



Office of Northwestern District Attorney
David E. Sullivan

2020 Annual Report



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Thank you to Mike Girardi for permission to use the cover photo of the French King Bridge.



Message from District Attorney

I am pleased to share the Office of the Northwestern District Attorney 2020 Annual Report. Our report is tempered by the global COVID-19 pandemic that has impacted our world since January 2020. The rapid and deadly spread of the COVID-19 virus has caused millions to be infected and the deaths of over 500,000 Americans and 2 million worldwide. This pandemic has resulted in the shutdown or curtailment of everything from our local restaurants and retail establishments to our schools and courthouses. Millions lost their jobs and food insecurity has never been higher.

Despite the many hardships and obstacles presented by this pandemic, our DA Office continued to operate 24/7 to handle investigations and prosecutions. We quickly pivoted to having many staff work remotely to keep them safe and healthy. We handled most court hearings through virtual conference calls and all bench and jury trials ground to a halt in March 2020. Our prosecutors, advocates, and staff continued to fight every day for the victims of crime who may be a vulnerable senior, a young child, or a battered spouse. The commitment of our staff to seek justice for all never wavered. In 2020, we celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Sullivan administration. Our 2020 Annual Report highlights achievements over this past year and the foundations for justice we have built over the last decade.

In 2020, there were many cases in which our prosecutors distinguished themselves in the courtroom to seek justice for victims of crime. Our victim advocates continued to provide 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.

The tragic death of George Floyd, at the hand of a Minneapolis police officer, brought into sharp focus America's legacy of racial injustices. The Black Lives Matter movement has demanded we make meaningful changes in our society and criminal justice system. As a District Attorney's office, we are committed to taking a hard look at our prosecutions and staffing practices to address any disparities based upon race, ethnicity, or class. There was a clarion call for all of us to interrupt and end racism in our workplaces and communities.

We deeply 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, written in a professional style.

Staff and Organization

Senior Management Team

David E. Sullivan, District Attorney
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
Ann Metzger, Senior Case Administrator
Mary-Elizabeth Connly, Superior Court
Administrator
Cassandra Jerome, Paralegal, Office Supervisor

Child Abuse Unit

ADA Linda Pisano, Chief
ADA Frederic Bartmon, Deputy Chief
ADA Lori Odierna
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*
ADA Anne Yereniuk, Chief
Rachel Senecal, Unit & TRIAD Coordinator

Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Unit

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
Joviana Rosario, Administrative Assistant
Katie Rosewarne, High Risk Team Coordinator

Appellate Unit

ADA Thomas Townsend, Chief
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 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

Juvenile Justice Unit

ADA Elizabeth Mulcahy, Chief
ADA Bruce Patryn
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 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

Nathan Foote, Director
Edward Drummond, IT Systems Support

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

Ashley Benoit, District Court Administrator
Mary-Elizabeth Connly, Superior Court Administrator
Alyssa Devlin, Legal Assistant
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, Office Supervisor
Samantha Johnson, District Court Administrator
Timothy Kwarcinski, District Court Administrator
Kelley Mason, Paralegal, DAMION Administrator
Pat Matusiewicz, Administrative Assistant*
Ann Metzger, Senior Case Administrator
Erin O'Brien, Administrative Assistant
Lauren O'Roark, District Court Administrator
Michelle Richotte, Executive Assistant
Joviana Rosario, Administrative Assistant
Susan Snyder, Executive Assistant
Jean Zimmerman, Administrative Assistant

Fiscal Unit

Donna Dudkiewicz, Chief Financial Officer
Higy Chan, Fiscal Assistant
Jessica 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.



Northampton Courthouse
photo by Richard Cowles

SUPERIOR COURT UNIT

Superior Court is where the most serious felony cases in Hampshire and Franklin Counties are prosecuted. A felony is any crime punishable by imprisonment in the state prison. Some felonies are so serious that they can only be prosecuted as indictments in the Superior Court, such as murder, rape, robbery, drug trafficking, and home invasion. Other felonies can be prosecuted in either the Superior or District Court, and can be punished by sentences in the local Houses of Correction.

Incarceration is just one possible outcome of cases prosecuted in Superior Court, and is by no means punishment of first resort. Each case is evaluated on its own facts and circumstances,

including: the nature and seriousness of the crime; the defendant's criminal history; the effect that drug and/or alcohol addiction, or mental illness, may have had on the defendant's actions; input from the victim(s); and outcomes in comparable cases.

In certain cases, a defendant may be placed on probation with strict supervision, which gives the offender the opportunity to avoid incarceration so long as they comply with special conditions and avoid committing new crimes.

Regardless of the outcome of a Superior Court prosecution, the overarching goal in every case is that justice be done.

"The [prosecutor] is the representative not of an ordinary party to a controversy, but of a sovereignty whose obligation to govern impartially is as compelling as its obligation to govern at all, and whose interest, therefore, in a criminal prosecution is not that it shall win a case, but that justice shall be done."

***-United States v. Berger
United States Supreme Court (1935)***

Grand Jury

Because felony cases prosecuted in Superior Court carry such serious potential penalties, they must first be presented to the Grand Jury. Each county (Hampshire and Franklin) has its own Grand Jury, which consists of 23 citizens who hear a variety of cases during their three-month term of service. Their task in every case is to evaluate the evidence presented by the prosecutor and determine whether there is probable cause to believe a particular suspect committed a crime. If they make this finding, an indictment or "true bill" is returned to the Superior Court.

Like the entire court system, the functioning of the Grand Jury was severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. In mid-March, when courts, schools and businesses abruptly closed, the Grand Juries in Hampshire and Franklin County were discharged due to the health risks inherent in having 23 people convene to hear cases. No new Grand Juries were empaneled until September 2020, by which time there was a considerable backlog of serious cases to be presented. Similarly, no pending cases in the Superior Court were tried after March. Notwithstanding this, there were several notable cases prosecuted in the Hampshire and Franklin Superior Courts in 2020, including:

Commonwealth v. Christopher Conley (Hampshire Superior Court) – The defendant was accused of poisoning his chronically-sick daughter by injecting a caustic substance into her gastrointestinal track, causing massive damage that required multiple surgeries and extended hospitalization. Doctors discovered that most of the child’s intestines were necrotic, and a large hole had developed in the child’s bladder; injuries with no known medical cause. In a recorded interview at the Northampton Police Department, the defendant confessed to injecting drain cleaner into his daughter’s cecostomy tube, in a supposed effort to spare her from further medical complications. The Hampshire Grand Jury returned indictments against the defendant in August 2015, charging him with attempted murder, assault and battery with a dangerous weapon on a child under 14, and assault and battery on a child causing substantial bodily injury. Over the next 4 ½ years, this case became one of the most heavily-litigated criminal cases in recent Hampshire County history, with hundreds of motions and an appeal to the Supreme Judicial Court. Part of that litigation involved the defendant’s efforts to prevent the jury from hearing his confession, claiming it was falsely given to deflect blame from his wife. These efforts proved unsuccessful, and the jury was

able to see and hear his full confession during trial. At the conclusion of a three-week trial (the last case tried in the Hampshire Superior Court prior to the COVID shutdown), the jury returned guilty verdicts against the defendant on all three charges. The Court sentenced the defendant to serve 16-18 years in state prison, noting that the “intentional and horrific acts of the defendant... require a significant and upward departure from the sentencing guidelines, so as to arrive at a true and just verdict and sentence in this case.” Conley has filed a notice of appeal, and his convictions will be reviewed by the Massachusetts Appeals Court in coming years. See the Child Abuse Unit section of this Annual Report for more details.



Christopher Conley in handcuffs during sentencing hearing in Hampshire Superior Court in February 2020

Daily Hampshire Gazette photo

This case was prosecuted by an entire team of attorneys and staff from the District Attorney’s Office, including: Assistant District Attorney Linda Pisano, the Chief of the Office’s Child Abuse Unit; First Assistant District Attorney Steven Gagne; Assistant District Attorney Bethany Lynch from the Office’s Appeals Unit; Kellie Beaulieu, Child Abuse Unit Coordinator; and Paralegals Jamie Foster and Kellie Mason. Their efforts would not have been successful without the countless hours of dogged investigation by the Northampton Police Department and the Massachusetts State Police Detective Unit, not to mention the heroic efforts of the medical staff at Yale New Haven Hospital in Connecticut.



First Assistant District Attorney Steven Gagne and Assistant District Attorney Linda Pisano, Chief of the Child Abuse Unit, following Christopher Conley's sentencing of 16-18 years in state prison. Daily Hampshire Gazette photo

Commonwealth v. Nerkin Omar Morales and Pedro Soto-Rodriguez (Hampshire Superior Court) – On the evening of March 10, 2018, Hatfield Police were called to Bridge Lane for a report of a mysterious fire. What they found triggered an intensive, months-long investigation resulting in the indictments of nine codefendants in connection with the murder of Daniel Cruz, age 44, of Northampton. The investigation revealed that Cruz was shot to death by Nerkin Omar Morales during an altercation inside the Meadowbrook Apartments in Northampton. After Cruz's death, Morales and his friends tried to conceal the crime by cleaning the crime scene, disposing of the gun used to kill Cruz, silencing witnesses, and disposing of Cruz's body in Hatfield and setting it on fire. The Hampshire Grand Jury investigated this crime (and its failed cover-up) for eight months before returning a total of 55 indictments against nine codefendants. In September 2020, Morales pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter and was sentenced to 15-20 years in state prison. Codefendant Pedro Soto-Rodriguez pleaded guilty to being an accessory after the fact to Cruz's murder and several other related crimes, and was sentenced to 7-8 years in state prison. Five other codefendants' cases remain pending. This investigation and the resulting

prosecutions were headed by Deputy District Attorney Jennifer Suhl, with assistance from Victim Witness Advocate Jennifer Reid.



Deputy District Attorney Jennifer Suhl, flanked by Massachusetts State Police Trooper Daniel Paras and Northampton Police Sergeant Peter Fappiano, addresses the media after a court hearing in the Morales case. MassLive photo

Commonwealth v. John Maslanka (Franklin Superior Court) – The defendant surreptitiously installed cameras in the home where he was living as a guest and took inappropriate photographs of two young female victims. Following the defendant's arrest, a forensic search of his digital devices revealed unrelated child pornography. The defendant pleaded guilty to indictments charging him with: posing or exhibiting a child in a state of nudity; photographing, videotaping or electronically surveilling a nude or partially nude person; and multiple counts of possession of child pornography. The Commonwealth sought a sentence of four to five years in state prison, followed by lengthy probation. The Court imposed a sentence of five years in the House of Correction, after which the defendant will be on strict supervised probation for five years. The defendant will also be required to register as a sex offender with the Massachusetts Sex Offender Registry Board. This case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Anne Yereniuk, with assistance from Victim Witness Advocate Linda Rogers.



Deputy DA Jennifer Suhl was recognized as one of the Top Women of Law in Massachusetts

Economic Crimes & Insurance Fraud

Each year, a number of economic crimes are indicted and prosecuted in Superior Court. The decision to indict these cases can depend upon the amount of money stolen, the complexity of the scheme involved, or the vulnerability of the victim. Often times, these cases involve embezzlement by an employee against their employer, or fraud or exploitation committed against an elder or a person with disabilities. Since its creation in 2012, the Economic Crimes Unit has investigated and prosecuted crimes involving millions of dollars of losses.

The Northwestern District Attorney's Office also partners with the Insurance Fraud Bureau of Massachusetts (IFB) to identify and prosecute instances of insurance fraud. Although the majority of these cases are prosecuted in the District Court, larger schemes involving repeat offenders are eligible for indictment, where felony convictions can carry the potential for jail time and significant monetary fines.

Commonwealth v. Mary Jane Czupryna (Hampshire Superior Court) – The defendant, the former manager of a group home run by the Department of Developmental Services (DDS) in Belchertown, was indicted after an investigation by the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) revealed that she had purchased more than \$16,000.00 in groceries for herself using group home funds. The matter originally came to light when a complainant contacted the OIG's "Fight Fraud" hotline. The defendant admitted her guilt in October 2020, and was placed on probation for five years on the condition that she pay back the \$16,000 in full. If she successfully completes probation and pays full restitution, the Court will dismiss her charges. This case was prosecuted by First Assistant District Attorney Steven E. Gagne, in collaboration with Julie Lavin Flaherty, the Director of the OIG's Bureau of Program Integrity.

CHILD ABUSE UNIT



CAU Chief ADA Linda Pisano
Daily Hampshire Gazette photo

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 CAU Chief Linda Pisano, works closely with law enforcement, child protective services (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.

Covid 19 – Effects on Child Abuse

The heightened stress on people, school closures, loss of income, and social isolation resulting from COVID-19 have increased the risk for child abuse and neglect. While these stressors have increased the risk of abuse of children, a recent study published in the journal *Child Abuse and Neglect* reported that the number of child maltreatment reports and child welfare interventions and investigations have decreased.

This decrease in reports of child maltreatment is believed to be a direct result of fewer people (teachers, doctors, therapists, etc.) having direct interactions with children. The Northwestern District Attorney's Office has experienced a similar decrease in reports of child abuse.



Kellie Beaulieu
CAU Coordinator / Forensic Interviewer



CAU Deputy Chief ADA Frederic Bartmon

- In 2020, 358 cases were referred to the CAU for investigation, involving 420 victims.
- In 2020, 98 child victims were interviewed at the Children Advocacy Centers in Hampshire and Franklin Counties.
- In 2020, there were 161 CAU defendants arraigned, 7 of which were in the Superior Court.
- There were 62 child abuse cases resolved in 2020.

CAU Trainings Attended

- January 2020: International Conference on Child & Family Maltreatment San Diego
- January 2020: Massachusetts Statewide Human Trafficking Summit Norwood
- April 2020: Annual Massachusetts Children's Alliance Conference (virtual)

Significant Cases Resolved

Commonwealth v. Christopher Conley (Hampshire Superior Court) - As detailed earlier in the Superior Court section, this prosecution was one of the most intensive undertakings by the Northwestern District Attorney's Office in recent memory, involving years of litigation, hundreds of motions and court hearings, and consultation with nationally-renowned medical experts from a variety of fields. This case was prosecuted by an entire team of attorneys and staff from the District Attorney's Office, headed by the Chief of the Office's Child Abuse Unit, Assistant District Attorney Linda Pisano. Through countless hours of research and preparation, including reviewing over 100,000 pages of medical records, ADA Pisano marshalled and organized the medical evidence necessary to prove that the child victim's injuries could only be explained by an intentional and malicious poisoning. She was assisted at trial by First

Assistant District Attorney Steven Gagne, who cross-examined the defense witnesses, and Assistant District Attorney Bethany Lynch from the Office's Appeals Unit, who researched and litigated a variety of complex legal issues. Also contributing to the successful outcome of this case were Kellie Beaulieu, the Child Abuse Unit Coordinator, and Paralegals Jamie Foster and Kelley Mason. This team's efforts would not have been successful without the thorough and professional investigation conducted by the Northampton Police Department and the Massachusetts State Police Detective Unit, not to mention the heroic efforts of the medical staff at Yale New Haven Hospital in Connecticut.

Commonwealth v. James Lopuk (Belchertown District Court) – The defendant was charged with Assault and Battery on a Child causing Bodily Injury involving the minor child. He received 1 year to the House of Corrections, suspended for 2 years with 2 year probation. Prosecuted by ADA Lori Odierna with assistance from VWA Kathy Bengtson.

Commonwealth v. Randall Sinclair (Hampshire Superior Court) – The Defendant was convicted of Rape of a Child. He received a 5 - 7 year prison sentence. Prosecuted by ADA Frederic Bartmon with assistance from VWA 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. Although the grant for the task force has expired, much of the work initiated by 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.



**Paralegal Jamie Foster and Forensic
Interviewer/CAC Family Service Advocate
Sonia Serrazina**



**Heather Hubbard
Child Abuse Unit Administrator**



**Linda Rogers
CAU Family Service Advocate
Franklin County**

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

The Northwestern District Attorney's Child Abuse Unit works collaboratively with The Children's Advocacy Centers (CACs) of Hampshire 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.

The Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) of Hampshire County, in Northampton, is a non-profit organization serving all of Hampshire County. In collaboration with the Northwestern District Attorney's Office and 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. In 2016, the CAC was re-certified.



Children's Advocacy Center of Hampshire County Executive Director Kara McElhone

The Children's Advocacy Center (CAC) of Franklin County and the 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 first 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 into place. In February 2016, the doors to the Children's Advocacy Center of Franklin County and North Quabbin Region officially opened its doors, led by Executive Director Irene Woods. It was awarded national accreditation by the National Children's Alliance in 2020. Thanks to its collaboration with NWDA and Baystate Health, it offers the same services that the CAC of Hampshire County provides.





DA Sullivan and CAC of Franklin County and North Quabbin Region Executive Director Irene Woods commemorate Child Abuse Awareness Month

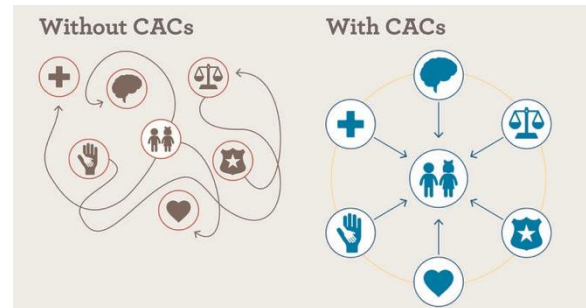
In 2020, almost 100 children were interviewed at the Children's Advocacy Center of Hampshire County and the Children's Advocacy Center of Franklin County and North Quabbin Region despite the limitations of Covid-19.

The goals of the Children's Advocacy Centers

- 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 Center

- 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



This infographic shows how CACs streamline the process of investigating and prosecuting sexual and physical abuse cases to help reduce the trauma children experience.



Proceeds from CAC supporter Lynne Scott's book about Sandhill Cranes in Worthington went to the CAC of Hampshire County



Child Abuse Awareness flag at Northampton Police Station

2020 Highlights for the Child Abuse Unit and the Children's Advocacy Centers (CAC)

- The Children's Advocacy Centers 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.
- The CAC of Franklin County and North Quabbin Region participated in a learning collaborative with the University of Oklahoma to implement services for children under the age of 12 with Problematic Sexualized Behaviors.
- The CACs of Hampshire County and Franklin County and North Quabbin Region both received a grant from Community Foundations of Western MA to support the basic needs of children and families that have received services at the CAC during the pandemic.
- The CACs of Hampshire County and Franklin County and the North Quabbin Region sponsored a training with law enforcement, the Department of Children and Families, the

Department of Mental Health and Department of Youth Services regarding internet safety; identifying children at-risk for commercial sexual exploitation; and addressing youth with problematic sexual behavior.

- The CACs of Hampshire County and Franklin County and North Quabbin Region offered comprehensive trainings for mandatory reporters of child abuse. Attendees included teachers, principals, nurses, doctors, mental health providers and other "Mandated Reporters."



Massachusetts Children's Alliance Director Tom King, Irene Woods and DA Sullivan

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 Anne Yereniuk, who succeeded ADA Jayme Parent in the position. ADA Parent dedicated many years of service for the protection of elders and the disabled. The EPDU is assisted by Unit Coordinator Rachel Senecal.



Former EPDU Chief Jayme Parent



EPDU Chief Anne Yereniuk

In 2020, the Elders and Persons with Disabilities Unit investigated and/or prosecuted **203 cases** in which elders or persons with disabilities were victims.



EPDU Coordinator Rachel Senecal

EPDU Initiatives 2020

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 2020, the EPDU conducted **4 community presentations** to provide seniors and those who work closely with seniors with information about the EPDU and crimes against elders.

2020 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 2020 community collaborations include:

- Rockridge Retirement Community
Rockridge in Northampton partnered with the EPDU to present a virtual legal training for direct care staff. Attendees learned the legal ramifications of financial exploitation against seniors, how to protect residents, and how to report elder abuse.
- 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.
- Massachusetts Attorney General's Office's Elder Identity Theft Coalition
Created by the AGO in 2018, some of the goals of the coalition are to educate elders and advocates on identity theft,

and to raise identity theft awareness among businesses who may be unknowingly facilitating elder identity theft. The EPDU was a member of the AGO ID Theft Coalition in 2020.

- LifePath: Avoiding Fraud in the New Year

In January, the EPDU presented at LifePath's free community learning session for seniors and caregivers concerned about protection from financial exploitation. The 55 attendees learned about adult protective services, scams, and how to spot and avoid financial fraud.

National Prescription Drug Take Back Day



Drug Take Back Day 2020 in Northampton

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. The EPDU assisted the Drug Diversion and Treatment Program

Director in the coordination of the October 2020 Drug Take Back Day when we collected 3,533 pounds of unwanted drugs. The NWDA continues to partner with local police departments across Hampshire and Franklin Counties, as well as the Worcester County town of Athol, to provide permanent, safe and convenient kiosks for disposal of medications that are available to community members at any time. Since 2011, we've collected more than 60,000 pounds of unwanted drugs.

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 Senior and Law Enforcement Together (S.A.L.T.) Council. Its goals are to:

- reduce criminal activity targeting seniors
- alleviate seniors' fears of victimization
- build confidence and improve their quality of life
- enhance the delivery of law enforcement services to seniors

The year 2020 brought unique challenges to the TRIAD program. Many groups continued to meet via Zoom or outdoors while meeting social distance regulations.

TRIAD is anchored by the Northwestern District's three top law enforcement officials:

- District Attorney David Sullivan
- Hampshire County Sheriff Patrick Cahillane
- Franklin County Sheriff Christopher Donelan

Rachel Senecal serves as the NWDA TRIAD Coordinator.



Rachel Senecal at a Community Shred Event

TRIAD Activities for 2020

Community Shredding Event The Granby S.A.L.T. Council co-sponsored a community shredding event in September. The event was made possible with the assistance of ProShred.

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. Several communities utilize the lockbox program. South County TRIAD in Franklin County joined the lockbox program in 2020.

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 2020 with over 300 buckets delivered.



Sand for Seniors



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ASSAULT UNIT

The Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Unit (DVSAU) is led by Unit Chief Sandra Staub. The Unit also includes DV Prosecutor Erin Aiello, and 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. In 2020, the Unit also welcomed Alyssa Devlin, Legal Assistant to Chief Staub and ADA Aiello.



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

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 2020 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: Joe Webber in Greenfield, Ryan Scott in Orange, Andy Covington in Northampton and Nick Atallah in Belchertown.

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.



Legal Assistant Alyssa Devlin

2020 Superior Court Case Highlights

With the suspension of all jury trials beginning in March 2020 and continuing through the end of the year, all Superior Court trials were continued until jury trials resume, which we hope will be sometime in 2021. In the meantime, prosecutors had to continually evaluate and defend against pretrial and sentenced detainees asking the Superior Court to release them into the community based on allegations that their health was at risk in prison or house of correction congregate living conditions. For example, in *Commonwealth v. Ballard*, prosecuted by ADA Sandra Staub and First Assistant DA Gagne, the defendant was convicted of rape in 2019 and sentenced to three to five years in state prison. In 2020, the defendant twice sought a stay of his sentence, and both times sought the stay first from the Superior Court and then from the Appeals Court. One of these requests was based in large part on the risk the defendant claimed existed from living in a prison during the public health emergency. The defendant's motions were both denied in both courts.

Other defendants being held pending trial without bail in houses of correction based on their dangerousness have moved to be released into the community pending trial. Concerns cited were the delays caused by the pandemic in proceeding to trial and the risks posed to them from congregate living. So far,

defendants being held on the basis of dangerousness in pending domestic violence or sexual assault cases in Superior Court have been unsuccessful in their efforts to be released and the delay has been excluded from the limits on pretrial detention.



DVSAU Chief Sandra Staub and ADA Erin Aiello outside the Franklin County Justice Center

As in all cases, the pandemic also forced a delay in *Commonwealth v. Chilcoff*, a rape case which had been scheduled for jury trial April 21, 2020. In that case, with representation by Victim Rights Law Center and pro bono counsel from Boston and with the support of the Commonwealth, the victim used the time successfully to petition a single justice of the Supreme Judicial Court for relief from a Superior Court order that she turn her cell phone over for a forensic examination. The single justice of the Supreme Judicial Court vacated the Superior Court order that required the victim to turn over the entire contents of her cell phone for forensic analysis, holding that "when ruling on a request under Rule 17 for a victim-witness's cell phone or cell phone records, the judge must include a consideration of these inherent privacy concerns. . . . A victim-witness does not surrender her privacy rights by filing a complaint or by cooperating with a police investigation."

With trials in all pending Superior Court cases delayed, and new indictments issued in 2020,

there will be a large number of cases ready for trial when juries resume sitting in our two counties.

DVSA 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 which are highlighted below.

As with everyone, the work of the DVSAU in 2020 was deeply impacted by the pandemic. Beginning in March, all programs and events were cancelled and staff began isolating and working from home. There was an adjustment period to working remotely, as staff learned to connect with victims and our program partners utilizing online platforms such as Zoom. As police departments, community programs and courts were closed for in-person interactions, we became very concerned about what this would mean for survivors of domestic and sexual violence. The primary focus of our work changed to ensuring that survivors knew how to get help despite these services being temporarily closed.

Isolation is frequently used by offenders as a way to control their intimate partner, putting them at increased risk of abuse. This danger significantly increased for victims when they were forced to isolate in the home with their abusive partners. In response, Unit staff published a guest column in the Gazette and contributed several letters to the editor in local newspapers. Staff were also interviewed by local TV and news media publishing news articles and programs highlighting the risks for victims and local hotlines and resources to get help. A poster was created with the Communications Unit and distributed to all police departments and community partners in Franklin and Hampshire Counties for display on social media pages and websites.

DO YOU FEEL SAFE IN YOUR RELATIONSHIP?
For confidential safety planning and resource information, help begins with a call.

SafeLink Statewide Domestic Violence hotline
(877) 785-2020
TTY: (877) 521-2601

FRANKLIN COUNTY
New England Learning Center for Women in Transition (NELCWIT)
Greenfield: 413-772-0806
Orange/Athol: 978-544-9857
Toll-free: 888-249-0806

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY
Safe Passage, Northampton:
(413) 586-5066
Toll-free: (888) 345-5282

Center for Women & Community at UMASS
24/7 Sexual Assault/Rape Crisis Hotline:
(413) 545-0800
Toll Free: (888) 337-0800

Llámamos Spanish Language Helpline
24-hour Helpline
(800) 223-5001

WHEN IN IMMEDIATE DANGER DIAL 911
Office of Northwestern District Attorney
David E. Sullivan

Trainings were held for community program staff on risk assessment in cases of domestic violence and how to refer a potentially dangerous case to the DV High Risk Team for review. In addition, District Attorney Sullivan sent a memo alerting police chiefs of the potential increased risk for victims, which included the strangulation and risk assessment worksheets to ensure all officers had them available.

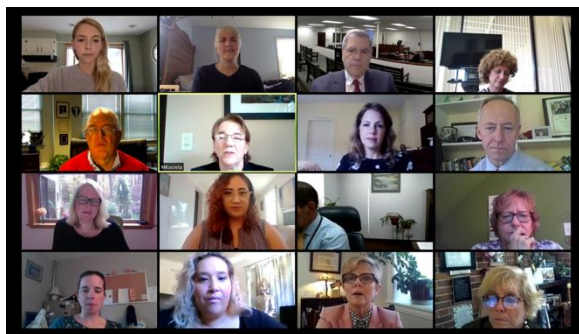
District Attorney's Task Force on Domestic and Sexual Violence

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 2020, several speakers were invited to address various topics. Speakers included staff from the Department of Transitional Assistance regarding assistance to survivors in the face of cuts to SNAP benefits; Community Action gave

an overview of services offered by their Family Center Program; Community Legal Aid reviewed how survivors can access their services; and The Salasin Project shared information on their work with incarcerated or formerly incarcerated women and support group at the Franklin County Jail.

The March Task Force meeting was cancelled due to the pandemic. In May, we regrouped and held a meeting via zoom with panelists from the courts and law enforcement entitled, "Intimate Partner Violence and Covid-19: Options and Resources for Survivors."



Judges Panel

Judges Panel

A popular event of the DA's Task Force is the Judges Panel. The event was originally scheduled for May and then postponed until October due to the pandemic. For the first time, the panel was held as a virtual event. That allowed us to have the presiding justice from each of our four courts, rather than holding the event in one courthouse. It was a collaboration between the DA's Task Force and the Franklin and Hampshire County Bar Associations entitled, **Domestic Violence: A View from the Bench - Court Access for Intimate Partner Violence Victims in the Covid-19 Era.**

Panelists included:

- The Honorable Beth A. Crawford, First Justice, Franklin Probate and Family Court

- The Honorable William F. Mazanec, III, First Justice, Greenfield District Court
- The Honorable Bruce S. Melikian, First Justice, Eastern Hampshire District Court
- The Honorable David S. Ross, First Justice, Orange District Court
- The Honorable Maureen E. Walsh, First Justice, Northampton District Court

The event was moderated by District Attorney Sullivan with over 100 law enforcement, court personnel and community members in attendance. It focused attention on victim access in each court during Covid-19 and the process for obtaining Restraining Orders and Harassment Orders electronically.

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 2020, partnership members received training from Cheryl LaChance, Esq., Director of Residential

Programs at Way Finders in Springfield. She addressed federal and state information on housing rights and options for survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking. Partnership members were also trained by Sergeant Janet M. Lopez, Daytime Supervisor, and 22-year veteran with the Amherst Police Department. Her presentation was entitled, "Victims of Domestic & Sexual Violence: Mental Health Challenges and Barriers for Underserved Populations."

The DVIP grant also funds a DV law enforcement newsletter that is published and distributed to law enforcement and first responders twice per year. Advocate highlights and project updates are included along with a FAQ section. Articles focused on local resources for survivors during the pandemic, review of the conference held for EMS on best practice response to near fatal strangulation and the role of comfort dogs in law enforcement.



**Administrator Lauren O'Roark and
ADA Nicholas Atallah with Winston, the
Amherst PD comfort dog**

The Northwestern District Attorney's Office was awarded funding in 2017 by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety & Security, Violence Against Women S.T.O.P. Grant

Program. The project is currently funded through December 31, 2021.

In 2020, DVIP Advocates provided immediate crisis support for 149 victims of abuse. Additionally, 43% 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, etc., 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.

Domestic Violence High Risk Team Project

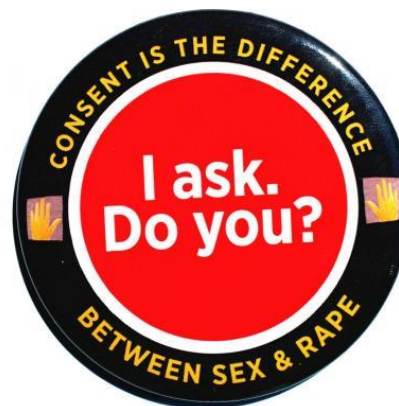
In an effort to reduce domestic violence homicides and to identify the most serious repeat offenders in Franklin and Hampshire Counties, high risk teams (HRT) were established in 2010. Evidence-based research has identified a set standard of high risk behaviors that can substantially increase the level 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, District Attorney's Office, 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 2020, there were 20 DV offenders identified as high risk in Franklin and Hampshire Counties. Currently, there is a total of 294 DV high risk offenders and an additional 85 who are in “watch” status, meaning the Coordinator will bring the case back to the team if there are any further charges.

In 2020, addresses of offenders identified as high risk were sent to all dispatchers and entered into the system to be flagged as high risk. This was done so that officers will receive a caution when they are dispatched to a home associated with a DV high risk offender. Our hope is to increase both the safety of the officer and the victim in these dangerous cases.

The High Risk Team Project has been lauded by the Governor’s office as a statewide model program and our office has served on numerous organizing committees of the Governor’s Council on Domestic & Sexual Violence. In 2017, an application was submitted to renew funding of the High Risk Team Project. The office was awarded the full amount allowed, \$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.



Sexual Assault Investigation Protocol

In 2019, the NWDA initiated 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. The protocol brings together the DA’s office and law enforcement to ensure that all adult sexual assault investigations are conducted in an efficient, comprehensive, and consistent manner.

Since April of 2020, when the protocol officially began, our office has received over 40 sexual assault investigations from police departments in the Northwestern District.

The two main goals are to:

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

Sexual assault investigations typically come to the NWDA when local law enforcement agencies forward to the NWDA reports of police investigations into sexual assault. The MOU and the protocol ensures 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 2020, outreach was limited due to the pandemic and many scheduled programs and events were cancelled. However, as we all became more familiar with virtual platforms, some of the trainings and events were re-scheduled. As a result, Unit staff provided virtual training for the Opiate Task Force, the Franklin County Resource Network and the staff at The Salasin Project. Trainings were focused on risk assessment and non-fatal strangulation with emphasis on the increased isolation and risk for victims during the pandemic.



Mayor of Greenfield's DV Task Force billboard

DVSAU staff also serve on the Mayor of Greenfield's DV Task Force. Although the annual flag raising event to highlight child abuse awareness month did not take place in 2020, the Task Force successfully rolled out a different outreach campaign. Billboards were on display in Greenfield, in both English and Spanish, during the month of October in recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The billboards read, "Ninety-three percent of Greenfield residents surveyed said they are likely to call 911 or intervene in some way if they heard or saw an individual being abused by an intimate partner."

The messaging was developed through a social norms campaign sponsored by the Mayor of Greenfield's Task Force on Domestic Violence. The task force surveyed Greenfield residents in order to learn about the community's attitudes on domestic violence and knowledge of local resources available to victims. Posters were also displayed on social media sites and community bulletin boards with information on who to call for help in Greenfield and Franklin County.

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 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 the NWDA website: <https://northwesternda.org/consent-difference-between-sex-and-rape-ending-sexual-assaults-campuses>



Sexual Assault Response Team (SART)

SART is a coordinated, multi-disciplinary team of people, including DVSAU Chief Sandra Staub, Legal Assistant Alyssa Devlin and Victim/Witness Assistance Unit Director Jacqueline Gaw. The Center for Women &

Community (CWC), the designated rape crisis center for Hampshire County, coordinates SART. The team includes representatives of Law Enforcement, Health Care, Forensic Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners, Prosecutors, and Victim/Survivor Advocates. In 2020, 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 and developed and implemented cross training opportunities. The team met monthly in person in Northampton for the first two months and then continued to meet via Zoom thereafter.

In 2020, SART hosted a number of trainings regarding issues related to effectively working with and supporting survivors of sexual assault. In January, the SART team benefitted from a presentation by Jackie Perez from the Disabled Persons Protection Commission (DPPC) Sexual Assault Response Unit on her role and resources available at DPPC. In February, the team heard extremely helpful information from Alyssa Berthiaume who is a Forensic Scientist in the Criminalistics and Crime Scene Response Unit from the Crime Laboratory, and Tina Gryszowka, who is a Forensic Scientist in the Case Management Unit from the MA State Police Crime Laboratory.

They presented on sexual assault evidence collection kit results and how to interpret them. After a hiatus in March 2020 caused by the public health emergency, the SART team convened by Zoom in April for an important discussion about impacts of the pandemic on team member services and information sharing. The rest of the year, the SART team met virtually and addressed a number of topics, including new Title IX regulations, connections between substance abuse and trauma, important updates on procedures and advocacy for victims of intimate and sexual violence, specifically including online access information, and a Deaf Survivor's Program presentation.

ADA Sandra Staub presented updates on a number of occasions, including on changes in court proceedings related to the public health emergency and updates on appeals court decisions and emergency orders that had an effect on pending sexual assault cases.

APPELLATE UNIT

The Appellate Unit is comprised of Assistant District Attorneys Thomas Townsend (Chief), Cynthia Von Flatern, Bethany Lynch, and paralegals Jamie Foster and Kelley Mason. 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, represents the office before the Massachusetts Parole Board, and supports all ADAs through legal updates and advice.

The NWDA Appellate Unit is the most experienced in the Commonwealth. Each member has nearly **25 years of experience** in appellate prosecution.

The worldwide pandemic wreaked havoc on the Massachusetts judicial system over the past year. But unlike the trial-court system, where cases were delayed for weeks or months, the appellate courts' schedules continued largely unabated. The Appeals Court cancelled oral arguments for the month of April, but then shifted to remote arguments on the Zoom platform for the remainder of the year. The Supreme Judicial Court followed suit after initially holding oral arguments via telephone conference.



Bethany Lynch arguing in the Appeals Court on Zoom

In addition to their normal caseload, the appellate courts saw a surge of litigation from inmates seeking release during the pendency of their appeals. The Appellate Unit responded to this new wave of litigation, often in conjunction with the trial prosecutors who tried the particular cases. The Appellate Unit also dealt with an unprecedented influx of medical-parole petitions, in which inmates sought to obtain

early release due to their medical conditions. A typical year sees one or two of these types of petitions; in 2020, the Appellate Unit received 20 of them. Responding to these petitions often required coordination with the SDP Unit because many of the petitioners had underlying convictions for sexual assault.

Nine different Assistant District Attorneys handled appeals for the NWDA in 2020: Thomas Townsend, Cynthia Von Flatern, Bethany Lynch, Steven Gagne, Sandra Staub, Nicholas Atallah, Matthew Russo, Alexa Pascucci, and Jillian Handy.

Notable appellate decisions from 2020

Commonwealth v. Scott King, in which the Appeals Court affirmed the conviction for failing to register as a sex offender which was obtained following a five-day trial in Franklin Superior Court.

Commonwealth v. Emmanuel Bile, in which the Appeals Court upheld convictions of aggravated rape for the gang rape of a first-year student in a campus dormitory at the University of Massachusetts.

Commonwealth v. Edward Fleury, in which the Appeals Court affirmed the firearms convictions of a former chief of police for the Town of Pelham.

SEXUALLY DANGEROUS PERSONS UNIT

General Laws chapter 123A provides for the indefinite civil commitment of an inmate serving time for a sex offense who is deemed too dangerous to release. The District Attorney's Sexually Dangerous Person (SDP) Unit reviews all inmates convicted of sex

offenses who are scheduled to be released within six months and determines whether to file such petitions. If a petition is filed, the inmate is then evaluated by two independent "Qualified Examiners" (QEs) who offer opinions as to whether the inmate meets the criteria of a Sexually Dangerous Person. The petition then proceeds to trial, where either a jury or a judge must decide whether the inmate is a Sexually Dangerous Person. The burden of proof at an SDP trial is the same as at a criminal trial: proof beyond a reasonable doubt. If the inmate is found to be a Sexually Dangerous Person, he or she is committed to the Massachusetts Treatment Center in Bridgewater, Massachusetts, for a period ranging from one day to life. All inmates committed as SDPs are evaluated periodically to see whether they remain too dangerous to release. In the meantime, they are offered counseling and treatment to address whatever mental abnormality or personality disorder renders them too dangerous to release.

The SDP Unit within the District Attorney's Office currently consists of three Assistant District Attorneys (Steven Gagne, Nicholas Atallah and Lori Odierna), a Unit Coordinator (Susan Snyder) and an Assistant Coordinator (Jean Zimmerman). Longtime ADA Jayme Parent headed this Unit before departing the Office in late 2020.

SDP Cases Handled in 2020

In Calendar Year 2020, the SDP Unit reviewed the cases of 40 inmates previously convicted of sex offenses who were scheduled for release from incarceration. Of those 40, the Unit determined that 25 (62.5%) did not meet the criteria for SDP commitment, and those reviews were closed without consulting an expert. Records and reports pertaining to 12 offenders were sent to experts to review; of those, 11 were found not to meet the criteria for SDP, and one was. A petition for commitment was filed against that one offender, and his case is scheduled for trial in 2021. Of the three

remaining cases, one was scheduled to be reviewed by an expert in early 2021, and two were referred to another District Attorney's Office for review.

In 2020, one SDP petition that was filed in late 2019 remained pending, and is scheduled for trial in March 2021.

Of the 40 cases reviewed by the SDP Unit in 2020, eight involved convicted sex offenders who had filed petitions for medical-parole. (For more information on medical-parole petitions, see the Appellate Unit section of this report.) These cases were referred to the SDP Unit to determine if an applicant might meet the SDP criteria. Of the two medical parole applicants who were granted early release, neither was found to meet the criteria for an SDP petition. The remaining six applicants were denied medical-parole for various reasons and were not released into the community.



ADA Veronica Santana outside the Northampton Courthouse

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 eleven 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); Danielle Cruz (Orange District Court); and Ryan Scott (Greenfield District Court). In addition, experienced ADAs in each of these courts are designated as Domestic Violence prosecutors and/or as Child Abuse prosecutors.



ADAs Danielle Cruz and Ryan Scott became the Attorney in Charge of Orange and Greenfield District Court respectively.

There were several staff-related changes in 2020. Joseph Webber, the former AIC of Greenfield District Court, joined our Superior Court Unit. As a result, ADA Ryan Scott became the AIC of Greenfield District Court and ADA Danielle Cruz became the AIC of Orange District Court. Additionally, Emaan Syed and Aiden Lanciani, both of who served the Office as legal interns, accepted positions as Assistant District Attorneys upon passing the Bar Exam.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, our ADAs adapted by participating in virtual court sessions. Through their diligence, the rights of the accused and the rights of the victims were protected despite the public health crisis.



Legal intern Emaan Syed accepted a position as an Assistant District Attorney

Assistant District Attorneys in the 4 District Courts handled **16,011 charges** in 2020. Some **3,848 were new arraignments**.



Guest speaker Attorney Harry Haytayan with Legal Intern Aiden Lanciani who also accepted a position as an ADA



ADA Joseph Webber outside the Franklin County Justice Center

NWDA Training Committee

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, in-person training sessions could not be held for much of 2020. Instead, our ADAs took advantage of online training opportunities on topics which included Office of Alcohol Testing data provisions, Interrupting Racism, and Cyber Crimes.

Prior to the pandemic, Attorney Harry Haytayan hosted an intensive training regarding opening statements for our ADAs.

The NWDA continued its partnership with the Western New England University School of Law's Criminal Law Clinic by hosting a law school student intern in the early months of 2020. Under Massachusetts Student Practice Rule 3:03, this student was able to develop her skills by handling arraignments, motions to suppress and trials. The Office was also able to host a legal intern for the fall of 2020. The intern was able to experience virtual court hearings and draft memorandums in opposition to motions to suppress.



**ADAs Matthew Russo and Alexa Pascucci
outside the Eastern Hampshire
District Courthouse**

JUVENILE JUSTICE UNIT

The mission of the Juvenile Justice Unit (JJU) involves promoting the healthy development of children and adolescents while protecting and enhancing public safety. The Juvenile Justice Unit (JJU) 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; and adult criminal complaints of 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.



Juvenile Justice Unit Chief Elizabeth Mulcahy

Chief of the JJU, Elizabeth Mulcahy, also serves as the Program Coordinator for the Northwestern District Attorneys Juvenile Diversion Program (NWDA-JDP). ADA Bruce Patryn serves the JJU as a senior litigation counsel. Naomi Bledsoe works as a Juvenile Diversion Specialist with the NWDA-JDP and also serves as the Unit administrator. ADA Elizabeth Swihart is responsible for handling juvenile matters in Franklin County. Two victim witness advocates are assigned to the JJU, Janice Francis (Hampshire County) and Tess Lane (Franklin County). Tess left the office in August 2020 to attend law school and Rebekah Nager took over as the Franklin County JJU Victim Witness Advocate. Heather Hubbard, Kathy Bengtson, Linda Rogers and Debra Kierstead worked with child victims and their parents/guardians in juvenile court child sexual abuse cases. Sonia Serrazina now works as a Family Service Advocate after Debra Kierstead's retirement in 2020. JJU ADAs participate in CAU Investigations; work with CAU- assigned Family Service Advocates; attend and Sexual Assault Intervention Network (SAIN) Interviews and multi-disciplinary team case reviews with the Child Advocacy Centers in Hampshire and Franklin Counties; and prosecute CAU-related cases in Juvenile Court.

The JJU handles cases in the four juvenile courts located in Hampshire and Franklin counties. In addition, as needed, the JJU prosecutes cases in

Superior Court and District Court. The JJU also works closely with schools and community partners on prevention and intervention efforts.



Juvenile Advocate Janice Francis

In 2020 the Juvenile Justice Unit handled **205 cases**. Four of those cases involved Youthful Offender matters. Two matters resulted in MGL C. 119 s. 72A (Proceedings upon apprehension after nineteenth birthday) hearings.

Hampshire County Juvenile delinquency cases out of Hadley and Belchertown Juvenile Courts: **117**

Franklin County Juvenile delinquency cases out of Greenfield and Orange Juvenile Courts: **88**

2020 and the COVID-19 Pandemic brought many changes for the JJU and our children, families, schools and community partners. The Chief Justice of the Juvenile Court and the Presiding Franklin/Hampshire Justice issued Standing Orders which resulted in changes to court practice including virtual court hearings and multi-disciplinary meetings. Other Juvenile Justice-related work such as some NWDA-JDP intake and planning meetings and SAIN interviews were also carried out virtually. The types of delinquency cases prosecuted by the JJU in 2020 ranged from misdemeanor offenses to complaints for serious felony offenses.

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 case to be prosecuted as a Youthful Offender, the case must meet statutory requirements and the facts and circumstances surrounding the youth and the case are carefully considered. If a Youthful Offender indictment is pursued, then the case is presented to a Grand Jury for indictment. If an indictment is returned, the case may proceed in Juvenile Court or Superior Court.

Many of the delinquency cases, in both counties, required additional investigative assistance, which can involve collaboration between the juvenile prosecutors, school administrators, local law enforcement and State Police detectives. Eligible court-involved youth are referred out of court system and to the Northwestern District Attorney's Juvenile Diversion Program (NWDA-JDP).

The Chief of the JJU also participated on the NWDA's Civil Rights Response Team and on the NWDA's Equity in Prosecution Committee.

In 2020, 59 juvenile cases were handled through our Juvenile Diversion Program.
Hampshire County NWDA-JDP cases: 26
Franklin County NWDA-JDP cases: 33

Juvenile Diversion Program

The NWD-JDP offers an alternative to formal prosecution in the juvenile court to certain eligible offenders between the ages of 12 and 18. Utilizing a pre-arraignment model, the diversion program is designed to keep participating youth from further court involvement and from a criminal offender record for the offense and to support positive youth development (PYD). An important goal of the NWDA-JDP is to address the underlying

causes of juvenile delinquency in order to enable the juvenile to be held accountable while at the same time addressing their individual needs. Naomi Bledsoe, the Juvenile Diversion Specialist, works with referred youth and their parent/guardians to develop diversion plans that may include restorative practices, counseling and educational programs, positive activities, community service and, when applicable, the payment of restitution.



Safe Schools Response Team

District Attorney Sullivan established a Safe Schools Response Team (SSRT) to enable the NWDA to promptly 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 to schools, parents, and victims.

Members of the SSRT include Deputy District Attorney Jennifer Suhl, Juvenile Justice Unit Chief Elizabeth Mulcahy, Assistant District Attorneys Elizabeth Swihart and Bruce Patryn, and Administrative Assistant Susan Snyder.



**2020 Safe & Healthy School Summit
Presenter Jordan on Zoom**

Juvenile Justice Unit Outreach and Education

During 2020, the JJU collaborated with the NWDA's Community Outreach & Education Unit and community partners on the development of conferences/trainings and outreach work and programming for youth, parents, school personnel and school resource officers. Members of the JJU also attended many trainings and webinars during 2020. Conferences and trainings from March through December 2020 were held online.

The following are examples of trainings and webinars attended by members of the JJU:

- Human In Common Interrupting Racism Level I Training Two-Part Training
- Intersections of Opioid Use and Suicide
- Adolescent Neurodevelopment
- The Developing Brain in Social Environments: Adverse Childhood Experience and Positive Youth Development Assets
- Legalization of Marijuana and Its Adverse Impact on Youth
- No Such Thing As a Bad Kid - Guiding At-Risk Kids and Families Using a Positive,

- Trauma-Informed, Strength-Based Approach Charles Appelstein
- Civil Rights Symposium – Hate Crime Training
- Minding Your Mind, Teens, Tweens and Quarantines (This Forum for parents and caregivers was Co-sponsored by the NWDA, SPIFFY, Communities that Care, South Hadley and Northampton Prevention Coalitions, Easthampton Health Youth Coalition and the Quaboag Hills Substance Use Alliance)
- Communicating about Developmental Relationships – Search Institute
- Juvenile Law and Procedure Update and Training – John Sofis Scheft, Esq.
- Assessing Problematic and Concerning Sexual Behavior in Children
- 51A Training
- SOS – Signs of Suicide Training
- Massachusetts Children’s Alliance 10th Annual Statewide Conference Healing, Hope and Justice: An Advanced Conversation
- NWDA 8th Annual Safe & Health School Summit – Supporting the Mental Health Needs of All Students

- Youth Career Connections Council – Mass Hire Franklin-Hampshire Workforce Board
- Presentation to Criminal Justice Class at Granby High School regarding Juvenile Justice



The following are examples of boards, task forces and committees where the JJU connected with community partners via Zoom in 2020:

- 4SC – Safe Schools Safe Streets Coalition - Steering Committee
- SPIFFY (Strategic Planning Initiative for Families and Youth) Coalition - Steering Committee
- Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School Criminal Justice Advisory Board
- Child Advocacy Center of Franklin County & North Quabbin CSEC Steering Committee
- Communities that Care Full Coalition Meeting
- Franklin County Resource Network

VICTIM/WITNESS ASSISTANCE UNIT

The purpose of the Victim/Witness Assistance Unit within the Northwestern District Attorney’s Office 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 G.L. Chapter 258B. The 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 Jackie Gaw**

In Hampshire County, our advocates were assigned to **795 cases**.

They assisted **1034 victims**,
498 witnesses and **3 family members**.

In Franklin County, our advocates were assigned to **500 cases**. They assisted **623 victims**,
375 witnesses and **20 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 2020, our staff filed **94 approved applications to the Victim Notification Registry** for either Offender Release Information or CORI certification for access to 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. For 2020, the total number of applications is far below the prior year. This is highly attributable to the Covid-19 health crisis' effect on the normal operations of the Trial Court and of the police departments ability to bring timely complaints. The challenges presented by the health crisis have been unprecedented for the Victim/Witness staff. Trying to ensure that victims and witnesses receive all the rights they are afforded while adjusting to ever changing statewide mandates and staffing reductions has proven to be a tremendous task. The Victim/Witness staff has exhibited dedication, resourcefulness and compassion throughout this time to uphold their responsibilities and mandates in service to the citizens of the Northwestern jurisdiction.



**Victim/Witness Assistance Unit
Deputy Director Lori Roy**



Victim/Witness Advocate Kim Devine

Training and Outreach

In 2020, our advocates participated in and attended a number of professional development opportunities on virtual platforms. They included:

- Domestic Violence: A View from the Bench presented by the District Attorney's Task Force on Domestic and Sexual Violence
- Women of Color Network Seminar
- Training on Virtual 209A's
- Signs of Suicide Training
- MOVA sponsored refresher training on The Sex Offender Registry Board, Probation, Parole and the Victim Notification Registry
- Advocacy in a Time of Covid
- Juvenile Judicial Court Reform
- CSEC & LGBTQ Youth
- Safety Planning for Victims of Child Abuse
- Shared Trauma: Responding to Crime Victims
- A Virtual Technology Symposium
- Crimes Against Women National Conference
- Safe and Healthy School Summit for Juveniles

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

In addition, the Director presented to the Massachusetts Trial Court Academy for new Court Officers twice over 2020. This training revolves around informing the recruits on what Victim/Witness Programs do and specifically on the Safe and Secure Waiting Area designated for victims and witnesses at the courthouse.



Victim/Witness Advocate and former intern Mariana Carbajal

Awards and Staff Changes

In 2020, the Northwestern District Attorney's Office Victim Witness Assistance Program had 6 advocates reach significant milestones in their careers. They were to be recognized for the Length of Service Awards at the Annual MOVA Victim Rights Conference until the Covid crisis delayed the conference. The staff to receive recognition were: Jacqueline Gaw-35 years, Janice Francis-25 years, Wendy Adams-20 years, Kate Clogston-10 years, Kimberly Devine-10 years and Kathleen Bengtson-10 years

In 2020, The Victim/Witness Unit saw two staff depart. Heather Darling, one of our most experienced advocates, left to enjoy retirement. We wish her well in her well-earned time. Theresa Lane, our newest advocate, left to pursue her law degree. She will no doubt excel in her new career.



Victim/Witness Advocate Janice Francis

Cases of Note

Commonwealth v. James Rode-Jacqueline

Gaw- This case was a Vehicular Homicide case out of Greenfield. The case was especially challenging and unique because the defendant was a Greenfield Police Officer, who, in the course of responding to a call, struck a car and killed the young driver. After a lengthy and thorough investigation, it was determined that the defendant was travelling at such an excessive, unnecessary speed, he was negligent in his actions thereby causing the crash and the death.

The case went to trial in January in Greenfield District Court. The family of the victim attended every court hearing including each day of trial. His mother presented an eloquent Impact Statement. The defendant was convicted and sentenced to 2 years at the House of Correction, 9 months direct and the balance suspended for 2 years with Probation. First Assistant ADA Steven Gagne did a phenomenal job in his handling of this quite emotional circumstance given the defendant was an on-duty police officer and the tragic death of a young man.

Commonwealth v. Pedro Soto-Rodriguez and Nerkin Morales- Jennifer Reid

- In March of 2018, a body was found burned in a field in Hatfield. Jennifer Reid was assigned as the Victim Advocate at the time of the initial investigation. From the start, Jennifer had extensive contact with the victim's family and kept them informed as to all updates as the investigation proceeded. She assisted them with getting assistance for burial expenses and other incidentals as they coped with their loss. The investigation continued for months and involved many Grand Jury dates with a large number of potential witnesses and potential defendants. Ultimately, 9 defendants were identified and indicted by the Grand Jury. That same evening, Jennifer Reid, ADA Jennifer Suhl and the lead investigators met with the family to outline the entire investigation and case, providing them information not before disclosed about the murder of their loved one.

Pedro Soto-Rodriguez and Nerkin Morales were two of the persons indicted in this homicide. As the case made its way through Hampshire Superior Court, Jennifer Reid had continual contact with the family. In February of 2020, Pedro Soto-Rodriguez changed his plea. The family was part of the plea discussions and was able to express their feelings about sentencing. Although informed of their right to be present, they chose to remain unidentified to the defendants and the public. Many family members did submit Victim Impact Statements to the Court.

In September of 2020, Nerkin Morales pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter. Due to Covid, the family meeting happened via Zoom. The family once again did not want to participate publicly in the plea hearing, but they did utilize the Superior Court Public Access Teleconference Line to listen in while still maintaining their anonymity. Their Impact Statements were again presented to the Court.

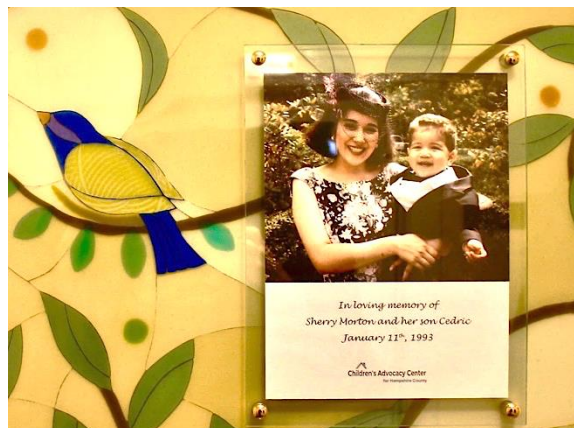
Many other co-defendant cases are still open, so Jennifer Reid maintains ongoing contact with the family.



**Greenfield District Court
Administrator Debra Jacques**



**HOPE sculpture by Gregory Stone at
Northampton Courthouse**



**Stained glass plaque by Lynn Lattimore
commemorating the late Sherry Morton and
son Cedric killed by Cedric's father in 1993**

CONSUMER PROTECTION UNIT

The Northwestern District Attorney's Office has been home to a local consumer protection program for close to 50 years. The Consumer Protection Unit's (CPU) 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.



Consumer Protection Unit Chief Janice Garrett



**Consumer Protection Unit
Case Coordinator Anita Wilson**

The Consumer Protection Unit works in cooperation with the Attorney General's Office (AGO). We are one of 18 programs throughout the state which receive 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.

In 2020, the Consumer Protection Unit received **1,284 calls**, opened **386 cases** and recovered **\$87,057** for consumers.

2020 CPU Highlights

This year started as usual with many outreach events including scam presentations at senior centers, presenting a financial literacy game at a local high school, MassHire presentations, LifePath, Clinical & Support Options (CSO) financial literacy competition between centers, and several appearances on local television. In March, when the state was shut down, so were our outreach events, including the summer picnics and health fairs across Hampshire and Franklin Counties. We have been able to conduct some programming online with the MassHire Career Center and a local geriatric practice about recognizing scams and financial literacy topics. Our Consumer Tip videos

continue to air on community access television stations and 1,500 Consumer Calendars that we created in cooperation with the Communications Unit were distributed to elders in our district.

Northwestern District Attorney
David E. Sullivan
Franklin County Sheriff
Chris Donelan and
Hampshire County Sheriff
Patrick Cahillane



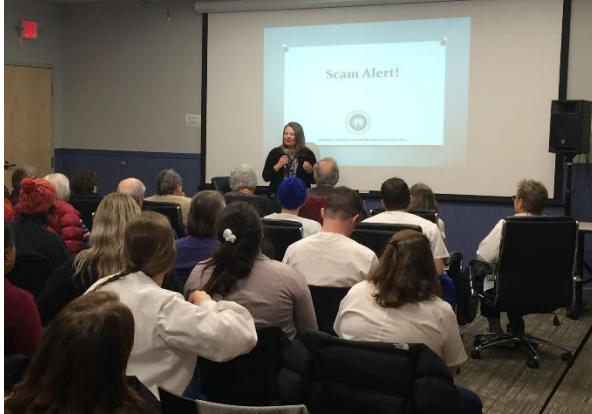
2021 CONSUMER CALENDAR



Consumer Protection Unit
(413) 586-9225 in
Hampshire County or
(413) 774-3186 in
Franklin or Worcester Counties
Northwestern DA.org/consumer-protection
Working in cooperation with the
Office of Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey

We developed a Scam Newsletter featuring over a dozen scams, how to recognize them, and what to do. We initially intended to hand them out at health and safety fairs and outreach events, but the pandemic put those events on hold. Instead, these newsletters are being distributed with Meals-On-Wheels, with salt and sand bucket deliveries coordinated by Triad, local fire and police departments, and by area senior centers during takeout meals and brown bag food distribution programs. The newsletter has been distributed by several local banks to their customers and is also posted on our website.

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



CPU's Anita Wilson presenting on scams

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION UNIT

The Northwestern District Attorney's prevention team works alongside community-based organizations on the shared goal of responding to social problems and nurturing resilient, connected communities. Our community outreach and education efforts focus on initiatives that promote resilience and seek to prevent crime by addressing root causes. Working with community coalitions, schools, grassroots groups and residents, these initiatives support thriving and healthy communities in the cities and towns of Hampshire and Franklin counties and the North Quabbin region. Laurie Loisel, NWDA director of Community Outreach and Education (COE), works with communities in a variety of ways to support educational initiatives and trauma-informed, community-based solutions. The Office supports safe storage and drug collection efforts designed to keep drugs from being misused and supports harm reduction efforts that are the cornerstone of compassionate approaches to addiction disorders.



COE Unit Director Laurie Loisel's series "Those Left Behind," on families coping with the deaths of loved ones from overdoses, received an award for outstanding journalism from the New England Newspapers & Press Association

Early in 2020, before the coronavirus pandemic closed down many in-person gatherings, we:

- Worked with the SPIFFY and Communities that Care coalitions to offer a Signs of Suicide training for school personnel from across the region. This well-attended conference was presented in response to concerning data that suggest an increase in mental health issues among young people.
- Collaborated with the Northampton Recovery Center and Hampshire HOPE, to organize the month-long Project Redemption photo exhibit and reception at the Forbes Library. This initiative was one of many undertaken to mitigate against the toll stigma takes among people who suffer from addiction issues.

- Joined forces with Hatfield's HEADS Up mental health awareness group to organize "Beyond Gun Laws: A Conversation about Keeping our Communities Safe and Preventing Violence," which drew a full house at Hatfield Elementary School, with District Attorney Sullivan among the panelists.



A photo exhibit illustrating the diversity of people in recovery


FEBRUARY 7–MARCH 5
HOSMER GALLERY, FORBES LIBRARY

A community reception featuring speakers who are part of the exhibit, the photographer and others who supported the show will be held Wednesday February 12 at 6pm in the Coolidge Room.

Project Redemption was created in collaboration between Alyssa's Place at AED Foundation and Photography by Veronica Patty in an effort to de-stigmatize addiction and people who struggle with substance use disorder – and to make the point in a visual way that people in recovery come from all walks of life. Now a statewide effort, it is a travelling photo exhibit featuring people in recovery created by photographer Veronica Patty. In August, Patty came to Northampton to take portraits of people in recovery, most of whom are affiliated with the Northampton Recovery Center. This exhibit is sponsored by the Northwestern District Attorney's Office, Hampshire HOPE, the Northampton Recovery Center, with generous funding from Cooley Dickinson Health Care.

No illness should be stigmatized. Project Redemption illustrates the breadth and depth of the recovery community.





Beyond Gun Laws

A Conversation about Keeping Our Community Safe and Preventing Violence

Join Hatfield HEADS Up for a panel discussion


February 11, 2020


Hatfield Elementary School

33 Main Street, Hatfield

6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

(Snow date Feb. 12)





Keynote Speaker Anne Thalheimer is a survivor of a 1992 school shooting at Simon's Rock College in Great Barrington. A Holyoke-based artist, educator and 2017 Everytown Survivor Fellow, she is one of 40 people from across the United States to be part of a flagship leadership program for survivors of gun violence in recognition that survivor voices are critical to raising awareness. Everytown Fellows work on education and legislative advocacy.

Northwestern District Attorney David Sullivan will moderate a panel discussion on the ramifications of school violence, the impact of school shooting drills on students, how schools and parents can help young people cope with regular school shooter drills and fear of violence, the status of gun related legislation in Massachusetts and how communities can balance gun rights with community safety. Panelists include:

- State Sen. Jo Comerford
- State Rep. Lindsay Sabadosa
- Josh Miller, Smith College School for Social Work professor, specializes in helping individuals and communities recover from disasters, war and violence and has responded to national tragedies including the Boston Marathon bombing and the school shooting in Newtown, Connecticut
- Hatfield Police Chief Michael Dekoschak
- Heather White, MA Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- Smith Academy student Ava Carter-Mee on the impact of school shooter drills

Following the panel, there will be opportunities for questions and comments from the audience.

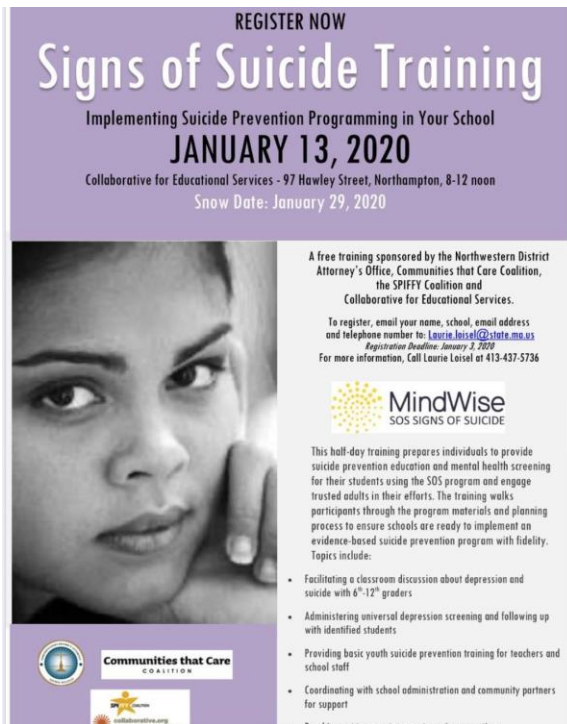
Child care is available by calling Jackie Pelc at 247-5010 or Kristy Dadmun at 247-5641 by February 2, 2020.

HEADS Up will provide refreshments.



Fair and Impartial Police Training

The pandemic shut-down brought to a swift halt additional in-person events in 2020, but virtual platforms meant outreach and education continued nevertheless. Working within the framework of our strong partnerships within NWDA cities and towns, we continued collaborating with community-based prevention coalitions to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors that keep young people from turning to substance use and other risky behavior while their brains are still developing and vulnerable.



To support parents, caregivers, educators and other helpers blindsided by the pandemic in 2020, the NWDA teamed up with multiple prevention coalitions to organize successful forums and webinars, including:

- “Teens, Tweens and Quarantines.”
- “School’s Out, Now What? Parents, Teens and Tweens Amid Pandemic and Protests.”
- Our signature conference for educators, the Safe and Healthy School Summit, transformed from an in-person event to a webinar, nevertheless drew a large crowd to hear experts on the topic of “Supporting the Mental Health Needs of All Students.”

Also in 2020, the NWDA worked in steadfast partnership with:

- Members of the NWDA Citizens Advisory Board (CAB), who serve as a resource to the District Attorney and as

ambassadors for NWDA initiatives. In the fall of 2020, the CAB heard from NWDA Director of Community Prosecution Projects Becky Michaels on a restorative justice initiative and NWDA committees on the issues of conviction integrity and equity in prosecution.

- The Council of Social Agencies of Hampshire County (COSA) and the United Way of Hampshire County to launch a series of interrupting racism trainings.
- Participants in Trauma Informed Hampshire County: A Network Responding to Adverse Childhood Experiences on efforts designed to address trauma and enhance resilience. Among the Network’s activities was the piloting of the Resilience Roadshow, a free 90-minute webinar to increase widespread knowledge about the impact of trauma and how to incorporate trauma-informed responses in all sectors of the community.
- Northampton Recovery Center and Hampshire HOPE to launch a Peer Grief Support After Overdose Death group as part of the state Department of Public Health initiative SADOD, Support after A Death by Overdose. The NWDA nurtures strong partnerships with the Northampton Recovery Center, Hampshire HOPE, the Opioid Task Force of Franklin County and the North Quabbin Region and other community groups to enhance understanding about the disease of addiction and support the many paths to recovery.
- Prevention coalitions, medical centers and recovery support groups to publish the fourth edition of the Hampshire-Franklin-North Quabbin Resource Guide to Drug and Alcohol Treatment and Related Services. “Addiction is similar to other chronic illnesses in that it can be

prevented, it responds to treatment, and people do recover,” District Attorney Sullivan wrote on the back page of the guide. “Approaching our nation’s epidemic of addiction from the three fronts of prevention, treatment and recovery support is what this resource guide is all about.” The guide is available in printed form as well as online on the NWDA website at this link:

https://www.northwesternda.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf3601/f/uploads/drug_alcohol_resource_guide_0.pdf



DA Sullivan at the College Success Course graduation at Greenfield Community College

COMMUNICATIONS UNIT



DA Sullivan and COE Unit Director Laurie Loisel with the Citizens Advisory Board

Whether connections take place in person or in the virtual world, in all outreach efforts, the office is dedicated to sustaining strong partnerships with people who live and work in the Northwestern District in pursuit of a just and safe community for all.



Communications Unit Director Mary Carey

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



DA Sullivan met in January 2020 with members of the Pioneer Valley Workers Center/Centro Obrero Del Valle Pionero to endorse legislation allowing residents regardless of immigration status to apply for a driver’s license.

In the early months of 2020, we were busy preparing materials for and promoting planned upcoming events, including National Prescription Drug Take Back Day, Law Day and the Safe & Healthy School Summit, when it became clear that almost every in-person gathering would need to be immediately cancelled or postponed because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Some events, such as Law Day, were not held in 2020, but others, including the Safe

& Healthy Summit were either presented virtually over Zoom or modified with great success. The 3,533 pounds of unwanted drugs we collected during Prescription Drug Take Back Day, after it was postponed from April to October, was a near-record breaking amount.



DA Sullivan and Deputy DA Jennifer Suhl met with Greenfield Recorder editors at the newspaper's office in February 2020

We had launched an upgraded website in 2019 which proved to be excellent timing, as the easy-to-navigate Contact function became an indispensable way for the public to connect with the NWDA. In the early days of the pandemic shutdown, we were able to identify the right person to answer each of a wide range of questions submitted through the website. Examples include defense attorneys requesting to communicate with prosecutors, residents wondering whether and how scheduled court hearings would transpire, consumers worried they might have been the victims of a scam, members of the public sharing their concerns about the Covid virus spreading in jails, political protest arrest-related demands and the occasional crime tip.

Your Vote, Your Voice, Our Democracy
The 19th Amendment at 100

Join us as we mark the Centennial Anniversary of the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote -- with interactive programs, courthouse tours and more.

FRANKLIN COUNTY LAW DAY - MAY 1
 10 a.m. - 12 noon at the Franklin County Justice Center
 43 Hope Street, Greenfield
 Sponsored by the Northwestern District Attorney's Office
 Franklin County Bar Association and Franklin County Justice Center

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY LAW DAY - MAY 7
 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. at the Old Superior Court, Hampshire County Courthouse
 15 Gothic Street, Northampton
 Sponsored by the Northwestern District Attorney's Office
 Hampshire County Bar Association and Hampshire County Courthouse

Law Day 2020 which would have marked the Centennial Anniversary of the 19th Amendment had to be cancelled

In addition to the website, we were able to communicate directly with the public through Facebook and Instagram, where some of our posts reached more Facebook users than ever before. Examples are Covid-related scam alerts, a post created with the Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Unit detailing where victims of domestic violence could find help and a Fourth of July-timed post reminding people that all fireworks are illegal in Massachusetts.

If you have a consumer problem or question, contact the

Northwestern District Attorney's Consumer Protection Unit

Greenfield (413) 774-3186
 Northampton (413) 586-9225

Working in cooperation with the Office of the MA Attorney General

BEWARE of COVID-19 CONTACT TRACING TEXT SCAMS

Legitimate virus contact tracers may text message you to let you know someone from the health department will be calling. They will NOT ask for money or personal information like your Social Security, bank account or credit card number. *Anyone who does is a scammer.* Legitimate contact tracers will NOT send LINKS in text messages.

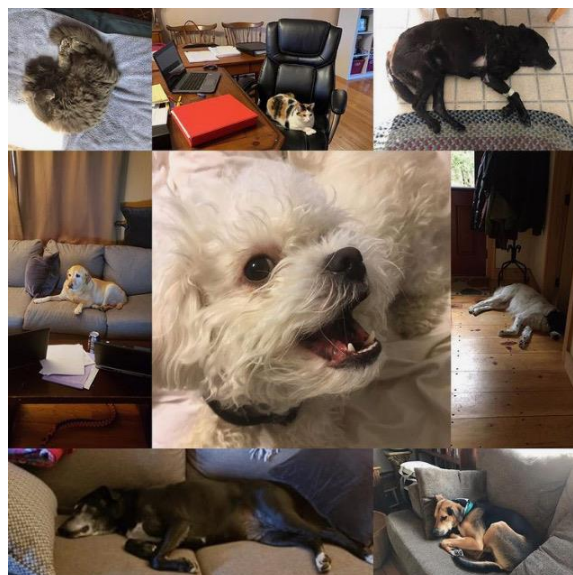


Timely and widely shared scam alerts in English and Spanish



With large fireworks displays cancelled, there were more concerning home-based efforts

The shutdown and limited access to the office did not disrupt production and distribution of thousands of updated brochures, as well as the updated Veterans Blue Book, Annual Report and 2020 Consumer Calendar. Nor did it halt dissemination of information to NWDA employees through the DAily Planet newsletter, through which employees in the early days of the pandemic shared cheerful photos of the pets who kept them company in their new home offices.



NWDA employees shared pet photos in the early days of the pandemic

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES DEPARTMENT



IT Director Nathan Foote

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 2020 Accomplishments

In 2020, the IT Department was faced with one of its biggest challenges in handling the needs created by the COVID-19 pandemic. In March, our office was rapidly transformed into an almost entirely remote workforce. Our primary goal was to get as many people working as we were able with our current equipment and infrastructure. This involved refurbishing and pressing older laptops into service for remote work and registering and setting up VPN connections which allow our users to securely connect to IT resources. This required us to utilize remote access tools and virtually train our remote staff connecting and working remotely.

As the year progressed and more things opened, it was decided that grand jury presentations would resume. Because of the social distancing requirements, we were forced to move into alternate meeting areas. In Hampshire County, we were able to use our current jury trial presentation equipment to create a space in the large historic courtroom.



The historic Old Superior Courtroom

Daily Hampshire Gazette photo

In the Franklin County Justice Center, we were forced to separate the grand jury into two separate rooms. This involved using the current multimedia and teleconferencing system in the courtroom to virtually connect the jury presentations.



**IT Support Systems Specialist
Edward Drummond**

The department also replaced many of our older desktop computers with laptop and docking station setups. These setups allow our users more flexibility for remote and in-office work. With the increased remote work, we were forced to rebuild our existing IT policies to adapt to the changing security landscape. We look forward to the new year and hope from this experience we have all learned to better use virtual meeting and remote access tools to more efficiently connect and work.



MASSACHUSETTS STATE POLICE DETECTIVE AND NARCOTICS UNIT

The Hampshire/Franklin State Police Detective Unit (SPDU) is comprised of 13 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.



Captain Jeffrey Cahill and NWDA Director of Operations Martha Murphy Kane

In 2020, the SPDU handled **507 cases, including 2 armed robberies, 17 sexual assault cases and 10 child pornography cases**, investigated **two homicides**, and **289 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 13 officers from 13 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 2020 the Anti-Crime Task Force **conducted 65 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.



Recently retired Sgt. Peter Konstantakos

COMMUNITY PROSECUTION

To fully carry out our mission to deliver justice and keep our communities safe, our prosecutors and staff take on responsibilities beyond traditional case prosecution. They work on community coalitions, domestic violence

prevention initiatives, and substance abuse task forces, to name just a few.

Community prosecution, at its core, involves three key ingredients: problem-solving, community involvement, and partnerships. This annual report highlights our community involvement and partnerships that are a foundation of our community prosecution efforts. Thousands of hours are spent working with partners in order to listen and respond to issues ranging from child abuse and addiction to school safety and elder protection. By partnering with the community and other organizations, we improve public safety, boost confidence in the justice system, and make communities stronger and safer. Collectively, these organizations are helping NWDA to set a crime-reduction agenda and, in many cases, participating in solutions.

We thank all our partners for their collaboration with us, as well as the many good works they carry out every day in the community.

**Northwestern District Attorney Partnerships
and Community Collaborations:**

Behavioral Health Network Inc. (BHN)
Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Hampshire and Franklin counties
Center for Human Development (CHD)
Center for New Americans
Center for Women and Community
Children's Advocacy Center of Franklin County and North Quabbin Region
Children's Advocacy Center of Hampshire County
Clinical and Support Options (CSO)
Children's Trust
Collaborative for Educational Services
Communities that Care Coalition
Community Action
Community Legal Aid
Communities for Restorative Justice (C4RJ)
Council of Social Agencies of Hampshire County (COSA)
Department of Children and Families

Department of Public Health
Department of Transitional Assistance
Dial Self
Drug Enforcement Agency
Easthampton Healthy Youth Coalition
18 Degrees
Five College Consortium
Franklin & Hampshire County State Police
Dispatch Centers
Franklin County Bar Association
Franklin County Home Care Corporation
Franklin County Resource Network
Franklin County Chiefs of Police Association
Franklin Sheriff's Department
Full Frame Initiative
Gandara Center-Intimate Partner Abuse Education
Greenfield Community TV
Greenfield Community College
Greenfield Safe Schools Safe Streets
Hampshire County Bar Association
Hampshire HOPE
Hampshire Sheriff's Department
Hilltown Community Health Center (HCHC)
Hilltown DV Task Force
Jane Doe, Inc.
LifePath MA
Massachusetts Attorney General's Office
Massachusetts Children's Alliance
Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance (MOVA)
Massachusetts State Police
Mayor of Greenfield's Domestic Violence Task Force
Montague Catholic Social Ministries
Northwestern Community Advisory Board
NELCWIT
NoFIRES
North Quabbin Community Coalition
North Quabbin Prevention, Addiction, Recovery, Treatment Task Force
Northampton Health Department
Northampton Recovery Center
Opioid Task Force of Franklin County and North Quabbin Region
Massachusetts Parole Board
Trial Court Probation Departments

Our 47 Northwestern District Police
 Departments
 Our 6 College/University Police Departments
 Proteous Intimate Partner Abuse Education
 Quaboag Hills Community Coalition
 Quaboag Hills Substance Use Alliance
 Safe Passage
 Salasin Project
 South Hadley Prevention Coalition
 SPIFFY Coalition
 STAVROS
 Support After Death by Overdose (SADOD)
 Tapestry
 The Consortium
 TRIAD communities
 Trauma Informed Hampshire County
 Town of Amherst & UMass-Campus and
 Community Coalition
 United Way of Hampshire and Franklin Counties
 Visioning B.E.A.R. Circle Intertribal Coalition
 (VBCIC)
 Ware DV Task Force
 Ware Regional Recovery Center
 Western MA Veterans Treatment Court
 Western MA Chiefs of Police Association
 YWCA Western MA
 United States Attorney's Office-WMass
 United States Marshall Services

School Partnerships:

Amherst Regional Public Schools
 Athol-Royalston Regional School District
 Belchertown Public Schools
 Easthampton Public Schools
 Four Rivers Charter Public School
 Franklin County Regional Vocational Technical
 School
 Frontier Regional and Union #38 School Districts
 Gateway Regional School District
 Gill Montague Regional School District
 Granby Public Schools
 Greenfield Public Schools
 Hadley Public Schools
 Hampshire Regional School District
 Hatfield Public Schools
 Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School

Mohawk Trail/Hawlemont Regional School
 District
 Northampton Public Schools
 Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter Public
 School
 Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public
 School
 Pioneer Valley Regional School District
 Ralph C. Mahar Regional School District
 Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School
 South Hadley Public Schools
 Ware Public Schools

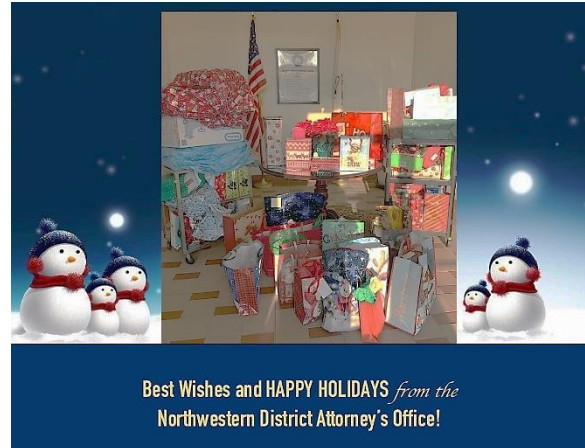


Director of Community Prosecution Projects
ADA Becky Michaels

Prosecutorial Equity and Accountability

Doing justice involves more than advocating for victims and prosecuting defendants. DA Sullivan's vision of justice requires prosecutors to understand and respond to their communities. The protests that followed George Floyd's murder demanded a response from members of law enforcement. DA Sullivan joined prosecutors nationwide in calling for prosecution offices to evaluate their practices and policies and immediately began to examine those of the NWDA. He tasked Becky Michaels, the Director of Community Prosecution Projects, to identify trainings on implicit bias and racial justice for all staff and to create a committee to gather data and propose policies to ensure equity and equality in prosecution throughout the NWDA.

- **Equity in Prosecution Committee:** The District Attorney, Assistant District Attorneys, Victim Witness advocates, and other staff examine bail, sentencing, potential declination of certain charges, and other areas in which prosecutors exercise discretion.
- **Conviction Integrity Committee:** Senior Assistant District Attorneys from the trial and appellate units and the Honorable Bertha Josephson (retired) review 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:** Senior Assistant District Attorneys from the trial and appellate units, including the District Attorney, ensure that the NWDA is strictly adhering to its discovery obligations under *Brady v. Maryland*, 373 U.S. 83, 87 (1963). Additionally, two members of the Committee participate in the statewide *Brady* working group.
- **The Professional Responsibility & Ethics Committee:** Attorneys and staff from all departments within the office are tasked with Training and Response. In addition to leading trainings on the Massachusetts Rule of Professional Responsibility 3.8: Special Responsibilities of a Prosecutor, and other rules that are essential to the practice of fair prosecution, the members of the Committee are on call to respond quickly to ethical issues that arise at any time during the investigation and prosecution of cases.



The NWDA provided many gifts to children through the Department of Families & Children

Restorative Justice

In 2020, the NWDA partnered with six police departments and the community-based nonprofit organization Communities for Restorative Justice (C4RJ) to significantly expand access to restorative justice in Hampshire County.

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.



The NWDA refers cases to C4RJ on a pre- and post-arraignment basis. Through C4RJ, volunteers from throughout Hampshire County lead circles that include the offender, victims, police, and other community members. The circles give victims an opportunity to be heard, community members a forum to uphold the values of the community and to support and involve those victimized, and an avenue for offenders to make amends.

In addition, even for cases that do not get referred to C4RJ, 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



DDTP graduation

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. 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 Assistant District Attorney/Director of Community Prosecution Projects Becky Michaels, who oversees the DDTP. Maria Sotolongo is the Director, and Tara Wilson serves as Intake Coordinator in Franklin County.

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.



DDTP Director Maria Sotolongo with Northampton PD Chief Jody Kasper and Probation Officer John Thorpe

Of the participants who graduated from the Drug Diversion & Treatment 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.

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.

ONGOING INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS

The Veterans Justice Partnership

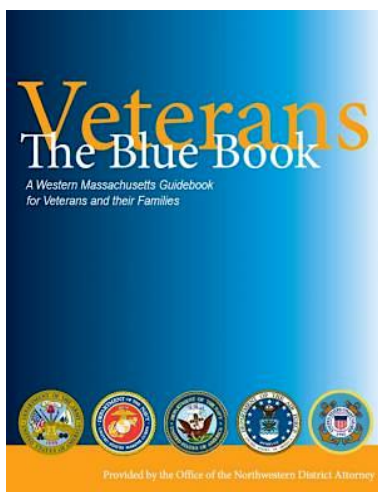
The Veterans Justice Partnership (VJP) was founded in 2011 by DA Sullivan and other community leaders. VJP's mission is to help court-involved and incarcerated veterans. VJP is a collaboration of the NWDA, veteran's organizations, mental health providers, local, state and federal veteran agencies, and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



NWDA Greenfield Office



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 Veterans Justice Partnership served 27 veterans in 2020, including 10 new graduates and 6 new participants.



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.

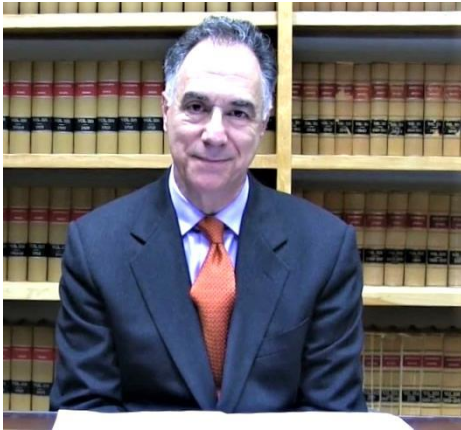


Judge Laurie McLeod and Veterans Treatment Court graduate

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 local 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 area 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.



The Law Enforcement Assistance Program has a library of dozens of training videos, newsletters and forms



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

Leaders in Addressing Addiction and Substance Abuse

NWDA staff at all levels continue to work closely with **Hampshire HOPE and the Opioid Task Force of Franklin County & North Quabbin Region**, 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 stigma and working to win 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.

These coalitions provide Narcan trainings, promote safe drug storage practices and drug collection efforts 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 organizes events to support people in recovery, works with Franklin County-based prevention coalitions and educates the public in its effort to reduce stigma and remove other barriers that get in the way of people receiving the help they need.



Opioid Task Force Director Debra McLaughlin

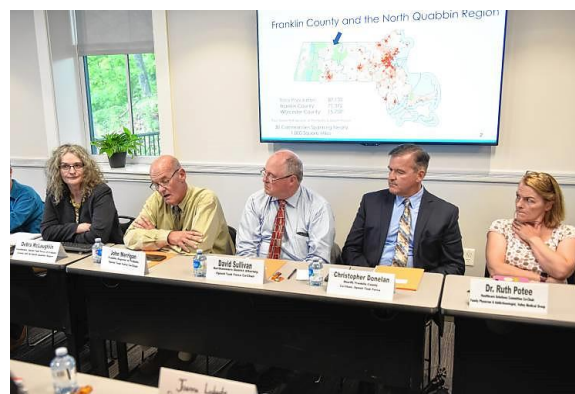
The Opioid Task Force is chaired by District Attorney Sullivan, Franklin Register of Probate John Merrigan and Franklin Sheriff Christopher

Donelan. OTF is led by Executive Director Debra McLaughlin.

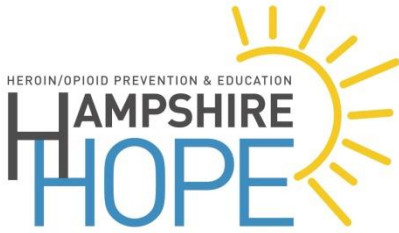
In 2020, OTF secured new grants totaling \$2,335,000, in their on-going efforts to address addiction and opioid use disorder in the community. OTF continue to be supported through designated state funding.

2020 Grant Funding amounted to \$2,335,000:

- \$635,000 - U.S. Department of Justice Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse (COSSAP) Rural Responses to the Opioid Epidemic Demonstration Grant. Grant period ends 9/30/21.
- \$1,000,000 - U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, SAMHSA First Responders Comprehensive Addiction & Recovery Act Grant. The grant period ends 9/29/22 with an opportunity to seek an additional \$1,000,000 for two more years.
- \$600,000-U.S. Department of Justice Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Abuse (COSSAP) Site-Based Program Grant. Grant period ends 9/30/23.
- \$100,000 - MA Attorney General's Office Cultural Humility Initiative Funding for CONNECT. Grant period ends 12/31/22.



Opioid Task Force meeting



Hampshire HOPE, formed in 2015 and operating out of the Northampton Health Department, 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 has committed significant resources for its success.



**Hampshire HOPE Executive Director
Cherry Sullivan**

Led by Executive Director Cherry Sullivan, Hampshire HOPE has expanded post-overdose response efforts through the Drug Addiction and Recovery Teams, known as DART to communities across the region to provide intervention teams to help people suffering from opioid use disorder and their families.



The NWDA supports and works closely with the **Northampton Recovery Center**, now a Bureau of Substance Addiction Services-funded program located on 25 Armory Street. The Recovery Center offers peer-based programs to support the continued recovery of those who are navigating their personal journeys away from addiction. The NRC provides recovery coaching and bases its work on the belief that there are many pathways to recovery. Working with the NWDA, the Center in 2020 began offering a group specifically for people who have lost someone to opioid or other substance related deaths.

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.



Northwestern Youth Fire Intervention
Response, Education and Safety Partnership

A Community Response to Youth-Set Fires

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

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.

On November 4th, 2020, the NoFIRES Partnership and NWDA adapted the **8th Annual Arson Investigation Conference to a virtual format by offering** a training on Arson Law and Juvenile Law & Procedure with Attorney John Sofis Scheft. Scheft is a leading legal expert, author of the Field Manual for Massachusetts Police and a longtime friend of the NoFIRES program. We filled all the online seats with police, firefighters, prosecutors, and investigators from the New England area. This professional development opportunity was made possible with support from The Massachusetts Property Insurance Underwriting Association and will be available as an online training through the Massachusetts Fire Academy in the future.



NOFIRES





**V/W Advocate Wendy Adams and
District Court Administrator Brianna Fuller**

Internship Program

Due to the Covid pandemic, the NWDA needed to cancel most of its internship opportunities during 2020. We hope to resume internships in Summer 2021.

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.



Franklin County Justice Center

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.

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.

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 2020 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



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

Total Fiscal Year 2020 Appropriation Funding

\$8,302,285

FY20 Total Grant Funding

\$704,565

Grand Total

\$9,006,850

Appropriation Funding Percentage

92%

Grant Funding Percentage

8%

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Greenfield, MA 01301

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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

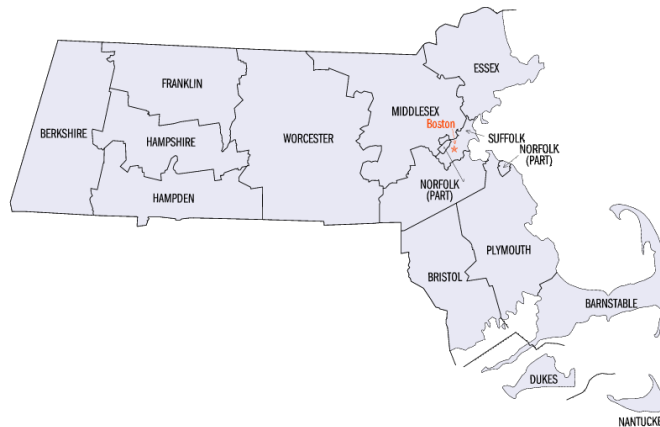
- Ashfield
- Bernardston
- Buckland
- Charlemont
- Colrain
- Conway
- Deerfield
- Erving
- Gill
- Greenfield
- Hawley
- Heath
- Leverett
- Leyden
- Monroe
- Montague
- New Salem
- Northfield
- Orange
- Rowe
- Shelburne
- Shutesbury
- Sunderland
- Warwick
- Wendell
- Whately

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.