



Office of Northwestern District Attorney
David E. Sullivan

2019 Annual Report

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Thank you to Robert Radowski for permission to use the cover photo of the Quabbin Reservoir.



Message from District Attorney

I am pleased to share the Office of the Northwestern District Attorney 2019 Annual Report. We continue to strive for excellence in fulfilling our mission to seek justice for all. Our prosecutors, advocates, and staff fight every day for the victims of crime who may be a vulnerable senior, a young child, or a battered spouse. We are committed to addressing the challenges of substance abuse, child abuse, domestic violence and other serious matters impacting the safety and quality of life in our 47 Northwestern communities. Our 2019 Annual Report highlights the achievements of our office and our many community partners.

In 2019, there were many cases in which our prosecutors distinguished themselves in the courtroom to seek justice for victims of crime. Our victim/witness advocates provided outstanding assistance to victims and survivors. We have highlighted some of these cases in this report.

I am proud of the many court matters and justice initiatives our dedicated prosecutors and staff have worked on in the past year. We continue to innovate and change to respond to the multitude of challenges we face every day. We established a Conviction Integrity Unit to ensure an independent review of any claims of wrongful conviction.

We appreciate our state and federal legislators, community partners, and law enforcement professionals that support our mission and efforts. I am deeply honored and grateful for the opportunity to serve as District Attorney for the people of the Northwestern District. I look forward to working with you and many other community members in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David E. Sullivan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

David E. Sullivan

Staff and Organization

Senior Management Team

David E. Sullivan, District Attorney
Janice Healy, Deputy District Attorney (*Ret.*)
Jennifer Handel Suhl, Deputy District Attorney
Steven Gagne, First Assistant District Attorney
Martha Murphy Kane, Director of Operations
Donna Dudkiewicz, Chief Financial Officer

Superior Court

First Assistant District Attorney Steven E. Gagne
Deputy District Attorney Jennifer Handel Suhl
ADA Jeremy Bucci, Chief Trial Counsel
ADA Frederic Bartmon
ADA Jayme Parent
ADA Linda Pisano
ADA Sandra Staub
ADA Matthew Thomas
ADA Anne Yereniuk
ADA Caleb Weiner*
Ann Metzger, Senior Case Administrator
Mary-Elizabeth Connly, Superior Court Administrator
Cassandra Jerome, Paralegal

Economic Crimes Unit

Kenneth Lupien, Forensic Investigator*

Child Abuse Unit

ADA Linda Pisano, Chief
ADA Frederic Bartmon, Deputy Chief
ADA Lori Odierna
ADA Caleb Weiner*
ADA Deirdre Kelleher Grass
Kellie Beaulieu, Unit Coordinator/
Advocate/Forensic Interviewer
Kathy Bengtson, Family Service Advocate
Jamie Foster, Paralegal
Heather Hubbard, Unit Administrator
Debra Kierstead, Family Service Advocate
Suzanne Koch, Forensic Interviewer
Linda Rogers, Family Service Advocate
Sonia Serrazina, Forensic Interviewer/Advocate

Elders & Persons with Disabilities Unit

ADA Jayme Parent, Chief
Rachel Senecal, Unit & TRIAD Coordinator

Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Unit

ADA Jennifer Handel Suhl, Chief*
ADA Sandra Staub, Chief
ADA Erin Aiello
Mary Kociela, Director of Domestic and Sexual Violence Projects
Richard Aucoin, AWARE/DVIP Coordinator
Alyssa Devlin, Legal Assistant
Samantha Johnson, Administrative Assistant*
Katie Rosewarne, High Risk Team Coordinator
Joviana Rosario, Administrative Assistant

Appellate Unit

ADA Thomas Townsend, Chief
ADA Steven Greenbaum (*Ret.*)
ADA Bethany Lynch
ADA Cynthia Von Flatern
Jamie Foster, Paralegal

District Court

ADA Michael Russo, Chief
ADA Andrew Covington, Northampton Attorney in Charge (AIC)
ADA Matthew Russo, Belchertown AIC
ADA Ryan Scott, Orange AIC
ADA Joseph Webber, Greenfield AIC
ADA Erin Aiello
ADA Nicholas Atallah
ADA Danielle Cruz
ADA Jillian Handy
ADA Shaun McLean
ADA Becky Michaels
ADA Lori Odierna
ADA Alexa Pascucci
ADA Veronica Santana
ADA Jeremy Simonich
ADA Sara Swan*

Juvenile Justice Unit

ADA Elizabeth Mulcahy, Chief

ADA Bruce Patryn
ADA Caitlyn Rock*
ADA Elizabeth Swihart
Naomi Bledsoe, Diversion Specialist

Victim/Witness Assistance Unit

Jacqueline Gaw, Director
Lori Roy, Deputy Director
Wendy Adams, Advocate
Kate Clogston, Advocate
Heather Darling, Advocate
Kimberly Devine, Advocate
Janice Francis, Advocate
Theresa Lane, Advocate
Karyn Miller, Advocate
Rebekah Nager, Advocate
Jennifer Reid, Advocate

Consumer Protection Unit

Janice Garrett, Director
Anita Wilson, Case Coordinator

Outreach and Education

Laurie Loisel, Director

Community Prosecution Projects

ADA Becky Michaels, Director of Community Prosecution Projects
Maria Sotolongo, Director of Drug Diversion & Treatment Program
Tara Wilson, Diversion Specialist

Civil Rights Review Team

Deputy District Attorney Janice Healy, Co-Chair (Ret.)
Deputy District Attorney Jennifer Handel Suhl, Co-Chair
ADA Michael Russo, Co-Chair
ADA Elizabeth Mulcahy
Laurie Loisel, Director, Outreach & Education

Communications Unit

Mary Carey, Director

Information Technologies Department

Bruce Fieldman, Director (Ret.)
Nathan Foote, Director
Edward Drummond, IT Systems Support Engineer

State Police Detective Unit

Captain Jeffrey Cahill, Unit Commander
Sergeant Peter Konstantakos, Executive Officer
Lieutenant Christopher Baran, Narcotics Unit
Sergeant Gary Darling
10 State Police Troopers

Administrative Staff

Mary Bates, District Court Administrator (Ret.)
Ashley Benoit, District Court Administrator
Alyssa Devlin, District Court Administrator*
Graham Fortier-Dube, District Court Administrator*
Jamie Foster, Paralegal
Brianna Fuller, District Court Administrator
Debra Jacques, District Court Administrator
Donna Jackson, Franklin County Office Supervisor
Cameron Jerome, District Court Administrator
Cassandra Jerome, Paralegal
Timothy Kwarcinski, District Court Administrator
Kelley Mason, Paralegal, DAMION Administrator
Pat Matusiewicz, Administrative Assistant
Erin O'Brien, Administrative Assistant
Lauren O'Roark, District Court Administrator
Michelle Richotte, Executive Assistant
Sue Snyder, Executive Assistant
Tara Wilson, District Court Administrator*
Jean Zimmerman, Administrative Assistant

Fiscal Unit

Donna Dudkiewicz, Chief Financial Officer
Higy Chan, Fiscal Assistant
Jess Diemand, Fiscal/Administrative Assistant

*Formerly held position

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

The District Attorney relies on his senior management team to help him administer the Office and implement the goals, objectives and priorities of his administration. His senior managers – Deputy District Attorney Jennifer Suhl, First Assistant Steven Gagne, Director of Operations Martha Murphy Kane and Chief Financial Officer Donna Dudkiewicz, ensure that the underlying policies, infrastructure and finances of the NWDA fully support the DA’s priorities and the critical work that the Office does on behalf of the residents of the 47 communities in our District.

SUPERIOR COURT UNIT

Certain crimes, due to their seriousness and/or complexity, can be prosecuted only in Superior Court, such as murder, rape, drug trafficking, robbery, habitual drunk drivers, and home invasion. Sentences in Superior Court range from probation, to incarceration in the local Houses of Correction, to potentially lengthier sentences in state prison. Every case is treated on its own merits, based upon the nature of the crime, the criminal history of the offender, the sentencing guidelines, and the input of the victim(s).

Regardless of whether a case is prosecuted in the District Court or the Superior Court, the Commonwealth’s standard of proof at trial remains the same: a person cannot be convicted unless all jurors unanimously agree, beyond a reasonable doubt, that the defendant is guilty. In Superior Court, juries are comprised of 12 persons, whereas in District Court, cases are tried to six-person juries. At any time, a defendant can choose to waive his or her right to a jury trial and decide to plead guilty. In some cases, the parties enter into a plea agreement and make a joint sentencing recommendation to the Court. Other times, there is no agreement, and the Court ultimately decides what sentence to impose. The majority

of cases in Superior Court are resolved through pleas rather than trials.

“A sensitiveness to fair play and sportsmanship is perhaps the best protection against the abuse of power, and the citizen's safety lies in the prosecutor who tempers zeal with human kindness, who seeks truth and not victims, who serves the law and not factional purposes, and who approaches his task with humility.”

-United States Attorney Robert H. Jackson,
“The Federal Prosecutor” (1940)

Although there are eight Assistant District Attorneys who primarily prosecute cases in Superior Court, prosecutors assigned to the District Court, Juvenile Court, and Appellate Unit often assist with Superior Court investigations and prosecutions in a collaborative effort.

In 2019, Superior Court prosecutors obtained indictments in 119 new cases in the Hampshire and Franklin Superior Courts. During the year, 160 cases were resolved by way of trial, plea or other disposition. Convictions or admissions of guilt were obtained in 80% of all cases resolved in 2019. The only mandate for Superior Court prosecutors handling these important cases is to “do the right thing” and to seek justice in every case.

Grand Jury

All cases prosecuted in Superior Court must first be presented to the Grand Jury for indictment. The Grand Jury consists of 23 citizens who, during their three-month term of service, hear a variety of cases and determine whether there is probable cause to believe a crime has been committed. This is a lower standard of proof than is required for someone to be convicted at trial, and requires evidence that establishes

“reasonable grounds to believe that a particular person committed a crime.”

When seeking an indictment from the Grand Jury, an Assistant District Attorney is ethically bound to disclose any significant exculpatory or mitigating evidence that might seriously affect the Grand Jury’s decision to indict. This ensures that the integrity of the Grand Jury process is preserved, and that indictments are based on trustworthy and reliable evidence.

Each and every defendant in Superior Court is entitled to legal representation. Any defendant can challenge their indictment by alleging either that the Grand Jury heard insufficient evidence to support the charges, and/or that the Grand Jury presentation was unfair or misleading. A judge deciding these motions may or may not hold an evidentiary hearing, but at a minimum will review the transcripts of the Grand Jury presentation. Since 2017, the entire Grand Jury presentation is transcribed by a stenographer, including any legal instructions provided by the Assistant District Attorney.

Case Highlights

The following are some of the more notable cases that were resolved in 2019:

Commonwealth v. Lewis H. Starkey III (Franklin Superior Court) – The defendant was convicted of first-degree murder in connection with the fatal shooting of his girlfriend inside their residence in Wendell in July 2017. The defendant was also convicted of armed assault with intent to murder for attempting to shoot the victim’s adult son, who fled into the nearby woods and called 911 on his cell phone. After fleeing the scene, the defendant drove to his workplace in Chicopee and fired the same weapon at a coworker of his, who was injured but survived. The defendant was apprehended several days after the murder when stopped by the Orange Police Department, at which time he surrendered without incident. The jury deliberated for just three hours before

convicting the defendant of every indictment brought against him. Superior Court Associate Justice John Agostini sentenced the defendant to life in prison with no possibility of parole, the mandatory sentence for a conviction of first-degree murder. [The defendant later pleaded guilty in the Hampden Superior Court to the charges related to the Chicopee shooting, and received a concurrent state prison sentence.] The case was prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Jennifer Suhl (who at the time was Chief of the Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Unit) and First Assistant District Attorney Steven E. Gagne, with assistance from Victim Witness Advocate Kimberly Devine. The case was jointly investigated by the Massachusetts State Police, the Wendell Police Department, and the Orange Police Department.



Deputy District Attorney Jennifer Suhl (left) and First Assistant District Attorney Steven Gagne (back turned) at a sidebar conference during the first-degree murder trial of Lewis Starkey III in Franklin Superior Court.

Commonwealth v. Christopher Vinsant (Franklin Superior Court) – The defendant pleaded guilty to involuntary manslaughter in connection with the July 2013 death of a 10-year-old boy in Athol. The victim died from a traumatic abdominal injury that he sustained while in the care and custody of the defendant, who failed to summons medical care for him. The Court adopted the parties’ joint sentencing recommendation and imposed an 8-10 year state prison sentence. After the plea, the lead prosecutor on the case, Child Abuse Unit Chief Linda Pisano, credited the diligence and hard work of the Massachusetts State Police, the Athol Police and the medical staff at UMass-

Worcester in obtaining a conviction in the case. Chief Trial Counsel Jeremy Bucci and Victim Witness Advocate Debra Kierstead were also part of the team that helped obtain justice for the victim and his family.



Assistant District Attorney Matthew Thomas speaks with the victim's family members after Soknang Chham's guilty plea in Hampshire Superior Court (Photo by Daily Hampshire Gazette).

Commonwealth v. Soknang Chham (Hampshire Superior Court) – In October 2016, the defendant committed an unprovoked shooting inside the Southpoint Apartments in Amherst, resulting in one man's death and serious injuries to a second man. The defendant then fled Massachusetts, but was later arrested in Arizona and extradited back to Massachusetts on charges including murder, armed assault with intent to murder and assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon. In February 2019, the defendant pleaded guilty to manslaughter and was sentenced to serve 18-20 years in state prison. He also pleaded guilty to assault and battery by discharging a firearm, for which he received a consecutive sentence of 4-5 years in state prison. He also received a concurrent 10-15 year state prison sentence for unlawful possession of a firearm with two prior convictions for crimes of violence. All told, the defendant will serve the next 22-25 years in state prison. The case was collaboratively investigated by the Massachusetts State Police and the Amherst Police Department, with assistance from the United States Marshals Service. The case was prosecuted by Assistant

District Attorney Matthew Thomas, with assistance from Victim Witness Advocate Kate Clogston.

Commonwealth v. Feng Ling Liu (Hampshire Superior Court) – This case arose from a collaborative investigation between the NWDA, the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office, and the Northwestern Anti-Crime Task Force, and involved human trafficking within businesses located in Hadley, Framingham and East Longmeadow. In the summer of 2016, officers conducted extensive surveillance of the Hadley business, which led to the discovery of the other locations. In December 2016, officers executed search warrants on all three businesses, as well as the defendant's residences in Sunderland and New Hyde Park, New York. Officers discovered a total of six female victims living inside the three business locations. In addition to relocating the six survivors to safe locations, police also seized over \$80,000 in proceeds from the human trafficking. In September 2019, the defendant took responsibility for her actions and pleaded guilty to three counts of trafficking of persons for sexual servitude, three counts of conspiracy to traffic persons for sexual servitude, three counts of money laundering, three counts of deriving support from prostitution and three counts of keeping a house of ill fame. She was sentenced to serve five years in state prison, and agreed to forfeit all of the assets seized. The case was prosecuted by Chief Trial Counsel Jeremy Bucci, together with Assistant Attorney General Elizabeth Vasiliades.

Commonwealth v. Timothy Murphy (Franklin Superior Court) – The defendant was convicted of two counts of home invasion, two counts of attempted murder, two counts of assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon upon a person age 60 or older, and one count of vandalism in connection with a violent assault he committed in June 2018 in Athol. The defendant kicked in the rear door of a home, armed with a knife, and proceeded to slash the throats of the two occupants, to whom he was

related. The defendant then fled the scene but was arrested a short distance away by the Athol Police Department, still armed with a large straight blade in a sheath. The defendant pleaded guilty and was sentenced to serve 6-8 years in state prison, followed by 3 years of probation. The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Joseph Webber, with assistance from Victim Witness Advocate Kimberly Devine.

Commonwealth v. Anthony Florio (Hampshire Superior Court) – In January 2019, the defendant pleaded guilty to indictments charging him with enticement of a child under the age of 16, rape and abuse of a child under the age of 16, and three counts of dissemination of obscene materials harmful to a minor. The defendant, formerly a volunteer basketball coach at Amherst Regional High School, admitted to sharing sexual images over social media with a 14-year-old girl and statutorily raping her. The Court sentenced the defendant to serve 3-5 years in state prison, after which he will be on probation for 6 years and be required to register as a sex offender. The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Anne Yereniuk, with assistance from Victim Witness Advocate Kathy Bengtson.

Commonwealth v. Nghia Le (Franklin Superior Court) – After committing a carjacking in New Hampshire, the defendant led local and state police on a high-speed chase along Route 2 on October 19, 2018. The chase ended along the side of Route 202 in New Salem, where the defendant stabbed a Massachusetts State Police Trooper in the head, arm and chest and then tried to steal the Trooper's cruiser. An Erving Police Officer who arrived on scene was forced to shoot the defendant several times when the defendant lunged at the officer, still armed with the same knife. Once the defendant was subdued, the Erving Police Officer rendered medical aid to the Trooper, who needed to be life-flighted to UMass Memorial Hospital in Worcester for surgery. The Trooper survived, but received serious and

long-lasting injuries. In September 2019, the defendant pleaded guilty to numerous indictments, including armed assault with intent to murder, armed assault with intent to maim, armed carjacking, and assault by means of a dangerous weapon. Although the Commonwealth requested a sentence of 19-23 years in state prison, the Court ultimately sentenced the 19-year-old defendant to serve 10-12 years in state prison, followed by 5 years of probation. The case was prosecuted by First Assistant District Attorney Steven E. Gagne, with assistance from Victim Witness Advocate Kimberly Devine.



Investigators at the scene of the non-fatal stabbing of a Massachusetts State Police Trooper in New Salem in October 2018 (photo by WWLP).

Economic Crimes & Insurance Fraud

Although many of the cases prosecuted in Superior Court involve acts of violence, the NWDA also investigates and prosecutes a wide array of economic crimes, most of which involve complex fraud schemes and/or exploitation. These crimes are often committed by individuals who were trusted by their employers or family members. Since its creation in 2012, the Economic Crimes Unit has investigated and prosecuted crimes involving millions of dollars of losses.



In 2019, the Office also continued its partnership with the Insurance Fraud Bureau of Massachusetts (IFB), to identify and prosecute instances of insurance fraud. The majority of insurance fraud prosecutions handled by the NWDA involve automobile insurance fraud, in which a person makes a false claim to their insurance company about where they “garage” their vehicle, or about a collision that may have been their fault but they falsely claim was a “hit while parked” incident. Most people do not realize that making these sorts of false insurance claims constitutes a felony (G.L. c. 266, § 111A & B).

Recent examples of economic and insurance fraud prosecutions include:

Commonwealth v. Jeanne Grover (Franklin Superior Court) – The defendant abused her position as treasurer of the Stillwater Condominium Association in Deerfield by embezzling over \$34,000 in association funds for her own personal use. The defendant also served as the bookkeeper at the First Church of Deerfield, where she overpaid herself in excess of \$17,000. The defendant pleaded guilty to one count of larceny over \$1,200.00, and admitted sufficient facts to support a conviction on one count of embezzlement by a fiduciary. She was placed on probation for one year and ordered to pay restitution. The case was prosecuted by Chief Trial Counsel Jeremy Bucci, with assistance from Victim Witness Advocate Heather Darling.

Commonwealth v. Liliana Garrison (Eastern Hampshire District Court) – The defendant reported to her insurance company that someone had vandalized her car while it was

parked outside her apartment in South Hadley. Forensic analysis of the damage, however, revealed that it was caused by the defendant repeatedly scraping up against a brick wall near her parking spot. The defendant unsuccessfully challenged the admissibility of the Commonwealth’s damage analysis expert, and was later found guilty by a jury. In addition to the felony conviction, the defendant was placed on probation and ordered to pay restitution to the insurance company for the expenses they incurred while investigating the fraudulent claim. The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Nicholas Atallah.



**The Franklin County Justice Center
Greenfield, Massachusetts**

CHILD ABUSE UNIT

The mission of the Northwestern District Attorney’s Child Abuse Unit (CAU) is to investigate and prosecute child abuse cases in order to protect and keep children safe. The CAU team, led by Chief Linda Pisano, works closely with law enforcement, the Department of Children and Families (DCF) staff and the Children’s Advocacy Centers for Hampshire County and of Franklin County and North Quabbin Region to provide a multi-disciplinary approach to responding to child abuse.



CAU Chief ADA Linda Pisano
Springfield Republican photo

- In 2019, **424 cases** were referred to the CAU for investigation, involving **520 victims**, which resulted in **202 offenders** being charged with offenses against children.
- In 2019, **44 cases involving 88 children** were referred to the Children’s Advocacy Centers for issues involving problematic sexual behavior between children under age 12.
- In 2019, **156** child victims and witnesses were interviewed at the Children’s Advocacy Centers in Hampshire and Franklin Counties.
- In 2019, there were **202 CAU defendants** were arraigned, 18 of which were in the Superior Court.
- There were **209 child abuse cases resolved** in 2019, representing a 13% increase from 2018.

Trainings Offered by the CAU

“Recognizing and Responding to Child Abuse: A Mandated Reporter Training” was presented at numerous schools and youth serving organizations in Hampshire and Franklin County, including:

- Community trainings; 3/19/19 in Erving and 3/21/19 in Hadley
- Northampton Rec Department, 6/20/19
- Through Her Eyes, Center for Human Development Annual Conference, 10/25/19

CAU Trainings Attended

In 2019, CAU staff attended several trainings, including:

- Multi-Disciplinary Team Response to Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children; Burlington, VT
- Massachusetts Children’s Alliance Annual Conference; Framingham, MA
- Avoiding Burnout; Worcester, MA
- APSAC Colloquium; Salt Lake City, UT
- Vicarious Trauma-Train the Trainer; Manchester, NH

The Child Abuse Unit is comprised of three full-time and one part-time Assistant District Attorneys. Unit Chief Linda Pisano is responsible for administrative and investigative management of the Unit, as well as prosecution of cases in Superior Court. ADA Fred Bartmon prosecutes child sexual and physical abuse, child pornography and child endangerment cases in Hampshire and Franklin Superior Courts. ADA Lori Odierna prosecutes cases of physical and sexual abuse, primarily in the four District Courts and is responsible for the oversight of all CAU cases prosecuted in the District Court. ADA Deirdre Kelleher Grass works part-time assisting with the investigation of CAU cases.



Trooper Geraldine Bresnahan, ADA Anne Yereniuk, Child Abuse Unit Chief Linda Pisano, ADA Lori Odierna, Linda Rogers, Suzanne Koch, Debra Kierstead and Kellie Beaulieu



Child Abuse ADA Frederic Bartmon

2019 CAU Case Highlights

- ***Commonwealth v. Jason Galvan (Hampshire Superior Court)*** -- This case involved the sexual abuse of a child over several years. After trial, the defendant received 10-12 years in state prison, followed by 5 years of probation upon release. Prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Linda Pisano with assistance from Family Service Advocate Kathy Bengtson.
- ***Commonwealth v. Joshua Leblanc (Hampshire Superior Court)*** – This defendant was charged with the rape and sexual assaults of two minor children. The defendant received 4-5 years in state prison, followed by 10 years of probation upon release. Prosecuted by Assistant District Attorneys Linda Pisano and Lori Odierna with assistance from Family Service Advocate Kathy Bengtson.
- ***Commonwealth v. Edward Bruneau (Hampshire Superior Court)*** – The defendant was convicted of indecent assault and battery on a child and rape. The Court sentenced the defendant to 2 1/2 years in the House of Correction followed by 7 years of probation upon release. Prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Frederic Bartmon with assistance from Family Service Advocate Kathy Bengtson.

Child Sexual Predator Task Force

In 2012, the NWDA formed a Child Sexual Predator Task Force with the help of a Department of Justice COPS Grant. The work of this Task Force continues under the leadership of ADA Anne Yereniuk.

The protection of children has been the core mission of this Task Force which works to hold child sexual predators accountable through investigations, prosecutions, probation and parole home audits.



Superior Court ADA Anne Yereniuk

Members of the Task Force include NWDA prosecutors, Massachusetts State Police detectives, United States Marshals Service, United States Attorney's Office, local law enforcement, and state and federal probation and parole departments.



**CAU Unit Coordinator Kellie Beaulieu
speaking at CAC Breakfast at
Greenfield Community College**

The Children's Advocacy Center of Hampshire County and The Children's Advocacy Center of Franklin and North Quabbin Region



The Northwestern District Attorney's Office Child Abuse Unit works collaboratively with the Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) of Hampshire County and Franklin Counties and the North Quabbin Region. The CACs are non-profit organizations that provide a child-friendly, safe place in which law enforcement, District Attorney personnel, the Department of Children and Families and medical personnel can provide a host of services to include: conducting and observing forensic interviews with children and providing medical services and mental health referrals and support to children who are victims of crimes and their non-offending family members. Together, these two advocacy centers provide vital assistance to the children in Hampshire and Franklin Counties and the North Quabbin Region.

In 2019, **156 children** were interviewed at the Children's Advocacy Center of Hampshire County and the Children's Advocacy Center of Franklin County and North Quabbin Region.

The goals of the Children's Advocacy Centers are:

- To minimize the trauma experienced by children and adolescents who are victims of abuse
- To improve the investigation and prosecution of sexual and physical abuse cases from the point of intervention through treatment
- To promote interagency collaboration and effective management in sexual and physical abuse cases
- To prevent further abuse of victims
- To provide quality training for professionals in the investigation, prosecution and provision of services for sexually and physically abused children and their non-offending caretakers

Services Offered by the Children's Advocacy Centers include:

- Forensically sound interviews conducted by a qualified forensic interviewer, as part of a multi-disciplinary Sexual Assault Intervention Network (S.A.I.N.) approach
- Medical intervention
- Therapeutic intervention
- Victim and family support services



**CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER OF
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY**
Susan Loehn, Executive Director

The Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) of Hampshire County, located in Northampton, is the non-profit organization which serves all of Hampshire County. In collaboration with the

Northwestern District Attorney's Office and the Cooley Dickinson Hospital, it provides a child-friendly house where physically and sexually abused children and their families can receive the support and services that they need through a coordinated, multi-disciplinary response.

In October 2012, following a rigorous review process, the CAC for Hampshire County was awarded national accreditation by the National Children's Alliance. The CAC for Hampshire County was reaccredited in 2019.



The Northampton Rotary Club donated \$3,000 to the Children's Advocacy Center of Hampshire County for bags of useful and comforting items for children



CHILDREN'S ADVOCACY CENTER OF FRANKLIN COUNTY AND NORTH QUABBIN REGION
Irene Woods, Executive Director

The Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) of Franklin County and North Quabbin Region, located in Greenfield, is a non-profit organization that serves Franklin County and the North Quabbin Region.

Shortly after District Attorney Sullivan took office, he announced that one of his top priorities was to establish a Children's Advocacy Center for the children of Franklin County and the North Quabbin region. Soon thereafter, a leadership team was assembled and a Board of Directors put in place. In February 2016, the doors to the Children's Advocacy Center of Franklin County and North Quabbin Region officially opened its doors. The CAC is led by Executive Director Irene Woods. Thanks to its collaboration with NWDA and Baystate Health, it offers the same services that the CAC of Hampshire County provides.



Bill Benson, Children's Advocacy Center of Franklin County and North Quabbin Region Director Irene Woods and Catherine Sykes



2019 Highlights for the Child Abuse Unit and the Children's Advocacy Centers:

- The CAC of Hampshire County sponsored the 20th Annual Child Abuse Awareness Month breakfast which was attended by law enforcement, child advocates, and community members.
- The CAC of Hampshire County was re-accredited by the National Children's Alliance.
- The CAC of Franklin and North Quabbin Region hosted the 6th Annual Hope and Healing Breakfast, a fundraising event which also recognizes professionals and community members who work on behalf of child victims.

- CAU hosted Northwestern District Child Fatality Review Team meetings, reviewing child deaths and making recommendations to the State for improved child safety.
- CAU/CAC held monthly case review meetings in Hampshire and Franklin Counties involving representatives from the Department of Children and Families, medical professionals, law enforcement and a mental health professional.
- Comprehensive trainings for mandatory reporters of child abuse were held at various locations. The attendees included teachers, principals, nurses, doctors, mental health providers and an array of other mandated reporters.



Children's Memorial Flag-raising in Orange

ELDERS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES UNIT

The Elders and Persons with Disabilities Unit (EPDU) investigates and prosecutes crimes in which elders and persons with disabilities have been victimized. EPDU also provides education and training to vulnerable populations and local law enforcement agencies in areas of prevention and effective investigation of financial exploitation, physical and sexual abuse and caretaker neglect. The Unit works with state civil agencies including adult protective services agencies and human resource agencies,

on joint investigations where there are allegations of abuse or neglect by caretakers or others. Cases are referred to the Unit by the Disabled Persons Protection Commission (DPPC), adult protective service agencies, local and state law enforcement agencies and private citizens. The Unit is led by Assistant District Attorney Jayme Parent who is assisted by Unit Coordinator Rachel Senecal.

In 2019, the Elders and Persons with Disabilities Unit investigated and/or prosecuted **232 cases** in which elders or persons with disabilities were victims.



EPDU Chief ADA Jayme Parent

2019 EPDU Case Highlights

- ***Commonwealth v. Donald Renkowicz (Hampshire Superior Court)*** - The defendant confronted a man with disabilities in the community and punched him multiple times. After the assault, he threatened to burn down his house if he reported the altercation to the police. The defendant pleaded guilty to assault and battery on a person with a disability and intimidation of a witness. He was sentenced to 3 years in state prison.
- ***Commonwealth v. Christopher Shepard (Greenfield District Court)*** - The defendant and a co-defendant stole checks and credit

cards from an elder couple who had allowed them to live on their property and used the checks and cards without their consent. Due to an alleged violation of his court-ordered release conditions, a warrant was issued for his arrest. When the warrant was executed, he resisted arrest and escaped from a municipal lockup. The defendant pleaded guilty to multiple counts of larceny, resisting arrest, misleading a police officer and escape. He was sentenced to 2 years in the Franklin County House of Correction followed by a 2-year probationary period upon release.



EPDU Coordinator Rachel Senecal

EPDU Initiatives 2019

Outreach and Education

The EPDU collaborates with professionals outside of the NWDA's office and with the senior population to form community alliances. The goals of the alliances are to:

- Reduce the occurrence of all types of abuse of elders and persons with disabilities through education;
- Raise awareness about common circumstances surrounding criminal abuse of vulnerable adults; and
- Ensure that instances of possible abuse are identified, reported, and responded to quickly and correctly.

In 2019, the EPDU took part in **8 health/safety fairs** and conducted **7 community presentations** at senior centers, assisted living facilities, senior housing complexes, and social service agencies to provide seniors and those who work closely with seniors with information about the EPDU and crimes against elders.

The EPDU, along with the Consumer Protection Unit at the NWDA, also **participated in 12 “Senior Savvy Showdown” trivia game presentations in 2019**. This interactive trivia game is a fun way for seniors to learn important safety information. Topics include safety, scams, and consumer issues in relation to seniors.



DA Sullivan, Laurie Loisel and ADA Jayme Parent at National Night Out in Ware

2019 Community Collaborations

The EPDU operates successfully due in large part to the relationships forged with community partners. These partners include law enforcement agencies, councils on aging, social and protective service agencies, media outlets, financial institutions, and local businesses. These relationships allow elder abuse, particularly financial exploitation, to be identified, reported, investigated, prosecuted, and prevented. Notable 2019 community collaborations include:

- Polish National Credit Union: PNCU partnered with the EPDU and other agencies to present two financial exploitation seminars at the Easthampton and Southamptton senior centers. Seniors enjoyed a free lunch while learning about the signs of financial exploitation, how to report it, and how to protect themselves and others.
- Highland Valley Elder Service’s Money Management Program Advisory Board: The money management program provides eligible seniors with financial assistance free of cost through a volunteer program. The EPDU helps educate the staff and volunteers on how to identify and report financial exploitation and keep them up to date on elder abuse trends and scams.
- Chalice of Salvation: The EPDU and the NWDA Consumer Protection Unit were featured during a televised segment produced by the Catholic Communications Corporation of the Diocese of Springfield. Scams that target the elderly and the barriers to the identification of the scammers were discussed.
- LifePath Elder Mental Health Outreach Team: This outreach team includes members from the EPDU and other area agencies such as elder services, addiction services, community coalitions, councils on aging, and medical facilities. Discussions include peer support, available resources, referrals to services, and access to care in relation to elder mental health.
- Mental Health and Law Enforcement Collaborative: Employees of the Department of Mental Health, local law enforcement agencies and community mental health providers meet quarterly in both Hampshire and Franklin Counties to address how these different groups can work together to support individuals with mental health issues who may come to the attention of law enforcement.

National Prescription Drug Take Back Day

The NWDA is committed to keeping prescription drugs out of the wrong hands and out of the environment by participating in the Drug Enforcement Agency's National Prescription Take Back Day. In 2019, the EPDU served as coordinator of the participating Hampshire and Franklin County Police Departments in two Drug Take Back Day events. The NWDA continues to partner with local police departments across Hampshire and Franklin County, as well as the Worcester town of Athol, to provide permanent, safe and convenient kiosks for disposal of medications that are available to community members at any time.



October 26, 2019 Drug Take Back Day
Photo courtesy of Easthampton PD

Thanks to the combined efforts of area law enforcement agencies, **7,555 pounds** of unwanted drugs were collected and disposed of in 2019. Approximately **57,243 pounds** of drugs have been collected from the Northwestern District and disposed of since the NWDA's Drug Take Back program began in 2011.

The TRIAD Program

As part of the EPDU, the TRIAD program plays a major role in building community partnerships in order to better serve seniors. TRIAD is a

community policing initiative of seniors, law enforcement and service providers which is focused on increasing safety through education and crime prevention. TRIAD on the community level is implemented by a S.A.L.T. Council. Its goals are: to reduce criminal activity targeting seniors; to alleviate seniors' fears of victimization, build confidence and improve their quality of life; and to enhance the delivery of law enforcement services to seniors.



Franklin County TRIAD Health and Safety Fair, September 2019.

TRIAD is anchored by the Northwestern District's three top law enforcement officials: District Attorney David Sullivan, Hampshire County Sheriff Patrick Cahillane, and Franklin County Sheriff Christopher Donelan. Rachel Senecal serves as the NWDA TRIAD Coordinator.

TRIAD Activities for 2019

Community Shredding Event: The Amherst and Hadley S.A.L.T. Councils combined forces to sponsor a community shredding event in November of 2019. Over 3 tons of sensitive documents were shredded to help prevent identity theft.

Lock Box Program: A small secure lock box is installed directly on a senior's home. The box contains a spare house key and is accessed by a 4-digit code shared with local emergency responders. When an emergency call comes in,

the responding fire fighter or paramedic can open the lock box and gain quick and safe access to the home to offer assistance. In 2019, Northampton, Easthampton, Southampton and Williamsburg were able to bring the lockbox program to their residents.



Rachel Senecal helping to deliver Sand for Seniors in South Hadley

Sand for Seniors: Falls are a major concern for seniors, even more so when winter brings icy conditions. TRIAD is addressing the issue with its Sand for Seniors project. Buckets of a sand-and-salt mixture are delivered by TRIAD to seniors with mobility issues. Several communities participated in Sand for Seniors in 2019 with over 29,600 pounds of sand delivered.

South County TRIAD Elder Financial Exploitation Educational Panel: The South County S.A.L.T. Council is comprised of seniors and law enforcement personnel from Deerfield, Whately, Sunderland, the NWDA and the Franklin County Sheriff's Office. This panel consisted of law enforcement, representatives from Greenfield Savings Bank, and the NWDA.



Greenfield PD Officer Donut joins seniors at a TRIAD picnic

TRIAD Volunteer Appreciation Networking Picnic: Held in June, this event brought together TRIAD members from across the district for an afternoon of food, networking, and law enforcement demonstrations. The purpose of the event was to acknowledge the hard work of all the dedicated TRIAD participants. Police K-9 Unit demonstrations, antique police cruisers, police drone demonstrations, and Greenfield Police Department's Officer Donut the Comfort Dog were all featured at the 2019 TRIAD picnic.





Easthampton Financial Exploitation Luncheon



**Amherst/Hadley TRIAD Shredding Event,
November 2019**

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ASSAULT UNIT



DVSAU members (left to right) Katie Rosewarne, Joviana Rosario, ADA Sandra Staub, Richard Aucoin, ADA Erin Aiello and Mary Kociela

In 2019, the Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Unit (DVSAU) welcomed a new Unit Chief, Assistant District Attorney Sandra Staub, when former Chief, Jennifer Suhl, was promoted to Deputy District Attorney. ADA Staub was the

first chief of the Domestic Violence Unit at the Northwestern District Attorney's Office during District Attorney Judd Carhart's administration and also served briefly at the Hampden District Attorney's Office. She was later in private practice with the Springfield-based Bulkley Richardson firm and with Allison, Angier & Bartmon in Amherst. ADA Staub was the legal director of the ACLU-Connecticut for five years and most recently worked doing impact litigation on behalf of people with mental health disabilities with the Center for Public Representation, a non-profit in Northampton that handles cases around the country.



ADA Erin Aiello, DA Sullivan, ADA Sandra Staub and Mary Kociela at Non-Fatal Strangulation & Intimate Partner Violence training for first responders and medical personnel in October

The DVSAU also welcomed ADA Erin Aiello as our new Domestic Violence Prosecutor, a position that District Attorney Sullivan created to allow the Unit Chief to focus on adult sexual assault cases. Prior to joining the NWDA, ADA Aiello worked as an ADA in Bristol and Plymouth counties, specializing in child abuse, sexual assault and animal cruelty cases.

The Unit also includes several highly trained and experienced staff members: Mary Kociela,

Director of Domestic & Sexual Violence Projects; Katie Rosewarne, High Risk Team Coordinator; Richard Aucoin, DVIP Coordinator; and Joviana Rosario, Administrative Assistant. The DVSAU is responsible for overseeing the prosecution of all domestic violence and sexual assault cases in the Northwestern District in which the victim is eighteen years of age or older. The majority of domestic violence (DV) cases in 2019 were handled in the District Courts. In order to provide comprehensive and consistent treatment of domestic violence cases at the District Court level, the District Attorney has designated a specialized domestic violence prosecutor in each of the four district courts: ADA Joseph Webber in Greenfield, ADA Ryan Scott in Orange, ADA Andrew Covington in Northampton and ADA Nick Atallah in Belchertown.



DA Sullivan and Ware High School students at the 5th Annual Domestic Violence Awareness Walk in October

The DVSAU collaborates with numerous community and law enforcement partners to deliver coordinated, best-practice prosecution of all domestic and sexual violence cases. These collaborations, along with effective training and ongoing communication, continue to result in successful prosecution of domestic violence and sexual assault cases in our district.

The office handled **1,146 domestic violence cases** in 2019: 16 in Superior Court, 15 in Juvenile Court, and 1,115 in District Court.

There were **65 adult sexual assault cases**, 31% of which were prosecuted in the Superior Court.

DVSAU Case Highlights:

Commonwealth v. Arthur Salisbury (Hampshire Superior Court) –This case was prosecuted by Deputy DA Jennifer Suhl and ADA Erin Aiello with assistance from Victim Witness Advocate Jennifer Reid. The defendant was sentenced to state prison for 9 to 13 ½ years after a Hampshire County jury convicted him in May 2019 of rape for forcing a woman to have sexual intercourse with him after transporting her from Holyoke to a deserted park in Granby in the middle of the night.

Commonwealth v. Chad Oberacker (Franklin Superior Court) - This case was prosecuted by Deputy DA Jennifer Suhl with assistance from Victim Witness Advocate Lori Roy. The defendant pled guilty in March 2019 to assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon (scissors), assault by use of a motor vehicle and numerous other charges stemming from his violent attack on his daughter and his subsequent flight from the police, during which he attempted to commit suicide. The defendant was sentenced to 3 years in state prison, followed by 4 years of probation with special conditions including mental health treatment and medication.

Commonwealth v. Cameron Mitchell (Franklin Superior Court) –This case was prosecuted by ADA Erin Aiello with assistance from Victim Witness Advocate Lori Roy. In December 2019, the defendant pled guilty to stalking and multiple counts of violation of a restraining order and intimidation of a witness. He was sentenced to 3 to 4 years in prison.

Commonwealth v. Patrick Amara, Commonwealth v. Ballard (Hampshire Superior Court) - In separate and unrelated cases in 2019, two students from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst were convicted by Hampshire County juries of raping fellow female students. In *Commonwealth v. Amara*, prosecuted by ADA Erin Aiello and Deputy DA Jennifer Suhl, with assistance from Victim Witness Advocate Karyn Miller, the jury found that the 20-year-old defendant held the 19-year-old victim by force in a bathroom at a party in Hadley and repeatedly raped her. In April 2019, Amara was convicted of 3 counts of rape, and received a 5 year state prison sentence with 3 years of probation from and after his time in prison, with conditions, including registration as a sex offender. In *Commonwealth v. Ballard*, prosecuted by ADA Sandra Staub and First Assistant DA Gagne, the defendant, a senior, was convicted of rape in September 2019 for holding down the victim, a sophomore, and forcing her to have sexual intercourse while on their third date. The defendant was sentenced to 3 to 5 years in state prison.



Judges Linda Fidnick, Jacklyn Connly and John Agostini with DA Sullivan at A View from the Bench

Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Unit Initiatives

The primary goal of the DVSAU is to provide best practice intervention strategies, in collaboration with our community and law

enforcement partners, aimed at holding offenders accountable and keeping victims safe. The Unit coordinates numerous prevention and intervention initiatives designed to meet this goal.

District Attorney's Task Force on Domestic and Sexual Violence

District Attorney Sullivan's Task Force on Domestic and Sexual Violence is comprised of members representing law enforcement, victim services and community programs. The Task Force offers training and networking opportunities for people working to end domestic and sexual violence. In 2019, meetings included current information and training on various topics with presenters from the Franklin Recovery Center of BHN, Center for Women & Community and 18 Degrees. Task Force members also learned about the new Pets & Women's Safety (PAWS) Act, the new evidence kit tracking system for survivors of sexual assault and information on cyber bullying and sexting legislation and the impact on local teens.

Judges Panel

A popular event of the DA's Task Force is the Judges Panel. In May 2019, the DVSAU, in collaboration with the DA's Task Force and the Hampshire County Bar Association sponsored a Judges Panel entitled, "Domestic Violence: A View from the Bench - Risk & Lethality Assessment in Domestic Violence Cases." The panelists included the Honorable John A. Agostini, Hampshire Superior Court; the Honorable Jacklyn M. Connly, Northampton District Court; and the Honorable Linda S. Fidnick, First Justice, Hampshire Probate & Family Court.

The event was moderated by District Attorney Sullivan with over 80 law enforcement, court personnel and community members in attendance. It focused attention on high risk

and lethality in DV cases and how the court can work to contain offenders and protect victims.



A View from the Bench panelists

Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP)

The Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP) is funded through a Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security S.T.O.P. Grant. The DVIP is an early intervention program for victims of DV designed to coordinate the efforts of police and community advocates. Specially trained advocates from local DV programs, NELCWIT in Franklin County & Valley Human Services at BHN in Hampshire County, are immediately available following a domestic violence incident. Police officers, in Hampshire and Franklin Counties and the Town of Athol, contact an on-call advocate who in turn contacts the victim. Advocates offer victims immediate support, safety information and referrals for counseling, shelter and legal advocacy.

An important aspect of the project is the training and discussions that are part of DVIP Partnership meetings. Meetings are held twice per year for police, dispatchers, advocates and all project partners and provide a space for discussing project challenges and successes and for training on various topics. In 2019, partnership members received training from the Fenway Health Institute Violence Recovery Program on the unique issues faced by LGBT/Q survivors of abuse. They also received training by Lt. William Gordon and Officer Donut of the

Greenfield Police Department on how comfort dogs can assist victims.



Lt. William Gordon and Officer Donut present at DVIP Partnership Meeting

The DVIP grant also funds a DV law enforcement newsletter that is published and distributed to law enforcement and first responders twice a year. Articles included information on the importance of DV risk assessments at the scene and a link to the new worksheet being utilized statewide. The newsletter also featured a FAQ section which shared information on the Extreme Risk Protection Order (“Red Flag Law”) and how the newly created sexual assault investigation protocol works and how will it help victims. Also highlighted was information on non-fatal strangulation and how utilizing the strangulation worksheet can positively affect prosecution and help victims. In fact, we have seen an increase in the number of police officers utilizing the strangulation worksheet from 50% of the time when they were first introduced, to 60% in 2018 and 88% in 2019. This is significant because when a prosecutor has the strangulation worksheet it greatly increases the likelihood of a conviction and our ability to hold the offender accountable.



DVIP funds paid for DV awareness ribbons and are being displayed on police cruisers throughout the Northwestern District

The NWDA was awarded funding in 2017 by the MA Executive Office of Public Safety & Security, Violence Against Women S.T.O.P. Grant Program, to continue the DVIP. Although funded for 4 years, we are required to re-apply each year. In 2019, the application for year three was submitted and fully funded through December 31, 2020.

DVIP Advocates provided immediate crisis support for **147 victims** of abuse in 2019.

Additionally, 46% of referrals to the DV High Risk Team came from DVIP Advocates.

DVIP Advocates routinely make risk assessment part of their safety planning with victims and assist officers in obtaining important information regarding threats to kill, past abuse and other risk factors, illustrating the importance of the linkage of these two programs. Police officers have also begun to utilize a risk assessment worksheet at the scene of a domestic, as part of a statewide effort to identify, document and refer high risk cases sooner.



High Risk Team members at statewide conference-Anthia Elliott, Katie Rosewarne, Rebekah Nager, Tess Lane, Sue English and Mary Kociela

Domestic Violence High Risk Team Project

In an effort to reduce domestic violence homicides and to identify the most serious, repeat offenders, in Franklin and Hampshire Counties, high risk teams (HRT) were established in 2010. Evidence-based research has identified a set standard of high risk behaviors that can substantially increase the level of risk for victims. By identifying high risk behaviors and sharing case information, the teams make recommendations to maximize offender accountability and safety for victims. The purpose of the project is to identify and closely monitor high risk offenders (HROs) in order to prevent further incidents of abuse and homicide. Teams are comprised of representatives from Probation Departments, Houses of Correction, Parole Board, Police Departments, 911 Dispatchers, NWDA, Department of Children and Families, Department of Transitional Assistance, Batterer's Intervention and Community Victim Advocates. Once an offender is identified as high risk, detailed information regarding that offender and victim(s) is distributed to all partners to ensure a coordinated, comprehensive, and consistent response to any future incidents involving the offender.

In 2019, there were **23 DV offenders** identified as high risk in Franklin and Hampshire Counties. Currently, there is a total of **273 DV high risk offenders** and an additional 82 who are in “watch” status, meaning the coordinator will bring the case back to the team if there are any further charges.

The High Risk Team Project has been lauded by the Governor’s office as a statewide model program. In fact, our office participated on the conference organizing committee of the Governor’s Council on Domestic & Sexual Violence. The committee organized a statewide conference, held in November, which focused on best practice high risk team models. The NWDA high risk team model was presented at the conference, with 200 attendees, as one of three model programs in the state.

In 2017, an application was submitted to renew funding of the High Risk Team Project. The office was awarded the full amount allowed of \$450,000 over three years to continue the project. The funds have allowed us to reinstate the Coordinator position to full time, increase support and follow-up for victims of strangulation and provide training for EMS responders and dispatchers. A continuation application was recently submitted to the Improving Criminal Justice Response Grant Program. If awarded, it will extend the project for 4 more years beginning October 1, 2020.

Non-Fatal Strangulation Conference for EMS & Medical First Responders

On October 3rd, with funds from the high risk grant, the DVSAU held a conference on non-fatal strangulation for EMS and medical first responders. Our featured speaker was Daniel Batsie, Chief of Emergency Medical Services for the Vermont Department of Health, who has more than 29 years of experience as a paramedic in New York and Maine. Dan offered a compelling and informative presentation,

drawing on his own experience and national best practice standards.



**Mary Kociela with conference presenter
Daniel Batsie**



**DVSAU staff Joviana Rosario, ADA Erin Aiello
and Richard Aucoin**

Sexual Assault Investigation Protocol

A new sexual assault initiative began in 2019. The NWDA recently drafted a protocol for the handling of adult sexual assault investigations. This included a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between our office and local law enforcement agencies to formalize our long-standing collaboration on these cases. With the MOU and the protocol, the NWDA is coming together with law enforcement agencies in Franklin and Hampshire Counties, along with Athol, to ensure that all adult sexual assault investigations are conducted in an efficient, comprehensive, and consistent manner.

The two main goals are to:

- Provide all victims of sexual assault with the same timely and trauma-informed response; and
- Increase opportunities for successful prosecutions of all appropriate criminal charges.

Sexual assault investigations typically come to the NWDA when local law enforcement agencies forward reports of police investigations into sexual assault. The MOU and the protocol will ensure that all sexual assault investigations are referred by law enforcement agents to the NWDA, using a common referral template that sets forth all pertinent information, regardless of the victims' initial inclinations with respect to prosecution. The referral of all sexual assaults to the NWDA will, among other things, assist us in identifying repeat offenders and trends within the community.

The NWDA, in turn, commits to providing a timely review of all forwarded investigations and to address immediate issues or concerns with the victim and investigation. Under the MOU, both the NWDA and law enforcement agencies commit to keep each other informed and to work collaboratively, with input from victims, to make appropriate investigatory and charging decisions.

DVSAU Community Outreach and Education

Each year, the DVSAU sponsors and participates in various training and outreach programs. In 2019, this included programs for high school students, community advocates, behavioral health providers, EMS & medical first responders, 911 dispatchers and police officers. Staff presented at several conferences including the Western MA Elder Care Conference, the Rural DV Forum sponsored by the MA Department of Public Health and the statewide Governor's Council Conference on best practice high risk team models. Staff also provided training on high risk assessment and non-fatal strangulation for the Northern Hope Program at BHN, NELCWIT and the Amherst College Police Department.

In addition, unit staff members participate on the Mayor of Greenfield's DV Task Force. Each year, the task force collaborates with the Franklin County Child Advocacy Center, to coordinate flag raising events in Greenfield and Orange, commemorating April as Child Abuse Awareness Month.



Children from Federal Street School in Greenfield perform at the flag raising event



White Ribbon Campaign

The White Ribbon Campaign (WRC) was founded and launched in Canada, two years after the Montréal Massacre in which 14 women students at the École Polytechnique were systematically killed, and 13 other students wounded, by a lone gunman on December 6, 1989. More than 100,000 men wore white ribbons across Canada that first year. Today, the WRC is a growing worldwide campaign in 60 countries.

White Ribbon Pledge

"From this day forward I pledge to be part of the solution in ending gender based violence and to never commit, condone or remain silent about violence against women and girls."

In 2019, we continued the opportunity for students to apply to become a Student White Ribbon Ambassador. Student ambassadors are students who recognize the importance of taking responsibility and playing a leadership role in preventing violence against women. Student ambassadors receive a Certificate of Appreciation from DA Sullivan and have the opportunity to organize an event in their own school.

One example of this was student ambassador, Justin White, from Belchertown High School. Justin organized an event for students and invited DA Sullivan, Mary Kociela and Belchertown Police Officer Michael Roney to speak to students about healthy relationships and the white ribbon campaign. Justin also accompanied DA Sullivan and Mary Kociela to the Reimagining Manhood Forum sponsored by Jane Doe Inc.



White Ribbon Student Ambassador Justin White, Mary Kociela and DA Sullivan at the Reimagining Manhood Symposium

Sexual Assault Prevention Media Campaign



The sexual assault media campaign originally started in 2012 with funding from an Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Grant. In 2016, with funds acquired by the Five College Consortium, a new public service announcement (PSA) was created focusing on sexual assault in the LGBTQ/T community. Over fifty students representing LGBTQ/T student focus groups on the local five college campuses and Greenfield Community College (GCC), reviewed the script and gave feedback and ideas for improvements. Each college media department received the posters in an editable format allowing them to add their own logo and messaging. In 2017, the PSA and posters were distributed to LGBTQ/T student groups on the five college campuses and GCC. The response was very positive and the PSA and posters continue to be utilized as training tools for dormitory Resident Assistants and student peer leaders. All posters and PSA's are available on our website.



Sexual Assault Response Team

The Sexual Assault Response Team (SART) is a coordinated, multi-disciplinary team of people, including Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Unit Chief Sandra Staub, Legal Assistant Alyssa Devlin, Victim Witness Assistance Unit Director Jacqueline Gaw, and Deputy District Attorney Jennifer Suhl, who respond to sexual assaults.

The Center for Women & Community (CWC), the designated rape crisis center for Hampshire County, coordinates SART, which includes representatives of Law Enforcement, Health Care, Forensic Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners, Prosecutors, and Victim/Survivor Advocates. In 2019, SART continued to review best practice models in responding to sexual assault that are victim centered and trauma informed, and increase the chances of effective prosecution. SART members shared these models within their own departments, developing and implementing cross training opportunities. The team met monthly in Northampton.

In 2019, SART hosted a number of trainings on issues related to effectively working with and supporting survivors of sexual assault. These trainings included one conducted by attorneys from the Victim Rights Law Center (VRLC) focused on the complex interrelationship between Title IX, civil orders for protection and criminal proceedings and the ways that VRLC can help victims navigate these interrelated systems.

ADA Sandra Staub and Deputy DA Jennifer Suhl presented updates on a number of occasions. Updates included the changes in the Sexual Assault Evidence Kit Tracking System as well as the planned NWDA memorandum of agreement on sexual assault (MOU) with local law enforcement agencies setting forth the arrangement whereby all reported sexual assaults are referred to the NWDA. These changes and the MOU have been prompted, in part, by implementation of last year's changes to the law regarding the testing, retention, storage, and tracking of sexual assault evidence collection kits including a victim's access to information about their kit.

Other SART presentations in 2019 included:

- recent data related to the numbers of kits processed and outcomes presented by Mary Walz-Watson, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Western MA Regional Coordinator;
- an outline of options for monitoring and supervision presented the Probation Department in Hampshire County;
- information on resources for people with disabilities presented by the Sexual Assault Response Unit within the Disabled Persons Protection Commission; and
- a presentation by the Attorney General's Office regarding the Victim Compensation Fund.

APPELLATE UNIT

The Appellate Unit is comprised of Assistant District Attorneys Thomas Townsend (Chief), Cynthia Von Flatern, Bethany Lynch, and paralegal Jamie Foster. The members of the Appellate Unit represent the NWDA before the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court and the Massachusetts Appeals Court.



Appellate ADAs Cynthia Von Flatern, Thomas Townsend, and Bethany Lynch

When a defendant is convicted of a crime, he or she may challenge that conviction by filing a legal brief outlining any alleged errors that may have occurred at trial. Handling an appeal requires the appellate ADA to confer with the prosecutor who conducted the trial; review the arguments contained in the defendant's brief; research the various legal issues that those arguments involve; and draft a brief for submission to the appropriate appellate court. The appellate attorney will then argue the case before the seven Justices of the Supreme Judicial Court or a three-judge panel of the Massachusetts Appeals Court. The appellate court will usually render a written decision on the appeal within 130 days of the oral argument.

The Appellate Unit also responds to motions for a new trial and supports all ADAs through legal updates and advice.

In addition, the Appellate Unit oversees parole hearings for those serving life sentences but who are eligible for parole.

The NWDA Appellate Unit is the most experienced in the Commonwealth. Each member has over **20 years of experience** in appellate prosecution.

Highlights from 2019

- Veteran appellate prosecutor Steven Greenbaum retired from the NWDA after 20+ years of distinguished service.



Retired Appellate ADA Steven Greenbaum

- The NWDA responded to 29 motions for a new trial in 2019.
- Five different Assistant District Attorneys argued cases on behalf of the NWDA in the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court: (1) Thomas Townsend in January; (2) Cynthia Von Flatern in February; (3) Bethany Lynch in March; (4) Jeremy Bucci in April; and (5) Nicholas Atallah in November.



ADA Nicholas Atallah arguing in the Supreme Judicial Court

Notable appellate decisions from 2019

Commonwealth v. Gregory Long, in which the Supreme Judicial Court upheld the issuance of a search warrant where the police smelled an overwhelming odor of unburnt marijuana coming from a commercial building.

Commonwealth v. Zachariah Larose, in which the Supreme Judicial Court held that police have the ability to stop a car that crosses the fog line because it serves the important public interest in ensuring safety on our roadways.

Commonwealth v. Stanley Michalski, in which the Appeals Court in a published decision affirmed multiple convictions of aggravated rape of a child.

SEXUALLY DANGEROUS PERSONS UNIT

The Sexually Dangerous Person (SDP) Unit is responsible for reviewing cases in which an individual who has been convicted of a sexual offense is due to be released from incarceration. The purpose of the review is to determine whether or not the individual meets the criteria for civil commitment as a Sexually Dangerous Person, as outlined in Chapter 123A of the General Laws. If those criteria are met, a petition for commitment is filed and a trial may be conducted to decide whether that person

will be committed as a Sexually Dangerous Person. With the retirement of ADA Steven Greenbaum, ADA Jayme Parent with the assistance of ADA Nicholas Atallah handled the SDP cases for the Office in 2019. Susan Snyder, SDP Coordinator, and Jean Zimmerman, Assistant SDP Coordinator, support the Unit.

SDP Cases handled in 2019

In Calendar Year 2019, the NWDA reviewed the histories of 28 inmates who were due for release. The Office determined that 24 of these inmates did not meet the criteria for SDP commitment and records and reports regarding 3 of the remaining inmates were sent to experts for review. The 4th remaining inmate will be sent out for review in early 2020. After review by experts, 2 out of the 3 inmates were determined to not meet the criteria for commitment under the SDP statute. One inmate was determined to meet the criteria for commitment under the statute. A petition for commitment will be filed in early 2020 on this inmate.

DISTRICT COURT UNIT

The District Court serves as the gateway to the criminal justice system. The vast majority of criminal cases are prosecuted there. The District Courts in the Northwestern District are located in Northampton, Belchertown, Greenfield and Orange. These courts have jurisdiction over all misdemeanors, including drug offenses, public order offenses and motor vehicle offenses. The District Courts also have jurisdiction over those felonies that are punishable by imprisonment in the state prison for not more than 5 years, which include, but are not limited to, certain weapon-related offenses and property crimes.



District Court Unit Chief Michael Russo

ADA Michael Russo is the Chief of the District Court Unit. He supervises the ten ADAs who are assigned to the four District Courts.

A senior ADA is designated as the "Attorney in Charge" (AIC) in each of the four District Courts. The AICs are: Andrew Covington (Northampton District Court); Matthew Russo (Eastern Hampshire District Court); Ryan Scott (Orange District Court); and Joseph Webber (Greenfield District Court). In addition, experienced ADAs in each of these courts are designated as Domestic Violence prosecutors and/or as Child Abuse prosecutors.



ADA Ryan Scott receiving the annual Spotlight Award from Deputy DA Jennifer Suhl

There were several staff-related changes in 2019. The former AIC of Orange District Court, ADA Elizabeth Swihart, joined our Juvenile Justice Unit. District Court ADA Marie Angers was selected for an Assistant Clerkship position in the Orange District Court. ADA Becky Michaels returned to the office after serving as an Assistant Attorney General. ADAs Jeremy Simonich and Veronice Santana joined the District Court staff.



ADA Becky Michaels returned to the office after serving as an Assistant Attorney General



Drug Diversion & Treatment Program Director Maria Sotolongo and ADA Andrew Covington with a DDTP graduate

Assistant District Attorneys in the 4 District Courts handled **20,013 charges** in 2019. Some **6,112** were new arraignments.



District Court ADA Jeremy Simonich



District Court ADA Veronica Santana

NWDA Training Committee

The Training Committee hosted 12 trainings for staff members on a variety of topics including Special Ethical Responsibilities of Prosecutors. The Office also hosted guest speakers, including Jordana Willers, who gave a presentation on the Opioid Treatment options in Western

Massachusetts. The Office continued its partnership with the Western New England University School of Law's Criminal Law Clinic by hosting a law school student intern. Under Massachusetts Student Practice Rule 3:03 this student was able to develop her skills by handling arraignments, motions to suppress and trials.



DDTP Coordinator Maria Sotolongo and Northampton District Court Clerk Magistrate Darren Alston at Cultural Appreciation Day at the Hampshire County Courthouse

JUVENILE JUSTICE UNIT

The Juvenile Justice Unit aims to reduce youth violence and crime through the use of a coordinated community approach that includes early intervention and prevention. The Juvenile Court has jurisdiction over delinquency and youthful offender matters as well as adult criminal complaints for contributing to the delinquency of a minor, furnishing alcohol to a minor and failure to send a child to school. With the exception of Youthful Offender cases, juvenile court proceedings are closed to the public.



A student interviewing Judge Michael Ponsor at Hampshire County Law Day

ADA Elizabeth Mulcahy serves as Chief of the Juvenile Justice Unit (JJU) and Program Coordinator for the Northwestern District Attorney's Juvenile Diversion Program (NWDA-JDP). ADA Bruce Patryn serves as senior litigation counsel to the Unit and primarily handles cases in Hampshire County. ADA Elizabeth Swihart joined the Unit in April 2019 upon the departure of long-time Juvenile Court ADA Caitlyn Rock and is responsible for handling juvenile matters in Franklin County.

Naomi Bledsoe serves the Unit as both Diversion Specialist and Administrator. Victim Witness Advocates Janice Francis, Theresa Lane, and Heather Darling, as well as Family Service Advocates Heather Hubbard, Debra Kierstead, Linda Rogers and Kathy Bengtson, work with victims and their families whose cases are being prosecuted in the Juvenile Court. The Unit handles cases in the four juvenile courts located in Hampshire and Franklin Counties. In addition, as needed, Juvenile Unit ADAs may prosecute cases in Superior Court and District Court.

In 2019, the Juvenile Justice Unit handled **137 delinquency cases in Hampshire County**, in both the Hadley and Belchertown Juvenile Courts.

In 2019, the Juvenile Justice Unit handled **110 delinquency cases in Franklin County and the Town of Athol**, in the Greenfield and Orange Juvenile Courts.



Juvenile Diversion Specialist Naomi Bledsoe and Administrative Assistant Jean Zimmerman

The types of delinquency cases prosecuted by the Juvenile Justice Unit in 2019 ranged from offenses such as larceny and assault and battery to extremely serious cases including sexual assault and armed robbery.

For the most serious crimes, the District Attorney may elect to prosecute a juvenile as a Youthful Offender which allows a judge to sentence the individual as a juvenile or as an adult. In order for a juvenile to be prosecuted as a Youthful Offender, the case must be presented to a Grand Jury for indictment. If an indictment is returned, the case may proceed in Juvenile Court.

Many of the delinquency cases, in both counties may require additional investigative assistance, which may involve collaboration between the juvenile prosecutors, local law enforcement and State Police.



The NWDA gives presents to children and teens recommended by the Department of Children and Families

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Training for School Resource Officers, Superintendents
and other School Administrators

Sponsored by the Northwestern District Attorney's Office, Massachusetts State Police &
Western Massachusetts Safe School Task Force

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 4

8 a.m. to 12 noon

SOUTH DEERFIELD FIRE DISTRICT TRAINING ROOM
84 GREENFIELD ROAD - SOUTH DEERFIELD



The training will address how to triage written threats, verbal threats and overheard threats; discuss best practices in the event of a threat or other concerning incident and discuss sensible communications strategies that take into account balancing safety with information sharing.

For more information or to register, email Laurie.loisel@state.ma.us

**SAFE IN SCHOOL Threat Assessment,
Management and Communications
Training for School Resource Officers,
Superintendents and other School
Administrators**

Juvenile Diversion Program

The Northwestern District Attorney's Office's Juvenile Diversion Program (NWD-JDP) offers an alternative to formal prosecution in the juvenile court to certain eligible offenders between the ages of 12 to 18. Utilizing a pre-arraignment model, the diversion program is designed to protect participating youth from further court involvement and from having a criminal offender record. An important goal of the NWD-JDP is to address the underlying causes of juvenile delinquency in order to enable the juvenile to be held accountable and gain insight into their behavior. After receiving input from the victim, the Juvenile Diversion Specialist works with the juvenile and their parent/guardian to develop a plan that supports positive activities and contributions to the community and addresses his/her individual

needs. Juvenile diversion plans involve restorative practices which may include referrals to counseling and educational programs, community service, letters of apology and when applicable the payment of restitution.

Safe Schools Response Team

DA Sullivan established a Safe Schools Response Team (SSRT) to enable the NWDA to review and respond to complaints and referrals involving threats, harassment, bullying, and civil rights violations occurring in schools. Additional goals of the SSRT are to assist local schools in their response to bullying and harassing behavior targeting students and to serve as a resource for schools, parents, and victims.

Members of the SSRT in 2019 included Deputy District Attorney Janice Healy (ret.), Deputy District Attorney Jennifer Suhl, Juvenile Justice Unit Chief Elizabeth Mulcahy, ADA Caitlyn Rock (former), ADA Elizabeth Swihart, ADA Bruce Patryn, and Executive Assistant Susan Snyder.

Juvenile Justice Unit Outreach and Education

During 2019, the Juvenile Justice Unit collaborated with the NWDA's Outreach & Education Unit and community partners on the development of conferences and outreach work and programming for youth, parents, school personnel, school resource officers and other law enforcement partners. Members of the JJU and the NWDA Director of Outreach and Education served on steering committees for community youth and school- related coalitions and prevention efforts and attended juvenile, school and community and court-related trainings throughout the state. Positive youth development, trauma, safe & healthy schools, families and communities, social media, substance use, healthy relationships, equity, race, restorative practices and law-related trainings were an important part of the JJU's outreach and education efforts.



Hampshire County Law Day



Franklin County Law Day



7th Annual Safe & Healthy School Summit – Rights & Responsibilities in Schools

Community-Based Justice Meetings

The Community Based Justice Program (CBJ) is a statutorily mandated school-based initiative designed to establish and coordinate a partnership between schools, police, and the NWDA to address school violence and violence prevention and assist schools in providing a safe, secure, violence-free, and supportive environment for learning. CBJ meetings are convened regularly by an ADA in each county throughout the school year and provide a forum to share information regarding violent and at-risk youth, as well as individual students whose conduct has raised concerns about their health, safety or well-being. These meetings also serve to share resources and to provide a means to build relationships and foster communication between the NWDA, local law enforcement agencies, schools, state service agencies and community partners.



Susan Snyder assists at a training

VICTIM WITNESS ASSISTANCE UNIT

The purpose of the Victim Witness Assistance Unit within the NWDA is to provide information, support and advocacy services for victims, witnesses and survivors throughout the criminal justice process by ensuring the delivery of mandated rights enumerated in Massachusetts General Law Chapter 258B. The victim witness advocates work with the Assistant District Attorneys throughout the criminal case in an effort to provide the best teamwork approach to a successful resolution of their cases. The advocates strive to prevent secondary

victimization within the court system by trying to ensure a victim's safety and to make sure each victim has a voice in the process.



**Victim Witness Assistance
Unit Chief Jacqueline Gaw**

In Hampshire County, advocates were assigned to **995 cases**.

They assisted **1,177 victims**,
613 witnesses and **5 family members**.

In Franklin County, advocates were assigned to
775 cases. They assisted **979 victims**,
545 witnesses and **5 family members**.

Advocates from both counties assisted prosecutors with open investigations regarding reported sexual assaults and motor vehicle crashes that resulted in death. In these instances, the advocates provided much needed information and guidance to a victim or family member about their rights and services available to them such as victim compensation. Also, referrals were made to outside agencies where appropriate, such as the Center for Women and Community, the Drunk Driving Trust Fund program, the Center for Community Resilience after Trauma (formerly the Community Crisis Response Team) and the Homicide Bereavement Program.

Over the course of 2019, our staff filed **201 approved applications to the Victim Notification Registry** for either Offender Release Information or CORI certification for victims to be able to access documents and offender Board of Probation records.

Statewide, in comparison with other larger, more urban District Attorney's Offices, the NWDA Victim Witness Assistance Unit is highly competitive in total accepted applications to the Victim Notification Registry. This reflects not only the success in prosecutions of offenders for victim-centered crimes, but also reveals the attention of the advocates to providing post-conviction services to victims, witnesses and family members.



**Family Service Advocates Linda Rogers
and Debra Kierstead**

Training and Outreach

In 2019, our advocates participated in and attended a number of professional development opportunities. They included:

- Domestic Violence: A View from the Bench presented by the District Attorney's Task Force on Domestic and Sexual Violence;
- Domestic Violence High Risk Teams Best Practices;

- MOVA Annual Victim Rights Conference;
- Non-Fatal Strangulation and Intimate Partner Violence-A Training For First Responders;
- Crimes Against Women National Conference;
- Safe and Healthy School Summit for Juveniles;
- Sex Trafficking in the Franklin County and North Quabbin Region; and
- Annual Child Abuse and Prevention Breakfast.

All of the above trainings and conferences were centered on victim-involved issues that the advocates encounter every day.

In addition, Jacqueline Gaw and Advocate Jennifer Reid both presented to the Massachusetts Trial Court Academy for new Court Officers several times over 2019 training the recruits on what Victim/Witness Programs do and are and specifically on the Safe and Secure Waiting Area.

Jacqueline Gaw also participated in the MOVA New Advocate Training Roundtable discussion and also presented to a Legal Studies class at the University of Massachusetts.

Awards and Staff Changes

In 2019, Heather Darling was recognized by MOVA for her commitment to serving victims by receiving her 20 year Length of Service Award. Her dedication to ensuring victims and survivors are heard and cared for in the criminal justice system is to be congratulated and recognized.



Advocates Kimberly Devine, Heather Darling and Lori Roy

In 2019, we welcomed one new staff member. Theresa Lane joined our Franklin staff as an advocate. She came to us from the Berkshire County District Attorney's Office where she started her career several months before. We are so pleased she joined the NWDA to continue on her career path. She has proven to be a great addition to our Unit.



Mary Kociela and Advocates Kimberly Devine and Wendy Adams at Old Hampshire Superior Courtroom

2019 Notable Cases

Commonwealth v. Jason Labelle & Michael McHugh, Berkshire Superior Court, VWA Kate Clogston – This was a Berkshire Superior Court case that the NWDA handled on behalf of the Berkshire District Attorney's Office. Victim Witness Advocate Kate Clogston assisted First Assistant District Attorney Steven Gagne with this case, which went to trial before a jury in

November 2019. One of the defendants, Michael McHugh, was a Pittsfield Police officer, and the codefendant, Jason Labelle, was the victim's son-in-law. The defendants were charged with severely beating the victim on the night of July 4, 2016, after confronting him outside Labelle's home and accusing him of harassing Labelle's wife (the victim's daughter). The victim suffered a broken bone in his back, seven fractured ribs, and significant bruising, resulting in a seven-day hospital stay. An internal affairs investigation by the Pittsfield Police Department revealed that McHugh and Labelle lied to responding officers about the circumstances of the beating, and then participated in a cover up that involved false police reports and misleading testimony in several court hearings. ADA Gagne and VWA Clogston worked tirelessly with the victim to guide him through the lengthy pretrial proceedings and prepare him to testify at trial, where he endured withering cross-examination by both defense attorneys about his own false statements during the investigation. His courage in testifying, together with the staunch advocacy and support of VWA Clogston, was the key factor in securing convictions against both defendants. As stated by VWA Clogston, this was a case that will stay with her, not only for the unusual aspect of taking place in another county, but because we fought for what was right. A frightened but brave victim stood up to a more powerful force, no matter the consequences, and obtained justice.

Commonwealth v. Arthur Salisbury, Hampshire Superior Court, VWA Jennifer Reid – This defendant was indicted for two separate rapes of two unrelated women which happened several years apart. The indictments arose out of an investigation into women being taken from Holyoke and being transported into Granby where they were sexually assaulted. The investigation eventually led authorities to the defendant, who was subsequently indicted for two rapes, in 2009 and 2018. The Court ordered the assaults to be tried separately. VWA Reid became involved early on during the

investigative stage and assisted Deputy DA Jennifer Suhl and ADA Erin Aiello from investigation through both trials. In the first trial, of the 2018 rape, the victim testified that she was raped by the defendant in a secluded park in the middle of the night after which she managed to escape and hide in a swamp for hours before finding help at a nearby home. After the jury convicted the defendant of rape, he was sentenced to 9-13 ½ years in state prison. Months later, the defendant was tried for the 2009 assault. In that case, after the defendant raped the victim in his vehicle, he pushed her out into a muddy field. She was also able to get help from residents of a nearby home. Because she did not know the perpetrator, the police were initially unable to identify him. Years later, the State Police Crime Laboratory matched the defendant's DNA to DNA found on the victim hours after the assault by a Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner at a local hospital. After the jury convicted the defendant of two counts of rape, the defendant was sentenced to an additional 9 to 13 ½ years, for a combined total of 18 to 27 years in state prison. These cases represent what can happen when tenacious investigators, committed prosecutors, and a devoted advocate work together, even if faced with the most challenging of circumstances and set of facts. VWA Reid worked overtime with both of these victims to ensure their wellbeing, their presence and their safety. She secured clothing for one of them who was embarrassed that she didn't have proper courtroom attire. By this action, VWA Reid was able to put her at ease and allow her to focus on the testimony instead of her appearance. She went above and beyond for both women and it showed in their continued cooperation and confidence.

Commonwealth v. Lewis H. Starkey III, Franklin Superior Court, VWA Kimberly Devine – In this case, the defendant was charged with murdering his girlfriend with a shotgun in their home and then attempting to murder her adult son, a witness to the shooting, in Wendell in 2017. The son, who was autistic, fled the home

and hid in the woods until authorities located him. The defendant fled, drove to his place of work in Chicopee, and tried to kill one of his co-workers with the same shotgun. He was on the run for several days and ultimately apprehended in Orange. VWA Devine was involved in this case from the day of the homicide and became immersed in whatever needs the surviving family had. Initially, because the defendant was not located for several days, safety concerns were paramount. After he was located and charged, VWA Devine assisted the family with a variety of property issues, assisted the family in moving the victim's belongings out of the house, and most importantly, making sure the son was taken care of. The victim's family appeared at each court date for two years and VWA Devine was always by their side. The case went to trial in 2019 with a large contingent of family present each day and a vast number of witnesses from various locations out of the area testifying. The victim's son was an integral part of the Commonwealth's case at trial and testified to seeing his mother killed before having the gun turned on him. VWA Devine worked extensively with Deputy DA Suhl in preparing the son for trial. VWA Devine's experience and compassion was central to assisting and supporting the many witnesses and family members involved in the case, and her efforts were greatly appreciated by the victim's extensive and loving family.

CONSUMER PROTECTION UNIT

The Northwestern District Attorney's Office has been home to a local consumer protection program since 1973. Consumer Protection Unit Director Janice Garrett and Case Coordinator Anita Wilson are trained consumer specialists who work to resolve consumer complaints through a volunteer consumer advocacy program and also provide resources and referrals to the public. They deliver education and outreach programs throughout both

counties, giving consumers the information they need to make informed decisions and protect themselves against scams and fraud.



CPU Director Janice Garrett

The Consumer Protection Unit (CPU) works in cooperation with the Attorney General's Office (AGO), and is one of 17 programs statewide receiving a grant from the AGO to provide a local consumer program. In addition to the coverage area of Hampshire and Franklin Counties, the CPU's coverage area includes 17 Worcester County communities. The CPU provides needed consumer protection services to all of our communities.

2019 CPU Highlights

This year, the CPU developed a series of Consumer Tip Infographics to be printed in senior center newsletters, shared on their websites or social media, or printed as posters

or handouts. The CPU also produced video versions of each tip that have been airing on local public access cable TV stations.

CPU staff have played our unique computerized, interactive game board with elders and others to teach about financial literacy 42 times since its development including at the statewide Elder Abuse Conference this past year. It is always a lot of fun while everyone leaves having learned something and it meets our goal to teach financial literacy in a fun, competitive, pressure-free environment.



Anita Wilson at the Franklin County Health and Safety Fair in September

Once again, the CPU participated in the Greenfield Community College Reality Fair attended by more than 500 high school students from various communities. This two-day event was a thoroughly interactive, hands-on experience in the basics of budgeting. The goal was to teach students to maintain a budget while developing practical money management habits. Involvement was expanded by adding our Financial Literacy game for “extra credit.”

The CPU presented a four-part lecture series for consumers who have been homeless, recovering from addiction or have been incarcerated and working on rebuilding their financial lives.

The CPU continues to present informational programs for our senior population. One presentation focused on the three ways that scams target seniors by using the mail, the

telephone, and the internet. Presentations were also given on financial literacy and retail rights. CPU staff attended many senior health fairs and picnics, and have designed and developed a Consumer Protection Calendar filled with monthly tips which was distributed to approximately 1,000 area seniors.



Anita Wilson & Rachel Senecal at a Senior Savvy Showdown in Greenfield

The CPU is a member of the Hampshire and Franklin County Money Management Advisory Boards. CPU staff regularly participates in professional development in order to enhance the Unit’s expertise and ability to help consumers. We are a member of the Consumer Federation of America, an association of non-profit consumer organizations to advance the consumer interest through research, advocacy, and education.

In 2019, the Consumer Protection Unit received **1501 calls**, opened **349 cases** and recovered \$117,980.11 for consumers. In the past 5 years, CPU has recovered \$810,086.81.



ADA Matthew Russo, Deputy DA Jennifer Suhl, UMass Police Chief Tyrone Parham and DA Sullivan at the 2019 Community Breakfast at UMass

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION UNIT

The Northwestern District Attorney's community outreach and education efforts aim to foster resilient communities by working in partnership with organizations, coalitions, schools and individuals across the cities and towns of Hampshire and Franklin counties and the North Quabbin. Responding to community needs, the Unit promotes and supports efforts not only to prevent crime but also to address its root causes and cultivate healthy communities in a variety of ways. The Director of the NWDA's Community Outreach and Education Unit is Laurie Loisel.

The addiction crisis facing our nation has left no community unscathed, and the Northwestern District is no exception. In response, NWDA continued to strengthen its partnerships with community and school-based coalitions dedicated to preventing substance misuse. The NWDA maintains a steadfast commitment to approaching people struggling with substance misuse with compassion as we work to remove barriers to intervention and treatment and promote an expansive view of recovery and the many different paths it takes.



Laurie Loisel assisting at the 2019 National RX Drug Summit in Atlanta



DA Sullivan at the graduation ceremony for students in the College Success Course at Greenfield Community College (Photo by Opioid Task Force Coordinator Deb McLaughlin)

The NWDA works closely with the Northampton Recovery Center and other community initiatives aimed at increasing public understanding and reducing the stigma that still shrouds the disease of addiction. In 2019, the NWDA worked with the Hampshire HOPE opioid prevention coalition and the Academy of Music in bringing arts into the response to stigma and misunderstanding. The agencies collaborated around the production of "(In)Dependent," a play about the opioid epidemic presented at the Academy of Music by holding writing groups for

people impacted by the opioid epidemic that led to readings on stage ahead of the play and publication of a chapbook of those writings distributed around the community.



Northampton Police Chief Jody Kasper, DA Sullivan and Training Force USA trainer Thomas Gillan at Protecting Your House of Worship with Compassion and Common Sense



Franklin County Law Day planners

Also in 2019, the NWDA Community Outreach and Education Unit organized community events including:

- **Protecting Your House of Worship with Compassion and Common Sense**, a day-long conference that drew more than 100 people from faith institutions and law enforcement to help communities be proactive in keeping faith institutions safer;
- **Fair and Impartial Policing** trainings for local police departments; and

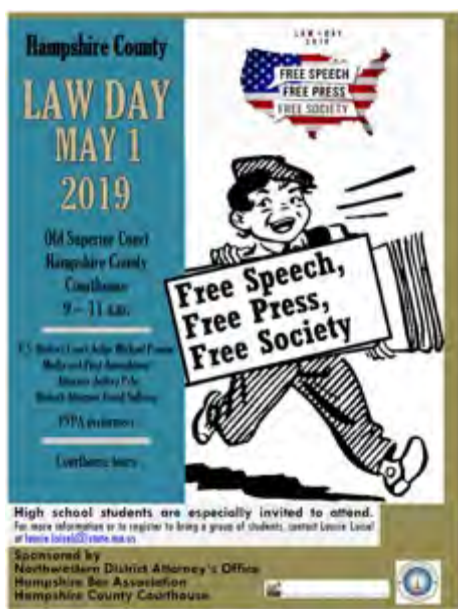
- **Safe and Healthy School Summit, Rights and Responsibilities in Schools, Guidance for Navigating Challenging Issues**, which addressed the topics of safeguarding student rights and creating safe learning environments for all.



Fair and Impartial Police Training

NWDA staff continued to work closely with **Trauma Informed Hampshire County: A Network Responding to Adverse Childhood Experiences** and other initiatives across the district that address trauma and its consequences and that foster resilience.

Joining forces with the Franklin and Hampshire Bar Associations and staff from the Hampshire and Franklin courthouses, NWDA staff helped present events to mark the American Bar Association's **2019 Law Day** featuring panels and distinguished speakers on the topic **Free Speech, Free Press, Free Society**. In Hampshire County, U.S. District Court Judge Michael A. Ponsor, First Amendment lawyer Jeffrey Pyle and students from Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Public School addressed one of the fundamental freedoms enshrined in the United States Constitution, while a panel of working journalists took on the topic in an event at Greenfield Community College.



Hampshire County Law Day poster

As always, the Community Outreach and Education Unit worked in partnership with schools and coalitions to increase protective factors and reduce risk factors that can lead students to use substances while their brains are still developing. NWDA staff continued year-round efforts to keep drugs from being misused by promoting safe storage and drug collection efforts through public education, permanent drop boxes and community drug-drop-off days. The office also promoted harm reduction efforts that are the cornerstone of compassionate approaches to addiction disorders.



Family Service Advocate Debra Kierstead at National Night Out in Orange

The NWDA also teamed up with cities and towns hosting **National Night Out** events, neighborhood block parties and other community-building activities that enhance connectedness around the Northwestern District.



The Citizens Advisory Board

Community members of the NWDA **Citizens Advisory Board** continued to play a role as a resource to the District Attorney while also serving as ambassadors for NWDA initiatives and sharing them with their communities. They learned about increasing advocacy on behalf of children caught up in commercial sexual exploitation, about the NWDA-affiliated NoFIRES program as well as work undertaken by the office to foster thriving community networks.

In all outreach efforts, the office is dedicated to building partnerships with the people who live and work in the Northwestern District by focusing on civic engagement and fostering long-lasting relationships that promote a just and safe community for all. The NWDA is committed to work alongside community-based organizations who share the goals of responding to social problems and nurturing resilient, connected communities.



DA Sullivan attended the Hampshire County House of Correction Nurturing Fathers program graduation in December

COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

The Communications Unit is vital in keeping the NWDA accessible and responsive to the public and media. The Communications Unit is led by Mary Carey, who coordinates with prosecutors, staff, and law enforcement to get information to the public in a timely, accurate and ethically sound way.



Mary Carey, DA Sullivan, ADA Becky Michaels and Advocate Janice Francis at the 2019 Amherst Block Party

In 2019, the Communications Unit worked with committee members to launch a new Northwestern District Attorney's Office website. The website provides up-to-date information to the public on cases being prosecuted by the NWDA as well as access to information about

the work of all of the units and community partners. The Facebook and Instagram pages, which feature hundreds of photos from office events and other outreach efforts, help the NWDA to form a close connection with the public. The Unit also filmed and produced several Law Enforcement Assistance Program training videos and worked closely with all of the NWDA Units to plan, promote and document in print, photos and video a wide range of events, trainings and educational programs.



TRIAD Coordinator Rachel Senecal and Senior Case Administrator Ann Metzger



DA Sullivan, State Senator Jo Comerford and State Rep. Dan Carey walked with Monte's March X: March for 1 Million Meals to raise money for The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts.

(Photo by Sen. Comerford's office)



Advocate Janice Francis, Damion Administrator Kelley Mason, DDTP Director Maria Sotolongo, Advocate Sonya Serrazina and CAU Coordinator Kellie Beaulieu



Northampton PD's Douglas visits the NWDA



ADAs Nicholas Atallah and Jillian Handy and District Court Administrator Cameron Jerome



DA Sullivan with Billy and Dana Warren in Chesterfield for 4th of July parade



Advocate Jennifer Reid, Court Administrator Beth Connly, IT Director Nathan Foote and Paralegal Cassie Jerome



ADA Cynthia Flatern teaches a weekly yoga class at the NWDA



Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey and DA Sullivan

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES DEPARTMENT

The Information Technologies (IT) Department works in a critical, behind-the-scenes role to support the work of all units within the NWDA office. The IT Department is charged with procuring, installing, developing and supporting information technology hardware and software for all of our offices in both Hampshire and Franklin Counties. These duties change from moment to moment as issues arise. The department is responsible for making sure that all of the office technology works for each member of the staff so they can get their work done efficiently.

IT Unit's 2019 Accomplishments

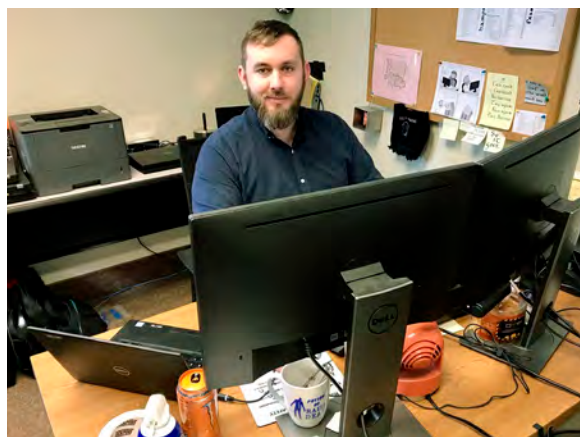
In 2019, the IT Department continued ongoing efforts to improve the infrastructure and IT practices of the NWDA to ensure smooth and efficient operations. Computer workstations, laptops, printers and other equipment were

purchased or existing equipment was refreshed, and deployed. Software and operating systems were continually updated with the most current security patches and upgrades to ensure our equipment ran securely and our data remained as secure as possible.

This year brought the retirement of Bruce Fieldman as Director. After a brief, much deserved break, Bruce returned to work part time to tackle some long-term IT projects. He has upgraded and updated many of the databases used in our office. He also continued his efforts to upgrade the office website.



Nathan Foote, previously Systems Support Engineer, took over the role of Director of Information Technologies this past July.



IT Systems Support Specialist Ed Drummond

In 2019, the office added Edward Drummond to the department as the Systems Support Specialist. He brings a wealth of industry experience in both the IT and cyber security.

This year, a new multi-media presentation system was acquired for the Grand Jury space in the Franklin County Justice Center. With this new system, prosecutors can better present the digital, audio and video evidence involved in today's cases.

The department also continued with the configuration and setup of various systems and equipment in the new Greenfield office on Bank Row.



Retired IT Director Bruce Fieldman and Director of Operations Martha Murphy Kane



Deputy DA Jennifer Suhl, ADA Elizabeth Swihart and State Police investigators



MASSACHUSETTS STATE POLICE DETECTIVE AND NARCOTICS UNIT

The Hampshire/Franklin State Police Detective Unit (SPDU) is comprised of 14 officers from the Massachusetts State Police with Captain Jeffrey Cahill as the SPDU Commander, and Sergeant Peter Konstantakos as the Executive Officer. The SPDU is responsible for investigating homicides, major felonies, digital crimes, and special investigations.

In 2019, the SPDU handled **552 cases**, investigated **two homicides**, and **269 unattended deaths**. The SPDU investigates all unattended deaths in Hampshire and Franklin Counties and the Town of Athol. The SPDU also partners with federal and local police agencies to assist them with their investigations.

Lieutenant Christopher Baran from the Massachusetts State Police and NWDA Chief Trial Counsel Jeremy Bucci lead the **Northwestern District Anti-Crime Task Force** which has an additional 12 officers from 12 local police departments including the Hampshire

and Franklin County Sheriff's Offices. These officers investigate illegal narcotics offenses, firearms offenses, and other organized criminal activities.

In 2019 the Anti-Crime Task Force **conducted 87 investigations** resulting in multiple indictments throughout the year.

Major drug trafficking, weapons cases, and theft rings have been investigated and indicted in Superior Court as a result of these joint law enforcement efforts. The Task Force is making a significant impact on major crime and the quality of life in our communities.



ADA Jeremy Bucci, ADA Joseph Webber and investigators outside Orange District Court

ONGOING INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS

CIVIL RIGHTS REVIEW TEAM

The protection of citizens' civil rights is a core mission for the Northwestern District Attorney's Office. DA Sullivan created the Civil Rights Review Team to review and respond to alleged hate crimes and hate incidents in our communities, as well as civil rights complaints and referrals. Team members include Deputy District Attorney Jennifer Suhl, District Court Chief Michael Russo, Juvenile Justice Unit Chief Elizabeth Mulcahy and Director of Community Outreach and Education Laurie Loisel. Having

this team in place has allowed the NWDA to respond in a prompt and effective way to civil rights incidents, complaints, referrals, and community inquiries.

COMMUNITY PROSECUTION PROJECTS

DA Sullivan's vision of justice is simply stated: *Do the Right Thing*. His philosophy is that justice requires fairness for all parties involved when a crime is charged: the victim, the community, and the defendant. To ensure that his vision underscores the work of his office, in 2019, DA Sullivan created a new leadership position, Director of Community Prosecution Projects, appointing Assistant District Attorney Becky Michaels to this new position. Among her responsibilities, ADA Michaels is charged with establishing and implementing initiatives that ensure consistency in policy and practice throughout the Northwestern District, including:

The Professional Responsibility Committee: Comprised of attorneys and staff from all departments within the office, the Professional Responsibility Committee is tasked with Training and Response. The Committee led a mandatory training for all Assistant District Attorneys, highlighting Massachusetts Rule of Professional Responsibility 3.8: Special Responsibilities of a Prosecutor, and other rules that are essential to the practice of fair prosecution. This training will be repeated and expanded each year to ensure that all prosecutors are aware of their special responsibilities as well as the significance of the District Attorney's vision. Additionally, members of the Professional Responsibility Committee are on call to respond quickly to ethical issues that arise at any time during the investigation and prosecution of cases.



ADA Becky Michaels and members of the Massachusetts Conviction Integrity Working Group with guest speaker Barry Scheck, co-Director of the Innocence Project.

Conviction Integrity Committee: Comprised of senior Assistant District Attorneys from the trial and appellate units and the Hon. Bertha Josephson (ret.), the Conviction Integrity Committee reviews claims of wrongful conviction based on claims of actual innocence or procedural error. The Committee reports directly to the District Attorney. Two members of the Committee serve on the statewide Massachusetts Conviction Integrity Working Group (MCIWG), created by resolution in 2018 by the Massachusetts Bar Association.

Brady Committee: Comprised of senior Assistant District Attorneys from the trial and appellate units, and including the District Attorney, the Brady Committee ensures that the NWDA is strictly adhering to its discovery obligations under *Brady v. Maryland*, 373 U.S. 83, 87 (1963). In 2019, the Committee created a Brady Protocol, trained the police departments in the Northwestern District, and is implementing the protocol throughout the District and Superior Courts. Additionally, two members of the Committee participate in the statewide *Brady* working group.

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

Restorative Justice is an integral part of the NWDA's justice practices. The principles of restorative justice recognize that criminal behavior harms both individuals and the

community as a whole. Restorative justice principles also hold that offenders have an obligation to understand the harm that they have caused, accept responsibility for their actions and actively participate in making amends. Panels of community members meet once a month to hear new criminal cases and to review offenders' progress in open cases. The panels give the community members a forum to uphold the values of the community, to support and involve those victimized and to build avenues for offenders to make amends.

While some cases resolve through a referral to a restorative justice panel, ADAs also include components of restorative justice—restitution, letters of apology, community service or other restorative practices—where appropriate in numerous dispositions.

DA Sullivan sits on the statewide Restorative Justice Advisory Committee (RJAC), comprised of legislators, academics, and members of the Restorative Justice community. The Legislature created the RJAC to recommend policy and advocate for best practices in restorative justice throughout the Commonwealth.

DIVERSION PROGRAMS

Drug Diversion and Treatment Program

Since 2016, the Drug Diversion and Treatment Program (DDTP) has provided immediate access to substance abuse treatment for hundreds of non-violent offenders. Initially, the innovative pre- and post-arraignment diversion program enrolled only those offenders who had no prior involvement with the criminal justice system. Beginning in 2019, DA Sullivan expanded the program to include non-violent offenders whose criminal histories may reflect an ongoing substance use disorder. In addition, he created two new positions within the program to work with Director Maria Sotolongo. Assistant District Attorney Becky Michaels oversees the

DDTP, and Tara Wilson serves as Intake Coordinator in Franklin County.



DDTP graduate with Northampton District Court Clerk Magistrate Darren Alston and ADA Andrew Covington

The DDTP provides eligible candidates with the opportunity to obtain comprehensive substance use disorder treatment and recovery support in lieu of being prosecuted through the criminal justice system. By offering comprehensive treatment and recovery support, the DDTP seeks to improve overall public safety by reducing substance use and criminal recidivism in our District. Of the participants who graduated from the program in 2017, a promising 83% of them have not reoffended.

The DDTP operates in all four of the District Courts in the Northwestern District. At the heart of the successful implementation of the program are the strong partnerships that we have developed with two treatment providers, Clinical Support Options (CSO) and the Center for Human Development (CHD); the MA Department of Public Health; local law enforcement; Trial Court Department staff in each of our district courts; the Recovery Support Center in each county; and our two

Western Massachusetts regional drug task forces/coalitions.

Adult Diversion Program

The Adult Diversion Program (ADP) diverts first-time offenders of certain crimes out of the criminal justice system, enabling them to avoid incurring criminal records while also taking responsibility for their conduct. First-time offenders are offered the opportunity to perform community service and enroll in an on-line educational course relevant to the crime charged. If an offender successfully meets these obligations, his or her case is then dismissed.



**DDTP Director Maria Sotolongo
and a 2019 graduate**

The Veterans Justice Partnership

The Veterans Justice Partnership (VJP) was founded in 2011 by DA Sullivan and other community leaders. VJP's mission is to help court-involved and incarcerated veterans. VJP is a collaboration of the NWDA, veteran's organizations, mental health providers, local, state and federal veteran agencies, and numerous criminal justice and community partners.

VJP is working to help veterans before and after case disposition. A Department of Mental Health initiative, Mission Direct Vet, is working collaboratively with VJP to help veterans get the

necessary mental health services to address and prevent criminal conduct. For incarcerated veterans, VJP has the benefit of the direct involvement of Sheriffs Patrick Cahillane (Hampshire), Christopher Donelan (Franklin), and Nicholas Cocchi (Hampden) to help with both treatment and re-entry options.

VJP is led by DA Sullivan. Martha Murphy Kane, Director of Operations, has been an integral part of coordinating VJP and moving it forward. The VA Veterans Outreach and Soldier On partners have been the driving forces in identifying and screening court-involved veterans in order to address and reduce their criminal behavior and improve the quality of their lives.

The NWDA continues to update *The Veterans Blue Book*, a comprehensive guide to resources and services for veterans. This popular resource guide has been distributed throughout Western Massachusetts and has been noted as one of the best Veterans guidebooks in the United States.

The VJP served 273 veterans in 2019:

- 194 veterans worked with both the Veterans Administration and Veterans Affairs.
- 79 veterans worked with Soldier On.



Veterans Treatment Court team

WMass Veterans Treatment Court

Established in 2015, the Western Massachusetts Veterans Treatment Court works specifically with court-involved veterans and is centrally located at Holyoke District Court to serve veterans from Hampshire, Franklin and Hampden counties. The NWDA plays an integral role in the vision and operation of this court. Currently, the court services 29 Veterans from all branches of the United States Armed Forces. Some 14 of those participants are from Franklin and Hampshire County. Participants in the program commit to a long-term, intensive probation during which they receive services for their mental health and substance abuse needs. They also receive assistance in locating stable, long-term housing and employment.

Justice Laurie McLeod is the presiding justice of the court. She leads the Veteran Court team which is comprised of a cross section of the district court community. The team includes representatives from the Northwestern and Hampden County District Attorney's Offices, the probation department, the Holyoke Police Department, defense attorneys and clinical support from Soldier On and the VA Hospital in Leeds. It is only appropriate that we have a Vet Court devoted to saving the lives of those who were willing to give up their lives for their country.

ADA Michael Russo is the coordinator for the NWDA.

Northwestern Law Enforcement Assistance Program



**Roll Call trainer
Attorney John Sofis Scheft**

The Northwestern Law Enforcement Assistance Program (LEAP) has conducted numerous professional development trainings and provided assistance to law enforcement agencies throughout the Northwestern District since it was launched in 2011. The monthly LEAP Newsletter gives valuable legal updates to all of our law enforcement partners. The LEAP website portal is available on the NWDA website and provides 24/7 access to training videos and materials. This training portal is accessible only to law enforcement agencies. NWDA continues to collaborate with the Franklin Sheriff's Department and Franklin Chiefs of Police Association to run a state certified 300 hour course to train local reserve police officers.



Opioid Task Force Co-Founders DA Sullivan, Register of Probate John Merrigan and Franklin County Sheriff Christopher Donelan

Leaders in Addressing Addiction and Substance Abuse

NWDA staff continued working closely with **Hampshire HOPE and the Opioid Task Force of Franklin County & North Quabbin Region**, the regional opioid prevention coalitions engaged in the fight to end the opioid epidemic.

DA Sullivan supports these coalitions with his time on their executive teams and working groups and with his advocacy on Beacon Hill and elsewhere, fighting for resources to support prevention and intervention as well as treatment and recovery services for people dealing with opioid misuse disorders.

Both coalitions are models of how to harness community energy to introduce harm reduction initiatives, public education and evidence-based practices to reverse the tide of this deadly epidemic. They work within the cities and towns they serve to address the rise in prescription opioid misuse, heroin use,

addiction, and overdose death in the region through policy, practice, and systems change.

In 2019, they offered Narcan trainings, promoted safe drug storage practices and worked with the NWDA to promote drug collection days to keep drugs from being misused.



The Opioid Task Force (OTF), created in 2013, operates out of the Franklin Justice Center, and works with medical and public health professionals, community coalitions and law enforcement to promote evidence-based practices and policy change that will save lives and mitigate the devastation caused by the opioid crisis. The Task Force organized events to support people in recovery, worked with Franklin County-based prevention coalitions and continued educating the public in its effort to reduce stigma and remove other barriers that get in the way of people receiving the help they need.

The Opioid Task Force's significant contribution to Franklin County and North Quabbin region were recognized with OTF's Co-Chairs, District Attorney Sullivan, Franklin Register of Probate John Merrigan and Franklin Sheriff Christopher Donelan being awarded the prestigious Manual Carballo Governor's Award for Excellence in Public Service



Hampshire HOPE, formed in 2015, operates out of the Northampton Health Department. It works in a collaborative way to bring together community groups, public health and medical partners, law enforcement, and treatment and recovery services to address the opioid epidemic. DA Sullivan is a Co-Chair of Hampshire HOPE and committed significant resources for its success.

In 2019, Hampshire HOPE collaborated with faith communities and worked with other coalitions to organize overdose awareness vigils. They launched a partnership with police departments to send out intervention teams to people who have overdosed, making important connections and offering support and information about helpful resources. The Northampton Police Department intervention team, known as DART (Drug Addiction and Recovery Team), has worked with Hampshire HOPE to help a number of other police departments in Hampshire County to establish their own teams. All 20 of Hampshire County's police departments will have trained intervention teams to help addicted persons and their families.

Hampshire HOPE has developed a wall of remembrance and hope where members of the community post words and pictures to honor loved ones lost and tributes to those in recovery.



The **Northampton Recovery Center** was a result of visioning sessions held with members of the local recovery community initiated by Hampshire HOPE. Lynn Ferro, former Director of Opioid Research & Recovery Support Services for the NWDA, has had a significant role in the

coordination of the new center which is modeled upon the successful peer-driven model adopted across the state. The Recovery Center will continue its efforts to find permanent funding and expand hours, programs and services. In 2018, the Recovery Center relocated to a new space at 2 Gleason Plaza, Northampton, which it has already outgrown. In 2020, the NRC moves to the site of the former La Fiorentina Pastry Shop at 25 Armory Street. Programs are added regularly in order to support the continued recovery of those who have successfully navigated their personal journeys away from addiction.

School Safety and Security Task Force

In the tragic wake of the shooting at the Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut, DA Sullivan, Massachusetts State Police, Franklin Sheriff's Departments, and local law enforcement formed a Western Massachusetts Safe School Security Task Force. The Task Force has helped to coordinate law enforcement and first responder trainings, school safety audits, school lockdown and emergency protocols, active shooter trainings, improved building designs, and safe school climate initiatives. This Safe School Security Task Force is spearheaded by Massachusetts State Police Troopers James Carmichael and Andy Canata.



NoFIRES is a non-profit organization that offers education and intervention to youth fire setters. In 2013, NoFIRES expanded to serve 51 communities located in Franklin County, Hampshire County, North Quabbin Region, and the City of Holyoke. The core mission is to

protect our youth, their families, and the communities in which they live from the dangerous, and sometimes fatal, act of setting fires. A collaboration of fire, law enforcement, mental healthcare providers and social service agencies, NoFIRES is committed to providing a coordinated and appropriate response to youth under the age of 18, who set fires or engage in fire-related behavior. The NoFIRES program has quickly become a national model program for helping youth fire setters.



NoFIRES Executive Director Loren Davine



NoFIRES Board of Directors

FRONT TO BACK Chief Michael Spanknebel, Deputy Chief Wayne Hennemann, Loren Davine, Chief John Ingram, Martha Murphy Kane, Chief Robert Authier, Campus Fire Marshal Michael Swain, Detective Michael Briggs

In 2019, NoFIRES received **40 referrals** to the program and held 13 fire education classes. More than **350 families** have been served by NoFIRES since it was developed in 2012.

At this time, NoFIRES is one of the few programs available for youth who have engaged in fire-related behavior. The unique model of utilizing licensed clinical social workers for screenings and specialized fire educators for classes makes this program an invaluable asset to the 51 communities it serves.



NoFIRES Instructors

In addition to providing fire safety education to youth who have engaged in fire setting, NoFIRES is committed to providing high-quality trainings in this field to educators, clinicians, prosecutors, fire investigators and law enforcement.



Martha Murphy Kane, DA Sullivan, State Rep. Dan Carey, Fire Marshal Peter Ostroskey, Massachusetts State Police Supt. Christopher Mason and Loren Davine

On November 5th and 6th, 2019, the NoFIRES Partnership and NWDA proudly presented the **7th Annual Arson Investigation Conference: *Using Technology in Arson Investigation*** at the Hadley Farms Meeting House in Hadley, MA. More than 135 police, firefighters, prosecutors, investigators, and mental health providers attended. NoFIRES welcomed The Massachusetts State Police, Massport Fire Rescue, The Commonwealth Fusion Center, and the Essex County District Attorney's Office to share their expertise.



**Fire Marshal Peter Ostroskey
at NoFIRES conference
(Photos: Public Safety Multimedia)**

The conference focused on Digital Evidence and Multimedia, Drone Use in the Fire Service, Bomb Squad Capabilities & Equipment Demonstrations, and a compelling case study of how the Essex County District Attorney's Office

investigated an organized crime ring. The training also examined Open Source Intelligence Techniques (OSINT), Utilizing License Plate Readers in Investigation, and the Capabilities and Limitations of Technology in Arson Investigation through Case Analysis. Demonstrations using drones, robots, and EK9's were a highlight of the event.

Internship Program



Summer 2019 Interns

The NWDA offers summer and academic year internships to college and law school students in the following areas: legal, administrative, communications, outreach, victim/witness services and consumer protection.

College internships provide students with valuable insight into the workings of the criminal justice system. Law students selected to participate in the NWDA Legal Internship Program assist prosecutors in the Juvenile, District, Superior, and Appellate courts, gaining experience in legal research, writing, case preparation and trial practice.

Interns assigned to the Victim Witness Assistance Unit work directly with advocates who serve as liaisons between the prosecutors, victims and witnesses as developments occur in cases. They also assist victims with compensation forms and referrals to community services and promote awareness of victims' rights in the community.

In the Consumer Protection Unit, interns are directly involved in consumer casework, fielding consumer calls, assessing problems, conveying information, sending correspondence, referring consumers to other agencies, and working on special projects. Consumer Protection interns also mediate cases between businesses and consumers.

FEDERAL GRANTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR PUBLIC SAFETY

Every year, critical grants make a difference in fighting crime and helping vulnerable victims. Listed are some of the federal grants which have been awarded to the NWDA with details as to how they assist prevention programs and victims of child abuse, domestic violence, sexual assaults, and other major crimes. These are essential grants for safer communities and are not available from any other funding sources.

VOCA – Victims of Crime Act Child Abuse Unit

The Child Abuse Unit (CAU) provides support services and advocacy to child victims of physical and sexual abuse and to their families. Family service advocates within the CAU provide information and advocacy regarding the criminal justice process, crisis intervention, social service intervention and social service referrals. The VOCA grant funds are being used to support two family service advocate's positions within the CAU as well as a forensic interviewer position.

Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) S.T.O.P. Grant The DVIP/AWARE Project

The Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP) is funded by the MA Executive Office of Public Safety & Security, S.T.O.P. (Services Training Officers Prosecutors) Grant program.

DVIP is an early intervention, collaborative program that combines the services of forty-five police departments, five state police barracks, two dispatch centers, three courts, two victim service providers and our local certified batterer's intervention program. This regional approach to domestic violence spans two counties and forty-seven towns. Advocates hired by the New England Learning Center for Women in Transition (NELCWIT) in Franklin County, and Valley Human Services at Behavioral Health Network in Hampshire County, are available by cell phone to assist police in providing an immediate response to victims of domestic abuse. The DVIP is closely tied to the High Risk Team Project, with DVIP Advocates making 45% of potential high risk offender referrals to the team.

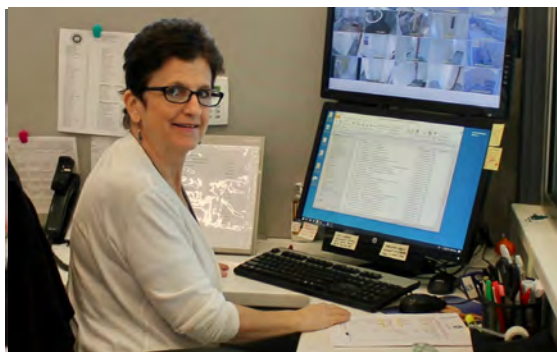
Office on Violence Against Women- Improving Criminal Justice Response The Domestic Violence High Risk Team Project

The DV High Risk Team Project (DVHRT) is funded by the Office on Violence Against Women, Improving Criminal Justice Response Program (formerly Grants to Encourage Arrest Program). The NWDA has been receiving these funds since 2001. Originally, the grant funded three districtwide, multi-disciplinary safety audits over ten years, which significantly improved our system response to domestic violence. The DVHRT began in 2009 as a direct recommendation of the safety audit team. The primary goal of the DVHRT is to identify, closely monitor and hold accountable high risk offenders of domestic violence. There are two high risk teams, one in each county. The coordinator screens referrals from the courts and non-profit agencies, gathers information and presents cases to the team. Each team has county representation from police, the NWDA, probation, parole, sheriff's departments, batterer's intervention, victim service providers and the courts. Teams meet monthly to identify new high risk offenders, review and update the current list of offenders, and address any new

offenses and/or safety concerns for victims. Recommendations are made for each high risk offender and communicated to police, probation and prosecutors. Recommendations can include priority prosecution, police drive-bys and improved safety plan for victims. As a result, we have seen a decline in the number of DV homicides in the district and we have improved our ability to contain offenders who are identified a high risk to kill their intimate partner.



Deputy District Attorney Janice Healy retired after a distinguished career in the Summer of 2019



The NWDA lost a beloved longtime employee, Greenfield Office Manager Donna Jackson, who passed away in April 2020

FISCAL UNIT

The Fiscal Unit is led by Chief Financial Officer Donna Dudkiewicz with the assistance of Fiscal Assistants Higy Chan and Jessica Diemand. The Fiscal Unit oversees the 2019 NWDA budget which includes all grants awarded to the office from federal and state sources. The Unit is responsible for the management and allocation of state and federal funds received by the office and ensures that all funds are expended in a fiscally responsible manner. In addition, the Unit coordinates the tracking of forfeiture funds recovered by the Office through successful prosecution of narcotics cases with Chief Trial Counsel Jeremy Bucci. The Fiscal Unit also plays an integral role in the writing and administration of state and federal grants.



Fiscal Unit Chief Donna Dudkiewicz, Jessica Diemand and Higy Chan

FY19 Total Appropriation Funding
\$7,952,654

FY19 Total Grant Funding
\$711,752

Grand Total
\$8,664,406

Appropriation Funding Percentage
92%

Grant Funding Percentage
8%

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Northwestern District Attorney's Website:

NorthwesternDA.org

Find us on Facebook:

[NorthwesternDADaveSullivan](https://www.facebook.com/NorthwesternDADaveSullivan/)

Find us on Instagram:

<https://www.instagram.com/dadavesullivan/>

The 47 communities of the Northwestern District

FRANKLIN COUNTY

- Ashfield
- Bernardston
- Buckland
- Charlemont
- Colrain
- Conway
- Deerfield
- Erving
- Gill
- Greenfield
- Hawley
- Heath
- Leverett
- Leyden
- Monroe
- Montague
- New Salem
- Northfield
- Orange
- Rowe
- Shelburne
- Shutesbury
- Sunderland
- Warwick
- Wendell
- Whately

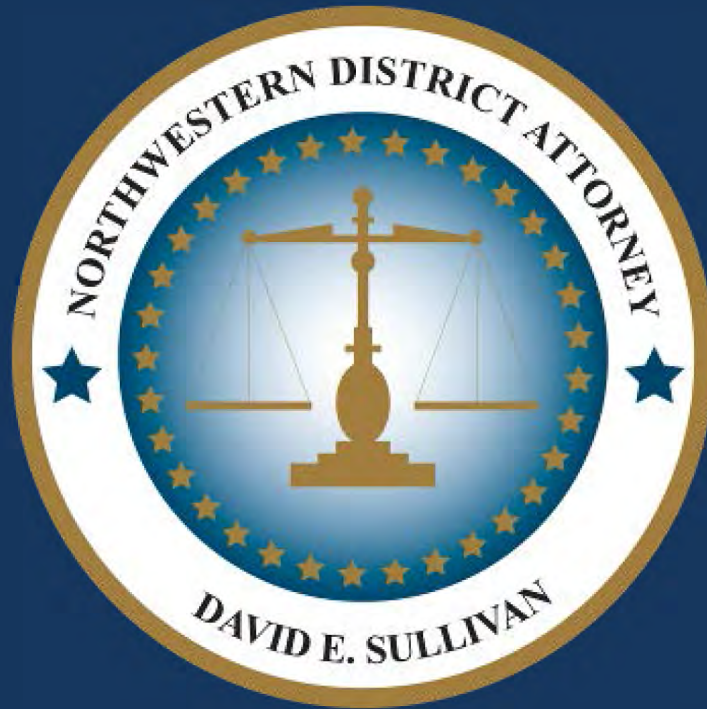
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY

- Amherst
- Belchertown
- Chesterfield
- Cummington
- Easthampton
- Goshen
- Granby
- Hadley
- Hatfield
- Huntington
- Middlefield
- Northampton
- Pelham
- Plainfield
- South Hadley
- Southampton
- Ware
- Westhampton
- Williamsburg
- Worthington

WORCESTER COUNTY

- Athol





Our Mission

To Seek Justice For All. The Office of the Northwestern District Attorney, in partnership with the communities we serve, is dedicated to the pursuit of truth and justice, protection of the innocent, and safety of the public.

Our Vision

Our vision is to enhance public safety and quality of life for all citizens in the 47 Northwestern communities. We will be leaders in fair and effective prosecutions and progressive prevention initiatives.