

# DA DISPATCH

FANI T. WILLIS, District Attorney  
*Intern Edition*



## 2022 Summer Intern Graduates

July 29th 2022

### To Our Esteemed Interns,

What a summer this has been! I am so proud of everything you all have accomplished in our internship program. I was blown away by the intelligence, passion, and hard work of this group. From helping our office with cases to participating in mock trials, you have made the most out of this opportunity. Each of you has the potential and talent to change the world for the better, and I am so excited to see you all become the leaders you are destined to be.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fani Willis".

 FULTONCOUNTYDA

 FULTONCOUNTYDA

 FULTONCOUNTYDA

 OFFICE OF THE  
FULTON COUNTY  
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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# Important Dates and Special Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>AUG 2022</b>	1	2	3	4  Kickball Playoff Game	5	6
7	8  DA Dispatch Release	9  Kickball Playoff Game Accountability Court & Comptency Court Training 	10	11  Kickball Championship Game 	12 Fulton County PayDay \$\$\$  Honoring Our Volunteers Event 	13
14	15	16	17	18	19 T-shirt Comp Submissions Due 	20
21	22 New Class of Employees Begin  Monday Matinee Movie Day!! 	23	24	25  DA Dispatch Release	26 Fulton County PayDay \$\$\$	27
28	29 Volunteer Award Ceremony 	30	31 Second Quarter Evaluation Due 	1	2	3

## 988 SUICIDE AND CRISIS LIFELINE

“988” is the nationwide phone number to connect to the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. By calling or texting the three-digit number, individuals will connect with mental-health professionals with the 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, formerly known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. Trained counselors will listen, provide support and connect callers to resources as needed. The previous Lifeline phone number, 1-800-273-8255, also remains available.



# BACKPACK GIVE-AWAY OFFICE COMPETITION

## 4x4x4

TEAMS CITIES PARKS  
(Fulton County)

July 9, 2022

We (FCDA family) provided **BOOK BAGS AND SCHOOL SUPPLIES** to children in elementary, middle and high schools in Union City, South Fulton, Atlanta, and Sandy Springs.

## Book Bag Prep





# Atlanta Location

Best Overall Award





# Sandy Springs Location

Most Generous Unit Award







# South Fulton Location

Best Activities for Children Award





*Thank you Commissioner Marvin Arrington for dropping by!*



*Thank you Mayor Khalid Kamau for attending!*



# Union City Location

Best Team Spirit Award





# Welcome **New Hires**



**DAVID HOWELL**  
Assistant District Attorney  
Case Intake Division



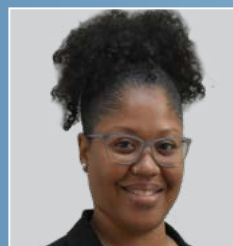
**AISHA BRODERICK**  
Assistant District Attorney  
Case Intake Division

We extend a warm welcome and lots of great wishes for becoming part of our growing family. Your remarkable skills and talents will be a great addition to our office.

## *Congratulations* **OFFICE PROMOTIONS**



**MARISSA VIVERITO**  
has been promoted to serve as our new  
**LIEUTENANT OF THE HP+ UNIT.**



**RAEISHA OLIPHANT**  
has been promoted to serve as our new  
**LIEUTENANT OF THE HP+ UNIT.**



**JUSTIN FRENCH**  
has been promoted to serve as our new  
**LIEUTENANT OF THE HP+ UNIT.**

# FCDA Summer Interns Field Trips



Interns pose for a photo with Georgia Supreme Court Justice Shawn LaGrua at the Nathan Deal Judicial Center.



Kevin Armstrong presents to interns before going to Supreme Court.



The interns at the GBI Crime Lab.



The interns at the Medical Examiner's office.

# FCDA Summer Interns Go Bowling

Internship Coordinators Kyra Banks and Jazmin Dilligard treated our interns to an exciting day of bowling, laughs, and teambuilding at Bowlero.





# SHINING *stars*



**ROBERT  
APPELL**



**GREGORY  
CAMPBELL**



**ALLONYA  
RAGLAND**



**CHRISTOPHER  
DAVIDSON**



**JAYSEN  
THOMAS**



**PAUL  
WASHINGTON**



**SALMAN  
KHAN**



**SHARON  
PAULS**

Congratulations to our Complex Trial Team Investigators for all the help they provide to victims during the process. Senior District Attorney Melissa Roth said, "If it wasn't for the investigators sitting with victims to be a calming presence, taking advantage of the moments of cooperation, and maintaining a watchful eye to make sure the victims honored their subpoenas, an immunity motion could have gone very differently."



**Rosa  
James**



**Dericka  
Mitchell**

Congratulations to Rosa James and Dericka Mitchell on a conducting a great Domestic Violence Community Listening Session!

-Natalie Zellner



**Will  
McCombs**

Kudos to Will McCombs on a phenomenal kickball series. Mr. McCombs was exceptional in every way with all aspects of coordination that made for incredible team building, fun, exercise, and expansion of relationships with our fellow stakeholders.

-Solicitor Keith Gammage

## Chattahoochee Nature Center Field Trip

Like true naturalists, the Jr. DA's spent the day exploring 127 acres of forest, wetland, and river habitats. They sharpened their observation skills as they hiked forest trails, searched high and low for signs of life, and studied plants and animals that call Georgia home. The Junior DA's also were introduced to the practice of mindfulness.





Madam District Attorney Fani T. Willis with the Junior DA's.

## National Center for Civil and Human Rights Field Trip

Encouraged to tap their power to change the world around them, the Jr. DA's were exposed to explore themes related to civil and human rights.



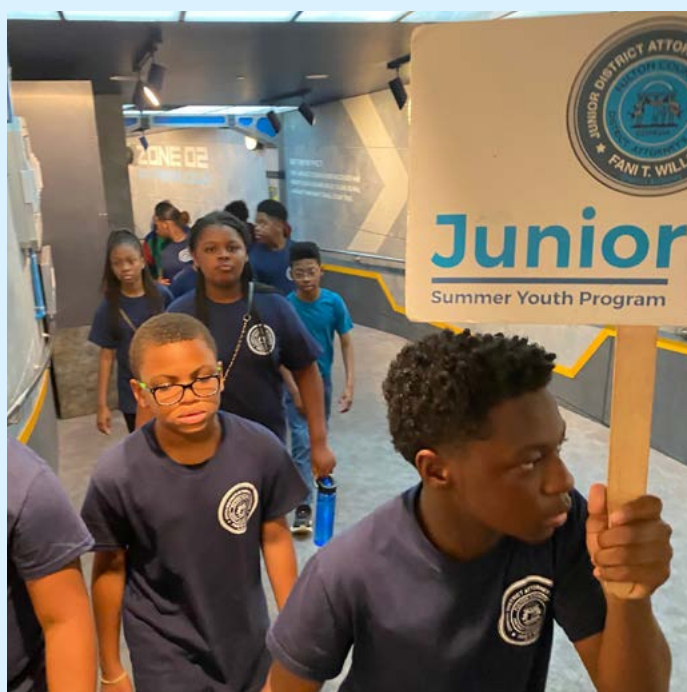
## Atlanta Police Department Field Trip

The Atlanta Police Department Training Academy hosted the Jr. DA's and demonstrated requirements for becoming an Atlanta police officer, and also provided the Jr. DA's with the opportunity to participate in real-world simulations, exposing them to some of the risks officers face daily protecting and serving the community.



## Aquarium Field Trip

Our Jr. DA's had an opportunity to immerse in an exclusive behind-the-scenes instructor-led tour of the Georgia Aquarium. The Jr. DA's explored, "the Secret World Behind Georgia Aquarium," as well as an opportunity to discover the various professions that help the aquarium operate.



# Out and About



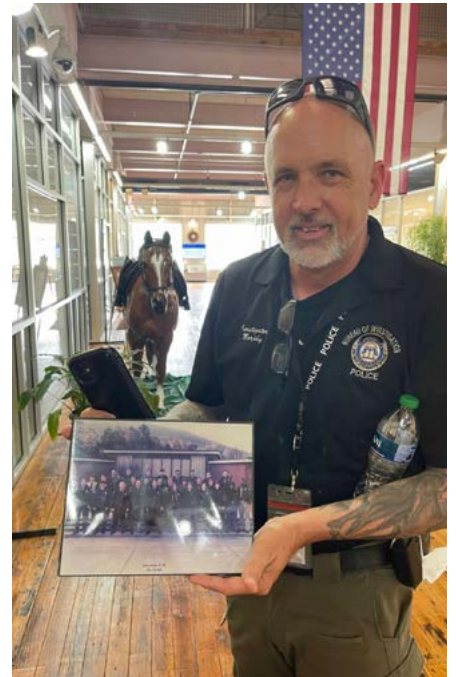
*Trial Division Inv. Salman Khan, Inv. Allonya Ragland, Inv. Neil Effler, Asst. Chief Bernice Higgins, Deputy Chief Robert Appell, Inv. Paul Washington, Inv. Chris Davidson, Sr. Inv. Jaysen Thomas enjoy a team-building event at Rosa's Pizza.*



*Inv. Richard Randolph accepts an award at the Atlanta Police Leadership Institute's Inaugural Training Class.*



*A young student walks away with one of the 200 backpacks donated by FCDA to WAVE.*



*Inv. Loran Crabtree poses with the 1984 police academy picture of one of his team members.*

# Employees of the Month



2022

*Saquez King started in Capital and Cold Case with very little experience working with homicide files. The difference between what he was accustomed to and what was expected in CCCU proved at first a little daunting. However, during the year that he has been with this unit Saquez has steadfastly sought to be better at what he does. He is consistently pleasant natured and always eager to exhibit the areas where his aptitude has improved. His efforts have served Fulton County well, and his growth in his field is ongoing and apparent. So, for all these reasons, for the persistent eagerness to better himself, for the sunny disposition he always displays, for having the heart to deal with a super demanding deputy and not lose heart, for the growth that he has exhibited while in CCCU, and for the \*true team spirit\* he exhibits daily, and for being \*THE BEST-DRESSED PERSON IN CCCU\*, I heartily recommend Saquez King as employee of the month!*

-Adriane Love

JUNE  
employee of the month

**SAQUEZ KING**

Legal Assistant  
Major Case Division-Cold & Capital Cases unit



2022

*On behalf of the Civil Rights Unit Leadership, I would like to nominate Inv. Obed Ford for Employee of the month. Obed is always diligent, friendly, generous, and quick with a joke. He is deeply knowledgeable about all parts of Fulton County law enforcement. Perhaps most important, Obed has excellent judgment. He routinely provides me with much needed reality checks and has been known to pull me out of the deep and abstract legal weeds. Important for Civil Rights work, Obed retains an excellent sense for what a cop on the street experiences and how their supervisor react. He knows how demanding (and important) working in law enforcement is and what good police work looks like. He refuses to compromise his rightfully high standards. I am new to Georgia, this office, and handling police use of force cases. Obed has been my invaluable guide and teacher since I arrived here. I am a better prosecutor, and am better able to serve the people of Fulton County, because I have the privilege of working with Obed every day.*

-Brian Watkins

JULY  
employee of the month

**OBED FORD**

Investigator  
Civil Rights Division

# Negligent Landlords

On July 15, 2022, Fulton County District Attorney Fani T. Willis pledged to work with the city of Atlanta to prosecute grossly negligent landlords; who continue to violate city code and endanger safety. She met with Atlanta City Council members and Solicitor Ericka Smith to discuss ways to address negligent landlords who collect rent but fail to maintain properties and allow the properties to attract gang activity and human trafficking.

Earlier in July, the Atlanta City Council passed a resolution urging a crackdown on “grossly negligent” property owners and landlords and their predatory practices. Targeted are several high-profile apartment complexes, which are advertised and listed under the pretense of “affordable living,” but the property owners and landlords continue to neglect maintenance and security provisions.



*Madam DA Fani T. Willis with Fulton County Solicitor Ericka Smith, Atlanta City Council President Doug Shipman, and Council Members Jason Winston, Liliانا Bakhtiari, Byron Amos, Matt Westmoreland, Dustin Hillis, Andrea Boone, Marci Overstreet, Keisha Waites, and Antonio Lewis.*





# National Bar Association

Madam DA Fani T. Willis spoke at the 97th annual convention of the Nation's oldest and largest national network of predominantly African-American attorneys. The event, held in Memphis, Tennessee, featured a panel called "Black Prosecutors Matter," where Madam DA spoke about the importance of representation. While in Memphis, Madam DA also visited The Lorraine Motel, the site of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination on April 4, 1968.



*Illinois Attorney General Kwame Raoul, Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison, NBA President Carlos Moore, DOJ Assistant Attorney General Hon. Kristen Clarke, Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis, and Nevada Attorney General Aaron Ford.*



*"Black Prosecutors Matter" panel discussion.*

# FCDA Summer Interns Competition

The summer interns participated in a mock trial competition on July 30 - 31.



The interns with DA Fani T. Willis.



The interns & their FCDA mock trial coaches (Christina Robinson, Julianna Peterson, and Chris Sperry) with Attorney Nathan Wade presiding as the practice judge.



**Salem Desir**



**Danielle Hercules, Kornicha Johnson, & Jameia Booker**



**Two mock trial teams pose for a photo with their FCDA mock trial coaches (Shannon Trotty, Marci Goldman, Kimberly Carey, Kelly Greenberg, Brett Pinion, and Rewa Collier) and Fulton County Magistrate Court Judge Sandra Witherspoon.**



**The interns with Fulton County Magistrate Court Judge Bobby Wolf.**



**Matthew "Max" Friedman, Kandyce Collins, & Jenna Culhan participating in the Fani T. Willis Mock Trial Competition.**



**Danielle Hercules, Kornicha Johnson, & Jameia Booker**



**Danielle Hercules**



**Danielle Hercules & Jameia Booker**



**Jaida Farmer takes the stand as a witness during the Fani T. Willis Mock Trial Competition.**



**The interns pose for a photo with Judge Marian Parker, Team Coach RuShondra Davenport, and Mock Trial Bailiff Carol Holt.**



**Interns discussing among themselves.**



**Kandyce Collins presenting in front of a Judge during the Mock Trial Competition.**



**Alyssa Fernandes presenting.**



**Danielle Hercules presenting.**



**Kaelyn Aills questioning her expert witness Michael Tanks, II.**

# Derricho's Mental Health Corner



## **Common Courtesy**

Common Courtesy is simply being respectful, polite, and cognizant of how actions impact others. It's extremely important in the workplace, but just like common sense, courtesy is not common to everyone. Common Courtesy in the workplace can help decrease conflict and increase positivity and productivity. We spend at minimum 40 hours at work, and some of us spend much more time with colleagues. Common Courtesy can go a long way to improve the workplace environment.

## **Greeting/Acknowledging:**

It is a common courtesy to speak to a colleague who speaks to you and to acknowledge that person passing in close proximity. Also, being respectful and communicating without an attitude is common courtesy. While we cannot hold doors open in secure areas, it doesn't hurt to acknowledge a person you see.

## **Acknowledging Positions:**

Each person in this office has worked hard to obtain status, degrees, etc. Please do not belittle anyone by not acknowledging that person's position or leadership placement. It is a common courtesy to address someone by their title.

## **Gossiping:**

Gossiping is extremely toxic and equally unproductive. Friendships are welcome at work, where spending so much time together leads to close connections. It does go against common courtesy to talk about colleagues behind their backs, discussing others private dealings, and to chastise coworkers about their personal lives outside of the office.

Working in public service, we must be aware of how our personal lives impact the work that we do. However, it is unrealistic to think that people do not have personal lives and have fun outside of the workplace.

## **Responding to your colleagues:**

One common complaint we have experienced is a staff member not responding to an important email. All emails do not warrant a response. However, it is a common courtesy that if someone asks a question, whether in email, text, or voicemail, the sender receive a response. You never know how impactful your response could be to someone.

## **Timeliness:**

It is a common courtesy to respect your colleagues' time by arriving to meetings and being prepared to start on time. It is disrespectful to take other's time for granted because all of us have so much work to do. Also, if you say that you will complete a task by a certain date, it is a common courtesy to get it done by said date. Sometimes, people's work is impacted by someone else doing their job. Your timeliness could impact an entire project.

In conclusion, we have no idea what a person is going through outside of the workplace. There are individuals facing eviction, contending with abusive relationships, dying relatives, persistent mental illness, and countless other issues. You never know how much your behavior impacts another. Some people are extremely burdened with issues in their personal lives, and it is counterproductive for them to come to work and deal with whatever may be bothering you. A little common courtesy can go a long way in brightening someone's day or, at a minimum, not worsen that person's day.

**-Chandrika Derricho**





# Accountability Court and Competency Court Training

Presentors:

**Rewa Collier**

*Deputy Assistant District Attorney*

**Nikia Smith Sellers**

*Senior Assistant District Attorney*

**Dr. Patrick Robinson**

*Forensic Psychiatry Fellow*

The Objectives:

Review procedures for referral and participation in Accountability Court

Introduce the office to the New Competency Unit

Review the Competency to Stand Trial Process

**AUGUST 9<sup>th</sup>** (Tuesday)

**2:00-4:00 p.m.**

**ZOOM:** [HTTPS://ZOOM.US/j/97283651708](https://zoom.us/j/97283651708)

**IN PERSON LOCATION:**  
FULTON COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER'S ASSEMBLY HALL,  
141 PRYOR STREET, SW, ATLANTA



## 2023 FCDA T-shirt **DESIGN** COMPETITION

### ARE YOU CREATIVE?

Join the 2023 FCDA T-shirt design competition!  
We need your help to create our 2023 FCDA staff T-shirts.

Create a design for each of the 12 divisions.  
*Please refer to the inaugural 2021 T-shirts shown above.*

**DEADLINE:** Aug. 19th

**PRIZE:** TBA

*Winner takes all!!!*

# Fani T. Willis Internship Awards Ceremony

The interns completed an 8-week intensive summer internship program that included multiple field trips, working within different units, and competing in a mock trial competition. Their hard work was recognized during the internship ceremony program on July 29.



*Alyssa Massey*



*Kimanii Hollis*



*Jameia Booker, Kornicha Johnson, & Danielle Hercules*



*Kornicha Johnson, Jaida Farmer, and Jordan Riullano reflect on their time as an FCDA intern.*



Summer 2022 Interns



Summer 2022 Interns



Kandyce Collins



Rewa Collier presents Talia Rouser with the Hero Award.



Brent Bunkley



*Interns enter BOC Assembly Hall for their graduation ceremony*



*Hazhir Khoshbou*



*Stefan Pruessmann*



*Mitchell Reaves*



*Kameran Saulsberry*



*Michael Tanks II*



*Nia Munz*



Interns listen as Madam DA thanks them for their service at the FCDA and provides advice for their future endeavors.



Max Szerlip winning the Best Witness Award



Kayla Hall



Roniyah Douglas



Catherine Hamilton



Sudden Death Round 1 Winners (Jaida Farmer, Jackson Takash, Alyssa Fernandes, Ryan Scirocco, Salem Desir)



Quarter-Finalists (Tylese Rideout, Christina Sally, Roniyah Douglas, Team Coach RuShondra Davenport, Catherine Hamilton, Kiana Taylor)



Semi-Finalists (Team Coach Adriane Love, Chandler Davis, Caroline Mosley, Alyssa Massey, Team Coach Christopher Sperry, Mitchell Reaves, Chan Dong, Nadia Abdulridha)



Best Orators (Nadia Abdulridha, Kornicha Johnson, Ryan Scirocco, Jordan Riullano, Kiana Taylor)



Finalists (Team Coach Julianna Peterson, Gabrielle Waterman, Jameia Booker, Nia Munz, Danielle Hercules, Shaquille Kokumo, Kornicha Johnson, Team Coach Christina Robinson)



Winners of the Fani T. Willis Mock Trial Competition (Coach Kelly Greenberg, Coach Shannon Trotty, Coach Marci Goldman, Coach Kimberly Carey, Kayla Hall, Matthew "Max" Friedman, Coach Brett Pinion, Kandyce Collins, Mikayla Conyers, Jenna Culhan, Michael Tanks)



July 7, 2022

# KICKBALL

FCDA vs.  
Sheriff's Office



DA Fani Willis and Sheriff Pat Labat with their teams!





July 25, 2022

# KICKBALL

FCDA vs.  
Summer Interns



# Summer PAC Conference

## July 17th – 20th

From July 17th to July 20th, prosecutors from the Fulton County District Attorney's Office attended the 2022 Prosecuting Attorneys' Council Summer Conference at Jekyll Island. Training and good times were on the agenda, and our office even won some awards!



# Summer PAC Conference

The Fulton County District Attorney's Office congratulates Executive District Attorney Daysha Young for winning Assistant District Attorney of the Year.



Yolanda Mack, Julianna Peterson, & Simone Hylton pose for a photo with Georgia's ADA of the Year, Daysha Young.

# CONVICTION ALERTS



**SIMONE HYLTON**

Deputy District Attorney  
DV Unit  
Special Victims Division



Inv. Michelle Lam



LA. Marlene Wilson-Hacker



VA Caitlin Bradley



Graphics-Mike Makins



Inv. Ron Coloma



Appeals- Kevin Armstrong



Appeals- Jayna Easton



**JAZMIN WILLINGHAM**

Assistant District Attorney  
Complex Unit  
Trial Division



**DANIELLE RUSSELL**

Assistant District Attorney  
Major Crimes Division

I want to Congratulate DV Team and SVD for a conviction in **State v. Hillius Rooks**.

The defendant was found guilty of Malice Murder, Felony Murder, Neglect to an Elder Person, Exploitation of an Elder Person and Unreasonable Confinement of an Elder Person.

I want to acknowledge and THANK all those for getting justice for this family.

Fani T. Willis



**KELCEE JONES-CONNOR**

Assistant District Attorney  
Lead Counsel  
Major Case Division



Senior Inv. Marcus Gerald



LA. Breanna Barrett



WVA. Chowan Moore

**State v. Joseph Tabb**

\*\*Special shout out to Grant Rood for all his help!



**RODERICK BRIDGES**

Assistant District Attorney  
Co-Counsel  
Gangs Division

Guilty on all counts before Judge Shukura Ingram – Murder, 2 counts of felony murder, armed robbery, aggravated assault, and possession of a firearm during the commission of a felony. Judge Ingram sentenced the Defendant this afternoon to life without the possibility of parole plus a consecutive life sentence, followed by an additional consecutive 5 years.

# Panel Discussion on Human Trafficking

On July 11, 2022, Fulton County District Attorney Fani Willis participated in a panel discussion at Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport regarding human trafficking. Madam DA emphasized the importance of acknowledging the problem and voiced her support for state legislation to provide support and resources for survivors and protect them from further contact with traffickers. She announced a multi-pronged approach that includes training law-enforcement agencies to detect trafficking, focusing on social media's role in recruitment and coercion attempts, and holding hotels accountable for profiting from or turning a blind eye to sex trafficking.

During the meeting, a woman disclosed that her 13-year-old daughter was a victim of human trafficking and had been missing for a year; she asked law enforcement and elected officials for help and resources. Ten days later, on July 21, Madam DA announced that the Fulton County District Attorney's Office, in collaboration with the Atlanta Police Department and the Fulton County Sheriff's Office, had located the teen and rescued her from a 40-year-old man.



*Georgia State Representative Debra Bazemore, Georgia State Senator Sonya Halpern, Rescuing Hope Founder and Executive Director Susan Norris, and District Attorney Fani Willis.*

# Shelter Backpack Donation

Madam DA visits a Fulton County women's shelter and donates backpacks and school supplies to children.





## Adam Ney

Chief Senior District Attorney  
Anti-Corruption Division

Born and raised in Atlanta, Adam Ney graduated from the University of Georgia before going to North Carolina's Duke University School of Law. He spent the summer after his second year in law school working at a U.S. Attorneys' Office. After graduating, Adam returned to Georgia, where he worked at King & Spalding LLP and Eversheds Sutherland. Ultimately, he shifted his focus to politics, working on numerous statewide and local races, including two gubernatorial campaigns and a U.S. Senate campaign.

Adam got married in July and lives in Lake Claire, located on the east side of Atlanta, with his wife Taylor and their dog Cowboy. In his spare time, Adam enjoys golf, tennis, and writing.

Fun fact: Adam recently spent three months backpacking through Southeast Asia. He returned with a travel beard that caused several people to tell him he looked like Klay Thompson, the 6'6 shooting guard with the Golden State Warriors. Adam find the comparison surprising because he is 5'11 and Jewish.





## Jasminne White

Legal Assistant - Programs Division

Atlanta native Jasminne White graduated in 2003 from Creekside High School, where she was president of DECA during her junior and senior years and participated in the work-study program. She recently went back to school, attending Southern New Hampshire University's online program to obtain an Associate Degree in Business Administration. She has three beautiful children, daughter Destinee and sons Jaylen and Davion. She also has two fur babies, Riley and Ace.

In addition to working as legal assistant in the Fulton County District Attorney's Office, she is also a Makeup Artist (MUA) specializing in natural makeup application, sometimes dramatic for parties, photoshoots, weddings, interviews, and headshots. She has worked behind the scenes as a makeup artist for a documentary hosted by Kandi Burruss and a Liberian dating show. She was nominated and featured in the May 2021 edition of VoyageAtl's Magazine as a hidden gem in Atlanta.

Some of her favorite things to do include visiting her grandparents for the holidays, especially Christmas; shopping; cheering the home teams during sports season, especially football; traveling to the beach; collecting plants; playing cards; and most importantly, spending time with family.





## Roderick Bridges

Assistant District Attorney - Gangs Division

Roderick Bridges brings more than 23 years of legal experience in state and federal court to the Fulton County District Attorney's Office, which he joined in April of this year. He has handled complex criminal litigation from inception to jury trial in multiple jurisdictions.

Bridges is deeply involved in the community, serving as the Human Trafficking Ambassador for the Interfaith Children's Movement, where he leads the initiative to eradicate human trafficking through education, legislation, and prevention. As a member of the 100 Black Men, he mentors youth. Bridges works with various non-profit organizations providing clothing and food to families.

As a member and former vice president of the Lions Club International, he provided vision screening for kids and spearheaded programs to honor police officers. Bridges is also a member of the NAACP, where he serves on the criminal justice committee on criminal justice reform to end violent crime.

A native of Mississippi, Bridges attended Xavier University in New Orleans, where he earned a degree in Chemistry and Biology. He earned a Master of Public Health from Tulane University before completing his Juris Doctor in St. Louis.

Bridges has lived in Georgia with his two children for more than 24 years. His daughter, who serves in the United States Navy, is expecting Bridges' second grandchild in December. His son is a rising high school senior. Roderick is a die-hard Dallas Cowboys and LA Lakers fan!







## Aisha Broderick

Assistant District Attorney - Case intake Division

Part of Gen X and an Army veteran born and raised in Philadelphia, Aisha Broderick graduated from Florida A&M University, and North Carolina Central University School of Law. She is a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated, and the Order of the Eastern Star.

She loves traveling, watching movies and reading books, which create opportunities to interact with new people. She's always trying to learn new languages to open doors of communication. She likes to share her knowledge and enthusiasm with young people, which is how she became an assistant Boy Scouts leader and firearms instructor. She and her husband have four children ranging in ages from 29 to 18.

She's passionate about Constitutional law and equality so she often challenges societal discrepancies. Her work as a senior federal Investigator at the Atlanta EEOC led to her focusing on disability rights. Specifically, mental health parity and its intersection with criminal law led her to advocate for special-needs students in the school system and to represent people in commitment hearings in DeKalb County Probate Court.

She's up for a good game of bowling and discussing the latest thought-provoking movie (if anyone can explain the movie *Tenent*, she would love to hear it!). She loves snacks and quoting movies. Fun fact: she's torn between who has the better cape: Thor or Superman. That's more difficult because she considers Doctor Strange's the best, but it isn't a cape (superhero movie reference).





# CaseLaw

By: Senior District Attorney  
Gautam Rao

## Paying Attention to What you Have to Prove!!!

At trial, prosecutors have the burden of proof of showing a defendant is guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. The Indictment alleges all the charges that need to be proved, making this document one of the most important. ALWAYS read the Indictment FIRST when preparing a case for trial. The indictment provides the context with which you need to filter information effectively when reviewing incident reports, witness statements, etc.

For example, Armed Robbery:

...do charge and accuse John Doe with the offense of ARMED ROBBERY O.C.G.A. §16-8-41, for the said accused, in the County of Fulton and State of Georgia, on the 30th day of November, 2018, did unlawfully, with the intent to commit theft, take toys, the property of Jane Doe, from the person and immediate presence of Jane Doe by use of a handgun, an offensive weapon;

What I Need to Prove:

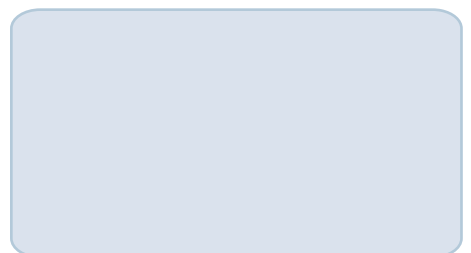
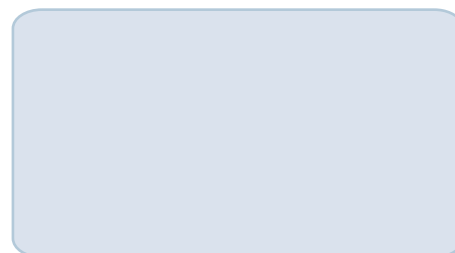
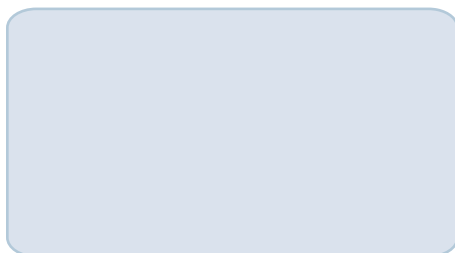
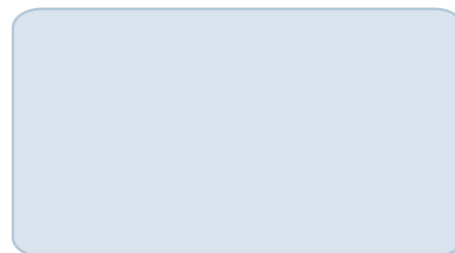
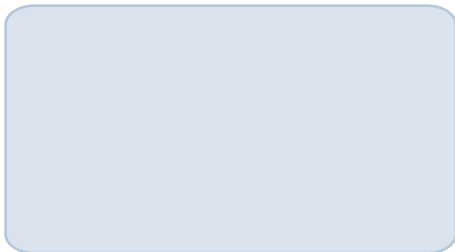
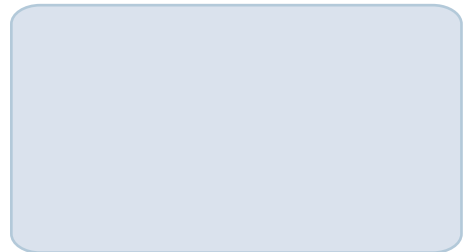
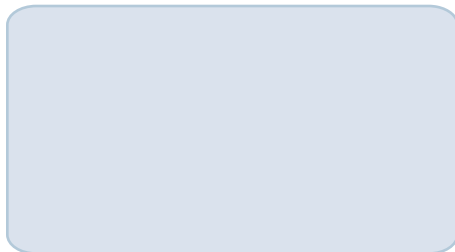
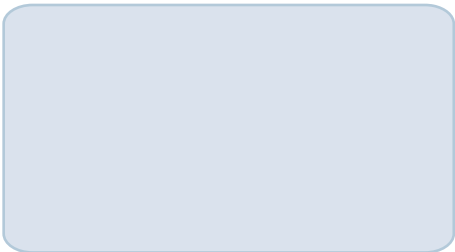
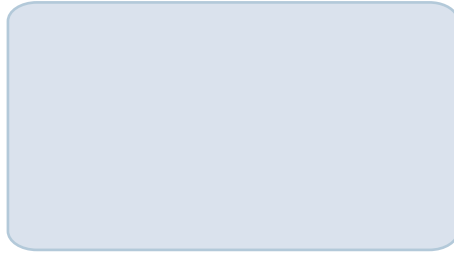
- The defendant is John Doe
- The location of the incident happened within the jurisdiction of Fulton County
- The date of the incident was 11/30/2018
  - Note: Dates alleged in an indictment, without more, is not a material allegation; consequently, unless the indictment specifically states that the alleged dates are material, the state may prove that the alleged crime was committed on any date within the statute of limitations. Thomas v. State, 352 Ga. App. 640 (2019).
- This is especially handy in cases involving young sexual abuse victims unable to specify a date.
- So if the incident happened on a different date, it will not tank the case to have a different date in the indictment as long as it is not a material part of the charge and is within the statute of limitations.
- The victim is Jane Doe
- The victim had toys on her person and immediate presence
- The defendant took the toys with intent to commit a theft
- The toys were taken from the victim by the defendant by use of a handgun

If prosecutors go into a case file without knowing what all the charges are, context is lost. After reading the charging language, I know what I have to prove and, therefore, I am in a better position to identify information that is helpful. I know some of you may be thinking: thanks for the advice Captain Obvious. Like when my high school baseball coach told us, "if we score more runs than the other team, we will win the game," with the look on his face to suggest he thought he was letting us in on some big secret.

However, the reality is that we just dive into reports without looking at the charges, let alone the charging language. For instance, if all we know prior to reading the file in the above example that the defendant is charged with Armed Robbery, but not what he took from the victim, then we don't know to be on the lookout for what he took (toys), which is an absolute requirement to proving the charge. Let's say in this case, the defendant took more than one thing, including the victim's car. If we don't read the indictment, we may naturally be inclined to think that the Armed Robbery is referencing the car keys, the vehicle, cash, but not the toys, which seem insignificant compared to the other items the defendant took. Imagine a scenario where the first time we really know what exactly we have to prove is when the judge reads the indictment before prospective jurors before proceeding with voir dire. While I don't believe that it has happened to anyone who maybe reading this, it has happened, even to veteran attorneys. As a result, the consequences can range from scrambling to ensure you can prove the charge to a directed verdict/acquittal of the charge(s).

# Newsroom

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District Attorney

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