



GWINNETT COUNTY
DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
END OF YEAR REVIEW
2023



Patsy Austin-Gatson
District Attorney

GWINNETT COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office is to seek and pursue justice on behalf of victims of crime through the fair and ethical prosecution of those who commit offenses in our community. Our office strives to impact the community through education, engagement, and reduction in recidivism while working vigorously to keep the community safe so that all Gwinnett County citizens and residents can thrive.

RULE 3.8: SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES OF A PROSECUTOR

"A prosecutor has the responsibility of a minister of justice and not simply that of an advocate. The responsibility carries with it specific obligations that the defendant is accorded procedural justice and that guilt is decided upon the basis of sufficient evidence."

State Bar of Georgia

MESSAGE FROM DISTRICT ATTORNEY PATSY AUSTIN-GATSON

Dear Gwinnett County residents
and stakeholders,

It's an honor to share the remarkable accomplishments and strides made by your Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office in our ongoing commitment to serve Gwinnett County. Our dedicated team has worked tirelessly to uphold the principles of justice and equity in the protection of our community.

Throughout the year of 2023, we have achieved significant milestones that have contributed to the well-being and health of the County. We've achieved key convictions, launched new initiatives, and remained active in the community. We're charged with holding offenders accountable along with our mandate to educate, not just incarcerate.

I'm pleased to present this summary highlighted in this end-of-year review publication. We applaud our dedicated team as you'll gain valuable insights into the progress we have made together as a community. We strive to be transparent, accountable, and keep you informed about the work we have done to make Gwinnett County a safer place for all.

Our work is much more than the presentation of crime statistics and conviction rates. We're excited to introduce you to the individuals who reflect the beautiful diversity of Gwinnett as they work hard for you as members of the Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office. Our diverse and talented team encompasses professionals who are deeply committed to the pursuit of justice and the well-being of our community. Their dedication and expertise are at the heart of our success, and we're proud to have them as part of this office.

As we reflect on the accomplishments of the past year, let us also express our gratitude to you, the residents and stakeholders of Gwinnett County. Your support and collaboration are integral to our shared mission of enhancing a safe and thriving community. We remain steadfast in our commitment to serving you, and we look forward to continuing this journey together in the years to come!

Thank you for your trust and partnership.

Sincerely,



District Attorney
Patsy Austin-Gatson





PATSY AUSTIN-GATSON

District Attorney

District Attorney Patsy Austin-Gatson is a dedicated and experienced legal professional committed to promoting justice, fairness, and positive change in Gwinnett County. As the first person of color and woman to be elected to the District Attorney's Office in the Gwinnett Judicial Circuit, she has made history and hopes to inspire the next generation of young people.

With a distinguished career spanning 34 years, D.A. Austin-Gatson possesses extensive expertise in both criminal and civil law. She began her legal journey at the Attorney General's Office of Georgia, and serving as a law firm associate. In 1992, D.A. Austin-Gatson founded her esteemed law firm, Austin & Associates, that specialized in criminal, family, and civil rights employment cases.

Prior to assuming the role as District Attorney, she held the Supervising Attorney role in the Gwinnett County Solicitor's Office. In this capacity, she effectively managed records restrictions and oversaw a team of twenty-five staff members, embodying a leadership style grounded in the principles of justice, fairness, and accountability.

D.A. Austin-Gatson is an alumna of Emory University School of Law and holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Syracuse University School of Human Development. Her formative legal experiences include internships with the Federal Trade Commission and work with the Brooklyn District Attorney's Office.

A central principle of D.A. Austin-Gatson's priorities is restorative justice to mitigate recidivism and address mass incarceration. Her vision extends to ensuring the safety of Gwinnett, providing second chances, safeguarding victims, and implementing preventative measures to deter young individuals from entering the criminal justice system.

Beyond her legal pursuits, D.A. Austin-Gatson actively participates in volunteer initiatives, contributing to causes such as the Berkmar High School Young Litigators, Red Cross relief efforts following Hurricane Katrina, Hospice Care, a Peru Mission Trip, and the Greater Eastside Chamber of Commerce feeding program.

Family holds a special place in D.A. Austin-Gatson's life. As the youngest of six siblings and a resident of Gwinnett County for 25 years, she and her husband, Travis Gatson, have raised three children and take pride in being grandparents to four grandchildren.

In her personal life, D.A. Austin-Gatson finds joy in reading and traveling. Her well-rounded background, unwavering commitment to justice, and dedication to fostering positive change make her a prominent figure in the legal community and a role model for aspiring individuals.



STAFF BIOGRAPHIES

JOHN MELVIN Chief Assistant District Attorney



John Melvin was appointed Chief Assistant District Attorney in 2023, returning to a role he knows well. A former attendee of West Point and a University of Georgia graduate, John has held diverse legal positions, including Deputy Chief Assistant District Attorney in DeKalb County and Chief Assistant District Attorney in Cobb County, where he handled various cases. His extensive career also includes serving as Assistant Director and Executive Director of the Georgia Bureau of Investigation, and he is a published author and Adjunct Professor at John Marshall Law School. John currently oversees the Drug and Gang Task Force.

HERBERT ADAMS Deputy Chief Assistant District Attorney

Herbert Adams, Jr., a seasoned legal professional, has a diverse background in roles including a former Assistant District Attorney in DeKalb County and extensive experience as a criminal defense and personal injury lawyer. Holding degrees from the Georgia Institute of Technology, Southern Methodist University (SMU), and Harvard University, he is the youngest person to ever be appointed to the board of trustees at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. Herbert has a deep connection to civil rights history. He currently oversees the Conviction Integrity Unit and Juvenile Court.



SABRINA NIZAM Deputy Chief Assistant District Attorney



Sabrina Nizam, a dedicated legal professional and Georgia native, graduated from Gwinnett County Public Schools, earned a Political Science degree from Georgia State University, and completed her legal education at Mercer University. With more than 18 years of experience as a felony prosecutor, she is a Deputy Chief Assistant with four trial teams and Grand Jury duties. She is a recognized media commentator on criminal cases and currently has management responsibilities for the Accountability Court. Beyond her legal role, Sabrina actively engages with South Asian and local refugee communities, utilizing her fluency in three languages to educate and assist individuals in navigating the legal system.



WANDA VANCE

Deputy Chief Assistant District Attorney

Wanda Vance, a lifelong Gwinnett County resident and University of Georgia graduate, holds a law degree and Bachelor of Arts in English. She began her career as a prosecutor in 2002 and received the Assistant District Attorney of the Year award in 2015 during her tenure in Hall County. Committed to community service, Wanda advocates for sexual assault victims and emphasizes collaboration between prosecution and law enforcement for justice. Wanda's role currently holds managerial responsibility for the Special Victims Unit at the District Attorney's Office.



JOHN WILLIAMS

Deputy Chief Assistant District Attorney

John Williams boasts a wealth of legal expertise, backed by an impressive record of more than two decades as a dedicated prosecutor. His legal journey began shortly after he graduated from the University of Tennessee College of Law. John currently serves as Deputy Chief Assistant District Attorney and oversees three trial divisions and the Appeals division.

TERRELL L. PATRICK

Director of Community Outreach and Partnerships

Terrell L. Patrick has served as the Director of Community Outreach and Partnerships since May 2022, and is a dedicated advocate for at-risk youth. His tireless work in community outreach, including developing educational programs for the District Attorney's Office, reflects his invaluable contributions of fostering a brighter future for Gwinnett County residents through collaboration, engagement, and advocacy.



UZMA KHAN

Victim Witness Director

Uzma Khan currently serves as the Director of the Victim Witness Program and is a devoted public health professional. A graduate of Kennesaw State University, she holds a Bachelor of Science in Exercise and Health Science and a master's in public health from Mercer University. She is an advocate for victims' rights and hosts the District Attorney Office's Community Conversations that educate and inform the public on available resources.



BETH GORSKI

Assistant Victim Witness Director

Beth Gorski has been a dedicated member of the Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office since 2014, showcasing a passion for assisting victims. With a robust background in supervising a domestic violence shelter and as Executive Director of the Will County Child Advocacy Center in Illinois, she brings extensive experience in providing hope, healing, and justice for children facing severe abuse. Beth's commitment extends to community service, where she actively participates in boards, mentors high school students, and contributes to initiatives that exemplify her dedication to philanthropy.



ADAM GARDNER

Chief Investigator



Adam Gardner is a true law enforcement professional with nearly three decades of dedicated public service in Georgia. He currently serves as chief of the Investigations Division. His extensive experience spans roles such as Senior Homicide Investigator in Atlanta's Fulton County District Attorney's Office and diverse positions within the judicial system including the Georgia State Patrol and various law enforcement agencies. Chief Gardner holds certifications as a Chief of Police in Georgia and is actively involved in key law enforcement associations, including the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police and the FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Association.

CHRIS FORD

Assistant Chief Investigator

Chris Ford was appointed as Assistant Chief Investigator in January 2023. He began his law enforcement career in 1993 after serving in the U.S. Navy. With a background in computer forensics and SWAT, he joined the Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office in 2016, specializing in firearms, use of force, and digital forensics. Chris is a certified Chief of Police in Georgia and actively contributes to the Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police, Gwinnett County Police Chiefs Association, and Georgia Peace Officer Standards and Training Council.



ANDRES "ANDY" RODRIGUEZ

Assistant Chief Investigator



Andres Rodriguez became Assistant Chief Investigator in February 2022. He started his law enforcement career in 2005 with the Gainesville Police Department before joining the Gwinnett County Police Department in 2007. With extensive training and certifications, including becoming a Certified Chief of Police in Georgia, Andres actively contributes to law enforcement associations and serves as the first Latino on the Executive Command Staff, focusing on community education and engagement while pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice Administration.

GRACE C. HOLLOWAY

Executive Manager



Grace Holloway currently serves as the Executive Manager for the Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office. Her experience in the legal field began as the Manager of the Law Library for the General Assembly of Virginia in the Division of Legislative Services. Continuing her legal experience after relocating to Gwinnett County, she served as Senior Law Librarian for King & Spalding, Head of Reference at Powell Goldstein, Manager of the Law Library for Nelson Mullins, and went on to serve as the Director of the Homer M. Stark Law Library for Gwinnett County for 15 years. Grace holds a Bachelor of Science in Sociology and Anthropology from Virginia Commonwealth University and a Master of Science from The Catholic University of America. She is also a graduate of the Virginia Leadership Institute and recipient of the Gwinnett County Bar Association's Liberty Bell Award.

MISTIE ODUM

Executive Assistant Manager

Mistie has been a state employee for 16 years, she has been an indispensable member of the Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office since April 2021. With over 26 years of executive assistant experience, Mistie excels in providing top-tier administrative support to high-level executives and senior leadership. Her track record includes effectively managing complex calendars, coordinating extensive travel itineraries, and orchestrating seamless communication across diverse teams. She is dedicated to optimizing office operations, streamlining workflow processes, and maintaining utmost confidentiality. Mistie's commitment to precision, proactive problem-solving, and exceptional communication skills consistently contribute to the success of the executives she supports, making her an invaluable partner in driving organizational success.



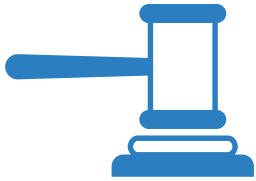
BETH HANSEN

Legal Manager



Beth Hansen is a highly accomplished professional with a distinguished career in Legal Management, marked by an unwavering commitment to excellence and a wealth of knowledge acquired through her academic pursuits and extensive 17-year tenure with Gwinnett County. A graduate of Georgia State University with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice, she plays a pivotal role in leading our team of legal assistants. Beth has honed her expertise in legal assistance and management, contributing significantly to the seamless operation of legal processes within Gwinnett County. Beth's dedication and expertise have not only contributed to the success of legal processes but also to the development and cohesion of her team.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS



96% of cases were affirmed on appeal, meaning the Appellate Court ruled in our favor.



Junior District Attorney/Investigator Mentorship Program grew from 12 students to 49, which is a **308%** increase.



Prosecuted **four** fentanyl cases, which resulted in murder and voluntary manslaughter convictions. Ten cases are still pending.



Scan to learn more



GWINNETT NAMED 2022 GEORGIA CHILD FATALITY REVIEW COMMITTEE METRO COUNTY OF THE YEAR

On October 27, 2023, Gwinnett was recognized as the 2022 Georgia Child Fatality Review Committee Metro County of the Year for its data collection efforts to help prevent child deaths in the county. The award was presented by the Georgia Child Fatality Review Panel with the Georgia Bureau of Investigation. The award reflects the work done by the Gwinnett County Child Fatality Review Committee, which is led by the Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office and Victim Witness Program.

Every county in Georgia has its own Child Fatality Review Committee that meets within 30 days of a child's death to gather and submit its findings.

The Gwinnett County Child Fatality Review Committee was honored for submitting quality, comprehensive reports while collaborating with other agencies that review each child-related death from ages 0 to 17. These reports prompt discussions that lead to preventative strategies to reduce child deaths.

GWINNETT COUNTY LEAD ACADEMY

Congratulations to our outstanding employees who successfully completed the LEAD Academy in 2023! The LEAD Academy is a comprehensive program developed to support Gwinnett County supervisors. The academy serves as the cornerstone for management development within Gwinnett County Government.

This three-month program is meticulously crafted to integrate the County's culture, expectations, policies, and procedures into its curriculum, fostering a results-oriented approach. The acronym LEAD encapsulates the essence of the program—Leadership, Education, and Development—reflecting its commitment to equipping County leaders with practical skills and ethical knowledge.

The participants, who dedicated themselves to attending weekly full-day courses, have demonstrated a commendable commitment to professional growth and leadership excellence. Their successful completion of the LEAD Academy not only enhances their capabilities, but also contributes to the overall goal of providing high-quality services to the diverse residents and employees of Gwinnett County. Again, congrats to these individuals for their dedication to lifelong learning and their significant leadership contributions to the County and the community!



Terrell Patrick,
*Director of Community Outreach
and Partnerships*



Faizah Shabazz,
*Managing Assistant
District Attorney*



Andy Rodriguez,
Assistant Chief Investigator



CONVICTION RATES

83 JURY TRIALS RESULTED IN AN **80%** CONVICTION RATE

JURY TRIALS

The Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office focuses on building strong cases, conducting thorough investigations, and working with law enforcement to ensure individuals charged with criminal offenses are prosecuted fairly and justly. We aim to achieve convictions, uphold the law, and provide a sense of security and justice to the community.

- The Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office tried cases effectively throughout 2023.
- This rate has increased since District Attorney Patsy Austin-Gatson took office and implemented her own staff.
- The District Attorney's Office prosecutes hard cases and permits the Jury System to render its verdict.

14 SEX CRIME TRIALS RESULTED IN AN **82%** CONVICTION RATE

SPECIAL VICTIMS UNIT

The Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office Special Victims Unit handles cases involving sensitive crimes such as sexual assault, child abuse, domestic violence, and other related offenses. The SVU works closely with law enforcement, victim advocates, and other agencies to investigate and prosecute these cases. Its primary goal is to seek justice for victims while supporting them through the legal process. Additionally, they provide resources and support to the community, such as education on preventing these types of crimes and offering assistance to survivors.

- District Attorney Patsy Austin-Gatson expanded her Special Victims Unit since taking office. The SVU is now comprised of a team of prosecutors that have expertise in these cases.
- The SVU conviction rate is higher than national averages due to the hard work of the unit.
- The SVU ensures each victim is heard and respected so that no matter the outcome of the trial, victims and their family know District Attorney Patsy Austin-Gatson cares about them.

11 DRUG AND GANG CASES RESULTED IN A **90%** CONVICTION RATE

DRUGS AND GANG TASK FORCE

The Gwinnett County Drugs and Gang Task Force specializes in combating drug trafficking and gang-related issues. They investigate and prosecute cases involving drug distribution, trafficking, and the illegal sale of controlled substances. Moreover, the task force targets gangs involved in criminal activities like drug trade and violence, collaborating with law enforcement to disrupt drug networks and gather intelligence for dismantling gangs. Through a mix of law enforcement strategies, community outreach, and education, its mission is to lower drug-related crime rates, enhance neighborhood safety, and curb the influence of gangs, ultimately safeguarding the community from these detrimental effects.

- Drug addiction continues to be a concern in our community. To that note, District Attorney Patsy Austin-Gatson has ensured that her Drug and Gang Task Force is staffed with experienced prosecutors and investigators that are knowledgeable about local gang activity.
- Drug and gang activity contributes to overall violence, so aggressive prosecution of drug activity helps to keep Gwinnett safe.
- District Attorney Austin-Gatson also supports her Drug Court prosecutors so that those with addictions get the help they need before they turn to violent crime.



INITIATIVES

CITIZENS ACADEMY

The Gwinnett District Attorney's Citizens Academy is designed to create a better understanding of the criminal justice system. The academy is a nine-week program that immerses residents in the judicial process. Sessions bring the community together with law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges, as the local criminal justice system is far more complex and diverse than most know. With this academy, we aim to show the role of the District Attorney's Office and our processes to create a more informed and enlightened community. Residents will be able to watch court during the week for a better understanding of the justice system.

The program begins with an insightful overview of prosecution challenges and specialized areas, addressing topics such as Victim Witness, Special Victims Unit, Drug & Gang Task Force, and Juvenile Prosecution. This gives residents an opportunity to learn about drug trends and gang prosecutions. Furthermore, the program provides a deep understanding of the American legal system, enforcement agencies, and court structures.

Academy sessions detail the legal process, constitutional rights, on-scene investigations, and ethical considerations. One unique aspect involves a visit to the Gwinnett County Police Department for an in-depth overview of Crime Scene Investigation techniques. Participants benefit from prosecutors' analysis of a criminal trial by enhancing their comprehension of SVU cases. The program incorporates discussions on evidence law, ethical practices, and a session on understanding the use of force and jury nullifications.

- The Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office purchased the Leica machine for our policing agencies to use with the aim of enhancing case prosecution capabilities.
- In an effort to strengthen the prosecution of Special Victims Unit (SVU) cases, the District Attorney's Office purchased the Colposcope machine by Cortex Flo for Mosaic Georgia to prosecute sexual assault cases.

Visit GwinnettCounty.com/DACitizensAcademy to apply for the next cohort!

Scan the QR code below to watch the full graduation.







This class was very eye-opening and gave me a great perspective. I wish more citizens could receive this information as it brings a great deal of understanding. I am so thankful for the blessing of being a part of the Citizens Academy. I sincerely thank everyone who made this academy possible. Your work made an important impact on our community, and it is going to grow as we share what we've learned with others in our circle of influence.

*Pamela Spivey,
Citizens Academy participant*



The Citizens Academy was very well put together. From the organization to the great people who genuinely cared, the academy ignited another fire in me to continue to pursue this career. Hopefully, I'll be seeing you all again soon on that side of Gwinnett County. This is a fantastic program. Thank you for having me.

*Angel Fenwick,
Citizens Academy participant*



JUNIOR DISTRICT ATTORNEY AND INVESTIGATOR MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

The Junior District Attorney and Investigator Mentorship Program affords participants a hands-on experience in understanding the practical applications of the criminal justice system by exploring the roles of the court, law enforcement, and corrections. Participants receive training in law, self-discipline, and a multitude of life skills while working directly with assistant district attorneys, investigators, and administrative staff.

The District Attorney's Office launched its first Junior District Attorney and Investigator Mentorship program in 2022 with just 12 students from our local High Schools. In 2023, the program grew by 308% and graduated 49 participants.

Visit GwinnettCounty.com/DAMentorship to apply for the next cohort!

Scan the QR code below to watch the Junior District Attorney and Investigator Mentorship Graduation ceremony.





WE STRIVE TO EDUCATE, NOT INCARCERATE

REHABILITATION ENABLES DREAMS PROGRAM (RED)

RED program is a partnership between the Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office and Rehabilitation Enables Dreams, a Georgia domestic 501(c)3 nonprofit restorative justice organization based in Atlanta, dedicated to keeping non-violent offenders out of the criminal justice system. The 12-month Pre-Adjudication Restorative Justice Program enhances the social, civic, financial, and digital literacy of individuals referred to court. RED's evidence-based digital curriculum equips participants with the soft and hard skills necessary to leave the criminal justice system and reenter society as thriving members of their community.

Participants are given laptops at our program orientation that allows them access to our cloud-based digital curriculum. Peer forensic mentors are matched with program participants during the second month of the program and remain actively engaged through graduation. Our social, civic, and financial literacy modules include:

- Emotional intelligence training
- Financial planning
- Proper police-citizen encounters
- Career readiness
- Voting procedures education

Each month, program participants join a pro-community outing that is relevant to the subject matter. In addition to our digital curriculum, classroom sessions, pro-community events, and mentor support, all participants who do not have a high school diploma are enrolled into our GED Certification Program and are given access to immediate and long-term employment opportunities.

Visit GwinnettCounty.com/RED to learn more about the program.



RYZER PROGRAM

Ryzer has partnered with the Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office to offer a six-month pre-trial diversion program. This program educates youth in the juvenile justice system and nonviolent offenders on positive behavioral, emotional, and social skill-building to strengthen their capacity in the community and prevent future return to criminal court. It aims to address risk factors that make adolescents more susceptible to developing violent behavior such as social or cognitive problems, association with peers who are violent, beliefs that support the use of violence, and academic failure or poor commitment to school. The goal of the Ryzer Intervention Program is to enhance individuals' awareness of the consequences of their attitude, decisions, and emotional state, promote improvement of behaviors to help prevent them from entering the juvenile justice system, and avoid further problems. The program also aims to make youth feel more positive, cheerful, and optimistic about their current situation and outlook.

The first 12 weeks of the program consists of one-hour sessions with modules. The second 12 weeks consist of a follow-up and limited module work as needed. Curriculum modules provide participants an opportunity to engage with family and community and delve into research and presentations. Curriculum modules include:

- Family tree exercises
- Getting to know you
- Emotional awareness and anger management
- Coping mechanisms
- Budget and finance
- Time management
- Positive affirmations
- Understanding your potential
- What is your purpose?
- Understanding law enforcement
- Setting and achieving goals
- Think sheet behavior contract

Program participants are provided mentors during the program to assist in their success. We are proud to have graduated two cohorts.

SUPPORTING OUR VICTIMS

VIRTUAL HOMICIDE VICTIMS SUPPORT GROUP

Our support group assists anyone who has experienced a loss due to a homicide or vehicular homicide. It may be helpful to meet with others who have experienced similar losses. Support groups provide an opportunity to share your story, encourage others, and be encouraged.

"With the Survivors Group, we all have lost someone close to us and we can all relate to the grief on a different level." – Barbara Carrion, Virtual Homicide Victims Support Group member

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Community Conversations is an initiative that sheds light on a host of issues that impact our vibrantly connected community. This series finds solutions, spreads awareness, and provides resources that connect our residents with the information they need to make sound decisions.

Visit GwinnettCounty.com/CommunityConversations or scan the QR code below to watch the series.



ANNUAL CRIME VICTIM CANDLELIGHT VIGIL

The Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office recognizes the profound impact crime has on individuals and communities. The annual Crime Victim Candlelight Vigil serves as a supporting gathering, offering solace, and a solemn remembrance for those affected by crime. Through this event, we aim to honor victims, raise awareness, and foster a sense of unity while emphasizing the ongoing commitment to justice and advocacy for victims through our Victim Witness program.

Since 2021, we've observed a noticeable increase in community members attending the Annual Crime Victim Candlelight Vigil, with a growing interest from a diverse range of community members eager to connect with this event.





NATIONAL CRIME VICTIMS WEEK

The 2023 National Crime Victims' Rights Week theme was **Survivor Voices: Elevate. Engage. Effect Change**. This year's theme calls upon communities to amplify the voices of survivors and create environments where survivors have the confidence that they will be heard, believed, and supported. During this week, our Victim Witness Program organized several activities to honor crime victims and survivors.

The District Attorney's Office staff wore buttons to honor the voices of victims. We also placed theme posters on the outer hallways of the District Attorney's Office with real quotes of victims' voices, in addition to filming a public service announcement involving some of our victims and survivors of crime.

The District Attorney's Office was awarded a proclamation from the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners that was presented by Chairwoman Nicole Love Hendrickson to commemorate April 23 – 29, 2023 as Crime Victims Right Week in Gwinnett County.



Proclamation

COMMEMORATING CRIME VICTIMS' RIGHTS WEEK

April 23 – 29, 2023

WHEREAS, Since the passage of the Victims of Crime Act in 1984, advocates, lawmakers, and victim service providers have sought to have a more equitable and supportive response to victims of crime; and

WHEREAS, During National Crime Victims' Rights Week, communities across the country honor the work and commitments made to preserve the rights of victims of crime; and

WHEREAS, Crime can leave a lasting and painful impact on any person regardless of their background, and navigating the criminal justice system can be challenging; and

WHEREAS, Identifying, reaching, and serving all victims of crime – especially those from groups that often have less access to healing services and avenues to justice – is essential; and

WHEREAS, Collaboration among public safety agencies, health care providers, community and faith-based organizations, educators, and businesses helps provide new and safe pathways for victims to get access to services they need and deserve; and

WHEREAS, Gwinnett County is dedicated to supporting victims and survivors in the aftermath of crime, restoring confidence to those impacted, and commending the responders and professionals who work to better each victim's future.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Nicole L. Hendrickson, do hereby proclaim April 23 – 29, 2023, as Crime Victims' Rights Week in Gwinnett County. Gwinnett's partnerships among government, non-profit, and private organizations improve the lives of victims and survivors. I encourage residents and leaders to help amplify the voices of victims and survivors and create an environment where they can be heard, believed, and supported.



Chairwoman
Board of Commissioners
Gwinnett County, Georgia

Signed this 25th day of April, 2023

DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE LAW ENFORCEMENT APPRECIATION AWARD

The Gwinnett County District Attorney's Office Law Enforcement Appreciation Award Ceremony is an event where we honor dedicated men and women of law enforcement for their unwavering commitment to justice and public safety which deserves the highest praise.

Our law enforcement officers play a crucial role in maintaining the peace and security of Gwinnett County, and this ceremony provides an opportunity for us to express our sincere appreciation for their tireless efforts. A heartfelt congratulations to all the well-deserving recipients! Their hard work and sacrifice make our community safer and stronger. The 2023 honorees are as follows:

Investigator Kristopher Acevedo Gwinnett County Police Department	Corporal Michael Ricks Gwinnett County Police Department
Corporal Aaron Devries Snellville Police Department	Officer Rachel Gullion Georgia Gwinnett College
Master Deputy Jaliber Bello-Lockward Gwinnett County Sheriff's Office	Master Deputy Jeremy Z. Lopez Gwinnett County Sheriff's Office
Sergeant Joshua Wilson Gwinnett County Police Department	Gwinnett County Police Department Homicide Unit
Detective Spenser Gilmore Norcross Police Department	K-9 Kai & Corporal Aaron Carlyle Gwinnett County Police Department



FOR MORE INFORMATION

District Attorney

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Justice and Administration Center

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the Gwinnett County District
Attorney's Office.