

DA NEWS

FALL 2024
OCTOBER



www.WestchesterDA.net



Message from DA Rocah

Communities nationwide are coming together this month to uplift the voices of survivors and support victim advocates in honor of Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention Month.

I am proud to join my colleagues and partners in the movement to spread awareness, fight the stigma associated with intimate partner violence and empower victims.

In addition to our commitment to prosecute and convict abusers, I am proud that the Westchester DA's Office has become a leader in the region on specialized training of law enforcement. This critical training strengthens our response to reports of domestic violence so that we can adequately support victims and reinforce our joint efforts to hold perpetrators fully accountable.

Help is always available at the DA's Office to anyone who is experiencing domestic violence, sexual assault or abuse at (914) 995 3000 or westchesterda.net.

Miriam Rocah

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Notable Cases P2
- In the News P3
- In the Community P4
- In the Office P5

Historic State Investment for DA's Offices to Fight Domestic Violence

\$1.4 million for Westchester County to Support Ongoing Work on Cases, Training, Victims Services

Kicking off Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention Month, District Attorney Miriam E. Rocah joined Governor Kathy Hochul's Oct. 2 announcement of \$35 million in funding to combat intimate partner violence for DA's Offices and law enforcement agencies, of which Westchester is tapped to receive \$1.4 million.

"This is a remarkable investment toward supporting the important work of my Office and ensuring greater resources can be dedicated toward providing services for victims in the County," DA Rocah said.

The historic funding will support both the DA's Office and police in Yonkers, the third largest city in the state, to address the rate of domestic violence cases and increase support for service providers, advocacy and community partners. It will also help the Office expand the vigorous high risk and lethality assessment training of law enforcement, which the Office is a leader in across the Hudson Valley region.



DA Rocah speaking at the Governor's press conference announcement Oct. 2 in Manhattan; DA Rocah with Special Prosecutions Chief Fred Green (far left) and Domestic Violence Bureau Chief Joyce Miller (third from right) at the Oct. 2 Domestic Violence Police Interactive Training in Eastchester.



The Westchester DA's Office is proud to stand with survivors and continue supporting the work of our advocacy partners in our shared commitment to fighting intimate partner violence during October's Domestic Violence Awareness & Prevention Month



Woman Charged for Torture Killing of Girlfriend in Their Home

In a first for this Office, a New Rochelle woman was indicted for murder and for inflicting torture upon 27-year-old Concetta Morton, an intimate partner, prior to her death. Kenya Tilford, 41, was arraigned on July 2 on an 18-count indictment in which she was charged with Murder in the First Degree, Murder in the Second Degree, Strangulation in the First Degree, Concealment of a Human Corpse, Tampering with Physical Evidence, two counts of Intimidating a Victim or a Witness in the Third Degree, Assault in the Second Degree, Unlawful Imprisonment in the First Degree, three counts of Aggravated Sexual Abuse in the Third Degree, Kidnapping in the First Degree, Attempted Assault in the Second Degree, Strangulation in the Second Degree, and Coercion in the First Degree, all felonies; and Assault in the Third Degree and Menacing in the Second Degree, both misdemeanors. The defendant allegedly tortured the victim for three months and, ultimately caused her death by asphyxiation before concealing the victim's body inside a 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 in which the victim's body was found. 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. The New Rochelle Police Department arrested the defendant on Sept. 15, 2023, at an Elmsford hotel after Tarrytown police received a tip about the victim's deceased body. The defendant was remanded. **Homicide Bureau**

Georgia Man Indicted for Murder of Girlfriend in New Rochelle

Robert Wooten, 29 of Atlanta, Georgia, was arraigned on Sept. 18 on an indictment in which he was charged with second-degree murder for fatally shooting his 30-year-old girlfriend Meisha Williams inside her apartment on 55 Clinton Place in New Rochelle. "The intersection of gun violence and intimate partner violence can be deadly," DA Rocah said. "I urge anyone experiencing abuse or violence at the hands of an intimate partner to contact the New York State Domestic Violence Hotline (call 800-942-6906 or text 844-997-2121) or our Domestic Violence Bureau at 914-995-3000." The defendant has been remanded at the Westchester County Jail since his arrest. **Violent Criminal Enterprise Bureau**

Building Painter Charged with Rape of Child in Peekskill

Anselmo Yambay Pena, 59 of Peekskill, was arraigned on Sept. 10 on the felony charge of Rape in the First Degree. Bail was set at \$50,000 cash, \$200,000 bond and \$350,000 partially-secured bond at 10%. The DA's Office requested the defendant be remanded. As alleged in the criminal complaint, the defendant raped a child younger than 13 years old between Feb. 15 and March 31 at a residential building in the city of Peekskill, where the defendant was working as a painter. Upon learning of the incident, the child's parent reported it to the Peekskill Police Department, who conducted an investigation and arrested the defendant on Sept. 10. Anyone who may have been victimized by the defendant or may have information about other possible victims of the defendant can contact the Peekskill Police Department at (914)737-8000 or the DA's Office Special Prosecutions Division at (914) 995- 3000. Language assistance is available. **Child Abuse Bureau**

Mount Vernon Man Sentenced to Prison for High-Speed Crash

Anthony Rose, 21, was sentenced in August to an indeterminate term of 2½ to 7½ years in prison for causing a December 2021 high-speed car crash on the Cross County Parkway that killed two passengers and severely injured a third. The defendant, who drove without a license in excess of 100 miles per hour before crashing head-on into tree, pleaded guilty on April 4 to two counts of Manslaughter in the Second Degree and Assault in the Second Degree, all felonies. **Vehicular Crimes Bureau**

Former Mamaroneck Library Business Manager Convicted

Mary Soto, 62, the former business manager of the Mamaroneck Public Library for 27 years, was sentenced in July to three years of probation after being convicted of stealing more than \$43,000 from the library between 2016 and 2023. The defendant pleaded guilty on April 24 to Grand Larceny in the Fourth Degree, a felony. As part of her plea agreement, the defendant paid full restitution in the amount of \$43,940, which she stole for personal expenses between May 2016 and February 2023 from the library's bank accounts in the form of credit card and recurring debit transactions. The defendant resigned from the library in March 2023. The DA's Criminal Investigators Squad arrested the defendant on Dec. 14, 2023. **Public Integrity Bureau**

Peekskill Man Indicted for Murder of Social Worker Maria Coto

Hasseem Jenkins, 31, was arraigned on July 30 on an indictment charging him for the murder of 56-year-old Maria Coto, a Westchester County Department of Social Services case worker, who was conducting a site visit in Peekskill when she was allegedly attacked. The defendant was charged with two counts of Murder in the Second Degree, two counts of Burglary in the First Degree, Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Third Degree, and Robbery in the First Degree, all felonies, and Resisting Arrest, a misdemeanor. The defendant was remanded. **Major Case & Violent Criminal Enterprise Bureaus**

Westchester's Conviction Review Leads to Court Vacating 1999 Murder Conviction of Bronx Man Who Served 20 Years

Westchester County District Attorney Miriam E. Rocah announced in September that following a credible witness recantation of testimony and discovery of new evidence by her Conviction Review Unit's exhaustive investigation, a Bronx judge 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 credible witness recantation and the new evidence uncovered by the CRU's more than two-year investigation provided a strong case that the integrity of the conviction was compromised," DA Rocah said.

New York Supreme Court Justice Alvin Yearwood today in Bronx County vacated the conviction and dismissed the underlying indictment of Mr. Mallet, who was released on parole in January 2019 after serving nearly 20 years in prison.

The CRU's investigation found that the single eyewitness in the case made a credible recantation that his statements implicating Mr. Mallet in the murder were the result of physical and psychological coercion during a nearly 19-hour interrogation by two New York City Police Department detectives. The CRU found new evidence supporting and corroborating these claims, and further obtained information and records, including some that predated Mr. Mallet's 1999 trial, of reported misconduct by the two detectives.

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.

At approximately 2:30 a.m. on Sept. 24, 1996, Michael Ledeatte, 19, was delivering a stolen Lexus to a buyer at Waldbaum's, a supermarket chain, on Gun Hill Road in the Bronx.

lohud. The Journal News

CRIME

Brooklyn man convicted of murder exonerated by Westchester review

Published Sept. 27, 2024

DAILY VOICE

Man's Murder Conviction Vacated After Over 20 Years Following Westchester DA Investigation

Mr. Ledeatte's friend, who was present for the sale and in his own car waiting nearby, saw two men approach the Lexus with Mr. Ledeatte in the driver's seat. After hearing a gun shot and seeing the men leave the scene in their car, the friend found Mr. Ledeatte in the Lexus slumped over and bleeding from a gunshot wound to the head.

After calling 911, and now a witness, he was interrogated by NYPD detectives Joseph Nieves and Kevin Tracy for nearly 19 hours during which he gave multiple written statements, ultimately identifying Mr. Mallet as the shooter.

Mr. Mallet was arrested on Sept. 26, 1996.

Asserting his innocence, Mr. Mallet went to trial where a jury returned a guilty verdict on March 18, 1999.

Mr. Mallet was sentenced to 20 years to life in prison. Since his conviction, Mr. Mallet has filed an appeal and numerous motions to overturn his conviction. In October 2019, Mr. Mallet filed his sixth motion to vacate his conviction based on the witness recantation and assertion that his identification of Mr. Mallet as the shooter was false and a result of police coercion.

The CRU investigation was conducted by Bureau Chief Anastasia Heeger, former Senior Assistant District Attorney Alexandra Keeling, former Assistant District Attorney Charity Brady and Criminal Investigators James Menton and Jon Jennings.

DA's Auto Crimes Investigator on Vehicular Theft Prevention

Senior Criminal Investigator Roger Bock of the DA's Office Criminal Investigations Squad - Auto Crimes Unit spoke to NBC4 New York on common-sense safety tips for the public to prevent their vehicles from becoming a target of car thieves during Vehicle Theft Prevention Month

As auto thefts have doubled in Westchester County over the last five years, thieves are finding new ways to steal vehicles.

Catch the special online at <https://bit.ly/news4bock> or en Español at <https://bit.ly/telemundo47bock>





Looking Out for Our Seniors: Senior Domestic Violence Aide Karen Simmons greeted seniors attending Senior Law Day at the Westchester County Center on Oct. 1; DA Rocah addressed the crowd about staying vigilant against scams targeting seniors and reporting anything suspicious to law enforcement.

Law Enforcement Connecting with Community: After stormy weather postponed events, National Night Out was back to business as our ADAs and Deputy Chief Investigator Wade Hardy went out in full force across the county in late August.



Top row: ADAs Noah Field and Zachary Hommel with Deputy Chief Investigator Wade Hardy and White Plains police Aug. 21, ADA Elizabeth Marcus and Paralegal Araceli Diaz at Kensico Dam Aug. 21, ADA Caroline Zicca with Yonkers Auxiliary Officer Frances Wagner at Coyne Park Aug. 13; Middle row: Mount Vernon branch team at Hartley Park Aug. 13, ADA Amanda Cicero with Yonkers Police Officer Brendan Moore and his partner K-9 Diesel at JFK Marina Aug. 13, Deputy Chief Hardy with Yorktown Police Chief Robert Noble and Northern Westchester Bureau ADAs Danielle Maffei and Miranda Princi at Memorial Field Aug. 29; Bottom row: ADAs Nicole Gamble and Ayanna Walthall Murphy with Deputy Chief Hardy at Sullivan Oval in Yonkers Aug. 13, White Plains Branch Chief Patrick Macarchuk (in cap) overseeing the DA's Office table in White Plains Aug. 21, Rye branch ADAs Peter Scutero, Michelle Bernstein and Bureau Chief Cindy Adimari with Port Chester Police Captain Charlie Nielsen at Lyon Park Aug. 13.

Class of 2024

Ten new Assistant District Attorneys were sworn in on Sept. 3. Representing a range of law schools from across the country, the new class of 2024 underwent an intensive six-week prosecutorial training program, followed by assignments to branch offices across the County.



Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month

Senior ADA Livia Rodriguez (left), President-Elect of the Hudson Valley Hispanic Bar Association, addressed attendees at their 9th Judicial District's Hispanic Heritage Month celebration in Rockland County on Sept. 25, and was joined by members from the Westchester DA's Office.



Training on Restorative Justice

With partners at Cluster, the Independent Office of Assigned Counsel and the Legal Aid Society of Westchester, the Office conducted an in-person and virtual training on Sept. 24 on a new Restorative Justice pilot program and discussed the principles behind restorative practices and processes for case referrals to the DA's Office—a transformative step in reforming our justice system in ways that restore, heal, and transform victims, offenders & communities.



Black Prosecutors Assoc. Convene in Boston

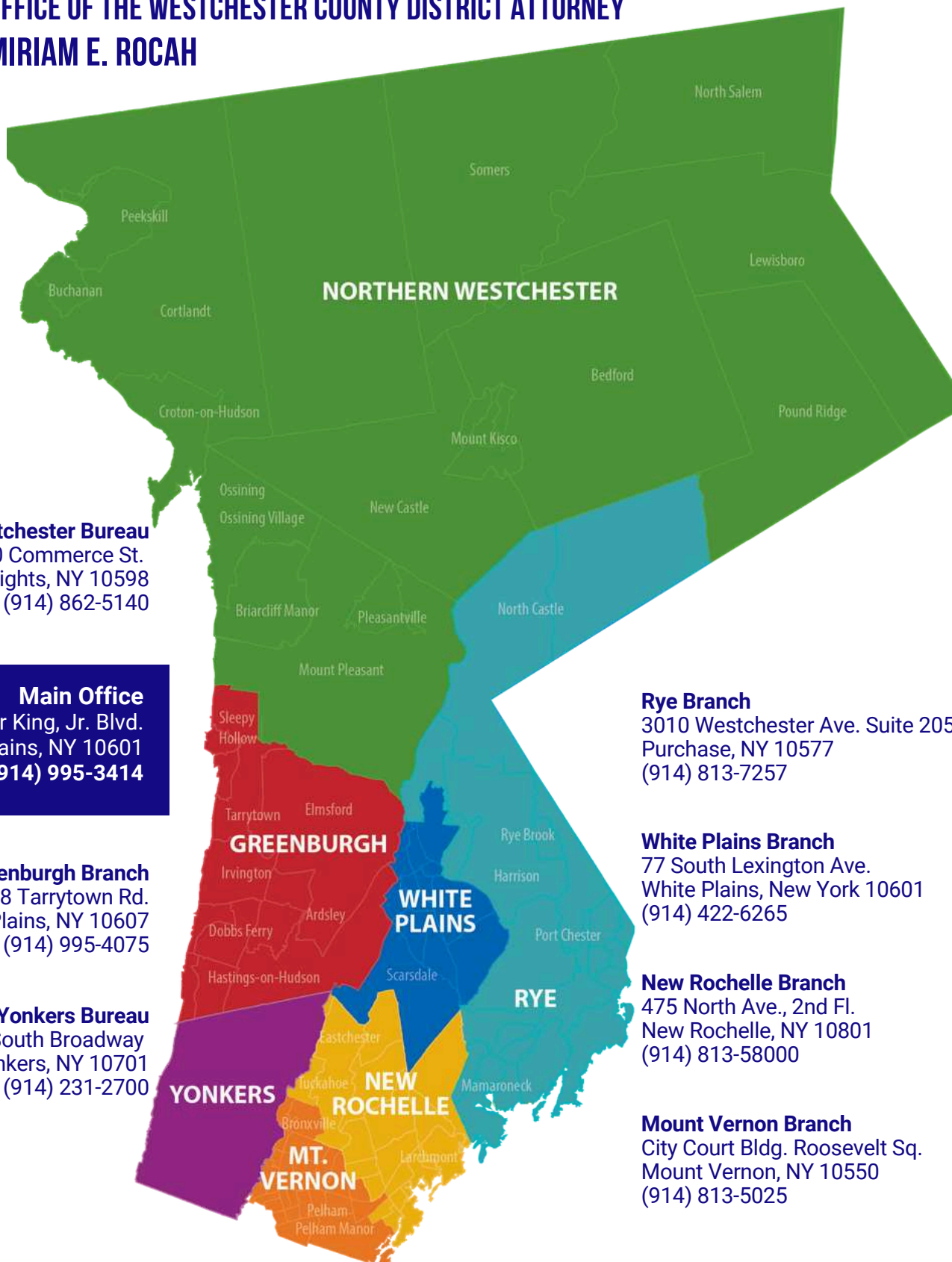
ADAs Brittany Burk and Davida Hawkes attended the National Black Prosecutors Association's 41st Annual Conference and Job Fair held in Boston on Aug. 3 to 10.





OFFICE OF THE WESTCHESTER COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

MIRIAM E. ROCAH



Northern Westchester Bureau
1940 Commerce St.
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598
(914) 862-5140

Main Office
111 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
White Plains, NY 10601
(914) 995-3414

Greenburgh Branch
188 Tarrytown Rd.
White Plains, NY 10607
(914) 995-4075

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

Rye Branch
3010 Westchester Ave. Suite 205
Purchase, NY 10577
(914) 813-7257

White Plains Branch
77 South Lexington Ave.
White Plains, New York 10601
(914) 422-6265

New Rochelle Branch
475 North Ave., 2nd Fl.
New Rochelle, NY 10801
(914) 813-58000

Mount Vernon Branch
City Court Bldg. Roosevelt Sq.
Mount Vernon, NY 10550
(914) 813-5025

The public can file a complaint directly with the DA's Office by phone or online

(914) 995-TIPS (8477)

www.WestchesterDA.net

For emergencies, please call 911