U.S. Department of Justice

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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AWARDS $48,175 TO NORTH LITTLE ROCK POLICE DEPARTMENT TO SOLVE 'COLD CASES'

LITTLE ROCK— North Little Rock will receive $48,175 from the Department of Justice (DOJ) to help solve old, unsolved "cold" cases and identify missing persons using DNA evidence. With this funding, the North Little Rock Police Department (NLRPD) Cold Case Squad will reinvestigate old, unsolved cases through a variety of methods, including modernized DNA testing. The funds will help the NLRPD pay Cold Case Investigators working the cases and will provide funds for the purchase of new equipment for the Cold Case Squad.

Earlier today, Deputy Attorney General James B. Comey announced $14.2 million to thirty-eight jurisdictions nationwide at the first-ever DOJ conference on the missing and unidentified dead—*National Strategy Meeting: Identifying the Missing.* The grants are part of the President's DNA initiative, *Advancing Justice Through DNA Technology,* a five-year, more than $1 billion effort to eliminate casework and the convicted offender backlog; improve crime lab capacity; provide DNA training; provide for post-conviction DNA testing; and conduct testing to identify missing persons. Last fall, the Department of Justice awarded $95 million in DNA grants nationwide.

"This is just one example of steps Chief Bradley and the North Little Rock Police Department have taken to modernize their department. They should be commended for taking the initiative to obtain one of these grants," stated United States Attorney Bud Cummins.

The promise of DNA to help solve cold cases and identify the missing and deceased is endless. On average, there are over 100,000 missing persons listed in the National Crime Information System (NCIC), the national, computerized index of criminal justice information. Over 45,000 of those have a last known contact of over a year ago and just 50 of the missing persons in the NCIC have their DNA information listed. Of the 5,800 unidentified dead that are listed in the NCIC, only 33 of these have their DNA information entered into the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), a database that enables federal, state, and local crime labs to exchange and compare DNA profiles electronically, thereby linking crimes to each other and to

convicted offenders. However, there are an additional 244 DNA profiles of unidentified human remains in CODIS that are not recorded in NCIC.

According to a study funded by the National Institute of Justice, the research, development and evaluation arm of the Department of Justice, researchers estimate that biological evidence either still in the possession of local law enforcement or backlogged at forensic crime laboratories is estimated to be 542,700. With these grants, the Departmemt of Justice has made sure that local jurisdictions, which often have the greatest DNA backlogs, are directly awarded DNA money.

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