

**News Release from
The Honorable Sandra Doorley
Monroe County District Attorney**

December 13, 2024

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Jury Finds Parolee Malik Black Guilty of Murder in the 1st Degree for the
Murder of Jessica Romich**

Rochester, NY- On Friday, December 13, 2024, a Monroe County Jury convicted 48-year-old Malik Black of Murder in the 1st Degree and Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 3rd Degree for the murder of Jessica Romich on September 30, 2023.

On September 30, 2023, Gates Police Officers were called to a parking lot on Pixley Industrial Parkway, where they located 47-year-old Jessica Romich. The victim, who was found with one gunshot wound, was deceased upon the Officers' arrival.

After a thorough investigation by the Gates Police, Malik Black, previously known as Ernest Dunham, was developed as a suspect. It was determined that on the afternoon of September 30, 2023, the defendant drove to the business owned by Jessica Romich in the Town of Gates. As Jessica was leaving work for the day, Malik Black approached her and shot her. Malik Black and Jessica Romich were known to each other, as the defendant was a former employee who worked for Ms. Romich's business. The defendant was on parole for a previous murder conviction.

The case was prosecuted by Special Assistant District Attorney Hillary Langdon, of the Special Victims Unit, and Senior Assistant District Attorney Aaron Rath, also of the Special Victims Unit.

"Jessica Romich was a mother, a wife, a business owner, and Malik Black took all of that away from her," said Assistant District Attorney Hillary Langdon. "This murder was violent and deliberate. I want to thank the Gates Police Department for their thorough investigation that resulted in the identification and apprehension of Malik Black. As a business owner, Jessica Romich gave the defendant a chance at gainful employment. She gave him a chance to re-enter society as a contributing member to our community. Instead of thanking her, Malik Black demanded a loan then killed her when she refused. Today, our community is safer knowing that Malik Black will spend the rest of his life in the New York State Department of Corrections."

“As a violent offender and convicted murderer, Malik Black is a danger to our entire community,” said District Attorney Sandra Doorley. “Instead of re-entering society and trying to lead a lawful life, Malik Black targeted and killed Jessica Romich. Because of the defendant’s despicable actions, Jessica’s husband and children will have another Christmas without their loved one. Jessica Romich was a business owner who gave back to her community, compared to the defendant who has killed two people in Monroe County during his lifetime. Today’s conviction is a much-needed and long-awaited resolution for the loved ones of Jessica Romich.”

Malik Black will be sentenced on January 29, 2025, in front of New York State Supreme Court Justice Renzi.

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