-level offenders and expanding rehabilitation and treatment working with the problem-solving courts.

- Launched Fresh Start in 2021
- Partnered with Mount Vernon City Court for Emerging Adult Justice Part in 2021
- Active participant in Opportunity Youth Part in New Rochelle
- Launched Misdemeanor Mental Wellness Court with the Office of Court Administration in 2022
- Expanded eligibility for Mental Health, Drug and Veteran's courts
- Launched Overdose Prevention and Treatment Initiative (OPT-In) in 2023 and expanded in 2024



*Veteran's Court*

## Reduced Sentences for Survivors

DA Rocah agreed to Westchester County's first reduced sentence under New York's Domestic Violence Survivors Justice Act of 2019.

### Gothamist

**Westchester DA explains move to reduce prison sentence of one domestic violence victim**



*George Joseph / WNYC*

## Cold Case Bureau

DA Rocah made good on her promise to families who have been waiting decades for closure when she established a bureau with senior prosecutors dedicated to solving the more than 100 open cases in Westchester County.

In 2022, the Office was awarded a \$500,000 Department of Justice grant using DNA to solve cases--a meaningful investment that greatly impacted some successful conclusions to decades-old cases. Some highlights of the work by the Bureau include:

- Allah-son-Allah sentenced to 20 years; co-defendant Steven Smith sentenced to 6-12 years for 1995 Christmas Eve fatal stabbing of Michael Jones inside Sing Sing prison
- Wanda Veguila sentenced to 20 years to life for the 2012 murder of her ex-girlfriend Pamela Graddick
- Identified Mount Vernon Jane Doe & Yonkers Jane Doe in homicides from 80s and 90s using forensic genealogy
- Indicted Robert Durst in the 1982 killing of his wife, Kathie Durst, whose body has never been found



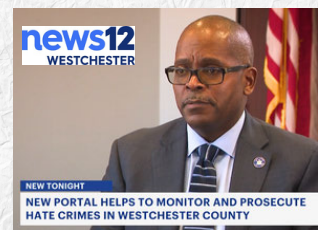
## 24-Hour TIPS line

Every complaint or message left on this multi-language line has been answered by an investigator since it launched in 2021.

**(914) 995-TIPS (8477)**

## Enhanced Hate Crimes Unit

DA named a senior ADA and crime analyst dedicated to hate and bias investigations. The unit also led regional training on hate crime laws and helped develop a law enforcement data portal for hate incidents.



## Enhanced Cyber Crimes Bureau

The "High Tech Unit" of specialized investigators within a reorganized bureau was enhanced to focus on internet crimes against children originating from referrals from National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC). The Office has now doubled the number of open cases from the previous administration as a result of DA Rocah's goal to focus in this area while proactively engaging schools and parents on the dangers of social media and sexual predators online.

## news12

New Rochelle man sentenced to 21 years in prison for sexually abusing 3 boys

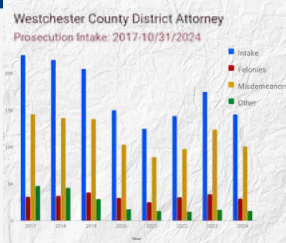
District Attorney Mimi Rocah said that Jason Ricketts befriended the boys, one of whom was only 8 years old when they first met, and pretended to be much younger than he actually was. The abuse went on from 2016-2023.



Jan. 31, 2023 Virtual Panel: Protecting Kids from Online Predators

## Data Dashboard

The Westchester District Attorney's Office has been developing an online dashboard to provide the public information about the DA's Office caseloads, charging decisions, and other data related to prosecutions by the Office. Currently on the website in early stages of a beta mode launch, the goal is to expand additional data points in the interest of transparency and accountability.



## Improving Retention & Diversity in DA's Office

- \$1.5 Million for ADA stipends in 2024
- Increased ADA salaries in 2023 and 2024 to align with city offices
- 50% diversity in 2024 new class of ADAs, bringing up diversity rate of ADAs to 30% in 2024 and better reflecting the communities we serve

As of 2024, more than

**60%**

of ADAs were new hires under DA Rocah

# The Year in Photos

Visual Journey – In the Community, In the News & In the Office



## IN THE COMMUNITY

### Port Chester College & Career Fair

Rye Branch Chief Cindy Adimari and Deputy Criminal Investigator Wade Hardy greeted Port Chester Middle School students at their May 17 annual college and career fair .



### Benjamin Turner Academy Students Meet ADA Cervasio

Mount Vernon Bureau Chief Christine Cervasio met with students at Benjamin Turner Academy in Mount Vernon for their June 4 Career Day.



### Empowering Girls at College and Career Expo

Senior ADA Livia Rodriguez spoke with students at a college and career expo at the Bronx Global Learning Institute for Girls on March 28.



### Career Expo at Yonkers Dayspring Community Center

Gorton High School students had the opportunity to meet ADA Omar Youssef during a career expo on March 1 at the Dayspring Community Center in Yonkers.



Greenburgh Branch Chief Jamie Fair visited Main Street School in Irvington to read aloud to elementary students for World Read Aloud Day on Feb. 7.



ADAs Caroline Zicca, Omar Youssef and Shelbire Pierre attended the Elisabeth Haub School of Law at Pace University's alumni event on March 21.



Contact the DA's Office at (914) 995-3317 to request a visit to your school, community or organization.



### Celebrating Juneteenth

The DA's Office DEI Committee members turned out for the 20th Annual White Plains Juneteenth Parade & Festival on June 8 honoring Westchester County's oldest and longest festivities celebrating Juneteenth.



Due to inclement weather, this year's National Night Out was actually several nights out throughout the month of August. Our ADAs volunteered to participate with Peekskill PD on Aug. 6, Mount Vernon PD at Hartley Park, Rye PD at Lyon Park and Yonkers PD at JFK Marina, Sullivan Oval, Andrus Field and Coyne Park on Aug. 13, White Plains Public Safety in downtown White Plains and County Police at Kensico Dam on Aug. 21 and Yorktown PD at Memorial Field on Aug. 29.



Peekskill — Aug. 6



Port Chester — Aug. 13



Mount Vernon — Aug. 13



Yonkers (Precinct 1) — Aug. 13



Yonkers (Precinct 2) — Aug. 13



Yonkers (Precinct 3) — Aug. 13



Yonkers (Precinct 4) — Aug. 13



Kensico Dam — Aug. 21



Kensico Dam — Aug. 21



White Plains — Aug. 21



White Plains — Aug. 21



Yorktown — Aug. 29

~~Westchester County Law Enforcement Torch Run~~

Members of the Criminal Investigators Squad participated in the May 6 run that started in Yonkers and ended in Peekskill marking the 38th year of Westchester law enforcement supporting the Special Olympics.



**Fourth Anniversary of Youth Diversion Success in New Rochelle**

ADAs of the New Rochelle branch joined Judge Jared Rice for the Nov. 1 four-year anniversary of the Opportunity Youth Part. The groundbreaking initiative celebrated the success of 111 emerging adults who have completed the program by receiving job, education or rehabilitative resources.



### 'Yo Digo No Mas'

Child Abuse & Elder Abuse Bureau Chief Christine Hatfield joined organizers (at podium) while members from our Special Prosecutions Division hosted the DA's Office's table at the information and resources event in support of Yo Digo No Mas (I Say No More) Third Annual Walk Against Sexual Abuse of Our Children in Yonkers on April 27.



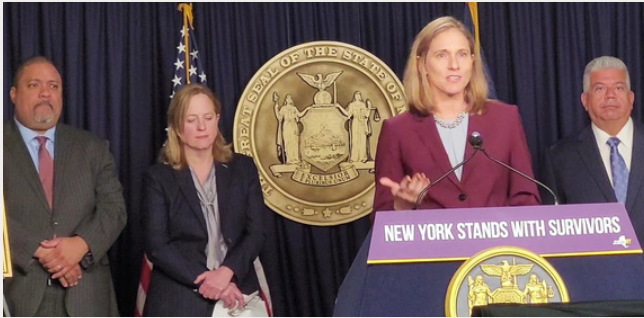
### Salute to Seniors

DA Rocah and Senior DV Aide Karen Simmons greeted seniors at the May 14 "Salute to Seniors" information and resources expo, which returned to the County Center this year.



### Record Funding to Combat Domestic Violence

DA Rocah spoke about the state’s \$35 million funding to prosecutor’s offices, of which Westchester will receive \$1.4 million, to fight domestic violence at Governor Kathy Hochul’s Oct. 2 announcement in New York City. The historic funding will support the DA’s Office, Yonkers police and service providers to address the rate of domestic violence cases in New York’s third largest city.



### In First for County, Contractor Charged for Worker’s Death on Construction Site

DA Rocah and the U.S. Department of Labor’s Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) announced in February that a contractor was charged for criminally negligent homicide and reckless endangerment in the 2021 death of Jose Vega, a 46-year-old laborer, after an approximately nine-foot-deep trench collapsed burying him under dirt at a residential construction site in the Village of Mamaroneck.

Construction Labor **Documented**

### In Historic First, Construction Contractor Criminally Charged in Immigrant Worker’s Death



### New York DAs Unite Against Antisemitism

DA Rocah led the effort for all 62 elected district attorneys in the state of New York, and the New York State Attorney General, to issue a joint statement in June pledging to prosecute and investigate hate-motivated threats or violence in response to the rising string of antisemitic incidents in and around New York City.

**Forward**  
JEWISH. INDEPENDENT. NONPROFIT.

### All New York district attorneys vow full prosecution of hate crimes amid rising antisemitism

More than 1,200 antisemitic incidents were recorded last year in New York, home to the largest Jewish population outside Israel



**\$1.4M**  
to combat Domestic  
Violence in Westchester



DA Rocah announced the winners of the inaugural DA's Office Awards, which she instituted to recognize professional excellence among prosecutors, investigators, crime analysts, and support staff serving the county, at a ceremony held May 14 at the District Attorney's Office in White Plains.

Recipients of the 2023 Patrick P. Moore Award for Excellence in Prosecution, named in honor of the late Assistant District Attorney Moore:

*The prosecution team of People v Jason Ricketts*

- Laura Forbes, Cyber Crimes Bureau Chief
- Janelle Armentano, Domestic Violence Deputy Bureau Chief
- Mollie O'Rourke, Sex Crimes Bureau Senior Assistant District Attorney
- Christine Hatfield, Child and Elder Abuse Bureau Chief
- Melissa Sheeley, Investigations Information Coordinator
- Stacey Nolan-Meaney, Clinical Trauma Therapist



DA, with prosecution and investigation team of People v. Jason Ricketts, announced on April 4 the 21-year prison sentence of 23-year-old New Rochelle man who was convicted of sex acts involving three children in Westchester.



Family of Pat Moore

Recipients of the 2023 The Stuart Cohen Award for Investigative Excellence, named in honor of the late Senior Criminal Investigator Cohen:

*The investigation team of People v Jason Ricketts*

- Thomas Woodburn, Criminal Investigator
- Marecia Baltimore, Criminal Investigator
- Latheia Smith, Senior Criminal Investigator
- Chloe McSwiney, Crime Analyst



Family of Priscilla Patrinos

DA lauded the excellent inter-division collaboration between the Trials & Investigations and Special Prosecutions divisions, and the Criminal Investigators Squad that led to the successful prosecution and conviction of Jason Ricketts, who sexually abused boys in New Rochelle, and was sentenced in April to 21 years in prison.

Olivia Kelly, Coordinator of Administration was named the recipient of the 2023 Priscilla Patrinos Staffer of the Year Award, in honor of the late staffer.

## SPOTLIGHT EMPLOYEE: LEWIS



Westchester DA highlights use of support dogs after Labrador helps 7-year-old victim testify in sex abuse case



FOUR-LEGGED TRAILBLAZERS HELPING VICTIMS AT WESTCHESTER DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

## 2024 New Class

Ten new ADAs, representing a range of law schools from across the country, were sworn in on Sept. 3 as they embarked on an intensive six-week prosecutorial training program before their assignments to branch offices across the county.



## DA Honored by County Anti-Trafficking Task Force

DA Rocah was recognized for her commitment to fighting human trafficking at the quarterly meeting of the Westchester County Anti-Trafficking Task Force in Croton Falls on Dec. 6. Consisting of a multitude of service providers and law enforcement across the state, the Task Force sets a national example for collaborative and coordinated work of law enforcement personnel, social service providers, and child protection staff, to help victims and to investigate, identify and effectively respond to human trafficking.



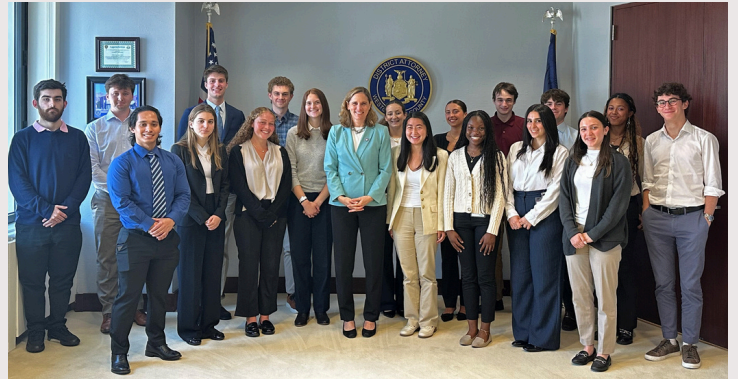
Department Of  
Justice

**\$500,000**

Human trafficking grant awarded to the DA's Office funded to law enforcement partners to assist in their investigations of trafficking cases

From shadowing ADAs in court to making their cases while representing the prosecution or the defense before the DA and executive ADAs acting as judges for the annual mock trial programs, the Office hosted 37 law school and college students for the full-time summer internships.

## Interns



## Mock Trials



Chief Assistant ADA Amy Finzi (far left) joins New York City District Attorneys at the National Black Prosecutors Association's Pathways to Prosecution Panel on March 13.



Child Abuse and Elder Abuse Bureau Chief Christine Hatfield was a recipient of the "Extra Mile Award" presented by the Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) at the Westchester County Institute of Human Development's April 25 ceremony and breakfast.



### Legal Aid Opens Westchester Training Center

DA Rocah joined more than 200 members of the judicial and legislative branches of state and county government to christen the June 20 grand opening of the Legal Aid Society of Westchester Training Center and Moot Courtroom, a state-of-the-art facility located in downtown White Plains.



# Grant Allocations and Staffing



The Administrative Services Division is responsible for all financial reporting, budgeting and forecasting, payroll, personnel, purchasing and procurement, accounts payable, grant administration, information technology, contract administration, record center operations, and travel and training requests. The Division also facilitates assistance for victims and witnesses, including travel arrangements and reimbursements.

## Budget Info

**\$2,438,304,233**

Westchester County 2024  
Adopted Budget

**\$34,833,554**

2024 District Attorney's  
Office Adopted Budget

*Less than  
1.5% of the  
County  
Budget*

## Employee Salary Funding

**244**

Operating  
Budget

**17**

Grants

## 2024 Total Grants

|   |       |             |
|---|-------|-------------|
| Aid to Prosecution (ATP)                        | 24.9% | \$2,250,692 |
| Discovery Compliance                            | 20.8% | \$1,874,928 |
| Body-worn Camera                                | 11.0% | \$995,935   |
| Hate Crimes (DOJ)                               | 6.6%  | \$600,000   |
| Cold Case                                       | 5.5%  | \$500,000   |
| Human Trafficking (DOJ)                         | 5.5%  | \$494,138   |
| Human Trafficking                               | 5.0%  | \$451,041   |
| Gun Violence (GIVE)                             | 4.5%  | \$404,484   |
| Victims Assistance Program (OVS)                | 4.0%  | \$363,773   |
| Crimes Against Revenue Program (CARP)           | 3.1%  | \$278,100   |
| Motor Vehicle Thefts                            | 3.1%  | \$277,963   |
| Law Enforcement Equipment                       | 2.4%  | \$215,800   |
| Child Advocacy Center Multidisciplinary Team... | 2.0%  | \$169,665   |
| VAWA STOP                                       | 0.6%  | \$50,000    |
| STOP-DWI  | 0.6%  | \$50,000    |
| Child Advocacy Center Equipment                 | 0.6%  | \$49,999    |

### Source of Grant Funding:

- NYS Office of Victim Services (OVS) - Victims Justice Center
- DOJ Office of Justice Programs (OJP) - Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Program
- NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) - Motor Vehicle Theft and Insurance Fraud (MVT)
- NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) - Crimes Against Revenue Program (CARP)
- NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) - Multidisciplinary Team and Child Advocacy Center (MDT/CAC)
- NYS Dept. of Motor Vehicle Special Traffic Options Program - Driving While Intoxicated
- NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) - Violence Against Women Act (VAWA STOP)
- NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) - Aid to Prosecution (ATP)
- NYS Division of Criminal Justice (DCJS)
- DOJ Office of Justice Programs (OJP) - Bureau of Justice Assistance
- DOJ Office of Justice Programs (OJP) - Office for Victims of Crimes
- DOJ Office of Justice Programs (OJP) - Enhanced Collaborative Model Task Force to Combat Human Trafficking
- DOJ Office of Justice Programs (OJP) - Enhanced Collaborative Model Task Force to Combat Human Trafficking
- NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) - Gun Involved Violence Elimination (GIVE) Initiative

# Public Information & News



## Communications

Office of the Westchester County  
District Attorney

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media@westchesterda.net

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**(914) 995-TIPS (8477)**

In emergencies, call 911.

*Language assistance is available.*