

Monroe County  
District Attorney  
Sandra Doorley

April 11, 2025



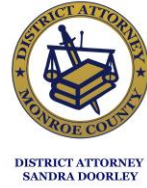
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District Attorney's Office

Weekly Newsletter



Welcome to the weekly newsletter from Monroe County District Attorney Sandra Doorley.

Richie Johnson – A Sexual Predator

Last week, 40-year-old Richie Johnson was sentenced to 13 and a half years in the New York State Department of Corrections plus 20 years of post-release supervision after he pled guilty to Criminal Sexual Act in the 1<sup>st</sup> Degree, a class B felony. This case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Jessica Wagner, of the Special Victims Unit.

On September 11, 2023, the defendant committed one of the most violent sexual assaults we have seen in the District Attorney's Office. Richie Johnson sexually assaulted this victim inside his car that night, and continued to assault the woman outside his car. I will not go into the brutal details of the rest of this violent sexual attack.



I am relieved that this survivor made it out of this situation alive and that she had the courage to work with the Rochester Police Department to identify this assailant. By reporting this sexual assault, Richie Johnson is no longer a dangerously threat to our community.

Although, I do not believe 13 and a half years of incarceration is sufficient punishment for this monster, this is what we could achieve given the evidence available. Nonetheless, we have strong reasons to believe that this was not an isolated incident.

This individual is a confirmed predator. If you have information about a sexual assault and recognize him or his vehicle, please call us immediately. He drove a



distinctive white Audi with curtains in the windows. Although he has been sentenced to the New York State Department of Corrections, the Rochester Police Department welcomes any new information.

## Homicide Update

To Date 2025:

City of Rochester Total: 7

Monroe County Total: 9

*If you have any tips about other victims, please reach out. Reach out to the Rochester Police Department, reach out to my office, or just call 911. If you are a survivor of sexual assault, remember that this is not your fault. You should never feel ashamed to report your abuse.*

*We stand ready to support you. We believe you, and we are committed to doing everything in our power to support you and find justice.*

*Sandra*

## Highlights from the MCDA's Office

A Monroe County jury convicted 49-year-old **Walter Balkum Jr.** of Manslaughter in the 1<sup>st</sup> Degree and Aggravated Criminal Contempt for killing Melikah Bruner on August 27, 2024. He was also convicted by the same jury of two counts of Assault in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree. On June 2, 2024, Rochester Police Officers responded to a call for service at the home of Melikah Bruner. Upon their arrival, officers spoke to Melikah and her son, both of whom had been assaulted with a knife by the victim's boyfriend, Walter Balkum, Jr. The defendant was arrested and charged with Assault in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, one count for Melikah Bruner and one count for her adult son. He was released on electronic monitoring and orders of protection were issued. On August 22, 2024, the court released him to pre-trial services without electronic monitoring. On the night of August 27, 2024, Melikah Bruner's 9-year-old daughter called 911 from their home on Hazelwood Terrace to report that her mother was being attacked by the defendant. When Rochester Police Officers arrived at the residence, they found 43-year-old Melikah Bruner deceased. After a thorough investigation, Rochester Police Officers determined that Walter Balkum, Jr. had beaten Melikah repeatedly, causing her death in front of her child. He was subsequently arrested for the homicide and indicted on Manslaughter in the 1<sup>st</sup> Degree and Aggravated Criminal Contempt. The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Kaylee Rizzari, of the Special Victims Unit. Walter Balkum, Jr. will be sentenced on May 21, 2025, in front of New York State Supreme Court Justice Renzi.

47-year-old **Terry Mack** was convicted by a jury of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree and Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 4<sup>th</sup> Degree. On December 13, 2023, the defendant was found to be in possession of an illegal double action revolver and a shotgun. This case was investigated by the Rochester Police Department and prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Emily Chisholm, of the Non-Fatal Shooting Taskforce. Terry Mack will be sentenced on May 14, 2025, in front of Monroe County Court Judge Dollinger.

22-year-old **Michael Scott, Jr.** pled guilty to Manslaughter in the 1st Degree for the fatal shooting of Demetrius Rucker. On August 4, 2023, Rochester Police Officers responded to Henion Street for reported gunshots. Upon arrival, they located 22-year-old Demetrius Rucker in a driveway with gunshot wounds to his head and torso. First responders performed life-saving measures but he was eventually pronounced dead at the scene. After a thorough investigation by the Rochester Police Department, Michael Scott, Jr. was identified as the shooter. He was located and arrested by local authorities on November 8, 2023. Michael Scott, Jr. also pled guilty to Manslaughter in the 1st Degree for the fatal shooting of Cahj'Miere Robinson. On September 11, 2022, Rochester Police Officers responded to Webster Avenue for reported gunshots. Upon arrival, they located 17-year-old Cahj'Miere Robinson in a park with gunshot wounds to his head, chest, and forearm. Cahj'Miere Robinson was eventually pronounced dead at the scene. After a thorough investigation by the Rochester Police Department, Michael Scott, Jr. was identified as the shooter. He was arrested by local authorities at the Monroe County Jail on November 14, 2024. Michael Scott, Jr. will be sentenced on both Manslaughter in the First Degree guilty pleas on May 19, 2025 by Supreme Court Justice Walsh. These cases were prosecuted by Special Assistant District Attorney Anthony Freeman, of the Non-Fatal Shooting Task Force.

29-year-old **Marquis Hooks** was sentenced by New York State Supreme Court Justice Schiano to 15 years in the New York State Department of Corrections plus 5 years of post-release supervision. He was previously convicted of four counts of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, three counts of Reckless Endangerment in the 1<sup>st</sup> Degree, Arson in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree, and five counts of Arson in the 4<sup>th</sup> Degree. This case was investigated by the Rochester Police Department and the Gates Police Department. Marquis Hooks was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Kevin Sunderland, Chief of the Local Courts Bureau.

31-year-old **Randell Parris** was sentenced by New York State Supreme Court Justice Argento to 15 years in the New York State Department of Corrections plus 5 years of post-release supervision. He was previously convicted by a jury of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree for the illegal possession of a firearm on October 30, 2023. This case was investigated by the Rochester Police Department and prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Stephen Ryck, of the Special Investigations Bureau.

**Dhymere Bailey** was indicted on Murder in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, three counts of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree and five counts of Robbery in the 1<sup>st</sup> Degree in relation to the homicide of Sandra Blanding on March 19, 2025 and a series of armed robberies. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Kevin Sunderland, Chief of the Local Courts Bureau.

**Austin Murphy** and **Andrew Smith** were indicted on Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree in relation to the possession of illegal narcotics on October 29, 2024. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Aaron Rath, of the Special Investigations Bureau.

**Mahogany Brown, Dyani Gregory,** and **Elijah Ross** were indicted on Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree, four counts of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree, and three counts of Criminally Using Drug Paraphernalia in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree in relation to the possession of illegal narcotics and firearms on March 25, 2025. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Ryan Mulcahy, of the Special Investigations Bureau.

**William Brown** was indicted on Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree in relation to the illegal possession of a firearm on March 25, 2025. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Michael Caranante, of the Special Investigations Bureau.

**Tyrek Jones** was indicted on two counts of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree and Menacing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree in relation to the possession of an illegal firearm on March 22, 2025. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Mikael Pelkey, of the Special Victims Unit.

**Michael Pagan-Rios** was indicted on Burglary in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree and Grand Larceny in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree in relation to a home burglary on March 27, 2025. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Jonathan Jirik, of the Major Felony Bureau.

**Jahrusalem Smith** was indicted on Robbery in the 1<sup>st</sup> Degree, Robbery in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, Grand Larceny in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, Criminal Mischief in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, and Criminal Possession of Stolen Property in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree in relation to the robbery of Dubai Jewelry on January 6, 2025. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Christopher Folk, of the Major Felony Bureau.

**Tony Brown** was indicted on Murder in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, two counts of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, and Criminal Possession of a Firearm in relation to the homicide of Ali Saleh on March 23, 2025. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Gregory Clark, Chief of the Public Integrity/Economic Crimes Bureau.

**Matthew Latson, III** was indicted on Strangulation in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree and Assault in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree in relation to the strangulation of a woman on June 4, 2024. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Armando Benitez, of the Special Victims Unit.

**Finesse Hall** was indicted on Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree in relation to the possession of an illegal firearm on March 22, 2025. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Aaron Rath, of the Special Investigations Bureau.

**Turemail McCullough, Jr.** was indicted on two counts of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Degree, and Menacing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree in relation to a domestic incident on March 15, 2025. This case was indicted by Assistant District Attorney Mikael Pelkey, of the Special Victims Unit.

**Kevin Monroe Bills** was indicted on three counts of Criminal Contempt in the 1<sup>st</sup> Degree, two counts of Menacing in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree as a Hate Crime, and Criminal Mischief in the 4<sup>th</sup> Degree as a Hate Crime. This case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Nicholas Reeder, of the General Felony Bureau.

## Henry and Migdalia Rivera Advocate for Safer Roads

Henry and Migdalia Rivera suffered an unimaginable tragedy. In 2007, their son Alex, who was a month away from graduating high school, was killed in a car crash. The driver of the other car, Herman Bank, had enough cocaine in his system to kill him. Alex's friend, Pedro, also died because of Herman Bank's drugged driving.

Henry and Migdalia have become amazing advocates for STOP-DWI and safer roadways. Currently, we hope A.3981A/S.6485A will pass through committees to close loopholes in New York State that allow drugged drivers to escape accountability.

I urge you to watch the CBS special about the advocacy for this legislation. We are so proud of Henry and Migdalia!



## MCDA in the News

<https://www.rochesterfirst.com/news/local-news/man-guilty-of-manslaughter-in-rochester-kills-woman-in-front-of-child/>

<https://wham1180.iheart.com/content/2025-04-08-rochester-man-guilty-of-girlfriends-fatal-beatin/>

<https://www.whec.com/top-news/man-indicted-on-murder-and-weapon-charges-in-connection-to-death-of-food-market-owner/>

<https://www.rochesterfirst.com/crime/man-indicted-in-rochester-corner-store-murder-case/>

<https://13wham.com/news/local/man-convicted-of-manslaughter-for-girlfriends-beating-death-rochester-walter-balkum-melikah-bruner-hazelwood-terrace-convicted-felon-released-from-electronic-monitoring>

<https://www.democratandchronicle.com/story/news/2025/04/08/walter-balkum-convicted-of-beating-girlfriend-to-death-in-rochester-ny/82987086007/>

<https://www.cbsnews.com/newyork/news/new-york-drugged-driving-loophole-proposed-bill/>

<https://www.whec.com/top-news/three-arrests-made-in-connection-to-home-invasion-robberies/>

<https://13wham.com/news/local/three-charged-in-violent-greece-home-invasions-annie-lane-dorsey-road-ghost-gun-burglary-robbery-high-capacity-magazines>

<https://www.rochesterfirst.com/crime/greece-police-make-arrests-in-violent-home-invasion-robbery-case/>

<https://nypost.com/2025/04/07/opinion/hochuls-no-brainer-fixes-make-nys-radical-discovery-law-less-insane/>

<https://nypost.com/2025/04/07/opinion/hochuls-no-brainer-fixes-make-nys-radical-discovery-law-less-insane/>