

FULTON COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

# DA DISPATCH

OCTOBER 2023



DOMESTIC  
VIOLENCE  
AWARENESS  
MONTH



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# OCTOBER 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30  MOVIE MATINEE					

# NOVEMBER 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1		3  PAYDAY	4
5	6	7	8	9	10 HOLIDAY OBSERVED	 NOVEMBER 11 <sup>TH</sup> VETERAN'S DAY
12	13	14	15	16 	17  PAYDAY	18
19	20	21	22	23 	24 HOLIDAY OBSERVED	25
26	27	28	29	30		



Celebrating 136 Years of “Excellence with Caring” at Florida A&M University  
FAMU, Florida’s sole public historically black university, marked its founding on October 3rd, 1887 – and on Tuesday, Founder’s Day felt like a birthday bash! But the festivities don’t stop there. U.S. News and World Report also recognized FAMU as the 3rd overall among all Black colleges. President Larry Robinson stated that such achievements should never be taken for granted. Howard University, the alma mater of Madam DA, is ranked at #2, while Atlanta’s very own Spelman College claims the top spot among all Black colleges per U.S. News and World Report.



District Attorney Fani Willis visited Howard University, her alma mater, where she recounted her inspirational path and provided invaluable perspectives during an interview conducted by the talented student journalist, Natalia Wilson. Madam DA’s visit not only rekindled fond memories but also served as a testament to the power of education and determination in achieving success.

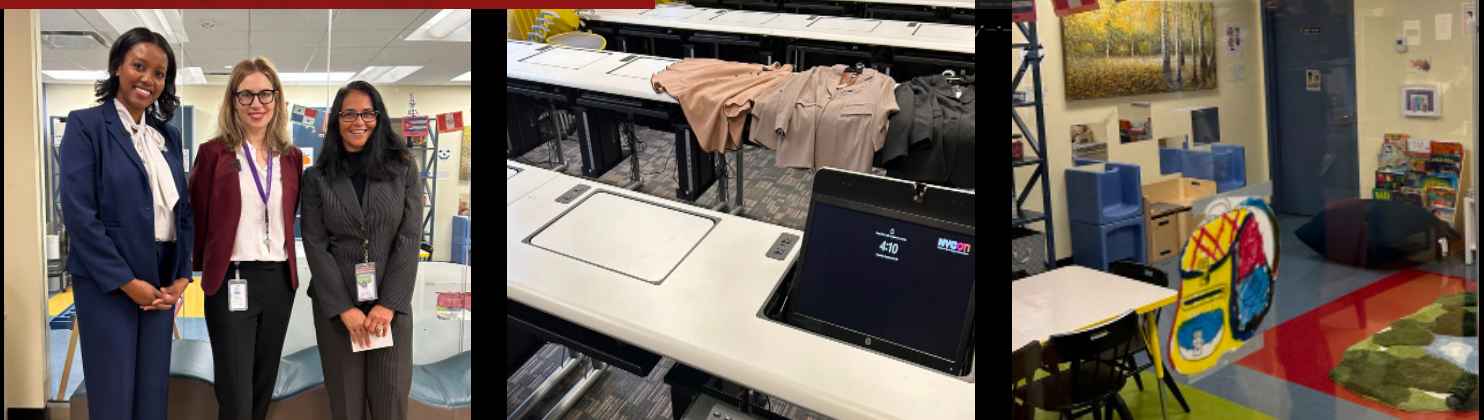
# FULTON COUNTY DA TAKES ON **THE BIG APPLE!**

## BROOKLYN



The tour of NYC started at the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office with a meeting with Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez. DA Gonzalez welcomed the group to Brooklyn, and explained the importance of having a FJC. We learned that a FJC is extremely important for victims of violence as it is one central place that victims can receive a variety of services that they need. The Brooklyn FJC is co-located with the DA's office: which further provides easy access to victims.

## MANHATTAN



Deputy District Attorney Asia Baysah and Grant Director Michele Henry toured the Manhattan Family Justice Center. The Manhattan FJC has implemented a 24/7 hotline for their clients to call in order to get help. In speaking with Executive Director Olivia Wilson of the Manhattan FJC, she emphasized the importance of setting boundaries with law enforcement and their presence/involvement with the FJC. We also learned that when working with different partners, it is important to set expectations of collaboration.



## BRONX



Bronx District Attorney Darcel Clark welcomed the group to the Bronx. We first had a larger lunch meeting with Deputy Chief Adrienne Gunta of the Special Victim Division, Chief of the Domestic Violence Bureau Agata Digiovanni, Chief of the Crime Victims Assistance Bureau Jessica Rosado as well as other people in the Office. In our initial meeting we learned that in the Bronx there is a major emphasis on trauma informed interviewing, and they have specific trainings on that. In addition, the 15 ADAs in the DV Unit participate in vertical prosecutions, and carry a case load of 40-60 indicted and unindicted cases. We then went on the tour of the Bronx Domestic Violence court parts. Judge Marsha Michael told us that her felony case load is about 100 cases. entesque.

## QUEENS



Our NYC tour ended with Queens the morning of September 28th. DA Willis, DA Howard and Queens DA Melinda Katz had an initial meeting. Afterwards, we had a group meeting in which we learned that Queens has a population of approximately 2.4 million people, and about 49 % of the residents of Queens was born outside of the United States. The population of Queens is made up of 190 countries and the residents speak over 200 languages. In this initial meeting we spoke about community prosecution, grants and the victim witness advocate program. We then took a tour of the Queens court and spoke with Judge Michael Yavinsky. We ended with a tour and lunch of the Queens Family Justice Center, led by Executive Director Susan Jacobs.

# **PURPLE THURSDAY** **& SPIRIT DAY**

*STANDING IN SOLIDARITY*



On Thursday, October 20th, we proudly wore purple in solidarity with two vital causes – Purple Thursday and Spirit Day. Purple Thursday signifies our unwavering support for Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Help is available at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or by texting the word **START** to 88788. Together, we stand strong for those who've endured and survived. If you or someone you know needs help, we are here for you.



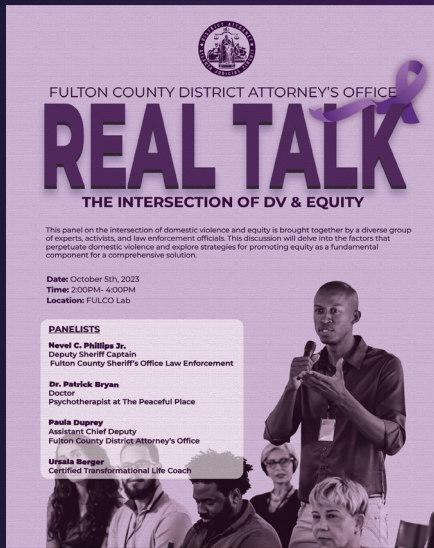


Spirit Day, the world's most visible anti-bullying movement, is a beacon of hope for LGBTQ+ youth. Every person deserves love and acceptance just as they are. No one should ever be bullied for being true to themselves. Take the pledge to stand up to all forms of bullying here: [tinyurl.com/spiritdaypledge](https://tinyurl.com/spiritdaypledge)

# Domestic Violence Awareness Month Events



On October 18th, Deputy DA Asia Baysah actively engaged in a thought-provoking discussion at the Georgia State College of Law's Domestic Violence Panel. The conversation delved into crucial topics related to domestic violence, including prosecution, and the support services available to victims.



On October 5, 2023, the Domestic Violence Unit hosted a compelling panel, "The Intersection of Domestic Violence and Equity." We explored the roots of domestic violence and strategies for achieving equity as a fundamental part of the solution. Our very own Victim Advocate, Nicole Santos, skillfully moderated the discussion. Our esteemed panelists included Fulton County Deputy Sheriff Nevel C. Phillips, Jr., Psychotherapist at The Peaceful Place Patrick Bryan, Assistant Chief Investigator Paula Duprey, and Certified Transformational Life Coach Ursula Berger. With over 20 attendees, it was an insightful and impactful event!



*Article by Jeremy Murray*

In the month of October, we're reminded that it's not just a time for falling leaves and pumpkin spice, but also a critical period to shed light on an issue that affects countless lives: domestic violence.

The FCDAO's Brenda Baham Domestic Violence Unit is committed to raising awareness about domestic violence, advocating for victims, and tirelessly striving to eradicate this widespread problem from our community.

Throughout Domestic Violence Awareness Month and every month, we want to underscore the significance of domestic violence and the critical role we all play in addressing this problem. Our mission is clear: to educate the community about recognizing the signs of domestic violence, provide resources and support for victims, and train law enforcement partners and elected officials on how to effectively combat domestic violence.

Here's how we're making a difference:

- ***Raising Awareness:*** Domestic violence often remains hidden, so we're dedicated to spreading the word and helping people understand the signs, from physical abuse to emotional manipulation. Recognizing the problem is the first step towards ending it. We do this by offering monthly trainings for our law enforcement partners.
- ***Supporting Victims:*** We offer assistance, guidance, and resources for victims, ensuring they know they are not alone, and that help is available. No one should suffer in silence, and we're here to ensure they don't have to.
- ***Training Law Enforcement Partners:*** By educating law enforcement officers, we're strengthening our collective ability to respond swiftly and effectively to domestic violence cases. Proper training is key to ensuring the safety of victims and the prosecution of offenders.
- ***Engaging Elected Officials:*** We collaborate with elected officials to create and support policies that protect victims, prevent domestic violence, and hold abusers accountable.

Domestic violence affects individuals, families, and communities. We encourage you to join us this October in spreading awareness, supporting victims, and working together to end domestic violence. Together, we can make a real difference in the lives of those affected by this issue. Stay tuned for our upcoming events and initiatives throughout the month, and let's stand together against domestic violence.



# F C D A O LEADERSHIP M E E T I N G

Under Madam DA's leadership, we concluded our final leadership meeting of the year on Saturday, October 7th. It was a great chance for both seasoned and new leaders to come together, fostering collaboration and sharing our visions for 2024. During the leadership gathering, Executive District Attorney Michael Carlson was recognized with the Outstanding Leadership Award for his exceptional leadership and unwavering dedication to our office and Fulton County.



**October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month**

Because October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month, it’s a great time to address this topic. The United States Department of Justice (2019) defines domestic violence as a “pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one partner to gain or maintain power and control over another intimate partner.” Domestic violence can affect anyone. According to the Frieden et al., (2011), “1 in 3 women and 1 in 4 men have experienced some form of physical violence by an intimate partner.” Based on these statistics, it is likely each of us knows someone who has experienced domestic violence.

It is important not to be judgmental or look down on a victim. Experiencing the cycle of abuse can be traumatizing and demeaning. Victim blaming is common because some feel that the victim can just leave the situation. Often, victims leave their relationships multiple times and return due to the control and manipulation of their abusers. Domestic violence is not just physical; it can include physical and financial isolation. When a victim leaves the relationship, it is the most dangerous time because the abuser does not want to lose power and control. Allowing a victim to exercise his or her own choice is as important as being supportive and providing resources.

In this office, we host a series of events each year during this month to educate the community about domestic violence. We also have a dedicated unit, the Brenda Baham Domestic Violence Unit, to provide the specialized resources and support victims need. If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence, you can reach out to the Employee Assistance Program or one of the domestic violence resources below. The Employee Assistance Program is available 24 hours a day to all employees and immediate family members. Fulton County Employee Assistance Program is available to all employees and provides up to 8 free confidential sessions. You can reach the Employee Assistance Program 24 hours a day, seven days a week by calling 800-999-7222 or visiting [www.AnthemEAP.com](http://www.AnthemEAP.com) (password: Fulton).

Domestic Violence Resources:

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233

Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence Hotline:  
1-800-334-2836

References:

Frieden, T. R., Degutis, L. C., Spivak, H. R., Black, M. C., Basile, K. C., Breiding, M. J., Smith, S. G., & Walters, M. L. (2011). National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Summary Report. [https://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/NISVS\\_Report2010-a.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/NISVS_Report2010-a.pdf)  
U.S. Department of Justice. (2019, May 16). Domestic Violence. [Justice.gov](https://www.justice.gov/ovw/domestic-violence); U.S. Department of Justice. <https://www.justice.gov/ovw/domestic-violence>



**Chandrika Derricho**  
Director of Victim Witness Advocates



# LAW CORNER

## ***The importance of Filing Your Recidivist Notice***

The Recidivist Notice is a powerful tool that we have in our arsenal to keep repeat offenders, especially those who commit serious violent felonies off the streets of our community. It ensures that for the fitting defendants, there is some accountability in them receiving an appropriate sentence.

O.C.G.A. 17-10-7 is the governing statute that presides over recidivist defendants. It is divided into three relevant subsections, each with a short paragraph associated with the respective section. I encourage everyone who hasn't already to log in through your LexisNexis accounts and read the statute. However, a brief synopsis of each section is as follows:

Subsection (a) of the statute essentially indicates that an individual who has at least one prior conviction, must be sentenced to the maximum time the sentence allows. However, the judge has the discretion to probate or suspend the sentence if the maximum sentence for the offense is not a life sentence. For example, Aggravated Assault carries a maximum sentence of 20 years. If a Defendant is sentenced under the recidivist statute after having been convicted of Aggravated Assault, the Judge has to sentence the defendant to 20 years (possible sentence breakdowns include 20 years probation; 20 years suspended; 20 years to serve 5 years, balance probated; 20 years to serve 2, balance suspended; etc.). For an offense that carries a life sentence as the maximum sentence (i.e., Armed Robbery, Rape, Aggravated Child Molestation), then the Judge must sentence the Defendant to a life sentence since it is the maximum.

Subsection (b) of the statute dictates that anyone convicted of a "serious violent felony" under O.C.G.A. 17-10-6.1(a) [Murder, Felony Murder, Armed Robbery, Kidnapping, Rape, Aggravated Child Molestation, Aggravated Sodomy, or Aggravated Sexual Assault) or what would be classified as a serious violent felony in another state and then subsequently is convicted of a serious violent felony, the mandatory sentence is Life without the possibility of parole. So, if your defendant has a prior conviction for a serious violent felony and then is convicted of a second or subsequent serious violent felony.

Subsection (c) states that any individual who is convicted of a felony while having had three or more felony convictions on their record must be sentenced to the maximum time the sentence allows no different than Subsection (a). And like Subsection (a), the Judge has the discretion to probate or suspend the sentence if the maximum sentence for the offense is not a life sentence. The part where Subsection (c) differs from Subsection (a) in terms of punishment is that any "in-custody" time that a judge does sentence a defendant to is not eligible for parole. So, on an Aggravated Assault charge, the Judge would have to sentence the Defendant to 20 years under this subsection. The Judge has the authority to probate or suspend either all or any part of the sentence. However, if the Judge decides that a 20 serve 5 sentence is the most appropriate consequence, the 5 years the defendant must serve will be "day-for-day" without the possibility of parole. Now if we kick the severity up a notch to where the maximum punishment for the offense is life in prison, the Judge must sentence the defendant to life since it is the maximum sentence for the offense. Additionally, what that also means under subsection (c) is that the life sentence is without parole.

This is meant to be a brief refresher on the recidivist notice and the importance it can play in negotiating plea deals to have a defendant accept responsibility for their actions, as well as a sentencing enhancement should a jury convict a defendant at trial. It is important to note that the enforcement of this statute is rendered toothless if the prosecutor fails to file a notice under this statute, outlining the prior convictions that the State intends to admit into evidence at sentencing for recidivist treatment under one or more of the relevant subsections in this statute.

**Gautam Rao**  
Deputy District Attorney,  
Training



# PURE IN HEART AWARD FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE



It was a profound privilege to join in the celebration of Cascade United Methodist Church's 97th anniversary and to share words of praise and worship with the congregation this past Sunday. I was moved and humbled to be presented with the Pure in Heart Award for Social Justice. Thank you, Pastor Kevin Murrial for the love and benediction showered upon



# 2023 GEORGIA

# NAACP PRESIDENTS AWARD



"I am incredibly grateful and humbled to have been bestowed with the prestigious President's Award by the Georgia NAACP. This honor stands as a testament to the tireless work of the NAACP in championing civil rights and social justice, and it reaffirms the importance of our shared mission."

- Fulton County District Attorney Fani T. Willis

# ATLANTA BUSINESS LEAGUE AWARD



"I am deeply grateful to the Atlanta Business League for presenting me with the Lottie H. Watkins Female First Award. It's a profound honor to be recognized alongside the legacy of Lottie Watkins, a true pioneer in Atlanta's history. As Fulton County's first female District Attorney, I'm reminded that history is made by those who dare to break barriers."

- Fulton County District Attorney Fani T. Willis

# ATLANTA MURAL

I am both deeply humbled and profoundly honored to be featured in a local mural created by the exceptionally talented artist, Fabian Williams. His artwork, named 'The Dream,' stands as a powerful homage to the enduring legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Recently, Mr. Williams updated his artwork to include me, a gesture that took my breath away.

The moment one of my staff members introduced me to this incredible honor, I knew that I had to witness it in person. Yesterday, I had the privilege of spending time admiring Mr. Williams' remarkable work, and I was deeply moved by the experience.

Yesterday, as I had the privilege of immersing myself in Mr. Williams' work, I was truly moved and deeply honored. My interpretation of this artwork resonates with the image of children peacefully asleep, basking in safety and inspiration, destined to become the future leaders our world needs. I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Fabian Williams for this extraordinary recognition; to be featured alongside a luminary like Dr. King is the highest of honors.

Art is important because it serves as a powerful vehicle for self-expression and creativity, allowing people to convey complex emotions and ideas in unique and compelling ways. It enriches our lives by fostering cultural diversity and offering different perspectives, ultimately promoting understanding and empathy. Celebrating local artists such as Mr. Williams is vital as it recognizes and supports the talent within our communities, bolstering cultural identity and boosting the local economy while ensuring a thriving and vibrant arts scene that can inspire, unite, and uplift us all.

Thank you once again, Mr. Williams, for this incredible honor.  
– Madam DA Fani T. Willis





# FEATURED

APPEALS EDITION



## CHARLES JONES



Charles Jones is a man of diverse interests and unique talents. He possesses an extraordinary memory, able to recite every word from each episode of “The Golden Girls.” Charles is an avid wrestling enthusiast, with a strong preference for athletic wrestling over the more theatrical forms of the sport. Currently, he is diligently working towards an online Master’s Degree in Roman Catholic Theology, with an ambitious goal of ultimately achieving a Th.D., humorously likened to the “Doctor of Think-ology” as described by the Wizard of Oz when awarding it to the Scarecrow. His intense focus and determination were once evident when he became so engrossed in a new video game that he forgot to eat for two days, emerging as the victor. In addition to his various interests, Charles has a mischievous side and is known as the office prankster. One April Fool’s Day at his previous job, he claimed to have baked brownies and lured his coworkers to the conference room, where they were greeted with a surprise – a pile of letter “E”s crafted from brown construction paper. We can’t help but wonder if this prank contributed to his departure from that job. He is pictured here on his vacation in Austria this year, standing on the very steps featured in the iconic Do-Re-Mi sequence from *The Sound of Music*!

## ELAINE THOMPSON



Elaine Thompson has dedicated a significant portion of her life to volunteer work, a passion instilled in her during childhood as she joined her mother in the Voter’s Council. Together, they organized activities for underprivileged children, ranging from theme park outings to beach trips, museum visits, and movie excursions. Throughout her teenage years, Elaine engaged in community service at the neighborhood park, contributing to the preparation of arts and crafts, sporting events, and social gatherings. As a seasoned lawyer with three decades of experience, she actively participated in bar activities. Her commitment extended to fundraising efforts, facilitating free legal assistance, coordinating continuing education courses, and organizing noteworthy events such as a retirement celebration for Florida’s first African American woman on the Supreme Court. Almost a decade ago, Elaine embarked on a new endeavor—coaching high school girls for college admissions. This coaching program later evolved into a free college readiness workshop, broadening its impact to include male students. Conducting workshops since 2017 in the Tampa Bay area at public libraries, community centers, and churches, she has expanded her outreach to DeKalb County, conducting over fifteen workshops since September 2022, with plans to extend the series to Fulton County. Beyond her extensive community service, Elaine finds joy in music, particularly old-school R&B. She enjoys watching quality basketball games at all levels and attending Broadway shows, with a special fondness for musicals.

## ALEX BERNICK



Born and raised in Baytown, a town nestled in the Houston area, I remain a dedicated Houston sports enthusiast, passionately cheering for the city's teams. Off the field, I am an ardent tennis player, and while my running and golf skills might not be top-tier, I enjoy every moment. Beyond the realm of sports, I have a flair for culinary creativity, with a special love for cooking and baking. My culinary prowess shines through my cinnamon rolls and babkas. Before venturing into the world of law, I earned my master's degree in art history, specializing in Pre-Columbian and Colonial Latin American art.

With a graduate degree from Princeton University and a master's in art history from Southern Methodist University, I honed my legal expertise at Emory Law School. My legal journey began in Atlanta, where I've remained ever since. I started by working for Judges Bedford and Dunaway in Fulton Superior Court before taking on roles at the Solicitor's Office and later the Attorney General's Office. In my free time, I find joy in traveling and reading. I also finished a marathon and won a salsa-making competition.

## CORRINE COLLINS



A proud graduate of Clayton State University, I hold a degree in Legal Studies and have a deep passion for helping people in any way I can. I'm an advocate for volunteering in the community and am currently involved with the Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation (AVLF). In my downtime, you'll often find me enjoying quiet moments alone with a good book, immersing myself in the world of literature. I also enjoy listening to the soothing sounds of LoFi music.



NE Ponce de Leon Ave



2023 ATLANTA  
**PRIDE**  
PARADE



DA Fani Willis and members of the Fulton County District Attorney's Office proudly took part in the annual Atlanta Pride Parade. This vibrant event, celebrated as Atlanta's largest parade, brought together thousands upon thousands of LGBTQ+ community members and allies.

DA Willis underscored the importance of standing shoulder-to-shoulder with the LGBTQ+ community, especially as we witness a rise in hate crimes. It's vital for the world to know that we firmly support our LGBTQ+ community, an inseparable part of our community fabric. What an incredible experience to be enveloped by the spirit of Pride and the limitless love of this community.

**#AtlantaPride #LovesLove #CommunityStrong**





# 5TH ANNUAL MAYOR'S PRIDE RECEPTION



On Thursday, 10/12, members of our office, including DA Willis's LGBTQ+ Advisory Committee Co-Chair Jeremy Murray, Committee Coordinator and Major Case Legal Assistant Brenda Sharpe, and Sexual Assault Unit Deputy District Attorney Yolanda Mack gathered for a night of unity and remarkable achievements at the 5th Annual Mayor's Pride Reception.

Here's a snapshot of the memorable moments:

- Over \$25,000 was raised for the Mayor's Youth Scholarship Program.
- Mayor Dickens and LGBTQ Affairs Director Malik Brown unveiled a captivating, free, and publicly accessible LGBTQ art exhibit, showcasing the vibrant creativity of Atlanta's LGBTQ+ community.
- The legacy of Lynn Barfield, a cherished figure from the Atlanta Pride Committee and the Mayor's LGBTQ Advisory Board, was honored and remembered, and we celebrated the outstanding contributions of Reese Adams McCranie, recognizing his years of devoted public service and his positive influence on both Atlanta and the LGBTQ+ community, as he received the inaugural Lynn Barfield Community Impact Award.
- The evening sparkled with dazzling drag performances by LaLa Ri from RuPaul's Drag Race and Atlanta-based drag sensation Brigitte Bidet, adding glamour and entertainment to the festivities.
- Exciting news from Mayor Dickens: the inaugural Youth Pride Summit + Festival is set to shine at Overtime Elite Arena on Sunday, October 29th. In line with Mayor Dickens' 2023 vision, it's the "Year of the Youth," championing the next generation.



This empowering event will offer LGBTQ+ youth up to age 25 with professional headshots, free haircuts, career attire, financial guidance, stress management, yoga, medical services, and more. Our office and Madam DA's LGBTQ+ Advisory Committee have generously contributed professional clothing, shoes, and accessories to this cause.

For event specifics, please visit: <https://atlgbtq.atlantaga.gov/youthpride>

A decorative graphic at the top of the page features several overlapping, flowing ribbons in the colors of the rainbow (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple).

# LGBTQ+

## HISTORY MONTH

*Article by Jeremy Murray*

Atlanta, recognized as the vibrant Southern haven for the LGBTQ+ community, has been a magnetic force for many who sought a welcoming community far from their small hometowns in neighboring states. Over time, Midtown evolved into the heart of queer culture, where weekends were marked by visits to legendary bars and joyous Pride celebrations. Originally held in June, Atlanta's Pride festivities eventually found a fitting home in October, coinciding with "National Coming Out Day." While the LGBTQ+ community has expanded across the metropolitan area, Midtown, adorned with its iconic rainbow crosswalk, continues to symbolize the spirit of gay Atlanta.

### **Atlanta's Pioneering Moments:**

Before today's vibrant LGBTQ+ scene in Atlanta, the city's queer history dates to 1895 when the first recorded instance of female impersonation occurred during the "Cotton States and International Exposition" in Piedmont Park. However, the catalyst for Atlanta's gay rights movement came just six weeks after the 1969 Stonewall Riots in New York. Dubbed "Atlanta's Stonewall," it occurred at the Ansley Mall Mini Cinema, known for showing indie films with gay themes, such as Andy Warhol's "Lonesome Cowboy." A police raid during a screening in 1969 where all 70 attendees were arrested led to the birth of the Georgia Gay Liberation Front, ultimately culminating in the city's first Gay Pride March in 1971, held in Piedmont Park with 100 activists in attendance. In 1976, then-Mayor Maynard Jackson proclaimed Gay Pride Day, facing significant opposition. He later renamed it "Human Rights Day" but continued to support the LGBTQ+ community during his term.


Also similar to Stonewall, in 2009, Atlanta police raided the Atlanta Eagle, a Midtown gay bar, arresting eight people. Charges were dropped, but only six of the 24 officers involved were fired. Victims of the raid successfully sued the Atlanta Police Department, prompting policy changes and compensation for those affected, with payouts to victims occurring in 2011.

### **Unifying Forces in the Community:**

In an era before the internet, Atlanta had publications like David Magazine and Etcetera Magazine, alongside its own version of the gay Yellow Pages. These resources helped LGBTQ+ community members find gay-friendly businesses, doctors, lawyers, and more. You could find these publications at various locations throughout the city, including bars like Burkhart's (now the new location of the Atlanta Eagle) and the longstanding institution, Brushstrokes in Ansley Mall. Even today, Ansley Mall and its surrounding shops remain an integral part of the gay Midtown experience.

### **Midtown - "the Gayborhood":**

From the urban transformation of the 1980s and 90s to the contemporary Midtown skyline of high-rises, we witness a neighborhood's vibrant evolution. Steeped in LGBTQ+ history, Midtown Atlanta was once home to iconic venues like Backstreet, the Armory, the Centaur Club, and the Cove, all cherished in memory.




While the physical landmarks have faded, their legacies endure. The permanent rainbow crosswalk at Piedmont Avenue and 10th Street, unveiled in 2017 and commemorating the Pulse nightclub tragedy's anniversary, stands as a poignant testament to this legacy. Although LGBTQ+ Atlantans have spread throughout Fulton County, Midtown remains an emblem of their collective journey and the unwavering advocates by their side.

July 30, 2020, marked an emotionally charged moment when Congressman John Lewis's hearse paused at the rainbow crosswalk, honoring his enduring legacy as an LGBTQ+ rights champion. Known for his pivotal role in the 1960s civil rights movement, Lewis was also at the forefront of the fight for LGBTQ+ rights. He boldly advocated for same-sex marriage in the early 2000s, far ahead of his peers and the U.S. Supreme Court's historic ruling. Cathy Woolard, Georgia's first openly gay elected official elected in 1997, hailed Lewis's unwavering advocacy. Amid a climate where LGBTQ+ issues had few allies in Washington, Lewis's distinct voice resonated. His words, delivered with compassion and eloquence, compelled even the most hesitant to listen.

### **A Forward-Looking Atlanta:**

As we transition from the Atlanta of 1969 to the dynamic landscape of 2023, Atlanta has undergone a remarkable transformation, symbolizing remarkable progress. Under the leadership of Malik Brown, the Mayor's Division of LGBTQ Affairs has consistently achieved a perfect 100% score on the Human Rights Campaign's Municipal Equality Index since 2013. Recently, the Mayor's Office hosted its 5th annual Pride reception, reaffirming its commitment to recognizing the pivotal role played by LGBTQ+ community advocates in our community.

At the recent annual Pride event hosted by Mayor Andre Dickens, he emphasized Atlanta's spirit of collaboration and dedicated the year 2023 to the younger generation. This visionary stance has laid the foundation for the upcoming Youth Pride Summit + Festival, scheduled for October 29th. Presented by the City of Atlanta and the Mayor's Division of LGBTQ+ Affairs, this event provides LGBTQ+ youth up to 25 years of age with access to a wide array of opportunities. These include engaging in financial literacy and stress management classes, enjoying complimentary haircuts and professional headshots, finding relaxation through yoga sessions, and receiving essential medical services, and much more. District Attorney Fani T. Willis, a stalwart champion of the LGBTQ+ community for decades, created history in 2021. She announced the creation of her LGBTQ+ advisory committee during her office's inaugural LGBTQ+ crime victims vigil at Piedmont Park. The year 2022 saw the oath-taking ceremony of the DA Fani Willis LGBTQ+ Advisory Committee, the first of its kind among District Attorney's offices in the Southeast. In June of this year, our office celebrated a significant achievement, hosting the 3rd annual LGBTQ+ crime victims vigil and inducting new advisory committee members. Our office reached a significant milestone in 2022 by successfully securing the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr., Hate Crimes Grant. In the period from 2023 to 2023, we proudly introduced a comprehensive LGBTQ+ Resource Guide, and introduced a dedicated reporting phone number and email for bias-based and LGBTQ+-targeted hate crimes. Despite Georgia's lack of standalone hate crimes charges, the grant and the advisory committee stand as a testament to the unwavering commitment to enhancing law enforcement's comprehension of LGBTQ+ cases. They play a pivotal role in proposing and delivering vital training, providing valuable counsel to DA Willis, and serving as educators within the community. The Fulton County District Attorney's Office actively and diligently pursues cases involving hate crimes and bias-based crimes, upholding the principles of justice and fairness as the cornerstones of our criminal justice system. This proactive approach heralds a more inclusive and promising future for Atlanta – and Fulton County as a whole.





**FCDAO 2023  
SWEATSHIRT  
DESIGN  
CONTEST**

**CALLING ALL FCDAO CREATIVES!!!**

Please submit all designs to Jeremy Murray by Monday, 10/30 at COB. The winning design will be showcased on our 2024 FCDAO sweatshirt for the entire office!

FULTON COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

# **PINK OUT FRIDAY**

**FOR BREAST CANCER AWARENESS  
COME DRESSED IN PINK FOR THE CAUSE**

**DATE & TIME**

**OCTOBER 27, 2023 @ 11AM**

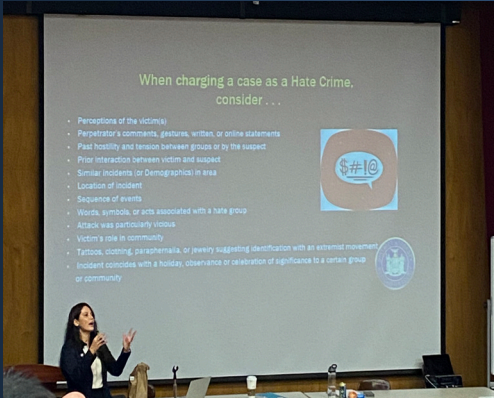
**LOCATION**

**LARGE MEDIA ROOM IN 141  
FOR GROUP PHOTO**





# **HATE CRIMES & BIAS INCIDENTS TRAINING** **WESTCHESTER COUNTY , NEW YORK**



On October 4th, Madam DA's LGBTQ+ Advisory Committee Co-Chair, Jeremy Murray, Appeals Deputy District Attorney Kevin Armstrong (also serving as the Lead Attorney for the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr., Hate Crimes Grant) and Hate Crimes Victim-Witness Advocate Caddarius Armstrong attended a Hate Crimes and Bias Incidents Training hosted by the Westchester County District Attorney's Office's Hate Crime Unit at SUNY Westchester Community College.

The audience was a diverse gathering of law enforcement professionals from Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, as well as states neighboring New York. The day was filled with insights, including the powerful voices of victims of hate crimes. Valuable training was imparted by Facebook's Civil Rights Unit and Assistant District Attorney Catalina Blanco Buitrago, the Bias & Hate Crimes Coordinator from the Westchester County DA's Office. Deputy DA Armstrong and Mr. Murray had the distinct privilege of conversing with District Attorney Miriam Rocah. This dialogue revolved around the investigation and prosecution of hate crimes in Georgia, with a shared aim of mutual learning and improving our ability to support citizens targeted by hate crimes. This collaborative effort underscores our unwavering commitment to justice, unity, and the well-being of all.

# CONVICTIONAlert!

## **State v. Kevin McCorvey**

Congratulations to the Anti-Corruption Division! In the case of State v. Kevin McCorvey, the Defendant pled guilty to three counts including Vehicular Manslaughter-1st Degree, Reckless Driving, and Reckless Conduct. Judge Rachel R. Krause sentenced the Defendant to 15 years to serve 8.



Chief Sr.  
Assistant District Attorney  
Sau Chan



Assistant  
District Attorney  
Kevin Majeske



Assistant  
Chief Investigator  
Kevin Majeske



Victim- Witness Assistance  
Program Director  
Chandrika Derricho

## **State v. Dehaven Johnson**

Congratulations to the Crimes Against Children Unit! In the case of State v. Dehaven Johnson, it took a jury just 40 minutes to return a guilty verdict against the Defendant on all six counts including Malice Murder, Felony Murder, Cruelty to Children in the First Degree, and Aggravated Battery. Judge Kelly Ellerbe sentenced the Defendant to life without the possibility of parole plus forty years.



Assistant  
District Attorney  
Robert Shapiro



Assistant  
District Attorney  
Dion Peebles



Assistant  
Chief Investigator  
Temperance Stoddard



Victim Witness Advocate  
Jasmyn Drummond



Legal Assistant  
Nyome Griffin

## **State v. Banks, Gilstrap, and Wells**

Congratulations to the Major Case Trial Team! In the case of State v. Banks et al, the three co-defendants were found guilty of 14 charges including Felony Murder, Criminal Attempt to Commit Armed Robbery, Aggravated Assault with a Deadly Weapon, and Possession of Firearm During Commission of a Felony. Judge Paige Whitaker sentenced all three Defendants to life without the possibility of parole.



Chief Sr. Assistant  
District Attorney  
Nailah McFarlane



Assistant  
District Attorney  
Jeffrey Hawkins



Investigator  
Shameka Duncan



Victim Witness Advocate  
Maya Wilburn



Legal Assistant  
SaQuez king

**State v. Torres Drain**

Congratulations to the Human Trafficking and Internet Child Exploitation Unit! In the case of State v. Torres Drain, the Defendant was convicted of four counts including Rape, Trafficking a Person for Sexual Servitude, Aggravated Assault Strangulation, and False Imprisonment. Judge Melynee Leftridge sentenced the Defendant to life in prison plus 30 years.



Deputy District Attorney Earnelle Winfrey



Chief Sr. Assistant District Attorney Tarrance Miller



Sr. Investigator Jason Johnson



Investigator Raeisha Oliphant



Sr. Investigator Michelle Lam



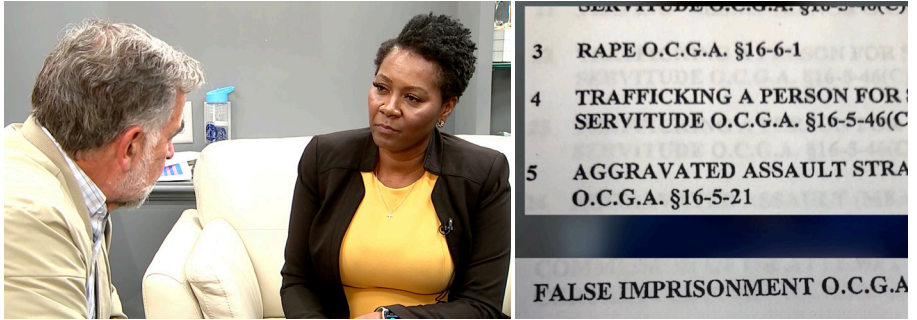
Chief Legal Assistant Patrice Stewart



Victim Witness Advocate Christen Clarke



Victim Witness Advocate Jasmyn Drummond



**State v. Anthony Stokes**

Congratulations to the Domestic Violence and Major Case Units! In the case of State v. Anthony Stokes, the Defendant was convicted of Murder. Judge Kimberly Adams sentenced the Defendant to Life without the possibility of parole.



Chief Deputy District Attorney Adam Abbate



Deputy District Attorney Asia Baysah



Chief Senior Assistant District Attorney Kassie Hall



Sr. Investigator Wesley Smith



Victim Witness Advocate Nicole Santos



Legal Assistant Nyome Griffin



# SHOUT-OUTS



**Jill Hollander**

Dear District Attorney Willis,

I am writing to thank you profusely for the incredible work being done by Jill Hollander and her team. Ms. Hollander was a presenter today at our virtual Safer Together seminar and served a key role speaking about the connection between elder abuse and the abuse of animals. There is no other office to my knowledge that has statistics on this issue, making her information truly invaluable.

Ms. Hollander was an engaging speaker as evidenced by the number of questions she received. I am confident that the information she shared today will lead to lives being saved of our elderly and also vulnerable animals, as well as quicker intervention leading to decreased suffering. I cannot overstate the importance of this knowledge being shared. Ms. Hollander is a credit to Georgia and your office. Thank you so much for all that you do on behalf of those who are vulnerable.

With gratitude,

Aislinn McCarthy-Sinclair, MSW  
*Associate Executive Director*  
Missouri Alliance for Animal Legislation



**Richard Randolph**

Dear Executive Deputy Chief  
Investigator Chief Randolph:

On behalf of the Fulton County Public Safety Training Center, Sergeant Davis and I would like to extend our sincerest appreciation for the donation of your valuable time and assisting with the Lesson Plan evaluations for ITC 23-02. Thanks to you and your expertise, seven Instructor Candidates were able to successfully complete the Instructor Training Course and will now go on to add their expertise and knowledge to the trainings of many officers to come. Without your invaluable skills and professional feedback, the successes of the ITC students would not have been achieved. It is thanks to experienced Instructors like you that will help make a considerable difference in the instruction of law enforcement professionals. Thank you again and please do not hesitate to reach out to Sergeant Davis or myself, should you have any questions, concerns, or input.

Thank you for your continued support of the Fulton County Public Safety Training Center!

Sincerely,  
Chad J. Burton

## **Anti-Corruption & Appeals**

Congrats to the Anti-Corruption and Appeals teams. Teamwork makes the dream work. Awesome reversal of the judge on the jailer case. What an amazing way for the DA to start her Wednesday. I so appreciate all your hard work. Appeals you all are doing amazing work. I know it seems to go unnoticed but trust me we all appreciate our smart lawyers.





Congratulations to our very own **Vanessa Condry** for 24 amazing years of service in Fulton County District Attorney's Office.



Congratulations to our very own **Carly Knight** for passing the Bar Exam



### ***Bo Legs: Marvin Arrington, Sr., An Atlanta Story***

District Attorney Willis had the privilege of attending a special screening of “Bo Legs: Marvin Arrington, Sr., An Atlanta Story” on October 18th, hosted at Emory University. The District Attorney shares a deep connection with Marvin Arrington, Sr.- not only is his son, Commissioner Marvin Arrington, Jr., a dear friend of hers, but both Judge Arrington and the District Attorney share a common educational background, having attended Howard University and later Emory University to pursue their legal careers. Judge Arrington holds the distinction of being one of the first two Black students to enroll in Emory University Law School on a full-time basis, setting a significant precedent for future generations. In 1969, he was elected to the Atlanta Board of Alderman, which is now known as the Atlanta City Council, and served as its president for an impressive 17 years. In 2002, former Governor Roy Barnes appointed Arrington to the Fulton County Superior Court, where he diligently served until his retirement in 2012. To commemorate his remarkable contributions, in May 2019, the Atlanta City Hall honored him by renaming its council chambers in his name.

# FULTON COUNTY DA NEWSROOM



*Atlanta Business League honors DA Fani Willis at Super Tuesday conference*

ATLANTA VOICE  
10/4/23



*Opinion: DA: Gold Dome should work with us on criminal justice in Fulton County*

AJC  
10/13/23



*No body, no crime? Fulton man convicted of murder after having 'a box the size of' victim*

WSBT  
10/18/23



*Fulton County DA: Man sentenced to life for murder of 9-month-old*

ANF  
10/23/23



*Babysitter sentenced to life in prison for the death of a 9-month-old in Sandy Springs, DA says*

WSBT  
10/24/23



*District Attorney Fani Willis Credits Howard As Part Of Her Success Story*

WSBT  
10/20/23



*Man sentenced to life after being convicted of attacking, raping woman being trafficked*

WSBT  
10/24/23

