



ANNUAL REPORT 2024

U.S. Attorney's Office
Middle District of Pennsylvania

John C. Gurganus
Acting United States Attorney





U.S. Attorney's Office Middle District of Pennsylvania

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Message from Acting U.S. Attorney John C. Gurganus



I'm pleased to present the 2024 Annual Report of the United States Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Pennsylvania. As public servants, we are accountable to the citizens we serve and our efforts at transparency include publicizing our work and accomplishments. The U.S. Attorney's Office, along with our partner agencies, had many successes in 2024. This Annual Report is a summary of those accomplishments and highlights the achievements in each major program of our office which seek to improve the safety and quality of life for the people of our district.

Over the past year, we successfully prosecuted numerous individuals engaged in drug trafficking, violent crimes, public corruption, fraud, human trafficking, child exploitation, civil rights violations, and various other federal crimes. Our office also successfully represented the interests of the federal government in various civil matters including representing numerous government agencies and officials in defensive litigation and obtaining significant monetary recoveries in affirmative civil litigation. We also supported various outreach programs designed to prevent violence and recidivism, and build community relations.

The accomplishments summarized in this report are due to the hard work of our dedicated professionals, including the steady leadership of former United States Attorney Gerard M. Karam. His devotion to the law and the citizens of the Middle District are evident and without his leadership, the accomplishments listed in this report would not have been possible.

It's an honor to work with the members of this office and with our federal, state, and local law enforcement partners to seek justice and make the Middle District of Pennsylvania safer.

I trust that the report will give you a fuller understanding of our mission. We invite you to read more and share your suggestions with us at <https://www.justice.gov/usao-mdpa>. Follow us on "X" @MDPAnews.

John C. Gurganus
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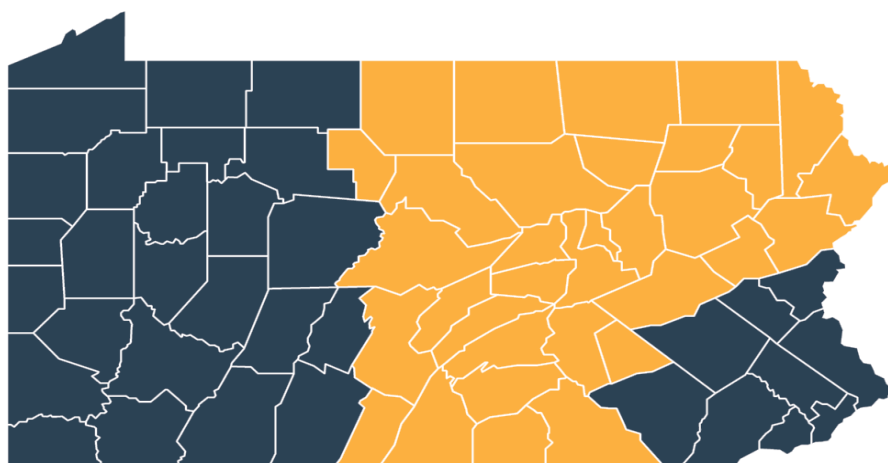
Our Mission & Geographical Area

The United States Attorney's Office represents the United States in the Middle District of Pennsylvania in the prosecution of criminal cases brought by the federal government, civil cases in which the United States is a party, and collection of debts owed to the federal government.

The Middle District of Pennsylvania extends over 21,907 square miles and contains 33 counties with over three million residents. The U.S. Attorney's Office is comprised of four offices located in Scranton, Harrisburg, Williamsport, and Wilkes-Barre.

The U.S. Attorney's Office represents the United States in legal proceedings for 14 federal institutions and enclaves within the Middle District of Pennsylvania. Federal institutions and enclaves within the district include: Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area; Steamtown National Recreation Center; Tobyhanna Army Depot; Wilkes-Barre Veterans Administration Medical Center; Tioga-Hammond Lakes Dams; U.S. Army War College and Carlisle Barracks; the Navy Inventory Control Point, in Mechanicsburg; the Defense Distribution Depot, Susquehanna (DDSP); Fort Indiantown Gap; Lebanon Veterans Administration Medical Center; Raystown National Recreation Area; Letterkenny Army Depot; and Gettysburg National Military Park.

A significant component of the office's civil workload arises from the presence in the district of four major federal correctional complexes: Allenwood, Canaan, Lewisburg, and Schuylkill. With a population of approximately 6,000 inmates, the facilities constitute one of the largest concentrations of federal inmate populations in the country. In addition, immigration and customs enforcement detainees are presently housed in county facilities in our district.



U.S. Attorney's Office
Middle District of Pennsylvania

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U.S. Attorney's Office, Middle District of Pennsylvania — At a Glance

The District is categorized as a medium-sized U.S. Attorney's Office by the Department of Justice and is comprised of four offices: Harrisburg, Scranton, Williamsport, and Wilkes-Barre (unstaffed). The Office is comprised of:

- 90 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) positions
- 1 United States Attorney
- 44 Assistant United States Attorneys
- 45 Support Staff

Federal Law Enforcement Agencies

The Middle District works closely with many Federal Investigative Agencies:

- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF)
- Department of Commerce
- Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)
- Environmental Protection Agency
- Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
- Fish and Wildlife Services
- Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- Health and Human Services (HHS)
- Homeland Security Investigations (HSI)
- Internal Revenue Service (IRS)
- Department of Labor
- Marshals Service
- Postal Inspection Service
- Secret Service
- Social Security Administration
- Department of Transportation
- Department of Veterans Affairs

Criminal Assistant United States Attorneys

First Assistant U.S. Attorney:

John C. Gurganus

Chief:

Bruce D. Brandler

Deputy Chiefs:

Francis Sempa

Michelle Olshefski

Chief, Appeals Unit:

Carlo D. Marchioli

Harrisburg:

William Behe

Michael Consiglio

Stephen Dukes

Scott Ford

Christian Haugsby

Carlo D. Marchioli

Kenneth Mishoe

Ravi Sharma

Michael Scalera

Joseph Terz

David Williams

Scranton:

James Buchanan

Sean Camoni

Gerard Donahue

Todd Hinkley

Michelle Olshefski

Jenny Roberts

Jeffrey St John

Luisa Honora Berti

Tatum Wilson

Kyle Moreno

Sarah Lloyd

Williamsport:

Geoffrey MacArthur

Alisan Martin

Robyn Zenzinger

Criminal Division

The mission of the Criminal Division is to prosecute federal criminal cases. Within the Criminal Division are several specialized areas of concentration including:

- Terrorism and National Security
- Public Corruption
- Economic Crimes
- Government Program Fraud/Health Care Fraud
- Violent Crimes and Firearms Offenses
- Drug Trafficking
- Tax Fraud
- Environmental Crimes
- Computer Crimes
- Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking
- Immigration
- Civil Rights
- Appeals

Assistant United States Attorneys indicted approximately 288 cases involving 384 defendants, and handled 13 criminal trials in 2024.

A defendant is presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty.



Enforcement

COVID-19. The U.S. Attorney's Office has prosecuted numerous fraud schemes targeting COVID-19 relief funds:

- *U.S. v. Yoel Weiss.* A 42-year-old Scranton man was charged in an indictment on November 5, 2024, with 41 combined counts of wire fraud, false statements to the Small Business Administration, identity theft, unlawful monetary transactions, and witness tampering. The indictment alleged that Weiss owned and operated multiple corporate entities in Pennsylvania and New York. Weiss allegedly filed at least seven fraudulent applications for pandemic stimulus funds through the Economic Injury and Disaster Loan (EIDL) program. The applications allegedly submitted by Weiss were filed on behalf of corporate entities that did not, in fact, have actual business operations, and that bore false dates of business establishment, false employee headcount information, and fabricated gross revenues, costs of goods sold, and lost rental income. Weiss allegedly obtained in excess of approximately \$850,000 in EIDL funds through filing the fraudulent applications, which he spent on unapproved personal expenses. Weiss is further charged with threatening and intimidating a witness in an attempt to influence and prevent the witness's testimony before a federal grand jury. Weiss is awaiting his next court hearing.
- *U.S. v. Christopher J. Miller.* A 36-year-old Newfoundland man was sentenced on June 28, 2024, to 149 months in prison following his conviction of bank fraud, aggravated identity theft, and unlawful monetary transactions. Miller filed approximately 50 fraudulent applications for pandemic stimulus funds, including under the Payment Protection Program (PPP), for Economic Injury and Disaster Loans (EIDLs), and for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefits. Some of the applications submitted by Miller were filed on behalf of corporate entities under his control that did not have actual business operations. Miller failed to disclose in the applications that he was previously convicted of a felony. Miller also filed fraudulent applications on behalf of himself and others. In exchange, he received cash kick-backs. Miller and his associates secured over \$2.1 million in pandemic stimulus funds.
- *U.S. v. Tanner Uffelman.* A 29-year-old York man was sentenced on June 13, 2024, to time served of approximately 13 months in prison for conspiracy to commit wire fraud. From 2020 to 2021, Uffelman submitted false applications to states seeking unemployment compensation claiming that unemployment was a result of the Covid 19 pandemic. Uffelman used identifications of numerous innocent victims and submitted the false claims in Massachusetts, Maryland, North Carolina, and California. The fraud scheme included over \$40,000 from the various states.
- *U.S. v. Takiyah Gordon Austin.* A 47-year-old Wilkes-Barre woman was sentenced to 36 months in prison and ordered to pay \$288,590 in restitution for a scheme to fraudulently obtain unemployment benefits related to COVID-19 emergency relief funds. Austin, a claims specialist with the Social Security Administration, filed PUA claims for ineligible recipients in exchange for payment from the individuals. Austin filed claims after accessing SSA databases to obtain the personal identifying information from unsuspecting individuals and then diverted the unemployment funds to addresses she controlled in order to use the funds for her own personal expenses.

Public Corruption. Combating public corruption in federal, state, and local government remains a priority for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Middle District of Pennsylvania. Corruption in federal, state, and local government directly damages our citizens. The people of the district deserve honest government at every level.

- *U.S. v. Paul Helring.* A 48-year-old former Scranton police officer and former elected police union president was sentenced on June 4, 2024, to six months in prison and ordered to pay \$17,831.40 in restitution and a \$5,000 fine for theft concerning programs receiving federal funds. Helring, while serving as the coordinator of Scranton Police Department's extra duty overtime program, knowingly obtained by fraud over \$5,000.00 in compensation paid to him for extra duty patrol shifts at several local, lower-income housing complexes that Helring claimed to work but did not in fact work.
- *U.S. v. Harry Brown and Richard Clink.* Two former Minersville Police Officers were indicted for depriving the civil rights of another under the color of law and for making false reports, on October 8, 2024. The indictment alleged that on or about February 2, 2022, while acting under the color of law, Brown and Clink, aiding and abetting each other, deprived an arrestee of his constitutional right to be free from the use of unreasonable force by a law enforcement officer. This alleged use of unreasonable force led to bodily injury of the arrestee. The indictment further alleged that both Brown and Clink falsified, covered up, and made false entries into police reports documenting the arrest and their use of force during that arrest. Defendants are awaiting trial.
- *U.S. v. Steven Stambaugh.* A York County Judge was indicted on October 8, 2024, with twenty-six counts of wire fraud, two counts of mail fraud, two counts of tampering with a witness, and one count of obstruction of justice. It is alleged that Stambaugh devised

a scheme to defraud the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to obtain money through materially false and fraudulent pretenses, representations, and promises. The indictment charged that Stambaugh instructed his employees to file and collect unemployment compensation benefits with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania during the COVID-19 pandemic, while at the same time directing and requiring his employees to continue working for Stambaugh Law, P.C. In furtherance of the scheme to defraud, it is alleged that Stambaugh caused the use of interstate wire communications, as well as the delivery of mail matter via interstate mail deliveries. The indictment further alleged that beginning in April 2021 through November 2022, Stambaugh attempted to intimidate and corruptly persuade a government witness to offer false testimony before a federal grand jury and to lie to federal law enforcement officers, and also attempted to obstruct justice while serving as a judicial officer for the Pennsylvania Court of Common Pleas for York County. Stambaugh is awaiting trial.

- *U.S. v. Kyle Schauer.* A former Mt. Carmel Borough police officer pleaded guilty on October 24, 2024, to conspiracy to deprive rights under the color of law. Schauer and his codefendants were charged for their involvement in a conspiracy to violate the civil rights of those they arrested over a three-year period. It was alleged that in 22 different arrests, they kicked, punched, choked, and used excessive force against those they were arresting and caused bodily injuries to their victims. It was further alleged that defendants took steps to ensure that video of the arrests were not captured by police cameras or if it was, took steps to ensure that footage was not preserved. They falsely reported that arrestees acted in a manner requiring violence and then charged arrestees with aggravated assault, resisting arrest, and related offenses to conceal their own use of violence. Schauer is awaiting sentencing. Codefendants Jonathan McHugh and David Donkochik are awaiting trial.



Project Safe Childhood (PSC) Prosecutions.

Project Safe Childhood is a nationwide initiative to combat the epidemic of child sexual exploitation and abuse. The U.S. Attorney's Office for the Middle District embraces its commitment to the protection of our children. Advances in technology over the past two decades have brought about new obstacles for parents, educators, and law enforcement. Our district is committed to aggressively targeting those who would harm children. The Office aims to investigate and prosecute those criminals vigorously, and protect and assist victimized children.

- *U.S. v. Christopher Capozza.* A 42-year-old Connecticut man was sentenced on February 22, 2024, to 210 months' imprisonment for online enticement of a minor and production of child pornography. Capozza used Snapchat to persuade a minor to engage in illegal sexual activity, including to engage in sexual intercourse, and to travel with him to Connecticut and Massachusetts for the purposes of continuing their illegal sexual activity together. Capozza enticed the same minor victim to make several pornographic videos and then send those videos to him via Snapchat.
- *U.S. v. Luke Shager.* A 37-year-old New Milford man was sentenced on March 7, 2024, to 262 months in prison for transmitting multiple images and videos of children engaged in sexually explicit conduct. Law enforcement officials executed a search warrant at Shager's New Milford residence and seized four cellular telephones that contained over 1,200 images and videos of child pornography, including 2 self-produced videos depicting Shager engaging in sexual contact with a minor under the age of 12.
- *U.S. v. Alkayan Khan.* A 37-year-old New York man was sentenced on June 24, 2024, to 360 months in prison for coercing a minor victim to create and then send him photographs of herself engaging in sexually explicit conduct. Khan, a family friend of the minor victim's family, had used his position of trust within the family to engage in a years' long pattern of abuse against the minor victim. Ultimately, the minor victim became pregnant with Khan's child and Khan coerced the minor victim to falsely report that she had been raped in her middle school's bathroom by an unknown assailant. The victim ultimately admitted that Khan was her child's father and that he had coerced her to concoct the story.
- *U.S. v. Brian Wilder.* A 54-year-old Jefferson City, Missouri man was sentenced on September 17, 2024, to 240 months in prison for participating in an online chat using the Kik application, with Mason Morey, age 27, of Lebanon, PA. Wilder purported to be a young woman during these online conversations and directed Morey to sexually abuse two minor children, ages 3 and 5. At Wilder's request and direction, Morey transmitted numerous videos and images of himself sexually abusing the children to Wilder. Morey was sentenced to 300 months in prison.
- *U.S. v. Christopher J. Cordes.* A 29-year-old former Tamaqua Police Officer was charged on October 24, 2024, for allegedly communicating with at least one minor victim on a social media platform, whom he attempted to solicit for child pornography. Additionally, Cordes is alleged to have used at least one social media platform to attempt to receive child pornography and to have created and then sent images to at least one minor victim, and others, depicting himself engaged in sexual activity with animals. Cordes is awaiting his next court hearing.



Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN). Project Safe Neighborhoods Program is the centerpiece of the Department of Justice’s violent crime reduction efforts. PSN is an evidence-based program proven to be effective at reducing violent crime. Through PSN, a broad spectrum of stakeholders work together to identify the most pressing violent crime problems in the community and develop comprehensive solutions to address them. As part of this strategy, PSN focuses enforcement efforts on the most violent offenders and partners with locally based prevention and reentry programs for lasting reductions in crime. The United States Attorney’s Office for the Middle District of PA has in place a multi-faceted program to reduce violent crime within the district. Gun violence, driven mostly by drug trafficking or by neighborhood rivalries and gangs, is identified as the main problem in many of the larger, more populated counties within the district. The U.S. Attorney’s Office endeavors to disrupt violent crime by pursuing appropriate prison sentences and seeking forfeitures of crime-derived assets to deter dangerous individuals from continuing to harm our communities. Through enforcement actions, prosecutions, and community partnerships, the U.S. Attorney’s Office works to lower violent crime and make neighborhoods safer.

**PSN Target Areas:
Harrisburg, York, Wilkes-Barre,
and Williamsport.**

Enforcement Actions — Violent Crime Initiative.

The MDPA adopted a renewed strategy for reducing and preventing violent crime in the Middle District focusing on the Harrisburg, York, Wilkes-Barre, and Williamsport areas. Federal, state, and local law enforcement officers joined forces to coordinate their activities in high-crime areas and vigorously enforce the laws, which punish gun offenses, gang activity, drug-related crimes, and other acts of violence. Since 2014, federal, state, and local officials have partnered and operated a program based in Harrisburg focusing on firearms offenses committed by recidivists or individuals using firearms in connection with drug offenses, or other violent crimes. Due to the success of that program, it was expanded to include firearms offenses in York, Williamsport, and Wilkes-Barre. Violent crime damages and destabilizes our neighborhoods, challenging our citizens as they strive to raise their families and be productive members of society. By coordinating efforts with our state and local law enforcement partners, we can ensure that law enforcement resources are being brought to bear in the most effective way possible to protect the people we serve.

Prosecution Activity. The U.S. Attorney’s Office remains active in the fight against violent crime through various enforcement actions, prosecutions, and sentencings, as demonstrated by the examples below:

- *U.S. v. Kyle Jadon Morales.* A 21-year-old Harrisburg man was sentenced to 230 months in prison on June 21, 2024, following his conviction for robberies of McDonald’s restaurants, Sheetz convenience stores, and United Bank during a 12-day crime spree in the states of Pennsylvania, Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. As part of these robberies, Morales pointed a handgun at employees and took money by means of actual and threatened violence and fear of injury.



- *U.S. v. Christopher Van Johnson, et. al.* Johnson was sentenced to seven consecutive life sentences on July 17, 2024, for the murder of three people including a federal witness. The charges against Johnson were the result of a seven-year investigation into three brutal murders of Wendy Ann Chaney, Brandon Cole, and Phillip Matthew Jackson, in a barn on victim Jackson's property. Wendy Chaney was in a relationship with co-defendants Kevin Coles and Torey White and had been previously assisting both with their drug distribution operations. Co-defendant Kenyatta Corbett was likewise a heroin trafficker in Hagerstown and areas of PA and WV. Corbett, Coles, White and co-defendant Devin Dickerson learned that Chaney was cooperating with federal authorities and contracted for her to be murdered. Corbett, and co-defendant Jerell Adegbesan who worked for Corbett recruited Johnson, who was a member of a Baltimore based gang known as the Black Guerilla Family (BGF), and other members of BGF from Baltimore, to travel to the Jackson property to kill Wendy Chaney. Johnson and the killers were promised that they could take as payment for Chaney's murder \$20,000 that was to be in a safe in the barn and any drugs and firearms that they could locate on the Jackson property. Once there, the killers encountered not only Wendy Chaney but also Brandon Cole and Phillip Jackson. The victims had their hands bound behind their backs with zip-ties and their bodies set on fire. Chaney was killed to protect the drug trafficking activities of Corbett, Coles, White, Dickerson, and others. Jackson and Cole were murdered to prevent them from being witnesses to the crimes of violence that were committed at the Jackson property. The killers never found any money on the property but stole some drugs and firearms. A total of 15 individuals were charged in relation to the murders. Defendants sentenced thus far who were involved in the murders have received sentences ranging from multiple consecutive life sentences to 30 years in prison.
- *U.S. v. Mark S. Herrick.* A 47-year-old Hanover man pleaded guilty on September 24, 2024, for robbing, or attempting to rob, five different businesses with a knife. The five businesses stretched across three counties within the Middle District of Pennsylvania. He is awaiting sentencing.
- *U.S. v. Steven Wong and Solomon Rodriguez.* Two members of Infamous Ryders Motorcycle Club were convicted on June 21, 2024, for conspiracy to commit Hobbs Act Robbery, firearms conspiracy, attempted Hobbs Act Robbery, and two counts of use of firearms. Wong was the president of the Schuylkill County chapter of the Infamous Ryders Motorcycle Club, of which Solomon Rodriguez was a member. Wong used his position to recruit members of the motorcycle club to participate in a series of brutal home-invasion armed robberies in Schuylkill and Berks County in the summer and fall of 2020. Wong rewarded loyal members involved in the conspiracy with money and free drugs. During these home invasion robberies, two or three members of the conspiracy would enter the homes of local street-level drug dealers while wearing masks and armed with firearms and knives and rob the victims of drugs and drug proceeds. One of the firearms used was a fully automatic homemade AR-15 style assault rifle. Defendants are awaiting sentencing.
- *U.S. v. Damen Drakeford.* A 30-year-old Wilkes-Barre man was sentenced on March 7, 2024, to 84 months in prison for committing four bank robberies. A total of \$32,988 was taken in the robberies.

Heroin and Opioid Policy. The MDPA continues a policy to prosecute heroin and opioid cases and request substantial sentences for individuals who traffic in these deadly drugs. Some cases that emphasize those efforts include:

- *U.S. v. Antoine Montgomery.* A 34-year-old Wilkes-Barre man was sentenced to 108 months in prison for trafficking in fentanyl. Montgomery was arrested during the DEA's Operation Overdrive which targeted drug trafficking, firearms and violent crimes in Wilkes Barre and surrounding areas. A federal search warrant was served on a residence and parked vehicle controlled by Montgomery and agents seized 300 grams of fentanyl and fluorofentanyl, together with crack cocaine and cocaine. Codefendant Jamal Jenkins was sentenced to 36 months in prison.
- *U.S. v. Anthony Bressi.* A 52-year-old Danville man was convicted on November 4, 2024, on charges of conspiracy to manufacture and distribute fentanyl, carfentanil and 3-methylfentanyl, and possession with intent to distribute acetyl fentanyl. Bressi used his business, Shiva Science and Technology, in East Buffalo Township to make various fentanyl analogues that he would then sell to his distributors in Philadelphia and the Cleveland, OH areas. Although the Shiva business purported to be engaged in cutting edge technology, a search warrant executed showed that it was front company designed to conceal a fentanyl manufacturing operation that manufactured hundreds of kilograms of fentanyl analogues.
- *U.S. v. Bruce Darby and Malik Bonds.* Darby was sentenced on October 22, 2024, to life in prison and Bonds was sentenced on June 17, 2024, to 156 months in prison following their conviction for their roles in a drug trafficking ring that distributed fentanyl, oxycodone, and cocaine. A delivery of fentanyl killed one of the customers and sickened others. Darby brought oxycodone pills from New York City and resold them in the Chambersburg area.
- *U.S. v. Federico Rosario.* A 30-year-old Scranton man was convicted on November 18, 2024, for selling a mixture containing fentanyl and cocaine to a 17-year-old who ingested the mixture and died shortly thereafter. Rosario was also found guilty of three additional sales of cocaine to the same victim. He is awaiting sentencing.
- *U.S. v. Asiana Christine Williams.* A 30-year-old Wilkes-Barre woman was sentenced on November 21, 2024, to 360 months in prison following her conviction for selling a quantity of fentanyl to a woman who ingested the fentanyl and died within two hours of the sale.
- *U.S. v. James P. Cullen and Michelle Ferranti.* Two Bartonsville individuals were charged in December 2024, by a federal grand jury for conspiring to distribute in excess of 400 grams of fentanyl and heroin. The indictment alleged that defendants obtained fentanyl and heroin from other coconspirators located in New Jersey, marketed the narcotics on the Darkweb, and then used fabricated names to distribute the narcotics. They allegedly mailed fentanyl and heroin to nearly every state in the United States, and to several foreign countries. As a result, it is alleged that three different individuals located in Vermont, Georgia, and Alaska overdosed and died from the fentanyl. The individual in Alaska was a juvenile. They are awaiting trial.

Drug traffickers who are responsible for overdose deaths and non-fatal overdoses resulting in serious bodily harm caused by their product are aggressively prosecuted as demonstrated below:



The following are opioid cases relating to medical professionals who committed serious drug crimes in the District:

- *U.S. v. Martin Evers.* A Pike County physician was sentenced to 22 years in prison on February 12, 2024, for repeatedly prescribing oxycodone, fentanyl, methadone, and diazepam outside the usual course of professional practice and not for legitimate medical purposes. As a result of unlawful prescribing, addiction occurred in his patients and the death of a 48-year-old Monroe County woman who died as a result of using the drugs.

The following case is related to controlled prescription medication:

- *U.S. v. Donte Lucas and Jania Aceituno.* Defendants were indicted on July 10, 2024 for allegedly using stolen identities and DEA registration numbers of healthcare providers to order fraudulent prescription medications at various pharmacies. The indictment further alleged that Lucas, Aceituno, and their coconspirators obtained and distributed those prescription medications, including the controlled substance Promethazine with Codeine—commonly known as “Lean” on the street. Defendants are awaiting trial.

Methamphetamines

- *U.S. v. Tylee Brown.* A 39-year-old Norris-town man was sentenced on April 23, 2024, to 19 years in prison for possessing between 1.5 kilograms and 5 kilograms of high-quality crystal methamphetamine for further distribution in the Susquehanna County .

- *U.S. v. Anthony and James Disabella.* Two Hazleton men were each sentenced to serve 10 years in prison on September 12, 2024, for distributing at least 500 grams of pure methamphetamine to other street level distributors and drug addicts.

Marijuana

- *U.S. v. Christopher Texidor.* A 36-year-old Harrisburg man was sentenced to 292 months in prison on December 11, 2024, following his conviction of trafficking over 1,000 kilograms of marijuana and hiring gunmen to protect his illegal activities. Texidor and his codefendants operated a marijuana smuggling operation out of Fastlane Auto Sales, a used car lot located in Harrisburg. Texidor and his codefendants arranged to have his drug source in California mail hundreds of parcels full of marijuana to Harrisburg through the U.S. Mail. In the same way, they regularly mailed tens of thousands of dollars in cash back to the California source. Texidor and his codefendants used a sophisticated system of GPS tracking devices, which they placed in their parcels, to keep track of their drugs and money. Through this the scheme, over 9,000 thousand pounds of suspected marijuana parcels, worth millions of dollars, were brought to the Harrisburg area. Texidor and his codefendants used guns, robbery, and kidnapping as tools to keep their criminal operation running. Texidor and his codefendants hired a gunmen to stop thefts. The gunmen shot up a truck in Harrisburg connected to the suspected thief; they shot into an occupied home in Susquehanna Township where the suspected thief was sleeping; and they shot into an occupied home in Steelton that they guessed was connected to the suspected thief. They ultimately robbed the suspected thief at gunpoint in Highspire. Some codefendants have pleaded and others have received sentences ranging from 57 months in prison to 156 months in prison for their roles in the marijuana drug ring. Those that pleaded guilty are awaiting sentencing.



Cocaine

- *U.S. v. Jose Torres.* A 29-year-old El Paso, TX man was sentenced to 10 years in prison on March 12, 2023, for possessing between 15 kilograms and 50 kilograms of cocaine for further distribution in the Lackawanna County. Codefendant Luis Gonzalez also received a 10-year sentence.
- *U.S. v. Moniqua Ramirez.* A 44-year-old woman was sentenced on May 28, 2024, to 40 months in prison for conspiring with others to smuggle kilograms of cocaine into Central Pennsylvania through the U.S. Mail. The cocaine was shipped in Puerto Rico and mailed to various drop locations in Lancaster, where the parcels were retrieved by conspirators for further distribution. They also engaged in street level drug trafficking, including selling heroin and fentanyl to customers. The conspirators transported cash back to Puerto Rico in furtherance of the trafficking. Her coconspirators received sentences ranging from 36 to 150 months in prison.
- *U.S. v. Kevin Marrero-Morales.* A York County man was sentenced on August 20, 2024, to 10 years in prison for conspiring with others to smuggle kilograms of cocaine from Puerto Rico to York, Pennsylvania. Co-defendants are awaiting their next court hearings.



Organized Crime Drug Enforcement Task Force (OCDETF).

OCDETF is a joint federal, state, and local cooperative approach to combat organized criminal activity and is the nation's primary tool for disrupting and dismantling major drug trafficking organizations, and targeting national and regional level drug trafficking organizations. The cases below illustrate this initiative:

- *U.S. v. Durante King-Mclean, et. al..* Four individuals were indicted on charges related to attempted international arms trafficking. The indictment alleged that King-Mclean was stopped by Pennsylvania State Police on September 2, 2023, in Franklin County, PA, after several motor vehicle violations were observed. It is further alleged that King-Mclean, who was illegally in the United States from Canada, fled on foot when troopers discovered firearms in the rental vehicle. A court authorized search warrant for the vehicle led to the recovery of 65 firearms that were allegedly destined to be illegally smuggled into Canada. Two of those firearms were fully automatic and considered machine guns under federal law. Eleven of the firearms were determined to be stolen, and one firearm had an obliterated serial number. The indictment further alleges that Prasath Paramalingam was involved in the conspiracy with persons known and unknown to the grand jury, including King-Mclean, to arrange for King-Mclean's illegal entry into the United States. While King-Mclean was in the United States, Paramalingam allegedly arranged funding for King-Mclean to purchase the various firearms which he obtained in Florida, Georgia and elsewhere as King-Mclean traveled back towards Canada and through Franklin County. Archit Grover and Jalisa Edwards were charged by the grand jury as accessories after the fact for their alleged assistance to King-Mclean after his arrest to conceal evidence concerning his attempted gun smuggling and provide co-conspirators with information regarding the scope of the investigation, among other things. Defendants are awaiting trial.



Firearms. Reducing gun violence and enforcing federal firearms laws have always been among the office's highest priorities. Examples of this type of prosecution follow:

- *U.S. v. Jeremy Anderson.* A 28-year-old West Hazleton man was sentenced on September 10, 2024, to 60 months in prison for possessing a firearm in furtherance of a drug trafficking crime. Anderson was a target of a DEA investigation and following a search of his residence, vehicle and storage unit, 10 grams of fentanyl, a loaded Ruger 9mm pistol, and \$28,457 was found.
- *U.S. v. Delvin Hutchinson.* A 33-year-old Stroudsburg man was convicted on September 4, 2024, for purchasing six firearms in three separate transactions at a sporting goods store within a 19-day period. When investigators from ATF interviewed Hutchinson, he was in possession of none of the firearms and claimed that some of the firearms had been stolen. Testimony presented at trial showed that his story regarding the theft was false and that he had "straw purchased" the firearms for one or more other individuals. In connection with the purchase of the firearms, Hutchinson completed federal forms in which he falsely stated that he was purchasing the firearms for himself, when in fact he was purchasing the firearms for one or more other individuals. He is awaiting sentencing.
- *U.S. v. Victorious Minter.* A 28-year-old Scranton man was sentenced on June 28, 2024, to 100 months in prison for possessing a loaded Glock 22 .40 caliber semi-automatic pistol, loaded with 24 rounds in an extended magazine, after having previously been convicted of a crime punishable by more than one year in prison. Minter had waived the gun at another driver on the North Scranton Expressway during a road rage incident. After the other driver called 911, officers with the Scranton Police Department spotted Minter's car and conducted a traffic stop. During that stop, the loaded pistol was discovered stuffed in the front passenger seat next to Minter's girlfriend. Minter's two-year-old child was also in the backseat of the car.
- *U.S. v. Donovan Lee Smallwood.* A 25-year-old McSherrystown man was sentenced on May 29, 2024, to 12 months and one day imprisonment for purchasing a total of four 9mm handguns on two separate occasions from a licensed firearms dealer. At the time of the purchases, Smallwood falsely stated that he was the actual purchaser. One of the firearms was subsequently used in a homicide and a separate carjacking.
- *U.S. v. Riley Simmons.* A 32-year-old Harrisburg man was sentenced on January 16, 2024, to time-served of 13 months in prison for making false statements during the purchase of a firearm. Simmons purchased five firearms from Federal Firearms Licensees in Dauphin and Cumberland Counties, knowing that they were for friends who were prohibited from possessing them due to prior felony convictions. Three of the firearms were later recovered in possession of felons with whom Simmons lived or associated. One of the firearms was used in a Harrisburg shooting in February 2019 and one bore the print of an individual wanted for attempted murder in Williamsport. Two of the firearms remain missing today.



Photo credit: Freepik

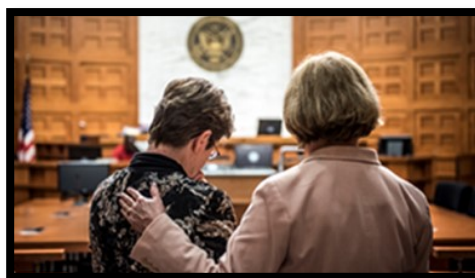


Elder Justice Initiative. The Department of Justice Elder Justice Initiative promotes investigations and prosecutions of financial scams targeting the elderly, and prosecution of crimes involving elder fraud and abuse. The cases below illustrate this initiative:

- *U.S. v. Rohan Lyttle, et. al.* Lyttle was sentenced to 97 months, Caron Pitter was sentenced to 66 months, and Charlene Marshall was sentenced to 34 months in prison and each defendant was ordered to pay a total of \$245,147.98 following their conviction for fraud and money laundering using funds from a Jamaican elderly lottery scam victims. An individual based in Jamaica posing as a representative of Publisher’s Clearing House used “lead lists” containing the names and personal information of elderly Americans who were contacted by phone and email and falsely told that they had won multimillion-dollar prizes through Publisher’s Clearing House but needed to prepay taxes and other fees in order to claim their supposed prizes. These elderly individuals were then directed to make payments by sending packages containing tens of thousands of U.S. dollars through the U.S. Postal Service, UPS, and Federal Express; and transmitting funds through bank-to-bank wire transfers, Zelle, MoneyGram, and Western Union. The fraudsters also gained access to victims’ credit cards and Amazon accounts and used those accounts to purchase goods. They also obtained debit cards for victims’ checking accounts and used those cards to make cash withdrawals at ATMs located in Jamaica. A 79-year-old former resident of Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, a 71-year-old

resident of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and a 91-year-old resident of Walterboro, South Carolina testified at trial. Collectively, these victims lost over \$1.1 million in connection with this fraud scheme.

- *U.S. v. Josiah DeJesus, et. al.* A 22-year-old New York man was sentenced on February 29, 2024, to 80 months in prison and ordered to pay \$366,303.28 in restitution for serving as a coordinating courier in a Dominican Republic-based “grandparents” fraud scheme that preyed upon elderly, American victims from states across the country. DeJesus, along with four codefendants that he recruited, regularly traveled from New York City to various locations in Pennsylvania and Ohio to retrieve UPS and Fed Ex packages containing thousands of dollars in cash. These packages were sent by elderly victims, who were induced to send the money based upon false claims that their grandchildren had been arrested and charged with serious vehicular crimes and, consequently, were in immediate need of money. These false claims were made to the elderly victims in phone calls that they received from DeJesus’ overseas co-conspirators in the Dominican Republic, who posed either as the victims’ grandchildren or as attorneys representing the victims’ grandchildren. Codefendants were sentenced from time-served to 21 months in prison.





Human Trafficking. Prosecuting those who traffic individuals against their will and force them into labor, services, or commercial sexual exploitation are among the office's highest priorities. Examples of this type of prosecution follow:

- *U.S. v. Viktoriia Zakirova, et al.* Zakirova pleaded guilty on April 3, 2024 to conspiracy to commit an offense against the United States. Four defendants in total were indicted on June 8, 2023, on charges related to a prostitution enterprise called XO Companions, or XOC. The indictment charged each defendant with conspiring to transport women in interstate and foreign commerce with intent that the women engage in prostitution and conspiring to persuade women to travel to engage in prostitution. The indictment further charged Panin and Jennie and Tracey Lawson with money laundering. The indictment alleged that Panin and Viktoriia Zakirova recruited women in Russia and other Eastern European countries to travel to the United States to work as prostitutes for XO Companions. Once in the United States, XO Companions workers traveled throughout the country to meet with clients in major cities. XO Companions workers typically sent cash prostitution proceeds to the Lawsons, who in turn transported the money to Panin in Florida. Additionally, the defendants operated a password-protected website through which clients could view schedules, view services offered, reserve time, and provide reviews. The remaining defendants are awaiting trial.

Interstate Transportation in Stolen Property and Smuggling. Prosecuting those that transport known stolen goods over state lines is among the office's priorities. Example of this type of prosecution follows:

- *U.S. v. Angelo Pereyra and Andrew Ensanian.* Two men pleaded guilty on June 24, 2024, to causing stolen human remains to be transported between Kansas and Pennsylvania. These charges resulted from a multi-year investigation into the nationwide trafficking of stolen human remains. Multiple defendants have been charged previously in the Middle District of Pennsylvania, and three have thus far entered guilty pleas. An additional defendant has been charged and convicted in Arkansas. None have yet been sentenced.

Torture. Prosecuting those that intentionally inflict severe physical or mental pain or suffering on a person by a public official or other person acting in an official capacity is among the office's highest priorities. Example of this type of prosecution follows:

- *U.S. v. Ross Roggio.* A 54-year-old Stroudsburg man was sentenced on April 15, 2024, to 70 years in prison following his conviction of torturing an Estonian citizen in the Kurdistan region of Iraq, in connection with the operation of an illegal weapons manufacturing plant in Kurdistan, exporting weapons parts to Iraq, wire fraud, money laundering, and smuggling goods. Roggio arranged for Kurdish soldiers to abduct and detain the victim at a Kurdish military compound where Roggio suffocated the victim with a belt, threatened to cut off one of his fingers, and directed Kurdish soldiers to repeatedly beat, tase, choke, and otherwise physically and mentally abuse the victim over a 39-day period. The victim was employed at a weapons factory that Roggio was developing in the Kurdistan region of Iraq that was intended to manufacture M4 automatic rifles and Glock 9mm pistols.

Fraud. The U.S. Attorney's Office handles a wide variety of fraud cases, including health care fraud, identity theft, mail fraud, bankruptcy fraud, bank fraud, corporate fraud, program fraud, tax fraud, investment fraud, counterfeiting, and environmental crimes.

Tax Evasion

- *U.S. v. Brandon Aumiller.* A Milroy man was sentenced on September 5, 2024, to 24 months in prison for evading his personal and employment taxes. Milroy, owned an insurance sales business. Aumiller filed personal income tax returns reporting that he owed taxes, but did not pay them. He also filed employment tax returns for his business reporting that it owed taxes for the third quarter of 2013 and the first two quarters of 2014, but did not pay those taxes. When the IRS sought to collect the taxes Aumiller admitted he owed, Aumiller engaged in a multi-year scheme to thwart the IRS' efforts by concealing his assets in nominee bank accounts, structuring multiple real estate deals to conceal the transactions from the IRS, and submitting false financial disclosure forms to the IRS that did not fully disclose his bank accounts and his real estate assets. In total, Aumiller caused a tax loss to the IRS of \$478,270.
- *U.S. v. Leidi Paulino.* The owner of LP Multi-services, a tax preparation business, was sentenced to 24 months in prison on January 19, 2024, to assisting clients in preparing and filing tax returns that were materially false in that they sought certain education tax credits, including the American Opportunity Tax Credit, to which the clients – the vast majority of whom were not even college students – were not entitled. Paulino acknowledged that the monetary loss attributable to her conduct was between \$550,000 and \$1.5 million dollars, and she was ordered to make restitution to the IRS in the amount of \$888,377.

Identity Theft

- *U.S. v. Zedan RaShwan.* A 25-year-old man was sentenced on February 7, 2024, to 28 months in prison for conspiring with others to use the stolen identities and DEA registration numbers of healthcare providers to order fraudulent prescriptions at various pharmacies. RaShwan and his coconspirators obtained and distributed those prescription medications, which included the controlled substances and prescription medications Promethazine with Codeine, Oxycodone, Hydrocodone, and Clonazepam.

Wire Fraud/Bank Fraud

- *U.S. v. Omoyoma Christopher Okoro.* A 50-year-old naturalized U.S. citizen of Nigerian origin was sentenced to 100 months in prison and ordered to pay \$22,565,929.18 in restitution on September 19, 2024, for conspiring to defraud attorneys located in the United States through what became known as the "attorney collection scheme." Attorneys in the United States were contacted by a prospective "client" in a foreign country who purported to be in need of legal representation. The client would claim to be owed money from someone in the United States resulting from a business transaction, settlement from a dispute, or an accident. If the attorney responded to the initial inquiry, the attorney would then be told that the other party had agreed to settle the matter and was prepared to make a payment. Soon after that, the attorney would receive a counterfeit "official check" supposedly issued by a U.S. bank in the mail. The attorney was directed by the client to deposit the check into his/her law firm escrow account, keep a portion of the funds as payment for services, and wire the balance to a foreign bank account. Once the funds reached the foreign bank account, they were withdrawn by a member of the conspiracy. The attorney and the attorney's bank would then be left responsible for the loss. It is believed that over \$20 million in fraudulent proceeds were actually obtained, and over \$70 million in attempted fraud occurred.

Wire Fraud/Mail Fraud

- *U.S. v. James Abrams.* The Chief Executive Officer of EthosGen LLC, a company operating in the clean energy industry, was sentenced on May 16, 2024, following his conviction for providing extensive forged documents and false information to induce several investors to invest \$1,100,000 in his company. The false documentation included forged teaming agreements and intellectual property licenses, where Abrams substituted his and EthosGen LLC's name for other companies and individuals, claiming that EthosGen LLC owned technology it did not own. During a pre-investment due diligence process, Abrams also provided forged tax returns and false financial statements that fabricated an existing customer base, and inflated EthosGen LLC's historical revenues, business activity, and profitability, thereby making it a more attractive investment. Abrams further provided forged contracts and purchase orders to potential investors, in which he claimed to have a revenue stream that, in reality, belonged to other companies. Following an initial investment of \$900,000, Abrams provided additional forged contracts and false customer sales documentation to induce an investor to advance another \$200,000 to EthosGen LLC. Abrams used approximately \$800,000 of the investors' money to purchase a personal residence. Once Abrams became aware of the IRS's criminal investigation, he took several steps to obstruct investigators.

Health Care Fraud

- *U.S. v. John H. Johnson.* A 62-year-old physician with specialized training in anesthesiology was sentenced to 97 months in prison for defrauding health insurance programs by billing them illegally for expensive urine drug tests (UDT). One of the individuals that Johnson conspired with was Rodney Yentzer, who pleaded guilty for his role in related offenses in March 2022 and is awaiting

sentencing. Johnson and Yentzer carried out this agreement through a couple different groups of pain management practices located throughout central Pennsylvania, known as Lighthouse Medical and Pain Medicine of York ("PMY"). PMY closed permanently after law enforcement agents executed search warrants. Lighthouse Medical operated a drug testing laboratory on its own premises. UDT, when used legitimately, is a method for physicians to test their patients for the presence and specific amounts of various substances. Johnson and Yentzer agreed with the new owners of a rural, 25-bed "Critical Access Hospital" to "sell" Lighthouse Medical's UDT laboratory services to the hospital; in exchange, the hospital purchased the exclusive right to bill for payment and collect payment from patients and insurance programs. The hospital agreed to pay Lighthouse Medical a kickback of \$900 per test. In The owners of the hospital billed others and private insurers, approximately \$1.4 billion for laboratory testing services that were not medically necessary. The majority being due to UDT. Lighthouse Medical received \$2,341,775 in kickback payments with 85% of this amount going to Johnson and the remaining amount going to Yentzer. Johnson's wife, Paula Johnson was sentenced to three years of probation and six months of home detention and ordered to pay \$249,301.36 in restitution.

- *U.S. v. Ester N. Mbaya.* A 43-year-old Harrisburg woman pleaded guilty on October 15, 2024, to health care fraud and bank fraud. Mbaya was president of Cool Waters, LLC, a home health care agency. Mbaya submitted fraudulent Medicaid claims seeking compensation for services that were not provided or inflated claims. Mbaya submitted these fraudulent claims and obtained in excess of \$1 million as a result of the fraud. Mbaya also submitted falsified records to obtain loans and lines of credit. The records included falsified paychecks and altered bank statements which made it appear she had more money on deposit than she did. Mbaya is awaiting sentencing.



Criminal Appeals. The United States has 94 judicial districts and there are 13 Appellate Courts that handle appeals from those districts. The United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit is the federal court with appellate jurisdiction over the Middle District of Pennsylvania.

Former U.S. Attorney Karam formed an Appeals Unit within the office and staffed it with four Assistant U.S. Attorneys. The goal in establishing this Unit is to elevate our appellate work product as well as allowing our litigators to focus on investigations and litigation matters. The Appeals Unit handles all criminal and civil appeals on behalf of the Office.

- *United States v. Hopkins.* The Third Circuit, in a precedential opinion, reversed the district court's dismissal of an indictment under the Speedy Trial Act. The district court had held that the time under the Speedy Trial Act had expired based on the so-called "ruse exception," under which time following a state charge could count for purposes of the Speedy Trial Act. The Third Circuit held that the ruse exception does not exist, explaining that the exception is inconsistent with the text of the Speedy Trial Act and is inadvisable as a matter of policy.
- *United States v. Peperno.* The Third Circuit, in a precedential opinion, affirmed the defendant's conviction and sentence for offenses related to a bribery scheme in Old Forge, Pennsylvania. The court held that the district court correctly denied the defendant's request for an entrapment instruction because—among other reasons—the defendant had a leading role in the bribery scheme. The court also held that the district court, in sentencing the defendant, correctly found that the offense involved multiple bribes and correctly calculated the value of the bribes.

- *United States v. Elonis.* The Third Circuit affirmed the defendant's conviction for three counts of cyberstalking. Those offenses related to the defendant's campaign of threatening communications directed toward the prosecutor from the defendant's prior federal criminal case, the defendant's ex-wife, and the defendant's ex-girlfriend. The Third Circuit held that sufficient evidence supported each count of conviction and that the district court did not err in admitting evidence related to the defendant's prior prosecution.
- *Kalu v. Spaulding.* The Third Circuit, in a precedential opinion, affirmed the district court's dismissal of Bivens claims brought by a federal inmate against a prison guard, warden, and hearing officer. The inmate alleged, among other things, that his Eighth Amendment rights were violated based on an alleged assault and his conditions of confinement. Applying recent Supreme Court precedent in the Bivens context, the Third Circuit held that a Bivens remedy did not exist for those claims.



Financial Litigation Unit. The Financial Litigation Unit (FLU) is tasked with the collection of criminal and civil debts owed to the United States and federal crime victims. FLU strives to collect and enforce debts in an aggressive, efficient, and effective manner. Maximum asset identification is achieved through vigorous financial investigations.

Restitution Recovered.

- *Penn State Health—\$11,712,336.* Penn State Health is a multi-hospital system and offers Annual Wellness Visits which are reimbursable through Medicare. In 2023, Penn State Health made a self-disclosure to the U.S. Attorney's Office. The US Attorney's Office found that between December 1, 2015 and November 30, 2022, Penn State Health submitted claims for Annual Wellness Visits that were not supported by the wellness record.
- *Teng Teng Wan—\$643,362.03.* On April 28, 2015, the defendant applied for a H-4 Visa to be admitted to the United States. On the same date, the defendant was completing a Form DS-160 Online Nonimmigrant Visa Application to obtain the H-4 Visa, and when asked for his primary occupation, he marked "not employed". On April 28, 2015, the defendant owned and operated one or more businesses. The defendant entered into a pre-trial diversion agreement and agreed to pay \$857,816.00.

Asset Forfeiture Judgments. The Department of Justice Asset Forfeiture Program's mission is to use asset forfeiture as a tool in order to deter, disrupt, and dismantle criminal enterprises by depriving criminals of the instruments of illicit activity.

The Justice Asset Forfeiture Program includes activity by Department of Justice components and components outside the Department. Each component plays an important role in the Program.



- *U.S. v. Hope Carbone.* The defendant owned and operated a business, D&H Marketing, with her co-defendant and sister, Donna Venturini. In 2009, the defendants agreed with Jose Dominguez and others to import Victor Sinclair cigars into the United States which were manufactured in the Dominican Republic. The defendant held back \$1,806,772 in excise taxes that should have been paid to the United States. The payment of \$206,938.87, was a result of the defendant receiving the money from the death of the co-defendant/sister, Donna Venturini's life insurance policy.
- *U.S. v. Jimmy Tran.* The defendant owned and operated a small food market and convenience store, Asia Market, in Harrisburg. The store was approved to participate in SNAP. From January 2017 – August 2020, the defendant traded SNAP benefits in exchange for cash. The total amount of SNAP benefits that were illegally exchanged for cash is \$1,843,534.00. The payment of \$299,174.60 was due to forfeiture/restoration.

Civil Division

Civil Assistant United States Attorneys

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Harrisburg:

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Gerard Donahue

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Ryann Loftus

Suzanne Scanlon

The Civil Division represents the United States and defends federal agencies and officials against civil claims. The Civil Division also works to ensure the civil rights of all Americans, enforcing the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Fair Housing Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Voting Rights Act among other federal civil rights laws. Moreover, the Civil Division obtains significant monetary recovery in Affirmative Civil Litigation.

The Civil Division's far ranging work includes the areas of:

- prison litigation
- immigration
- defensive and affirmative cases
- bankruptcy
- social security
- mortgage foreclosures
- healthcare fraud
- qui tams
- civil rights
- appeals

The Civil Division handled approximately 700 cases in 2024. A sample of these cases includes approximately 135 prison litigation cases including habeas petitions and constitutional claims; approximately 50 Federal Tort Claims Act cases, including several medical malpractice cases; approximately 35 immigration cases; approximately 20 employment discrimination cases; and, at any given time the Civil Division has approximately 40 to 60 Civil Rights and Affirmative Fraud investigations open.

Highlights of the Civil Division's work in 2024 follows:

Civil Rights. MDPA works closely with the Department of Justice, Civil Rights Section, to investigate allegations of civil rights violations within the district. The civil rights matters involve allegations of denial of equal access to persons with disabilities, employment discrimination, fair housing discrimination, denial of religious freedom, violations of the rights of institutionalized persons and investigating allegations of denied access to polling sites for those with mobility impairments.



Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)

The ADA is a transformative law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in places of public accommodation, including all hotels, restaurants, retail stores, theaters, health care facilities, convention centers, parks, and places of recreation (Title III), in all activities of state and local governments (Title II), and in employment (Title I). The ADA empowers the Department of Justice to investigate, litigate, and resolve complaints of discrimination as well as authorizing the Government to conduct compliance reviews of covered entities.

- *United States v. Unified Judicial System of PA (UJS Courts), et al.* The UJS Courts agreed in February 2024, to pay \$100,000 to resolve a federal lawsuit under the American with Disabilities Act. The United States brought this action against the courts to vindicate the rights of individuals with opioid use disorder who have been subjected to discriminatory written and unwritten policies and practices in at least eleven UJS Courts, restricting their

ability to take medication administered by their health care providers to treat their disability. Under the settlement agreement, the UJS Courts will compensate six victims of the court's discriminatory policies. The courts made each individual choose between taking their prescribed medication or face incarceration or termination from the court's respective treatment program. By forgoing their medication, the individuals faced painful withdrawal symptoms and the risk of relapse, overdose, and death. The UJS Courts will provide training to all Commonwealth court criminal judges and treatment court professionals on the ADA and OUD medication. Three of the named county courts will adopt an anti-discrimination policy related to OUD medication. The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania will post the policy on their webpage and encourage all other county courts to adopt the same policy. All of the defendants will report to the United States on their efforts to comply with the agreement.

- *United States v. Franklin County Jail.* The United States filed a lawsuit on January 9, 2024, alleging that the Jail unlawfully terminated a correctional officer whose disability substantially limited her ability to walk, stand, concentrate, and sleep. The correctional officer sought, but was denied, a modification of the Jail's policy that a probationary employee could only have two unscheduled absences during her probationary period. Although the Jail initially provided the employee an accommodation, it later relied on the absenteeism policy to terminate her. The ADA prohibits employers from discriminating against a qualified individual on the basis of disability and an employer may not demote, terminate, or deny employment opportunities to an employee who is otherwise qualified if the demotion or termination is based on the need to make reasonable accommodations for the employee. The U.S. Employment Opportunity Commission, Philadelphia District Office, found that the Jail violated the ADA and referred the matter to the Department of Justice.

Civil Defensive. Defending Federal Agencies and Employees.

- *United States of America v. Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission.* The NTSB was tasked with investigating the cause of a natural gas explosion at the RM Palmer Candy Factory in West Reading, PA. In order to conduct their investigation, the NTSB required certain records from the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission (PAPUC). In response to the request for those records, the PAPUC asserted that a state law confidentiality statute precluded disclosure. The NTSB and PAPUC engaged in a public disagreement regarding the PAPUC's failure to cooperate in the investigation. The matter was referred to our office and we were able to secure an agreement with the Office of the Attorney General of Pennsylvania, which represented the PAPUC. Through this process, the NTSB was able to secure the needed records in a timely manner in order to analyze the records in conjunction with their investigation.
- *Ray Lentz v. United States.* The United States Attorney's Office successfully settled this negligence matter for less than the amount of actual damages incurred and prior to conducting any discovery or spending money on experts. A BOP employee transporting a prisoner to Hershey Medical caused an accident, rear ending an elderly gentleman with pre-existing back and neck injuries. The total gross amount of medical expenses billed due to the accident totaled \$258,232,80. Also, the plaintiff incurred a total loss of \$28,140.12 for medical bills, miscellaneous expenses, and wage loss as a result of the accident. Plaintiff settled this case for \$120,000.00.
- *Alfrey v. Whitley, et. al.* The case involved an unfortunate incident where a mother (the

plaintiff) was pregnant and in her 23rd week – preivable as viability begins at 24 weeks. She was supposed to be admitted to Lehigh Valley Hospital, a tertiary facility with a Level III NICU, in the 23rd week because she was a high risk pregnancy due to complications from a subchorionic hemorrhage and abruption. She was provided prenatal care at a federally funded health care facility by an OBGYN whom we represented. At the 18th week, he referred the plaintiff to maternal fetal medicine specialists at Lehigh Valley. They consulted with our OBGYN and they came up with the plan to admit the plaintiff at the 23 – 24 week time. At 23 weeks and four days, the plaintiff had an office visit with one of the specialists expecting to be admitted but was sent home with instructions to go to her nearest hospital if anything changed. She lives an hour and a half drive from Lehigh Valley hospital and the nearest hospital is Wayne Memorial Hospital. That evening she felt pain and had additional bleeding. She went to the hospital as directed. Our OBGYN was called at home and immediately began the transfer process to get her to Lehigh Valley. He ordered medication to be administered and went to the hospital to oversee plaintiff's treatment. Unfortunately, the process to transfer a patient is not quick. Tragically, she delivered in the ambulance before reaching Lehigh Valley, and the baby did not survive. Plaintiff contended that Lehigh Valley was negligent for not admitting her when she was at her appointment earlier the day before and for not requiring a labor and delivery nurse to accompany the ambulance crew as required by its policy. This was a disputed fact. Plaintiff asserted that our OBGYN was negligent because she did not perform a second cervical exam before allowing her to go on the ambulance to verify whether she was stable for transport as opposed to asking about alternative modes of transport like a helicopter or a mobile NICU from Lehigh Valley. After five days of trial and into the sixth with more to go, Lehigh Valley settled for \$1,000,000. Wayne Memorial settled for \$300,000. That left us. We were able to settle at \$100,000. In our world of civil litigation, this is a win. Risking a verdict could place our OBGYN in significant professional peril as such a finding is reportable to the Nation Practitioner's Data Bank.

- *Brenner v. United States*. Donna and Bruce Brenner commenced this FTCA action against the United States alleging a delay in diagnosis of Mrs. Brenner's stage four metastatic breast cancer. Liability in this matter was clear as a radiologist identified a potential malignancy on an image, instructing that further follow-up was necessary. However, Mrs. Brenner was not made aware of this finding and no further follow-up was ordered. Further, Plaintiff had two additional imaging studies performed, read by different radiologists, where the malignancy was present, but not identified. The United States secured an expert oncologist who was able to explain that notwithstanding the delay in diagnosis, Mrs. Brenner's ultimate prognosis was unchanged and that she received the same or nearly the same treatment that she would have received had she been diagnosed earlier. There was an additional complication in this matter because Mrs. Brenner had filed a claim under the Camp Lejeune Justice Act of 2022. The impact of the filing of that claim upon Mrs. and Mr. Brenner's FTCA claim was an issue of first impression for the DOJ. Once that issue was resolved, the United States mediated this matter before Judge Saporito and reached a favorable and fair settlement with Mr. and Mrs. Brenner.
- *In Re Dr. Peter J. Baddick, III*. The U.S. Attorney's Office reached a \$60,000 settlement on February 29, 2024, to resolve civil liability for alleged violations of the False Claims Act. Dr. Baddick prescribed the opioid medication Subsys to patients who did not have a cancer diagnosis without a legitimate medical purpose outside the usual course of professional practice. Dr. Baddick then billed Medicaid and Tricare for the visits associated with the prescription of Subsys to these patients.
- *In Re Penn State Health*. The U.S. Attorney's Office reached a \$11,712,336 settlement on February 7, 2024, to resolve allegations of civil liability for submitting claims to Medicare for Annual Wellness Visit (AWV) services that violated Medicare rules and regulations. Penn State Health voluntarily disclosed that, between December 2015 and November 2022, PSH submitted claims to Medicare for Annual Wellness Visit services that were not supported by the medical record. After PSH discovered the problems, PSH took prompt corrective action and disclosed the matter to the United States Attorney's Office.
- *In Re Insight Global LLC*. Insight Global LLC, headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, agreed to pay \$2,700,000 to resolve allegations that it violated the False Claims Act by failing to provide adequate cybersecurity to protect health information obtained during COVID-19 contact tracing.
- *In Re Dr. Donald J. Dinello, D.M.D.* Dr. Dinello agreed to pay the United States \$120,000 in civil penalties for allegedly failing to comply with record-keeping and other requirements of the Controlled Substances Act. Dr. Dinello failed to use the required DEA form 222 for each distribution of a Schedule II Controlled Substance, failed to maintain accurate records of controlled substances dispensed by him, failed to maintain biennial inventory at both his registered locations, and in one instance, failed to issue a prescription for a Schedule IV controlled substance in the usual course of his professional practice. Dr. Dinello acknowledges he is required to operate in accordance with the statutory and regulatory provisions of the CSA and its implementing regulations.

Affirmative Civil Enforcement (ACE). The Affirmative Civil Enforcement unit within the Civil Division exclusively handles ACE matters such as health care fraud, violations of the Controlled Substance Act, defense procurement fraud, COVID relief fraud, as well as various grant program frauds. Many of these are filed as qui tams. The ACE team is staffed by two AUSAs, an ACE auditor, a contract health care investigator and a contract senior financial investigator, to support these investigations. In 2024, the ACE unit resolved matters through paid settlement agreements.

Prison Litigation. The MDPA houses four major federal correctional complexes: Allenwood, Canaan, Lewisburg, and Schuylkill. With a population of approximately 6,000 inmates, the facilities constitute one of the largest concentration of federal populations in the country. These inmates are a constant source of complex litigation including, habeas corpus challenges, general torts, and Constitutional claims alleging excessive force, failure to protect, retaliation, and other damages and constitutional claims. Named as defendants are multiple federal employees and institutions.

- *Thornton-Bey v. Fed. Bureau of Prisons.* The U.S. Attorney's Office received a favorable decision on a motion to dismiss claims of Excessive Force, Retaliation, Physical and Sexual Assault, Conditions of Confinement under the First and Eighth Amendments. The inmate who had a medical history of delusional disorder and schizophrenia alleged that medical staff were trying to kill him and were assaulting him by their use of electromagnetic device. The Court dismissed the complaint. It held that the inmate failed to exhaust his administrative remedies, and that the inmate could not sue the individual defendants for these types of constitutional claims, as the BOP had alternative remedies available foreclosing any constitutional claim here. The Court dismissed the inmates claim that he received substandard medical care for failure to state a claim upon which relief can be granted.
- *Boyle v. United States.* The U.S. Attorney's Office received a favorable decision on it's motion for summary judgment as to the Fifth Amendment claim finding the inmate did not timely assert his claim of failure to protect. The inmate claimed his cellmate repeatedly assaulted him physically and sexually over a one month period. Noting a two-year statute of limitations, the Court granted summary judgment to the BOP employees, finding that the inmate filed his complaint almost four years after the alleged incident.



USP Lewisburg—High security U.S. Penitentiary with an adjacent minimum security satellite camp.



USP Allenwood—High security U.S. Penitentiary which is part of a correctional complex including a medium and low security institution.



USP Canaan—High security U.S. Penitentiary with an adjacent minimum security satellite camp.



FCI Schuylkill—Medium security federal correctional institution with an adjacent minimum security satellite camp.



Civil Appeals

- *Kalu v. Spaulding, et al.* The Third Circuit affirmed the dismissal of Bivens claims against BOP officials by an inmate who alleged he was sexually assaulted by a Bureau of Prisons staff member and subjected to unconstitutional conditions of confinement. The inmate also alleged that the warden was deliberately indifferent and failed to protect him from the sexual assault. The Third Circuit held that the inmates claims were not actionable under the Supreme Court’s decision in *Egbert v. Boule*, 596 U.S. 482, 491 (2022), as they arise in a new Bivens context and special factors, including the BOP administrative remedy program, counsel against extending Bivens to the claims. This precedential opinion clarified what had long been disputed in the Third Circuit—that Bivens remedies are not available for Eighth Amendment deliberate indifference or failure-to-protect claims in the prison setting.
- *Rinaldi v. USA, et al.* The Third Circuit affirmed the grant of summary judgment for claims brought by an inmate against Bureau of Prisons officials under Bivens and claims against the United States under the Federal Torts Claims Act alleging that officials failed to protect him from a known risk of violence. The Court found that its recent decisions foreclose an implied cause of action under Bivens against federal officials for failure to prevent inmate-on-inmate violence in violation of the Eighth Amendment. The Court affirmed the dismissal of the FTCA claims under the discretionary-function exception because his claim of negligence with respect to his cellmate assignment could reasonably be construed as one of purely state-law negligence.
- *Ward v. Enigk et al.* The Third Circuit affirmed the district court’s dismissal of Bivens claims against Bureau of Prisons officials by an inmate who alleged they were deliberately indifferent to his medical needs. The Court held that these claims presented a new Bivens context, and, even if the claims were cognizable under Bivens, none of the prison officials were deliberately indifferent to the inmate’s medical needs.
- *Holland v. Warden Canaan USP.* Plaintiff filed a habeas petition arguing that newly discovered evidence rendered one of his convictions no longer criminal. The district court denied his petition, and on appeal the Third Circuit remanded with instructions that his petition be dismissed for lack of jurisdiction pursuant to the Supreme Court’s decision in *Jones v. Hendrix*, 599 U.S. 465 (2023).





Administrative Division

Administrative Division. The Administrative Division is responsible for planning and executing a comprehensive range of administrative services that support the mission of the U.S. Attorney's Office. The Administrative Officer is the principal advisor to the United States Attorney and the District on all administrative matters.

The Administrative Division continues to support the overall mission of the office by working jointly with other agencies and offices, including the General Services Administration, Justice Management Division, the Executive Office for U.S. Attorneys, the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, and the U.S. Marshals Service.

Overall, the District had a total of six separations in 2024. The Administrative Division reached full complement in 2023, only to lose it in 2024 with the transfer of our Human Resources Specialist in June and the retirement of our Administrative Officer in December. Regardless, the staff of the Administrative Division continued to provide a wide variety of services to District staff in all three offices during 2024, including systems maintenance and user support, staffing, personnel security, benefits management, retirement counseling, leave administration, position management and classification, payroll, contracting, replacing the Grand Jury contract for all three offices, purchasing, document management, case management, records management, budget, financial management, construction and facilities management, space planning, mail services, shipping and receiving.

Prevention

Reentry Programs

The Project Safe Neighborhoods initiative calls for greater attention to other major components of the federal criminal justice system. The initiative proposed changes to the traditional role of the federal prosecutor, calling for sustained involvement in matters related to crime prevention and offender reentry programs, in part to help reduce recidivism. A primary focus of our reentry efforts is to remove or reduce barriers to successful reentry, so that motivated individuals - who have served their time and paid their debt to society - are able to compete for a job, attain stable housing, support their children and their families, and contribute to their communities.



CARE (Court Assisted Re-Entry Program)

The United States District Court for the Middle District of Pennsylvania conducts a Court-Assisted Re-Entry Program (CARE), a four-phase program designed to aid the rehabilitation and re-integration of persons recently released into the community under federal supervised release and who face a moderate to high-risk of recidivism. The CARE Program relies upon support from public institutions and agencies as well as volunteer private entities and individuals. The MDPA CARE Program began in 2009. The U.S. Probation Office, the Federal Public Defenders and the U.S. Attorney's Office participate in the program. The CARE Program offers an alternative program of supervision and

a blend of treatment and support to effectively address offender behavior and rehabilitation. Most CARE participants have served multi-year prison sentences and face barriers to reintegration to the community.

The CARE Program is an intensive voluntary program in which criminal justice professionals who comprise the "CARE Team," encourage and assist participants to seek educational, employment, health, family counseling and other opportunities to aid in their successful return to the community as productive and law abiding citizens.

Persons recently released from federal prison and serving a period of supervised release under supervision of the U.S. Probation Office are eligible to apply for admission. Each applicant is considered based on the totality of his/her individual circumstances, including a Risk Prediction Index and Post-Conviction Risk Assessment scores.

The U.S. Probation Office considers each applicant and then makes a recommendation to the Court and to the participating Federal Public Defenders and Assistant United States Attorneys as to whether or not an applicant would likely benefit from the program. Before making recommendations, the Probation Office also consults the federal judge who imposed the original prison sentence and term of supervised release and the federal prosecutor who handled the case. While the Assistant United States Attorneys and Federal Public Defenders who participate in the CARE Program are consulted regarding an applicant's suitability for participation, the judge who oversees the program makes the final decision as to whether or not to admit an applicant. The CARE Program operates in the Court's Harrisburg, Scranton and Williamsport venues. There is no set number of allowable participants. However, experience suggests that multiple groups that meet separately and consist of approximately 10 participants per group leads to ideal circumstances for interactions between participants, the Court and other CARE partners.

CARES

In the summer of 2015, an innovative public/private partnership between the CARE Program and ESSA Bank & Trust, Northampton Community College, and Pyramid Healthcare, Inc. local, regional, and national nonpartisan private business interests, whose goals and missions, among other things, are to be involved in their respective communities, was established. Each of these entities has demonstrated a commitment to support the reentry efforts of the CARE Program through a focused set of activities called, collectively, Cooperatively Arranged Re-Entry Services "CARES." Each participating entity has entered into a written agreement to provide the services. The CARES providers have expressed common goals for their investment of resources and services: to enhance crime prevention, deter crime, help families, save costs to taxpayers, and reduce recidivism. The purpose of this public-private collaborative arrangement is to provide services to CARE Program participants that will aid and assist in reaching its goals and objectives. One of the most innovative aspects of the CARES Agreement is that the services provided are available, not only while a CARE participant is enrolled in the CARE Program, but also after the participant graduates from the Program and is no longer under court supervision.

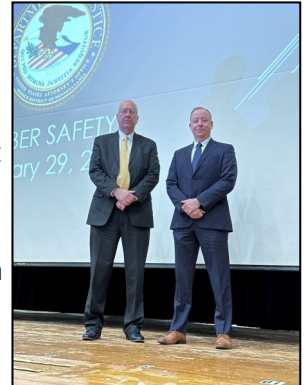
Another key component of CARES is participation of individual community volunteers who provide mentoring services to some CARE participants.

The CARES partnership provides a continuum of services to participants and graduates of the CARE Program, including scholarships, grants, and loans for education, job training, transportation, housing, healthcare, drug and alcohol counseling.



Project Safe Childhood

Our U.S. Attorney, prosecutors, and staff, spoke to over 1,700 students throughout the district about Internet safety. They shared lessons from cases about internet child predators who seek to meet children and teens online, travel to meet children in person, coerce children to share photos and engage in sextortion if the child does not share an explicit photo.



Elder Justice Initiative

Our Public Affairs Officer attended multiple senior expos to hand out materials on elder financial fraud and abuse.



On September 10, 2024, former First Assistant John Gurganus, FBI, and AARP hosted an interactive Tele Town Hall for over 4,800 seniors on financial fraud. Twenty-three seniors were able to ask questions during the call.





York Group Violence Initiative Call in Program

In 2016, the U.S. Attorney's Office joined community and law enforcement partners in York as part of the York Group Violence Initiative (GVI). GVI is designed to reduce street group-involved homicide and gun violence. GVI was pioneered by the National Network for Safe Communities at John Jay College.

As the National Network's website notes, GVI has repeatedly demonstrated that violence can be dramatically reduced when a partnership of community members, law enforcement, and social service providers directly engages with the small and active number of people involved in street groups and clearly communicates a credible moral message against violence, prior notice about the consequences of further violence, and a genuine offer of help for those who want it. A central method of communication is the call-in, a face-to-face meeting between group members and the strategy's partners. The aim of the GVI strategy is to reduce peer dynamics in the group that promote violence by creating collective accountability, to foster internal social pressure that deters violence, to establish clear community standards against violence, to offer group members an "honorable exit" from committing acts of violence, and to provide a supported path for those who want to change.

In 2024, there was a 40% reduction in gun related homicides; a 5% reduction in non-fatal shootings; and a 12% reduction in a person struck by gunfire incidents.

The reduction in gun-related violence can be attributed to the combination of factors, including effective law enforcement strategies, community engagement, support for high-risk individuals, and the seamless collaboration between various agencies and services.

Harrisburg Group Violence Initiative Call in Program



In 2023, the U.S. Attorney's Office joined community and law enforcement partners in Harrisburg as part of the Harrisburg Group Violence Initiative (GVI). The Harrisburg Bureau of Police began holding biweekly incident reviews with surrounding law enforcement agencies, federal partners, and Dauphin County Probation and Parole. A formal memorandum of agreement was signed with Dauphin County Probation outlining the collaboration between the agencies. Members of the Harrisburg Bureau of Police GVI team observed the strategy in action in York and Philadelphia.

Additionally, PCCD approved a request for an extension of funding for the GVI strategy implementation, which included adding a full-time support and outreach coordinator to increase the ability to secure resources for group members the team is attempting to reach.

Since the hiring of a GVI Project Manager in November 2023, he has worked tirelessly to put together the "Board of Governance," an "Advisory Committee," and a "Providers List." He has also conducted multiple "Custom Notifications" and "One Stops" in the affected areas of the city.

United Against Hate Initiative

Our office launched the United Against Hate Program in 2022, as part of the Department of Justice's initiative to better counter hate crimes and hate incidents. The United Against Hate initiative seeks to strengthen collaborative relationships of federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies with communities in order to build trust and encourage the reporting of hate crimes and hate incidents. On January 24, 2024 and February 28, 2024, our office hosted United Against Hate Programs at Central York and Wilkes-Barre High Schools to over 2,000 students.



Faith Community Leaders Meetings

As part of the Department of Justice's United Against Hate initiative to better counter hate crimes and hate incidents in the Middle District of Pennsylvania, former U.S. Attorney Karam met with religious leaders to discuss their concerns about extremism and threats to their places of worship and their members.

Former U.S. Attorney Karam hosted two respective meetings in Scranton and in Harrisburg with law enforcement and local Muslim, Islamic, and Arab Christian Faith leaders to discuss their concerns about the recent uprise in antisemitic speech and incidents of hate.

Career Day

Members of the U.S. Attorney's Office attended the 8th grade Career Day for Allen, Crossroads, and New Cumberland Middle Schools on November 7, 2024. We also attended the Harrisburg Academy's Career Day on May 3, 2024.

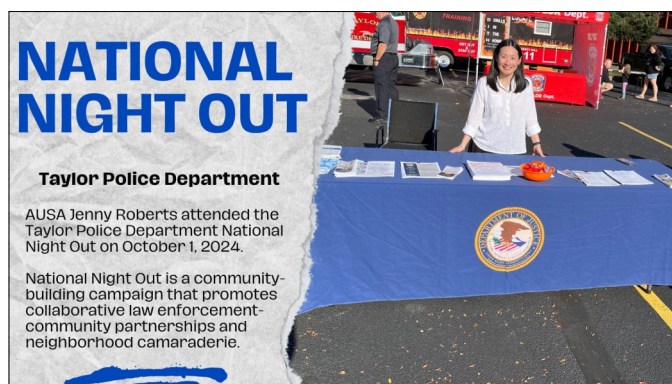
Financial Crimes Conference

Our office partnered with PA Office of Homeland Security, PA State Police and MAGLOCLEN, to host a two-day training conference that brought together law enforcement communities. Topics covered various types of financial crimes.



National Night Out

The United States Attorney's Office joined Plains and Taylor Township Police Departments, community leaders and residents on August 6, 2024 and October 1, 2024, to celebrate National Night Out.



Reentry Simulation

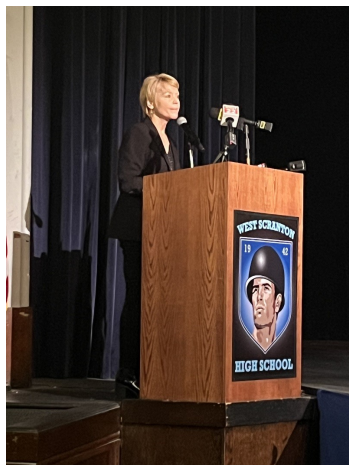
Our Office joined the Cumberland County Reentry Coalition, the Eastern District of PA, and Dickinson College to host a reentry simulation on April 6, 2024. The simulation was a two-hour activity that prompted participants to walk in the shoes of an individual who has recently returned home from prison by providing them with tasks to complete within a certain amount of time. The exercise represented the first month in the life of someone returning home. The activity was followed by a discussion about the criminal justice system and the complexities of reentry from those with lived experience.



Anti-Gang Program

Our Office organized an anti-gang program for over 2,000 Scranton School District students grades 7-12. The event took place on February 15, 2024, and focused on educating students on the perils of gang membership. We were joined by the FBI, PA State Police, and the Office of PA Attorney General.

On May 6, 2024, our Office joined Wyoming County District Attorney Joe Peters and law enforcement, to present the anti-gang program at the Tunkhannock High School grades 8-10.



Opioids—Americans with Disabilities Act

Former U.S. Attorney Gerard M. Karam joined the Eastern and Western U.S. Attorney's to host a virtual training on July 23, 2024, to educate Pennsylvania prisons and jails on their obligations under the Americans with Disabilities Act to provide inmates with medication to treat opioid disorder. These medications include methadone, buprenorphine, and naltrexone. During the webinar, it was emphasized that individuals with opioid use disorder or being treated with medication are generally considered disabled and protected by the American Disabilities Act.

Human Trafficking

Our Victim/Witness Specialist participated as a panelist, along with Homeland Security Investigations and state prosecutors at the Northeast Regional Human Trafficking Task Force seminar on November 26, 2024.

Our Intelligence Specialist gave a presentation to over 680 attendees during the Governor's Office of Homeland Security Fourth Annual Human Trafficking Summit. He presented on identifying human trafficking through financial transactions, and general trends and patterns of human smuggling.

Special Olympics

A member of our office carried the torch in the Pennsylvania law enforcement torch run on September 20, 2024, to raise awareness for the Special Olympics.



Public Affairs

Press Conference

A press conference was held on July 12, 2024, in Wilkes-Barre on the *U.S. v. Amanda Corea et al.* case. Seven defendants were charged in a wide ranging conspiracy resulting in the death of four victims. The defendants trafficked drugs and guns, and used dating websites to connect with individuals interested in hiring prostitutes. Defendants would arrange to come to the victim's location with the intent to rob the victim of firearms, cash, drugs, and other items of value. The victim would be offered narcotics through unbeknownst to the victim, the narcotics contained fentanyl. If the victim refused the drugs, members of the and associates of the F.R.G. would administer fentanyl-laced narcotics to the victim by forcibly introducing it into the victim's body. This was done to incapacitate victims to steal items of value. If a victim was not incapacitated, they would instead commit home invasion robberies where they would be let into the victim's home by other defendants and then steal items of value at gunpoint or other violent means. The defendants are awaiting their next court hearing.

Press release: <https://www.justice.gov/usao-mdpa/pr/seven-charged-wide-ranging-conspiracy-resulting-death-four-victims>

