



Office of Northwestern District Attorney
David E. Sullivan

2021 Annual Report



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Message from the District Attorney



I am pleased to share the Office of the Northwestern District Attorney's Annual Report for 2021, a year tempered by the global COVID-19 pandemic that has impacted our world since January, 2020. The deadly spread of the COVID-19 virus has caused hundreds of millions to be infected and resulted in the deaths of over 850,000 Americans and 5.5 million people worldwide.

Despite the many hardships and obstacles presented by this pandemic, our office continued to operate 24/7 to handle investigations and prosecutions and work with victims of crime. We transitioned to handling court

matters remotely through phone and video conferencing and in September resumed jury trials. Prosecutors, advocates, and staff continued to work on behalf of victims of crime, including vulnerable children, senior citizens, survivors of intimate partner violence. The commitment of our staff to seek justice for all remains constant. Our Annual Report highlights achievements over the past year as well as the justice innovations we have collectively built over the past 11 years of our administration.

In 2021, there were many cases in which our prosecutors distinguished themselves in seeking justice for victims of crime. Our victim witness 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 even as we continue to innovate and change in response to the multitude of challenges we face every day.

And we strive for equal justice. Our Conviction Integrity Unit; Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee; and adoption of Prosecutor Performance Indicators are some of the important ways we aspire to better our DA office and justice system.

We remain steadfast in our focus on prevention, helping people struggling with addiction, fighting stigma and collaborating with residents of the district in pursuit of healthy communities. We deeply appreciate our state and federal legislators, community partners, and law enforcement professionals who work hand in hand with us in support of those efforts. I am honored 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,

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.

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



SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM



**Director of Operations Martha Murphy Kane,
Chief Financial Officer Donna Dudkiewicz,
Deputy District Attorney Jennifer Suhl,
District Attorney David Sullivan,
First Assistant District Attorney Steven Gagne**

The District Attorney works together with his senior management team to guide and oversee all office staff, run an efficient office and implement the goals of justice, equity and compassion as the hallmark of his administration. Senior managers – Deputy District Attorney Jennifer Suhl, First Assistant District Attorney 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 on behalf of the people who live, work and spend time in the 47 communities that make up the Northwestern District.

SUPERIOR COURT UNIT

In 2021, Superior Court activity returned to nearly pre-pandemic levels, including the resumption of jury trials after an unprecedented year-long hiatus caused by COVID-19. Among other resolutions, prosecutors wrapped up an exceptionally complex child abuse case that began in 2016 and secured a guilty plea resulting in a lengthy state prison sentence for an attack

described by a Superior Court judge as the “most horrific set of facts” he had ever seen.



**Superior Court prosecutors in the
historic Hampshire Superior Courtroom**

Superior Court & Grand Jury

Northwestern Assistant District Attorneys prosecute criminal cases in three different courts: Superior Court (located in Northampton and Greenfield), District Court (located in Northampton, Belchertown, Greenfield and Orange), and Juvenile Court (located in Hadley, Greenfield, Orange, and Belchertown). Superior Court is where the most serious and complex felony cases in Hampshire and Franklin Counties are prosecuted. A felony is any crime punishable by incarceration in the state prison, whereas misdemeanors are punishable by a sentence in a local House of Correction (commonly known as jail), probation or a fine. Certain felonies, such as murder, robbery, rape, home invasion, and drug trafficking, are so serious they are required by law to be prosecuted in Superior Court.

Before any case is prosecuted in Superior Court, it must first be presented to, and voted upon, by a Grand Jury, which consists of 23 citizens who hear a variety of cases during a three-month term of service. Hampshire and Franklin counties each have a Grand Jury, whose task in every case is to

evaluate the evidence presented by the prosecutor and determine whether there is enough evidence to prove a crime was committed. If the Grand Jury makes this finding, an indictment (or “true bill”) is returned to the Superior Court and the suspect then faces charges in that public forum.

Unlike most other court hearings, Grand Jury proceedings are confidential and not open to the public. There are several reasons for this long-standing secrecy requirement. One is to protect the integrity of Grand Jury investigations. Another is to ensure that nobody interferes with witnesses or tampers with evidence, and that suspects do not flee. Finally, the secrecy allows the Grand Jury process to unfold without revealing who may be the subject of a grand jury investigation, which is particularly important in cases where the investigation does not ultimately yield criminal charges.

Pleas v. Trials

The majority of criminal cases prosecuted in Superior Court are concluded by way of guilty pleas rather than trials. Nationwide, well over 90% of all criminal cases are resolved without a trial. And there are several reasons for this. First, courts generally look favorably upon defendants who accept responsibility for their actions by admitting their guilt, rather than putting victims and witnesses through the ordeal of a criminal trial. Second, the criminal justice system would be unduly slowed if every criminal case went to trial, given the time and resources required for a trial—particularly juror service. But also, and in the Northwestern District in particular, prosecutors and defense counsel routinely engage in spirited plea

negotiations resulting in agreed-upon sentencing recommendations presented for the Court’s acceptance. If the two sides can’t agree on a sentence, they argue their respective positions to a judge, who then decides the sentence. In the Hampshire and Franklin Superior Courts, it is not uncommon to hear judges commending the parties for arriving at fair and reasonable sentencing recommendations.

The duty of a prosecuting attorney is not to persecute, but to prosecute . . . to protect the innocent as well as to prosecute the guilty . . . seeing that the truth and the right shall prevail . . .

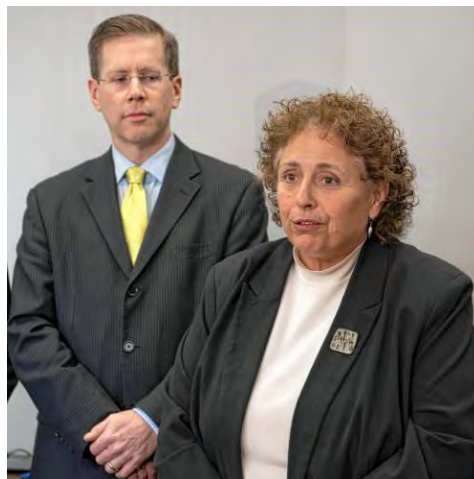
Excerpt from Catharine Foute v. State, Tennessee Supreme Court (1816)

Notable Case Resolutions in 2021

Commonwealth v. Julie (Conley) Gordon (Hampshire Superior Court) – The final chapter of an epic criminal case involving the poisoning and medical abuse of a 7-year-old Northampton child by her caregivers came in June 2021, when Julie (Conley) Gordon was convicted of reckless endangerment of a child. Gordon’s conviction was the culmination of an investigation that began in April 2015, after the child was admitted to Yale New Haven Hospital in Connecticut with life-threatening abdominal injuries. Christopher Conley, Julie Gordon’s former husband and co-defendant, was sentenced in February 2020, to 16-18 years in prison after a Hampshire Superior Court jury found him guilty of attempted murder, assault and battery on a child by means of a dangerous weapon (opioids) and assault and battery on a child causing substantial bodily injury.

In June 2021, Julie Gordon's case was resolved when she admitted there was sufficient evidence to convict her of recklessly endangering a child by misrepresenting the victim's medical conditions to health providers, resulting in unnecessary and dangerous surgical procedures. Gordon was sentenced to probation until September 2023 and prohibited from unsupervised contact with children under 16 and contact with the victim.

"This plea holds the defendant publicly accountable for her disturbing conduct, while providing some measure of closure, healing and justice for the victim," Northwestern First Assistant District Attorney Steven Gagne said after the court hearing. The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Linda Pisano, then-Chief of the Child Abuse Unit, Assistant District Attorney Bethany Lynch and First Assistant Gagne. They were assisted by Child Abuse Unit Coordinator Kellie Beaulieu and paralegals Kelley Mason and Jamie Foster.



First Assistant District Attorney Steven Gagne and former ADA Linda Pisano

Photo courtesy of Daily Hampshire Gazette



Defendants Julie Gordon and Christopher Conley

- Photos courtesy of MassLive



District Attorney Sullivan welcomes NWDA staff to an implicit bias and harassment prevention training at Union Station.

Commonwealth v. Rie Hachiyonagi (Franklin Superior Court)

The defendant was convicted of nine felony charges stemming from a December 2019 attack that left a colleague with permanent injuries. During the October 2021 plea hearing, Assistant District Attorney Matthew Thomas outlined the facts: Hachiyonagi arrived at the victim's home claiming to need emotional support over a breakup; and once inside, tortured her for four hours until the victim convinced Hachiyonagi to summon help. The victim

addressed the court during the plea hearing, offering an emotional statement detailing the extent of her injuries and the pain and terror she experienced that night, with ongoing impacts on all areas of her life. Hachiyonagi pleaded guilty to three counts of armed assault with intent to murder a person over 60; three counts of assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon on a person over 60; and one count each of home invasion, mayhem and entering in the nighttime with intent to commit a felony. The judge imposed a 10-12 year prison sentence followed by three years of probation. Victim Witness Advocate Rebekah Nager worked with ADA Thomas.

Commonwealth v. Christopher Dahlinger & Eric Kousen (Hampshire Superior Court) –

The co-defendants committed a string of break-ins in the fall of 2018 that targeted businesses in western Massachusetts, including Atkins Farm in Amherst, AllSport Arena in Northampton, and G&S Industries in Hatfield. These crimes, committed mostly at night, were part of a spree extending into Connecticut. After a multi-jurisdictional investigation, the co-defendants were indicted on numerous felony charges including breaking and entering in the nighttime with intent to commit a felony and larceny over \$1,200. Dahlinger pleaded guilty to related charges and a judge sentenced him to three years in prison followed by three years probation. Kousen was sentenced to a 3½-year prison sentence. The pair also faced sentencing on similar charges in Connecticut. This case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Anne Yereniuk, with assistance from Victim Witness Advocate Wendy Adams.

Commonwealth v. Mercedes Diaz-Wright, Chelsea Rodriguez, Alondra Gil, Kimberly Perez, & Diafuka Kayamba (Hampshire Superior Court) – In March 2018, Nerkin



ADA Steven Gagne testifies at a virtual hearing on a bill to strengthen penalties for drivers eluding police.

Omar Morales shot and killed Daniel Cruz, 44, inside the Meadowbrook Apartments in Northampton, after which several of Morales' friends and associates assisted him in cleaning the scene, removing evidence and disposing of Cruz's body by transporting it to a field in Hatfield and setting it on fire. During the ensuing investigation, many of those same people lied to law enforcement and committed perjury in an ill-fated attempt to cover up the crime. The five co-defendants listed above were indicted by the Hampshire Grand Jury for a variety of crimes in connection with the murder and coverup, including: misleading a criminal investigation; tampering with evidence; accessory after the fact to murder; conspiracy; and perjury. Morales pleaded guilty in 2020 to voluntary manslaughter and was sentenced to 15-20 years in prison. Co-defendant Pedro Soto-Rodriguez also pleaded guilty in 2020 and received a 7-8 year prison sentence for his involvement in the attempted coverup. The cases of the remaining five co-defendants were resolved in 2021 with sentences ranging from incarceration in prison or the House of Correction, to terms of probation. These cases were prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Jennifer Suhl. Victim Witness Advocate Jennifer Reid worked with members of the Cruz family.

Economic Crimes & Insurance Fraud

Economic crimes inflict serious, long-lasting effects on victims, often involving complex schemes targeting particularly vulnerable individuals. The decision to indict these cases depends on the amount of money stolen, the complexity of the scheme and the vulnerability of the victim. These cases can involve embezzlement, fraud or exploitation committed against a vulnerable person. Since 2012, NWDA prosecutors and financial investigators working under the leadership of First Assistant Gagne have investigated and prosecuted crimes involving millions of dollars of losses. The office partners with the Insurance Fraud Bureau of Massachusetts to identify insurance fraud. Dozens of cases of fraud — motor vehicle, health care, homeowners, and the like—have been successfully prosecuted. This collaboration reduce fraudulent payouts and protect premiums paid by law-abiding citizens.

Sexually Dangerous Persons

When someone incarcerated after a sex offense conviction nears their release date, prosecutors can file a Sexually Dangerous Person (SDP) petition seeking to prevent their release. Petitions are filed pursuant to

General Laws chapter 123A, which allows the indefinite civil commitment of a person convicted of a sex crime if they are deemed too dangerous to release because they are at high risk to reoffend. The DA's office has an inmate's case reviewed by an expert psychologist to assess whether the inmate meets SDP statutory criteria. If he or she does, the office files a petition in Superior Court, where two independent Qualified Examiners are appointed to evaluate the inmate. If one or both examiners conclude the person is at high risk to reoffend, a trial by a jury or a judge determines whether the inmate should be deemed sexually dangerous. The burden of proof is the same as at any criminal trial: beyond a reasonable doubt. Inmates deemed sexually dangerous are committed to the Massachusetts Treatment Center in Bridgewater indefinitely. with periodic re-evaluation to determine if they are sufficiently rehabilitated for release. In the meantime, they receive treatment.

In 2021, the unit reviewed the cases of 32 people convicted of sex offenses who were scheduled for release, closing 25 cases without further review; these defendants were released on schedule. For seven cases, experts conducted reviews. Four did not meet SDP criteria and were released.



State Police Lt. Steven Hean speaks to members of the Anti-Crime Task Force after a lengthy investigation led to more than a dozen arrests in December, 2021. Seated near the wall are ADA Jeremy Bucci, who works with the Task Force and State Police Captain Jeffrey Cahill.

The office filed two petitions which were later dismissed after examiners concluded they did not meet the SDP criteria and they were released on schedule. One case went an expert in late 2021 for review in early 2022.

In May, 2021, in one of the first cases tried in Superior Court following the 2020 COVID-19 moratorium on jury trials, the NWDA prosecuted a sexually dangerous person petition (Commonwealth v. William Hoyt). The jury agreed the defendant was sexually dangerous, and Hoyt was committed to the Massachusetts Treatment Center. Another SDP case is scheduled for trial in Superior Court in March 2022.

SDP staff are Assistant District Attorneys Steven Gagne, Nicholas Atallah and Lori Odierna, Coordinator Sue Snyder and Assistant Coordinator Jean Zimmerman.

DISTRICT COURT UNIT



District Attorney David Sullivan with District Court prosecutors

The vast majority of criminal cases are prosecuted in the District Court. In 2021, ADAs handled 4,881 new arraignments in the four district courts within the Northwestern District. The court continued to adapt to the COVID-19 pandemic with remote sessions over the Zoom video

conferencing platform and by instituting procedures in all courtrooms to more safely accommodate in-person trials, hearings and arraignments. Safety protocols included the installation of plexiglass shields as well as social distancing and masking requirements for attorneys, courthouse staff, jurors, witnesses and the public.



District Court Unit Chief ADA Michael Russo



**District Court Attorneys in Charge
Andrew Covington (Northampton),
Matthew Russo (Eastern Hampshire),
Ryan Scott (Greenfield)**

District Courts in the Northwestern District, located in Northampton, Belchertown, Greenfield and Orange, have jurisdiction over all misdemeanors, including drug-related crimes, property crimes, public order offenses, assault crimes and motor vehicle violations. District Courts also have jurisdiction over felonies punishable by incarceration in prison for not more than five years, which includes certain weapon-related offenses, sexual offenses, and property crimes.

The majority of domestic violence, child abuse and elder abuse cases in the Northwestern District are prosecuted in the District Court. ADAs receive specialized training to handle these sensitive cases. In addition, experienced ADAs in each of these courts are designated as domestic violence prosecutors and child abuse prosecutors.



**Orange District Court Attorney in Charge
Danielle Cruz**

District Court Chief and ADA Michael Russo supervises the 11 ADAs assigned to handle cases within the four District Courts. Senior ADAs are designated as the Attorneys in Charge for each of the four District Courts: Andrew Covington in Northampton; Matthew Russo in Eastern Hampshire

(Belchertown); Danielle Cruz in Orange; and Ryan Scott in Greenfield.



ADA Jillian Parent

In 2021, Jillian Parent accepted a position as an Assistant District Attorney in Franklin County.

Assistant District Attorneys in the four District Courts handled **8,945** cases in 2021. Of those cases, **4,881** were new arraignments.

NWDA Training Committee

The NWDA Training Committee made COVID adaptations to continue to offer important and timely trainings to District Court staff remotely. The committee coordinated monthly sessions over Zoom, on topics such as prosecuting elder abuse cases, drafting opposition briefs and conducting dangerousness hearings. ADAs also attended remote trainings hosted by outside agencies on topics including the prosecution of sex trafficking cases, the use of drug recognition experts at trial and strategies to better protect victims of sexual offenses during cross-examination.

JUVENILE JUSTICE UNIT



ADA Bruce Patryn, Unit Chief ADA Elizabeth Mulcahy, ADA Mary Beth Ogulewicz

The goals of the Juvenile Court include maintaining public safety and holding youth accountable for their actions as well as providing individualized assessment to prevent further delinquent or criminal behavior through the development of educational, vocational, social, emotional and basic life skills which enable youth to grow and mature. The Juvenile Court has jurisdiction for what is known as delinquency offenses – crimes committed by youth between ages 12 and 18 –including offenses committed upon other children. The Juvenile Court also handles adult criminal complaints for contributing to the delinquency of a minor, furnishing alcohol to a minor and failure to send a child to school. With the exception of particularly serious crimes, juvenile court proceedings are closed to the public.

The overarching goals of the NWDA's Juvenile Justice team are to promote the health and well-being of children and adolescents, support families to thrive, and protect and enhance public safety. The unit

works to keep young people out of the criminal justice system using restorative justice approaches, a juvenile diversion program and multi-disciplinary meetings, as well as by supporting and working closely with community-based early intervention and prevention initiatives. Staff work in partnership with schools and community organizations to support and promote positive youth development opportunities and reduce unsafe and unhealthy behavior that can lead to court involvement. With individual youth, staff seek to understand underlying causes of dangerous or anti-social behavior in order to hold youth accountable while also addressing their risks and needs.

Juvenile Diversion

In 2021, 63 juveniles who otherwise would have been prosecuted in the Juvenile Court were instead diverted from court through their participation in the NWDA's Juvenile Diversion Program. This program is an alternative to formal prosecution for individuals between 12 and 18 who commit offenses. The diversion takes place prior to arraignment, keeping participating youth from further court involvement and avoiding criminal records. Unit staff assess youth and work individually with them and their parents or guardians to create diversion plans tailored to their particular circumstances and their unique risks and needs. Individualized diversion plans include restorative practices, counseling, educational programs, positive activities, community service and payment of restitution. A young person who commits a crime while under the influence of alcohol, for example, may have a chance to take an alcohol education program. Youth who complete the program will not start a criminal offender record.

Delinquency, Youthful Offender and Transfer Cases

Some cases are not appropriate for diversion, and those most often will be prosecuted in one of the four juvenile courts located in Hampshire and Franklin counties: Hadley, Belchertown, Greenfield and Orange.

Delinquency matters may include misdemeanor and serious felony offenses. In 2021, the unit handled 231 delinquency cases that included offenses such as arson, breaking and entering, assault with a dangerous weapon, rape, trafficking narcotics while armed with a loaded firearm, threat to use a deadly weapon at a school, assault and battery on a disabled person, operating under the influence of alcohol, animal cruelty, leaving the scene of a motor vehicle crash, larceny and vandalism. Juvenile unit ADAs were involved with five cases in which a person was alleged to have committed an offense before age 18 but was not apprehended until after their 19th birthday. By law, these individuals may be prosecuted in adult court.

For the most serious crimes, a DA may elect to prosecute a juvenile as a Youthful Offender, a designation that allows a judge discretion to sentence the individual as a juvenile and/or an adult. Such cases must meet requirements according to state law. The facts and circumstances surrounding the youth and the case are carefully considered in making such a designation. If a Youthful Offender indictment is pursued, the case is presented to a Grand Jury and in case of indictment, may proceed in Juvenile or Superior Court.



Juvenile Diversion Specialist Naomi Bledsoe with Officer Douglas, the Northampton Police comfort dog.

In 2021, the Juvenile Justice Unit handled **231** cases. Youth diverted from court through the Juvenile Diversion Program: **63**.

Juvenile Justice Unit Staff

Assistant District Attorney Elizabeth Mulcahy is Chief of the Juvenile Justice Unit and Program Director for the Juvenile Diversion Program. Assistant District Attorney Bruce Patryn is senior litigation counsel for the unit, handling cases throughout the Northwestern District. In 2021, Assistant District Attorney Elizabeth Swihart departed after 10 years with the office, and the unit welcomed Assistant District Attorney Mary Beth Ogulewicz to handle juvenile matters in Franklin County. Naomi Bledsoe is the juvenile diversion specialist and unit administrator.

Two victim witness advocates work with the Juvenile Justice Unit, Janice Francis in Hampshire County and Deanna Weech in Franklin County, while Family Service Advocates Heather Hubbard, Kathy Bengtson, Linda Rogers, Sonia Serrazina and Karen Hernandez work with child victims and their parents/guardians in child abuse cases prosecuted in the juvenile court.

Community Based Juvenile Justice and Prevention

Community Based Juvenile Justice meetings, an initiative required by state law, brings together schools, law enforcement and youth-serving agencies to address school violence, undertake violence prevention efforts and assist schools in providing a safe and supportive learning environment. Convened by ADAs from the Juvenile Justice Unit during the school year, these meetings provide a forum for information sharing about school issues as well as confidential conversations about court-involved students and other students who are at risk to become court involved. The program has established solid partnerships and avenues of

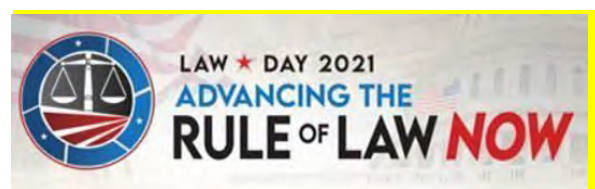


Message from District Attorney David Sullivan on safe celebrations and social host laws 2021

**Naomi Bledsoe, Elizabeth Mulcahy
DA Sullivan**

communication to build and strengthen relationships that help school communities, at-risk youth and their families.

In 2021, as part of the Juvenile Justice team's collaboration with schools and community partners on prevention and intervention efforts, the office produced a video to educate parents on social host laws. The video was distributed by prevention coalitions around the district. The unit worked with other NWDA staff in organizing programming for Law Day 2021 on the theme "The Rule of Law and Protest" and collaborated with community partners to develop conferences and other trainings for youth, parents, school personnel and school resource officers.



Safe Schools Response Team

The Safe Schools Response Team reviews and responds to complaints and referrals involving threats, harassment, bullying, and civil rights violations occurring in schools. The team also assists local schools in developing a response to bullying and harassing behavior and serves as a resource to schools, parents, and victims. Members of the team include Deputy District Attorney Jennifer Suhl, Juvenile Justice Unit Chief Elizabeth Mulcahy, Assistant District Attorneys Mary Beth Ogulewicz and Bruce Patryn, Juvenile Diversion Specialist Naomi Bledsoe and Administrative Assistant Susan Snyder.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ASSAULT UNIT

The Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Unit (DVSAU) is responsible for the prosecution of all domestic violence and sexual assault cases in which the victim is 18 years of age or older. The unit works closely with law enforcement and community partners to address the serious problem of domestic violence and sexual assault through prosecution of offenders and the development and implementation of strategies for prevention and intervention for the victims. Through regular communication and collaboration with police, court staff and social service agencies, the DVSAU ensures effective prosecution of domestic and sexual violence cases in the district. The unit's primary mission is to hold offenders accountable and keep victims safe.



Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Unit staff outside the Greenfield NWDA office

The majority of domestic violence cases in 2021 were handled in the District Courts. To provide comprehensive and consistent treatment of domestic violence cases, the District Attorney has designated specialized domestic violence prosecutors in each district court: ADA Nicholas Atallah in Northampton, ADA Alexa Pascucci

in Belchertown, ADA Jillian Handy in Greenfield and ADA Danielle Cruz in Orange.

The unit handled **1,332** domestic violence cases in 2021, **14** in Superior Court and **1,318** in District Court. DVSAU received **55** referrals for sexual assault investigations and handled **92** adult sexual assault cases, of which 24% were prosecuted in the Superior Court.

Sexual assault investigations typically come to the unit when local law enforcement agencies forward reports of police investigations into complaints of sexual assault. Memoranda of understanding between the NWDA and law enforcement agencies throughout the district formalize long-standing collaborations on these cases to ensure investigations are conducted in an efficient, comprehensive and consistent manner. This tracking helps identify repeat offenders and trends within the community, which is key to guiding the office's prevention initiatives.



New DVSAU staff Christine Torres, Zoraida Agudelo, Siobhan Powers

DVSAU Staff

Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Unit Chief and Assistant District Attorney Sandra Staub works with Assistant District Attorney Erin Aiello and Legal Assistant Alyssa Devlin on the investigation and prosecution of cases. Four other staff members in the unit take the lead to develop, implement and coordinate extensive prevention and intervention programs and initiatives. In November, 2021, after 25 years with the office, Mary Kociela retired as Director of Domestic & Sexual Violence Projects. The unit welcomed Zoraida Agudelo, who has over 20 years of experience in the field of domestic and sexual violence, as the new director. She works closely with High Risk Team Coordinator Katie Rosewarne and Domestic Violence Intervention Program Coordinator Christine Torres (hired in 2021 upon the retirement of Richard Aucoin), and Administrative Assistant Siobhan Powers (who succeeded Joviana Rosario when she became receptionist for the Greenfield office).

Notable Case Resolutions in 2021

2021 was notable for convictions obtained in serious domestic violence felony cases in which the victims declined to participate in the prosecution of the offenders. For a variety of reasons, victims are not always able to assist in the investigation and prosecution of intimate partner violence, but it is the responsibility of District Attorneys' offices to rely on evidence-based approaches to hold offenders accountable. This occurred in the following Superior Court cases.

In ***Commonwealth v. Antonio Candello (Franklin Superior Court)***, the victim asserted a valid privilege not to testify,

making her unavailable as a witness. Despite this, through the use of other evidence including emergency responder observations, photographs, out-of-court statements from the victim and defendant and witness statements, Assistant District Attorney Erin Aiello secured convictions and a prison sentence on the charges of strangulation, subsequent offense; assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon; two counts of assault and battery on a family member, subsequent offense; and two counts of witness intimidation.



DVSAU staff hold signs they made for the Hilltown Voices campaign in support of survivors of domestic violence.

In ***Commonwealth v. Rafael Rivera (Franklin Superior Court)***, Assistant District Attorney Matthew Thomas secured a conviction against a perpetrator of grave intimate partner violence even though the victim testified for the defense at trial. After seeing photographs of her injuries and hearing other evidence proving that the defendant had beaten her with a hammer, including the victim's previous Grand Jury testimony compellingly presented by Assistant District Attorney Jillian Handy, the jury returned guilty verdicts against the defendant on the charges of assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon.

DVSAU Outreach, Prevention & Intervention

Community outreach and education is another part of the unit's prevention efforts. In 2021, that included providing virtual training opportunities with police focused on risk assessment and near fatal strangulation as well as serving on the Greenfield Mayor's Domestic Violence Task Force, helping to organize annual events in collaboration with the Children's Advocacy Centers, working on a diaper drive, creating a domestic violence awareness display at the Greenfield Fairgrounds and participating in the Hilltown Voices Campaign in support of survivors. Intervention initiatives include:

District Attorney's Task Force on Domestic and Sexual Violence: Law enforcement as well as representatives from victim services and community programs came together throughout 2021 via remote platforms to provide training and networking opportunities for people working to end domestic and sexual violence. Speakers and topics included: national expert and trainer Dana Fleitman from the Stalking Prevention

& Awareness Resource Center presenting on stalking and the use of technology to stalk victims; Monica Moran, Manager of Domestic Violence Prevention Projects for the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission training on the new 10-10 hotline; and Hema Sieminski, Policy Director at Jane Doe, Inc., presenting on coercion and control in our criminal and civil domestic violence statutes.



Mary Kociela retired from the NWDA in November after 25 years.



DVSAU staff set up a display at the Franklin Fairgrounds to raise awareness about domestic violence.

Domestic Violence Intervention Project (DVIP):

This initiative coordinates the work of police and community advocates, sending specially trained advocates from the New England Learning Center for Women in Transition (NELCWIT) in Franklin County and Valley Human Services at Behavioral Health Network (BHN) in Hampshire County to work with victims immediately after a report of domestic violence. Police officers contact on-call advocates who reach out to victims to provide support, safety information planning and referrals for counseling, shelter and legal advocacy.

Advocates are trained to incorporate risk assessment as part of safety planning with victims and assist officers in obtaining information about threats to kill and past abuse. Police officers also rely on a risk assessment worksheet at the scene of domestic violence cases as part of a statewide effort to identify and respond to high risk cases. DVIP meetings for police, dispatchers, advocates and all project partners offer an opportunity to discuss challenges and successes and to receive training. Among the topics addressed in 2021 was “Juvenile Justice and Domestic Violence,” in which Assistant District Attorney Elizabeth Mulcahy and Juvenile Diversion Specialist Naomi Bledsoe presented on juvenile law, court processes and available resources. The DVIP is funded through a state grant that supports early intervention to better protect victims of domestic violence.

In 2021, Domestic Violence Intervention Project advocates provided immediate crisis support for **154** victims of abuse, including lock changes for six victims.
48 % of referrals to the High Risk Team came from DVIP advocates.

Domestic Violence High Risk Teams: In an effort to identify the most serious, repeat offenders of intimate partner violence and prevent domestic violence homicides in the Northwestern District, the office created high risk teams in both Hampshire and Franklin counties in 2010. These teams use evidence-based research to identify offender behaviors that substantially increase levels of risk for victims. A full-time coordinator for the project provides robust support and follow-up for victims of intimate partner violence and training for

In 2021, **25** domestic violence offenders were flagged as high risk in the Northwestern District. Currently a total of **316** offenders have been identified as high risk.

police, EMS responders and dispatchers to assess and identify high risk situations. The teams share case information, identify concerning behaviors and then make recommendations to hold offenders accountable while also maximizing safety for victims. Team members identify and closely monitor high risk offenders to prevent further incidents of abuse and homicide. The team includes representatives from the probation department, houses of correction, the Parole Board, police departments, emergency dispatchers, the Department of Children and Families and the Department of Transitional Assistance as well as batterer’s intervention programs and community-based advocates. Once an offender is identified as high risk, detailed information regarding that offender and victim is distributed to all partners to ensure coordinated, comprehensive, and consistent responses to any incidents involving the offender.

Sexual Assault Response Team: Known as SART, this is a multi-disciplinary team coordinated by the Center for Women & Community – the state-designated rape crisis center for Hampshire County – that includes Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Unit Chief Sandra Staub, Legal Assistant Alyssa Devlin and Victim/Witness Assistance Unit Director Jacqueline Gaw. Other members of the team include representatives from law enforcement, health care, forensic sexual assault nurses, prosecutors, and domestic violence advocates. In 2021, SART hosted a number

of community trainings including: Tamara Thompson of Westover Air Force Base, presenting on military investigations of sexual assaults and support available to military-connected survivors; sexual abuse in LGBTQ communities; and Catherine Kay of Community Legal Aid, presenting on how survivors can access public benefits after an assault.

CHILD ABUSE UNIT

The Child Abuse Unit (CAU) works to protect children by preventing child abuse, holding offenders accountable and supporting families to be strong and resilient. The unit was created in 1987 as a special section within the NWDA in recognition of the unique nature of crimes against children and the manner in which such crimes are investigated and prosecuted. The CAU's team of specially trained assistant district attorneys, family service advocates and child interview specialists work closely with law enforcement and child protective services workers in a multi-disciplinary and trauma-informed approach to child abuse.

CAU staff work closely with the Department of Children and Families and two Children's Advocacy Centers (in Greenfield and in Northampton) that together serve every city and town in the Northwestern district. This collaboration helps make an excruciating experience less traumatizing and sets victims on a path toward healing. The unit works in partnership with local and national experts to continually seek just outcomes while providing support, medical care and mental health services to victims and their families.

Prosecution of child abuse presents special challenges. Typically, the key witnesses are the child victims themselves. For sexual

abuse – the most commonly prosecuted type of abuse – there is often limited evidence, which means the victim's statement takes on greater importance. Because sharing that information can be traumatizing, forensic interviewers talk individually with victims in a child-centered manner in sessions observed by other members of the multi-disciplinary team via live video streaming. This process means child victims do not have to repeatedly relate their experiences. Still, prosecutions do mean child victims sometimes need to testify in court about what happened to them. Unit staff work closely with children and their families to minimize the trauma and coordinate with agencies that provide support to children as they prepare for trial.



Assistant District Attorney Lori Odierna was named chief of the Child Abuse Unit upon the retirement in 2021 of former CAU Chief Linda Pisano.



**Child Abuse Unit staff outside the Northampton offices
of the NWDA**

Child Abuse Unit Staff

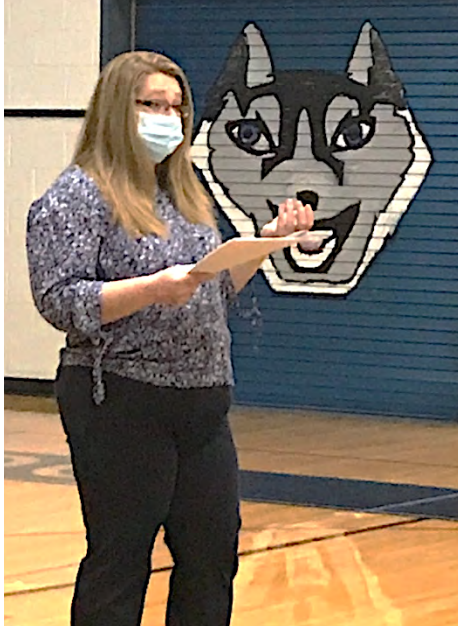
In 2021, the CAU underwent key staff transitions. Longtime Unit Chief, Assistant District Attorney Linda Pisano retired in October. Taking over as Unit Chief was Assistant District Attorney Lori Odierna, previously District Court Supervising Attorney with the unit. Chief Odierna leads a staff that includes Deputy Chief and Assistant District Attorney Frederic Bartmon, Assistant District Attorney Anne Yereniuk and Assistant District Attorney Stephanie Jimenez, who joined the NWDA in November, 2021. Other staff with the CAU are Unit Coordinator and Forensic Interviewer Kellie Beaulieu, Paralegal Jamie Foster, Family Service Advocates Linda Rogers, Sonia Serrazina, Kathy Bengtson and Karen Hernandez, Forensic Interviewer Suzanne Koch, and Unit Administrator Heather Hubbard.



Family Service Advocate Karen Hernandez



**New Child Abuse Unit Assistant District
Attorney Stephanie Jimenez**



Child Abuse Unit Coordinator Kellie Beaulieu addresses camp counselors in Northampton.

The Child Abuse Unit in 2021:

- Opened **337** cases involving **424** children;
- Held forensic interviews with **132** children coordinated by a multidisciplinary team;
- Filed criminal charges against **167** defendants, **24** in Superior Court;
- Resolved **169** child abuse cases.



DA Sullivan with CAC staff at the *Protecting Our Children* conference in October.



Camp Counselors for the Northampton Recreation Department hear about child safety matters from Kellie Beaulieu.

Notable Case Resolutions in 2021

Commonwealth v. Leonid Khotin (Franklin Superior Court) – This was a case in which all of the pieces of the multidisciplinary approach to child abuse investigations came together to result in a successful prosecution. The case was initiated by the brave and persuasive disclosures made by the children abused by the defendant. Forensic interviews of the children, thorough detective work and detailed crime lab analysis followed. As a result, the defendant was convicted of rape of a child and multiple other counts. He received a 7-8 year prison sentence, followed by five years of probation. This case was prosecuted by Deputy Chief of the CAU, Assistant District Attorney Frederic Bartmon, with assistance from Family Service Advocate Linda Rogers who significantly aided the children and their mother through the investigation and prosecution of this case.

Commonwealth v. Daniel Labbe (Franklin Superior Court) – The investigation began when Microsoft reported the uploading of apparent child sexual abuse material using

an IP address registered to the defendant's home address in Orange, Massachusetts. After a search warrant was executed at the defendant's residence, a forensic examiner from the State Police Cyber Crimes Unit located child sexual abuse material on the defendant's laptop. At the time of the offense, the defendant was on probation for sexual abuse offenses committed in another jurisdiction. The defendant was convicted of possession of child pornography and was sentenced to 2 ½ years in jail. This case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Anne Yereniuk.

Commonwealth v. Cameron Bergeron (Hampshire Superior Court) – The defendant was convicted of sexually assaulting a child under 5, on one occasion between 2003 and 2005, when the defendant was between the ages of 14 and 16. Although the child victim did not disclose the abuse until 2017, they hoped the defendant would be held accountable for his crimes.

Because the defendant was an adult at the time of disclosure, the case required a lengthy court process involving an initial charge in Juvenile Court and a transfer hearing allowing the Commonwealth to proceed against the defendant in adult court. After the defendant pleaded guilty to rape of a child and indecent assault and battery on a child under 14, he was sentenced to five years of probation and required to complete sex offender counseling and registration. This case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorneys Lori Odierna and Bruce Patryn, with the assistance of Family Service Advocate Kathleen Bengtson, who worked closely with the now adult victim.

APPELLATE UNIT

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. The prosecutor's office responds by defending the conviction and the process that earned it. This is the work that falls to the Appellate Unit. In handling appeals, appellate Assistant District Attorneys confer with the prosecutors who conducted the trial; review the arguments contained in the defendant's brief; research the various legal issues 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 Assistant District Attorneys through legal updates and advice.

The NWDA Appellate Unit is the most experienced appeals unit in the Commonwealth.

Each lawyer has **25** years of experience in appellate prosecution.

After a year of remote arguments conducted over the Zoom video conferencing platform due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Massachusetts appellate courts returned to in-person oral arguments during 2021. The Appellate Unit had four in-person arguments in the Supreme Judicial Court and many more in the Appeals Court.

In addition to their normal appeals caseload, the unit handled a surge in motions for new trials in 2021. In fact, these motions outnumbered traditional appeals by more than two to one. The unit responded to this wave of litigation, often in conjunction with the trial prosecutors who tried the individual cases. Appellate prosecutors also dealt with a near-record influx of medical-parole petitions, in which inmates sought to obtain early release due to their medical conditions. Responding to these petitions often required coordination with staff assigned to review Sexually Dangerous Persons cases because many of the petitioners had underlying convictions for sexual assault.

The Appellate Unit is comprised of Chief and Assistant District Attorney Thomas Townsend, Assistant District Attorneys Cynthia Von Flatern and Bethany Lynch and paralegal Jamie Foster.

Notable Appellate Decisions in 2021

Commonwealth v. Ryan Welch –

The Supreme Judicial Court affirmed the first-degree murder conviction of the defendant for the 2012 stabbing death of Jessica Pripstein in her Easthampton home. In its unanimous decision, the SJC rejected the defendant's contentions that the police improperly elicited statements in the hospital following his suicide attempt and that the trial judge should have excluded text messages between the defendant and the victim.

Commonwealth v. Jason Galvan –

The Appeals Court upheld multiple convictions of child sexual abuse, including two counts of rape of a child. In affirming the convictions,



Appellate ADAs Cynthia Von Flatern, Chief Thomas Townsend, Bethany Lynch stand outside the Hampshire Courthouse.

the Appeals Court held that the Superior Court judge properly allowed the prosecution to present an expert on the delayed disclosure of childhood sexual abuse.

Commonwealth v. Christopher

Hoime – The Appeals Court affirmed the conviction of a defendant who raped an incapacitated woman. In its published decision, the Appeals Court concluded that an expert

I used to say that, as Solicitor General, I made three arguments of every case. First came the one that I planned – as I thought, logical, coherent, complete. Second was the one actually presented – interrupted, incoherent, disjointed, disappointed. The third was the utterly devastating argument that I thought of after going to bed that night.

-- U.S. Supreme Court Justice (and former appellate prosecutor) Robert H. Jackson

toxicologist properly testified to the effects of gamma hydroxybutyric acid, a knockout drug. The Court also held that the prosecutor properly argued the case in her closing argument to the jury.



**Franklin County Victim/Witness Assistance
Unit staff**

VICTIM/WITNESS ASSISTANCE UNIT

Being the victim of a criminal act or witness to a crime can be traumatizing. The Victim/Witness Assistance Unit provides support to make these difficult experiences more bearable. Advocates work with victims, witnesses and survivors to reduce stress by providing information, support and advocacy as cases proceed in the criminal justice system. Working cooperatively with assistant district attorneys provides a teamwork approach that is the best route to successful resolution of cases. The NWDA believes that in order to seek justice we need the full participation of victims and witnesses – and they need support and guidance through that process.

Advocates work to ensure safety for witnesses and victims and help victims have a voice in the process.

In 2021, NWDA victim witness advocates handled **1,709** cases, helping **2,216** victims of crime and **839** witnesses. They also worked with family members of loved ones who were victims of violent crimes, primarily homicide.

The 13 staff members in the unit assist individuals who are either victims of or witnesses to a crime by protecting their rights as mandated by the Massachusetts Victim Bill of Rights, Massachusetts General Laws chapter 258B. Advocates ensure victims and witnesses understand and are supported through the court process, remain informed about upcoming court hearings, receive help in seeking orders from a judge to prohibit abuse or harassment and can access funds available to victims of violent crime.

Services provided by victim/witness advocates are free. They are trained to provide trauma-sensitive support during any criminal proceeding in courtrooms across the Northwestern District.

Unit staff also offer resources and referrals for help from agencies such as the Center for Women and Community, Safe Passage, the New England Learning Center for Women in Transition (NELCWIT), the Drunk Driving Trust Fund program, the Center for Community Resilience after Trauma and the Homicide Bereavement Program.



**Hampshire County Victim/Witness Assistance
Unit staff**

**The Massachusetts Victim Bill of Rights
guarantees victims of crime and witnesses
to crimes the right to:**

- Be informed of court hearings.
- Be present at all court proceedings.
- Meet with a prosecutor before the case is settled.
- Apply for funds to help pay medical expenses through the Victim Compensation Fund.
- A safe waiting area at court.
- Present a victim impact statement to the judge before a sentence is handed down.
- Be notified of an offender's release from incarceration.
- Be heard in the parole process prior to an offender's release.
- Have property returned when no longer needed for the prosecution.
- Request compensation from the court as part of the sentence.
- Remain free from intimidation.

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to present challenges that impacted victims and witnesses as cases faced continuances and postponements which can be quite distressing to victims. A number of court hearings were held remotely which also can

present challenges to people participating in court sessions. Staff in the unit worked diligently to ease frustrations by ensuring victims had the information needed to remain an important part of the process. They also strategized with victims who did not have easy access to technology to ensure their voices were heard as cases made their way through the court system.



**Hampshire County Victim/Witness
Advocate Janice Francis**

Despite the challenges brought on by the pandemic, advocates offered victims services and support in 2021. In addition to making sure they were informed in the court process, advocates also assisted victims with applications for victim compensation and post-conviction notification, accompanied victims to court for any in person hearings, scheduled and attended meetings for victims to meet with the prosecutors on their cases, and assisted victims in drafting and presenting victim impact statements to the court. In cases in which the victims' safety was at risk, such as domestic violence cases, advocates assisted victims with emergency shelter, long-term housing, financial resources, community services and collaborated with local law enforcement to help keep the victim safe and free from intimidation.

- In 2021, advocates worked with **127** victims and family members to make sure they were certified with the **Victim Notification Registry** to be informed of changes in the offender's incarceration status after conviction;
- Advocates helped **54** victims in applying for what is known as 178A certification, a process that entitles them to the offender's criminal record while a case is pending.

Victim/Witness Staff



**Victim/Witness Advocate
Michelle Torto**

In 2021, the Victim/Witness Assistance Unit welcomed three new advocates: Mariana Carbajal, a former intern, Deanna Weech, who joined the team in January and Michelle Torto, an experienced advocate who started in May. They brought a diverse mixture of skills and experiences, joining veteran staff: Director Jacqueline Gaw, Deputy Director Lori Roy, advocates Wendy Adams, Kate Clogston, Kimberly Devine, Janice Francis, Rebekah Nager, Jennifer Reid and administrative assistant Erin O'Brien.

ELDERS AND PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES UNIT



**Elders and Persons with Disabilities Unit
Chief Mary Beth Ogulewicz**

Staff in the Elders and Persons with Disabilities Unit (EPDU) work to keep uniquely vulnerable individuals safe. The unit focuses on prevention of harm to elders and people with disabilities while also working to hold individuals accountable in the unfortunate event of harm by criminal acts. EPDU staff provide education and training to vulnerable populations and local law enforcement in the areas of financial exploitation, physical and sexual abuse and caretaker neglect. They also coordinate outreach to raise awareness about common circumstances surrounding criminal abuse of vulnerable adults and identify and respond quickly to instances of possible abuse.

The EPDU also investigates and prosecutes crimes in which elders and persons with disabilities have been victimized. The unit works with state civil agencies including adult protective services and human resource programs on joint investigations into allegations of abuse or neglect by caretakers or others. Cases are referred to

the unit by the Disabled Persons Protection Commission, adult protective service agencies, local and state law enforcement and private citizens. In 2021, the EPDU investigated, reviewed, or prosecuted 223 cases of abuse against elders and persons with disabilities.

EPDU Staff

The unit saw staffing changes in 2021. EPDU Chief and Assistant District Attorney Anne Yereniuk took a position within the Child Abuse Unit and Mary Beth Ogulewicz, a licensed social worker and longtime prosecutor, joined the NWDA to take over as Unit Chief. The work of the EPDU is ably assisted by Rachel Senecal, Unit Coordinator.



TRIAD Coordinator Rachel Senecal helps community partners distribute sand in Hadley.

Community Collaborations

The EPDU collaborates with professionals from community agencies who work with elders and people with disabilities to form effective partnerships in keeping people safe. In 2021, EPDU staff participated in five in-person or virtual community presentations for seniors and those who work closely with seniors providing information about prevention and

prosecution of crimes against elders. The unit forges strong alliances with community partners including law enforcement, councils on aging, social and protective services, financial institutions and local businesses. The goal of these partnerships is prevention, identification, investigation and prosecution of elder abuse, particularly financial exploitation. Notable 2021 community collaborations include work with Highland Valley Elder Service's Money Management Program Advisory Board, the Hampshire County Sexual Assault Response Team, the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office's Elder Identity Theft Coalition, the Hampshire/Franklin Mental Health and Law Enforcement Collaborative and LifePath.

TRIAD Program: A community policing initiative bringing together law enforcement, seniors and elder care providers, the TRIAD program seeks to prevent crime and educate seniors about how to stay safe. TRIAD works to build community partnerships that better serve seniors. TRIAD is implemented by a Senior and Law Enforcement Together Council, known as the S.A.L.T. Council, whose goals are to reduce criminal activity targeting seniors; help seniors be proactive about preventing victimization; build confidence and improve their quality of life; and provide trauma-informed law enforcement services to seniors.

In 2021, TRIAD groups continued to meet remotely via Zoom or outdoors while meeting social distance regulations. TRIAD efforts are led by District Attorney David Sullivan, Hampshire County Sheriff Patrick Cahillane and Franklin County Sheriff Christopher Donelan. Rachel Senecal serves as the TRIAD Coordinator for the NWDA.

In 2021, TRIAD continued its tried and true prevention initiatives such as free community shredding events, lock box programs that give first responders secure but efficient emergency access to seniors' homes, and the popular sand for seniors distribution program that delivers sand/salt mixture to seniors with mobility issues. Falls are a major concern for seniors, especially when winter brings icy conditions. In 2021, the program delivered about 23,000 pounds of sand.

Rachel Senecal and Deputy Dave Fenton of the Hampshire Sheriff's Office co-authored the article "Respecting Our Elders: NSA's reinvigorated Triad program seeks to prevent financial exploitation and other forms of abuse" for Deputy & Sheriff Magazine distributed by the National Sheriff's Association to every Sheriff's Office in the United States.

- EPDU investigated, reviewed, or prosecuted **223** reports of abuse against elders and persons with disabilities in 2021.
- Delivered **23,000 pounds** of sand to seniors through TRIAD.

CONSUMER PROTECTION UNIT

The Northwestern District Attorney's Consumer Protection Unit works in cooperation with the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office to fight for the rights of consumers. Trained staff help resolve consumer complaints through consumer advocacy and assistance and engage in prevention by providing educational opportunities, resources and referrals to the public. The unit handles complaints through an informal process that involves phone calls and other correspondence in reaching settlements

that are agreeable to both consumers and businesses.



Consumer Protection Unit Chief
Anita Wilson

The Consumer Protection Unit (CPU) has been based in the office since 1973. It is one of 18 programs across the state working in cooperation with the Attorney General's Office and is supported by a grant from the Attorney General. The CPU educates the community about consumer protection laws designed to ensure fair business practices and truthful information in the marketplace. The unit serves every city and town in Hampshire and Franklin counties as well as 17 Worcester county communities. CPU staff are trained to guide residents in the areas of automobile purchase and repairs, home improvement, shopping rights, credit and debt issues, landlord/tenant rights, identity theft, internet shopping and telemarketing scams.

Staff also present education and outreach programs to prepare residents to be informed consumers who can make wise decisions that protect against scams and fraud. Presentations cover topics such as how to recognize and avoid trending scams, financial literacy education, buying a used car, rebuilding credit, and smart shopping. In recent years, the unit developed the

interactive Senior Savvy Showdown and financial literacy games for high school students and adults, with the aim to educate while having fun.

CPU staff undergo regular training to keep up with the latest trends in fraud in an ongoing quest to have informed consumers. The CPU is a member of the Money Management Advisory Boards at LifePath and Highland Valley Elder Services, which assist residents who need assistance with bill paying, as well as the Consumer Federation of America, an association of non-profit consumer organizations working to advance the consumer interest through research, advocacy, and education

In 2021, the Consumer Protection Unit handled **1,212** calls, opened **394** cases and recovered for consumers **\$115,517**.

Consumer Protection Highlights



Janice Garrett

In 2021, after 20 years leading the unit, Consumer Protection Unit Director Janice Garrett retired. Anita Wilson, who had served as case coordinator for four years, was named its new director, with plans in the year ahead to hire a new case coordinator.

The CPU offered consumer advocacy and assistance services during the



EPDU Coordinator Rachel Senecal and Consumer Protection Chief Anita Wilson staff a resource table at a senior picnic in Hadley.

pandemic by shifting many programs to online presentations and joining outdoor senior picnics to share consumer information, also presenting several Senior Savvy Showdown games in person following COVID-19 guidelines. NWDA Consumer Tip videos aired on community access television stations throughout the district and on a monthly basis, the unit sent printed consumer tips about scams to senior centers and elder services organizations.

These tips are used in newsletters, social media, and printed out to display on bulletin boards. The unit also created and delivered one thousand consumer calendars to elders and shared consumer news and information on the NWDA website and social media platforms

COMMUNICATION AND OUTREACH UNIT



NWDA employees Cassie Jerome, Michelle Richotte and Rachel Senecal staff a resource table at a safety fair in Sunderland in October.

Transparency, outreach and education are key elements in creating a community knowledgeable about the criminal justice system. The mission of the communication and outreach unit is to bolster connections between the District Attorney's office and the people living and working within the Northwestern District; collaborate with community groups working hard to keep youth and families healthy and safe; and respond to the changing needs of our communities. In 2020, for example, in response to a demonstrated community need, the office worked with the Northampton Recovery Center, the statewide Support After Death by Overdose non-profit and Hampshire HOPE to launch a peer support group for people impacted by substance-related deaths, a group that continued through 2021. By working in partnership with community organizations the NWDA aims to keep prevention and compassion at the heart of the work undertaken by the office. The unit proactively communicates with the community via the Citizens Advisory Board, the NWDA website, as well as community outreach events and community listservs.

Importantly, NWDA staff respond to inquiries from local and national media outlets and initiate press releases to educate the public about both the prevention initiatives and the prosecutorial efforts of the office.



DA Sullivan and Monica Moran, advisor to the Ware High School Domestic Violence Task Force at a DV awareness event.

The unit experienced staffing changes and reorganization in 2021. After more than a decade with the office, Director of Communications Mary Carey retired in April. Laurie Loisel, who joined the NWDA office as Director of Community Outreach and Education in 2015, assumed a restructured position of Director of Communication and Outreach. Through the NWDA outreach hub created in 2021, staffers from all units participated in community-based prevention initiatives such as National Night Out, community

fairs, block parties and public safety events in order to forge stronger connections and gain greater understanding between the NWDA and the communities it serves.



DA Sullivan and Mary Carey at Mary's Zoom retirement party in April 2021.

COMMUNITY PROSECUTION AND EQUITY INITIATIVES

At its core, community prosecution requires three key ingredients: community involvement, partnerships, and an understanding of community concerns. These elements improve public safety, boost confidence in the justice system, and make communities stronger and safer by helping the NWDA with a crime-reduction agenda that emphasizes safety and fairness and brings communities to the table when seeking just solutions. To fully carry out the mission of delivering justice and keeping communities safe, NWDA prosecutors and staff take on responsibilities beyond traditional case prosecution.

Prosecutorial Accountability

Justice requires that prosecutors evaluate practices and examine policies to ensure they are prosecuting equitably and consistently with our community values. Director of Community Prosecution Projects and Assistant District Attorney Becky Michaels oversees these initiatives:

Equity in Prosecution Committee: Senior management, assistant district attorneys, and victim witness assistance director work together to examine arraignments, bail, potential declination of certain charges, and other areas in which prosecutors exercise discretion, proposing policies to ensure equity and consistency in all our courts.

Conviction Integrity Committee: Senior ADAs from the trial and appellate units and the Honorable Bertha Josephson (retired) review claims of wrongful conviction based on claims of innocence or procedural error. The committee reports directly to District Attorney Sullivan. One committee member serves on the statewide Massachusetts Conviction Integrity Working Group, created in 2018 by the Massachusetts Bar Association.

Brady Committee: Senior ADAs from the trial and appellate units, as well as the District Attorney, ensure that the NWDA is complying with its discovery obligations to provide all evidence in its possession under *Brady v. Maryland*, 373 U.S. 83, 87 (1963). One member of the committee participates in the statewide *Brady* working group.

Professional Responsibility Committee: Experienced ADAs and other staff are on call to respond quickly to ethical issues that arise at any time during the investigation and prosecution of cases. They also assist with related training within the office.

Prosecutorial Performance Indicators: This data collection project is guided by a national group of academics and attorneys who recommend that prosecutors' offices collect and analyze data in particular categories to guide their work and to make the data available to the public. In 2021, the NWDA hired a data analyst who is gathering and analyzing data in categories including prosecutor caseload; sentencing; bail and pretrial detention; and victim services. Once compiled, the results will be shared on the NWDA website.

Alternatives to Prosecution

Restorative Justice: The NWDA partners with six Hampshire County police departments and the community-based nonprofit Communities for Restorative Justice, known as C4RJ, to move cases from the court system and into restorative justice. The principles of restorative justice recognize that criminal behavior harms both individuals and the community as a whole and that those who commit crimes have an obligation to understand the harm caused, accept responsibility for their actions, and actively participate in making amends.

The NWDA refers cases to C4RJ on both a pre- and post-arraignment basis. Trained volunteers from throughout Hampshire County lead circles that give victims an opportunity to be heard and community members a forum to uphold the values of the community and to support people who have been victimized. They also give people who have committed crimes an opportunity to make amends. Expansion of this restorative justice model into Franklin County is a future goal.

In addition, ADAs often include components of restorative justice – restitution, letters of apology, community service or other

restorative practices – where appropriate in dispositions.

District Attorney Sullivan sits on the statewide Restorative Justice Advisory Committee, composed of legislators, academics, and experts in the field of restorative justice. The Legislature created the committee to recommend policy and advocate for best practices in restorative justice throughout the Commonwealth.



Maria Sotolongo, Director, Drug Diversion and Treatment Program

Drug Diversion and Treatment Program:

The DDTP provides immediate access to substance misuse treatment for people whose substance use is the predominant cause of their criminal involvement. Operating out of the four district courts in the Northwestern District, the pre- and post-arraignment program is for individuals charged with non-violent crimes whose criminal histories are the result of ongoing substance use disorders. DDTP Director Maria Sotolongo oversees the program, working with Intake Coordinator Tara Wilson.

Through the program, eligible candidates have an opportunity to engage in comprehensive substance use disorder treatment and recovery support. This alternative to prosecution helps improve overall public safety by reducing substance use and criminal recidivism.

At the heart of the program are strong partnerships developed with treatment providers: Clinical Support Options; the Center for Human Development; the Massachusetts Department of Public Health; local law enforcement; Trial Court Department staff in each of our district courts; recovery support centers; and the two Western Massachusetts regional drug task forces/coalitions.

Adult Diversion Program: This initiative offers people charged with certain crimes the opportunity to perform community service and enroll in an on-line educational course relevant to the crime charged. Once those obligations are met successfully, the case is then dismissed.

Equity Initiatives

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee: The DEI committee recommends initiatives to the District Attorney that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion. To date, it has updated the NWDA Harassment and Discrimination Policy; worked with the District Attorney to create the IMPACT (Impacting People and Communities Together) Program to encourage staff to volunteer in the communities around the district; and identified and addressed a resource gap for Spanish-speaking victims.

Civil Rights Review Team: The protection of citizens' civil rights is a core mission for the NWDA. District Attorney 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. Chaired by Deputy District Attorney Jennifer Suhl, the team includes Juvenile Diversion Specialist Naomi Bledsoe, Director of Communication and Outreach Laurie Loisel, Juvenile Justice Unit Chief Elizabeth Mulcahy, District Court Chief Michael Russo, and Family Service Advocate/Forensic Interviewer Sonia Serrazina. The team ensures the NWDA responds promptly and effectively to civil



Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee

rights incidents, complaints, referrals, and community inquiries. In 2021, the team reviewed and assisted police departments in several hate crimes investigations and aided in the prosecution of cases where hate crimes were charged.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

These are initiatives in which community-based organizations or coalitions work closely with staff from the NWDA to promote prevention. In some of these partnerships, the initiative was incubated within the NWDA, then moved into a separate outside organization working with the NWDA.

Child Fatality Review Team

The Northwestern District Attorney's Child Fatality Review Team evaluates infant and child fatalities in the district to determine if they could have been prevented. The goal is to review cases with an eye toward changing policies and practices and educating the public in efforts to prevent child deaths.



Child Fatality Review Teams are mandated by state law and it falls to each local District Attorney's office to assemble a multi-disciplinary group. The NWDA team includes prosecutors, municipal police officers, state troopers, health care providers, emergency services workers and staff from the Department of Children and Families and the Department of Public Health. The team works in a proactive, non-punitive way through information sharing and candid discussions.

In the summer of 2021, the team launched a four-part child safety campaign focused on raising awareness about some of the most significant risks posed to children and

babies. The "Keeping infants and children safe must be our top priority" campaign targets avoidable risks, offering tips for safer practices around water, infant sleeping, open windows, and children in hot cars. These PSAs can be viewed and printed out from the NWDA website.



Children's Advocacy Centers

The NWDA, particularly its Child Abuse Unit, works collaboratively with the Children's Advocacy Centers of Hampshire County and of Franklin County and the North Quabbin Region to serve the people of the Northwestern District.

In 2021, 260 children received support services from the two Children's Advocacy Centers in the Northwestern District. These centers are independent, non-profit organizations devoted to providing a child-friendly, safe place where law enforcement, NWDA staff, the Department of Children and Families and medical personnel can work together to conduct (and observe) forensic interviews with children; provide medical services and mental health referrals; and provide support to children who are victims of crimes and their non-offending family members. Both CACs have national accreditation by the National Children's Alliance.



DA Sullivan, CAC clinician Samantha Staelens, conference presenter Cory Jewell Jensen, CAC Director Irene Woods and CAC staff Joanne Leonard at *Protecting Our Children*, a conference hosted in October by the CAC of Franklin County/North Quabbin.



DA Sullivan, CAC Director Irene Woods and Bill Benson

-Photo courtesy of Greenfield Recorder

The Children's Advocacy Center of Franklin County and the North Quabbin Region, based in Greenfield, serves Franklin County and the North Quabbin Region in collaboration with the NWDA and Baystate Health. 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. In February 2016, the Children's Advocacy Center of Franklin County and North Quabbin Region officially opened its doors, led by Executive Director Irene Woods, who continues in that role to advocate for the area's children.

The Children's Advocacy Center of Hampshire County, based in Northampton, serves the people and communities in Hampshire County. In collaboration with the NWDA 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. Kara McElhone is the director of the Children's Advocacy Center of Hampshire County.

Northwestern Fire Intervention Response, Education and Safety Partnership (NoFIRES)

NoFIRES, a non-profit organization offering intervention and education to youth who have misused fire, provides fire safety education to 51 communities in Hampshire and Franklin counties, North Quabbin and Holyoke. The core mission is to protect youth, their families, and their communities from the dangerous, and sometimes fatal, act of setting fires. A collaboration of fire, law enforcement, mental health providers and social service agencies, NoFIRES provides a coordinated and appropriate response to youth under 18 who set fires or engage in fire-related behavior. NoFIRES – one of the few programs available for youth who have engaged in fire-related behavior – has worked with nearly 400 families and become a model program. Efforts are underway to make fire safety education accessible statewide. NoFIRES is led by Executive Director Loren Davine, M.Ed., CAGS. NWDA Director of Operations Martha Murphy Kane serves as president of the NoFIRES Board of Directors.



NoFires Executive Director Loren Davine

Photos on this page courtesy of Public Safety Multimedia



Presenters and organizers outside at the NoFIRES conference room in November.



NWDA's Martha Murphy Kane, State Rep. Daniel Carey, NoFires Director Loren Davine



Law enforcement and fire professionals at the 2021 NoFIREs conference held in Easthampton.

The 9th annual NoFIREs Arson Investigation and Prosecution Conference held Nov. 9 and 10, 2021 at The Boylston Rooms in Easthampton focused on public safety's response to clandestine drug and explosives labs. More than 135 prosecutors, police officers, firefighters, and investigators from around New England attended the conference, professional development supported by the Massachusetts Property Insurance Underwriting Association, the Northwestern District Attorney's Office, the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services, and the Massachusetts State Police. NoFIREs offers high quality, low-cost professional development in collaboration with their community partners.

Opioid Prevention

NWDA staff at all levels continue to work closely with **Hampshire HOPE and the Opioid Task Force of Franklin County & the North Quabbin Region**, regional opioid prevention coalitions engaged in the fight to prevent overdose deaths and end the opioid epidemic.

District Attorney 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 NWDA is a key player in these efforts.

The Opioid Task Force of Franklin County & the North Quabbin Region, 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 works with co-chairs District Attorney Sullivan, Franklin Register of Probate John Merrigan and Franklin County Sheriff Christopher Donelan.

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.

District Attorney Sullivan is a co-chair of Hampshire HOPE and has committed significant resources for its success. Led by 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.

National Prescription Drug Take Back Day



Joviana Rosario, DA Sullivan, Maria Sotolongo at Northampton's National Prescription Drug Take Back Day in April.

The NWDA works with local and federal partners to keep the community and environment safe by preventing the diversion and misuse of prescription drugs. The office teams up with sheriff's departments and other law enforcement partners to coordinate the twice-annual Drug Enforcement Agency's National Prescription Take Back Day to raise awareness about safe drug storage and reduce the amount of prescription drugs in medicine cabinets. Additionally, the NWDA continues to partner with local police departments to provide permanent, safe and convenient kiosks for disposal of medications available to community members year-round.

In 2021, the NWDA coordinated the 20th Drug Take Back Day April 24, 2021, when 16 participating communities collected and disposed of 2,388 pounds of unwanted drugs and the 21st Drug Take Back Day in 14 cities and towns on Oct. 23, 2021, collecting 1,640 pounds of unwanted drugs from Hampshire and Franklin counties. Since the first one in 2011, between the take back days and kiosks, the program has disposed of more than 63,500 pounds of unwanted drugs. NWDA Drug Diversion and Treatment Program Director Maria Sotolongo coordinates the events with help from Rachel Senecal of the Elders and Persons with Disabilities Unit and other NWDA staff members.

Veterans

Veterans Justice Partnership: Founded in 2011 by District Attorney Sullivan and other community leaders, this partnership aims to help court-involved and incarcerated veterans. The program 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. These teams work together to help veterans before and after case disposition. A Department of Mental Health initiative, Mission Direct Vet, is working collaboratively with the partnership to help veterans get the necessary mental health services to address and prevent criminal conduct. For incarcerated veterans, the partnership benefits from the direct involvement of Sheriffs Patrick Cahillane (Hampshire), Christopher Donelan (Franklin), and Nicholas Cocchi (Hampden) to help with both treatment and re-entry options. The VA Veterans Outreach and Soldier On partners have been the driving forces in identifying and screening court-involved veterans in order to address and reduce their criminal behavior and improve the quality of their lives.

The NWDA continues to update and circulate the Veterans Blue Book to veterans and the organizations that help them. This is a comprehensive guide to resources and services specifically for veterans and it has been noted as one of the best veteran resource books in the United States.

Western Massachusetts Veterans

Treatment Court: Established in 2015, this court works specifically with veterans, responding to their needs and helping them get services. The court was developed out of the belief that those who were willing to give up their lives for their country deserve special attention when they fall on hard times. District Court Unit Chief and Assistant District Attorney Michael Russo is the Coordinator for the NWDA's participation in the treatment court, which is located at Holyoke District Court, serving veterans from Hampshire, Franklin and Hampden counties. The NWDA plays an integral role in the vision and operation of this court. The court currently works with 17 veterans from all branches of the United States Armed Forces, of which 12 are from communities within the Northwestern District. 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 is the presiding justice of the court, leading a team that 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. According to 2021 data from the court, 84 percent of the program's graduates have had no new criminal convictions.

NWDA Internship Program

In 2021, NWDA placed five interns from area institutions of higher education within four units. The NWDA offers summer and academic year internships to college and law school students in the following areas: legal, administrative, outreach, victim witness services and consumer protection. College internships provide students with valuable insight into the workings of the criminal justice system. Law students assist prosecutors 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 and victims and witnesses. In the Consumer Protection Unit, interns field consumer calls, mediate cases between businesses and consumers and work on special projects. Notably, in 2021, the NWDA hired a new ADA and victim witness advocate who had previously completed internships at the office.

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Behavioral Health Network Inc.
Belchertown Overcoming Addiction Together
Belchertown Understanding Obstacles in Youth
Big Brothers, Big Sisters of Hampshire and Franklin counties
Center for Human Development
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
Children's Trust
Collaborative for Educational Services
Communities that Care Coalition
Community Action
Community Legal Aid
Communities for Restorative Justice
Council of Social Agencies of Hampshire County

Department of Children and Families
 Department of Public Health
 Department of Transitional Assistance
 Dial Self
 Drug Enforcement Agency
 Easthampton Heathy 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
 HEALing Communities
 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
 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
 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
 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 Office-WMass
 United States Marshall Services

SCHOOL PARTNERS

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

MASSACHUSETTS STATE POLICE DETECTIVE UNIT NORTHWESTERN DISTRICT ANTI-CRIME TASK FORCE

Across the Commonwealth, homicides, serious motor vehicle crashes, major crimes and suspicious or unattended deaths are investigated by State Police Detectives working out of units attached to each District Attorney's Office. Directed by Captain Jeffrey Cahill, 13 State Police detectives attached to the NWDA work collaboratively with local police departments to investigate these serious cases. Detectives also work with the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner and the State Police Crime Scene Services and Collision Analysis and Reconstruction sections. State Police assist local police departments and federal authorities with complex or multi-jurisdictional investigations and travel to other states to return prisoners or fugitives to Massachusetts to face criminal charges. In December of 2021, seven months of investigation and surveillance by more than a dozen law enforcement organizations led to the take-down of an alleged cocaine trafficking syndicate believed to have distributed between 100 and 200 grams of cocaine a day through Franklin and Hampshire counties and the North Quabbin region. The investigation led to the arrest of more than a dozen people from Greenfield, Deerfield, Montague, Ludlow, Charlemont and West Springfield in connection with the criminal enterprise.

In 2021, the Anti-Crime Task Force conducted **65** investigations resulting in multiple indictments throughout the year.

That investigation was the result of the dogged work of the **Northwestern District Anti-Crime Task Force**. State Police Lieutenant Steven Hean is commander of the task force, working with NWDA Chief Trial Counsel Jeremy Bucci to lead officers from state and local police departments as well as deputies with the Hampshire and Franklin County Sheriff's offices. Members of the task force investigate illegal narcotics offenses, firearms offenses, and other organized criminal activities. Their work is particularly effective for cases that span many towns and cities by harnessing and coordinating the efforts of multiple law enforcement agencies.

Since its inception in 2013, the Anti-Crime Task Force has investigated cases of major drug trafficking, homicide, human trafficking, armed robbery, illegal weapons and theft rings, leading to indictments 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.

In 2021, State Police detectives handled 628 cases. Of those, 366 were investigations into unattended deaths in the Northwestern District. They returned 16 fugitives to Massachusetts. Detectives also investigated:

- 29 cases of child physical abuse;
- 11 cases involving images of child sexual abuse and exploitation;
- 10 child sexual assault cases;
- 10 adult sexual assault cases;
- 11 fatal motor vehicle crashes;
- 9 armed robberies;
- 1 homicide.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES



IT Director Nathan Foote and IT specialist Edward Drummond

The work of the information technologies staff is central to everything the NWDA does. The department procures, installs, develops, supports and maintains information technology hardware and software for the entire office. It ensures the right technology is available to effectively present information in courtrooms and the community. Director Nathan Foote and IT Systems Support Engineer Edward Drummond were on call 24/7 through the pandemic, keeping ADAs and other staff working at locations that included home offices, courthouses, NWDA offices or temporary quarters as needed. IT staff adapt to changing circumstances to keep staff working effectively no matter what the future holds.



IT Director Nathan Foote on the job in the large conference room in the Northampton offices of the NWDA.

FISCAL DEPARTMENT

Chief Financial Officer Donna Dudkiewicz works with fiscal assistants Higy Chan and Jessica Diemand to oversee and manage the NWDA budget which includes all grants awarded to the office from federal and state sources. The unit is responsible for the sound management and allocation of state and federal funds received by the office, ensuring they are expended in a fiscally responsible manner. In addition, the unit coordinates the tracking of forfeiture funds recovered through successful prosecution of narcotics cases with Chief Trial Counsel Jeremy Bucci. The unit also plays an integral role in the writing and administration of state and federal grants.

**FY21 Total Appropriation Funding
\$8,795,578**

**FY21 Total Grant Funding
\$727,231**

**FY21 Grand Total
\$9,522,809**

**Appropriation Funding Percentage
92%**

**Grant Funding Percentage
8%**



Fiscal assistant Higgy Chan and DA Sullivan



Fiscal assistant Jessica Diemand



DA Sullivan consults with Director of Operations Martha Murphy Kane at a staff training at Union Station.

STAFF AND ORGANIZATION

Senior Management Team

David E. Sullivan, District Attorney
Jennifer Handel Suhl, Deputy District Attorney
Steven E. Gagne, First Assistant District Attorney
Martha Murphy Kane, Director of Operations
Donna M. Dudkiewicz, Chief Financial Officer

Superior Court Unit

First Assistant District Attorney Steven E. Gagne
Deputy District Attorney Jennifer Handel Suhl
ADA Jeremy Bucci, Chief Trial Counsel
ADA Frederic Bartmon
ADA Stephanie Jimenez
ADA Lori Odierna
ADA Mary Beth Ogulewicz
ADA Jayme Parent*
ADA Linda Pisano*
ADA Sandra Staub
ADA Matthew Thomas
ADA Joseph Webber
ADA Anne Yereniuk
Ann Metzger, Senior Case Administrator
Mary-Elizabeth Connly, Superior Court Administrator
Cassandra Jerome, Paralegal, Office Supervisor

District Court Unit

ADA Michael Russo, Chief
ADA Andrew Covington, Northampton Attorney in Charge (AIC)
ADA Danielle Cruz, Orange AIC
ADA Matthew Russo, Belchertown AIC
ADA Ryan Scott, Greenfield AIC
ADA Nicholas Atallah
ADA Jillian Handy
ADA Aidan Lanciani
ADA Becky Michaels
ADA Jillian Parent
ADA Alexa Pascucci
ADA Veronice Santana
ADA Emaan Syed*
ADA Jeremy Simonich*

Child Abuse Unit

ADA Linda Pisano, Chief*
ADA Lori Odierna, Chief
ADA Frederic Bartmon, Deputy Chief
ADA Stephanie Jimenez
ADA Deirdre Kelleher Grass*
ADA Anne Yereniuk
Kellie Beaulieu, Unit Coordinator/
Advocate/Forensic Interviewer
Kathy Bengtson, Family Service Advocate
Jamie Foster, Paralegal
Karen Hernandez, Family Service Advocate
Heather Hubbard, Unit Administrator
Suzanne Koch, Forensic Interviewer
Linda Rogers, Family Service Advocate
Sonia Serrazina, Forensic
Interviewer/Advocate

Elders & People with Disabilities Unit

ADA Anne Yereniuk, Chief*
ADA Mary Beth Ogulewicz, 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*
Zoraida Agudelo, Director of Domestic and
Sexual Violence Projects
Katie Rosewarne, High Risk Team Coordinator
Richard Aucoin, AWARE/DVIP Coordinator*
Christine Torres, AWARE/DVIP Coordinator
Alyssa Devlin, Legal Assistant
Siobhan Powers, Administrative Assistant

Appellate Unit

ADA Thomas Townsend, Chief
ADA Bethany Lynch
ADA Cynthia Von Flatern
Jamie Foster, Paralegal

Juvenile Justice Unit

ADA Elizabeth Mulcahy, Chief
ADA Bruce Patryn
ADA Mary Beth Ogulewicz
ADA Elizabeth Swihart*
Naomi Bledsoe, Diversion Specialist

Victim/Witness Assistance Unit

Jacqueline Gaw, Director
Lori Roy, Deputy Director
Wendy Adams, Advocate
Mariana Carbajal, Advocate
Kate Clogston, Advocate
Kimberly Devine, Advocate
Janice Francis, Advocate
Rebekah Nager, Advocate
Jennifer Reid, Advocate
Michelle Torto, Advocate
Deanna Weech, Advocate
Erin O'Brien, Administrative Assistant

Consumer Protection Unit

Janice Garrett, Director*
Anita Wilson, Director
Brianna Fuller, Case Specialist*

Communication and Outreach

Mary Carey, Director*
Laurie Loisel, Director

Community Prosecution Projects

ADA Becky Michaels, Director
Maria Sotolongo, Director of Drug
Diversion & Treatment Program
Tara Wilson, Diversion Specialist
Erin Yarrows, Data Analyst

Information Technologies Department

Nathan Foote, Director
Edward Drummond, Systems Support Engineer

State Police Detective Unit

Captain Jeffrey Cahill, Unit Commander
Sergeant Corey Mackey, Executive Officer
Lieutenant Christopher Baran,
Anti-Crime Task Force*
Lieutenant Steven Hean, Anti-Crime Task Force
Sergeant Gary Darling
9 State Police Troopers

Other Administrative Staff

Ashley Benoit, District Court Administrator*
Brianna Fuller, District Court Administrator
Michaela Grady, District Court Administrator*
Debra Jacques, District Court Administrator
Cameron Jerome, District Court Administrator
Timothy Kwarcinski, District Court
Administrator
Kelley Mason, Paralegal, DAMION
Administrator
Lauren O'Roark, District Court Administrator
Michelle Richotte, Executive Assistant
Joviana Rosario, Administrative Assistant
Susan Snyder, Executive Assistant
Jean Zimmerman, Administrative Assistant

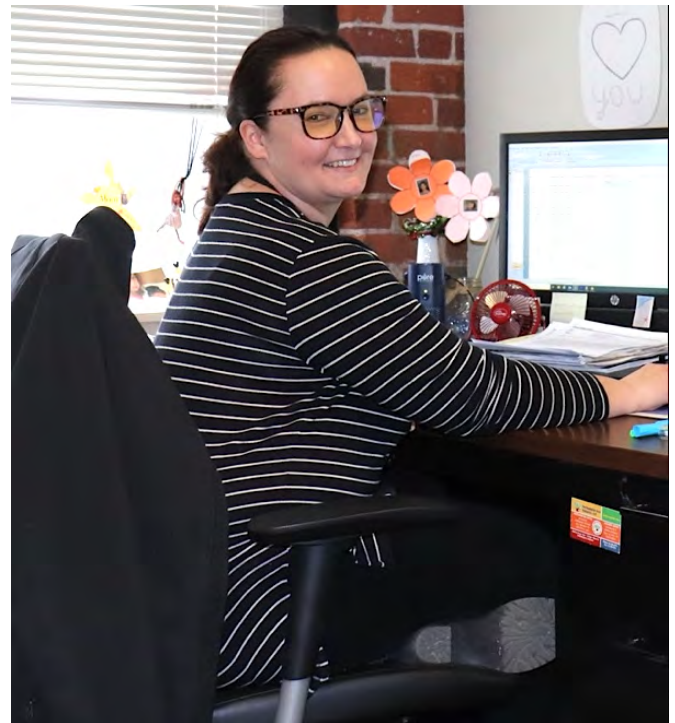
Fiscal Unit

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

*Formerly held position



**Senior Case Administrator for the Superior Court Unit
Ann Metzger**



**Paralegal and DAMION database administrator
Kelley Mason**



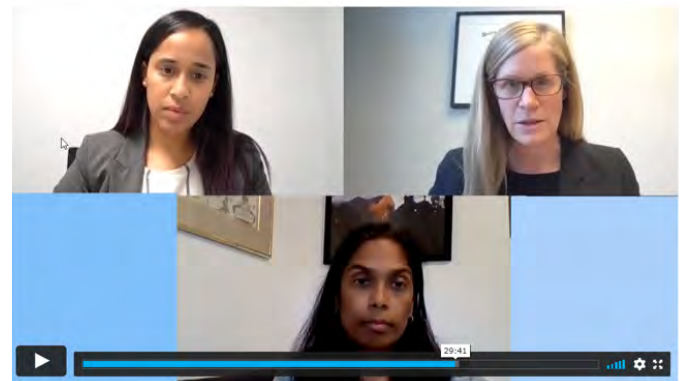
ADA Andrew Covington takes his oath during his promotion to the rank of major in the US Army Reserves at a ceremony at Westover Air Base in July.



Kelley Mason, Michelle Richotte and Jessica Diemand gather up presents donated by NWDA staff to give to children in need.



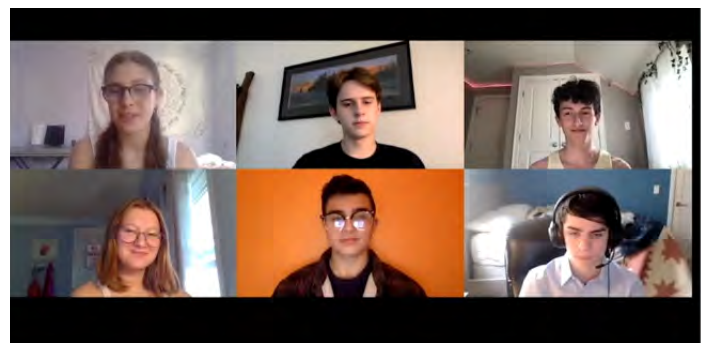
Executive Assistant Michelle Richotte



The 2021 local Law Day presentation on Rule of Law and the Role of Protests was held virtually, featuring Western New England School of Law Dean Sudha Setty in a conversation with ADAs Veronica Santana and Becky Michaels, shown above, as well as Pioneer Valley Performing Arts Charter Public School students performing a skit they wrote on the topic, shown below.



Executive Assistant Susan Snyder





NWDA staff Michaela Grady and Deputy DA Jennifer Suhl at a cultural fair at the Franklin County courthouse.



The National Prescription Drug Take Back Day crew at Smith Vocational and Agricultural High School in April.



The Northampton Drug Court team at a drug court graduation in June, 2021.



DA Sullivan joins others for a trivia bee event at the Center for New Americans annual meeting.



DA Sullivan and ADA Veronice Santana at the National Night Out in Ware in August.



DA Sullivan and Jean Zimmerman at Easthampton's National Prescription Drug Take Back day in April.



Above, Director of Communication and Outreach Laurie Loisel and ADA Mary Beth Ogulewicz at an overdose awareness event in Northampton; below, Drug Diversion and Treatment Program Director Maria Sotolongo and Naomi Bledsoe, Juvenile Diversion Specialist, staff the information table.



NWDA staff take part in the Hot Chocolate Run to benefit Safe Passage.



ADAs Alexa Pascucci, Matthew Russo and Mary Beth Ogulewicz at the UMass Community Breakfast in September.



NWDA staff and community partners at a prescription drug collection event.



ADA Veronica Santana with Parker, a UMass police dog at the National Night Out in Ware in August.



DA Sullivan, U.S. Rep. Jim McGovern and State Rep. Natalie Blais at Monte's March, held annually to raise funds for the Food Bank of Western Mass.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Fax: (413) 773-3278

ORANGE DISTRICT COURT OFFICE

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Orange, MA 01364
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Fax: (978) 544-5204

Northwestern District Attorney's Website:
NorthwesternDA.org



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.