

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

January 29, 2025

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Malik Black Sentenced to Life Without Parole for the Murder of Jessica Romich**

Rochester, NY- On Wednesday, January 29, 2025, New York State Supreme Court Justice Renzi sentenced 48-year-old Malik Black to Life in the New York State Department of Corrections Without the Possibility of Parole. The defendant was previously convicted by a jury of Murder in the 1<sup>st</sup> Degree and Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.

"I cannot overstate the kindness and generosity of Jessica Romich and her family," said Assistant District Attorney Hillary Langdon. "Jessica gave the defendant an opportunity for employment, despite his past. Instead of appreciation for a job and livelihood, Malik Black targeted the victim for money and killed her when she denied to offer him a loan. Thank you to the Gates Police Department for their thorough investigation that resulted in the identification and apprehension of Malik Black. Today's sentence will ensure that a third family is not destroyed by Malik Black's violence. Our community is safer knowing that Malik Black will spend the rest of his life in the New York State Department of Corrections."

“Jessica Romich was a loving mother, wife, sister, a dedicated business owner, and so much more. This is a stark contrast to Malik Black, who has now killed two members of our 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, the woman who gave him a chance to build a future for himself. He did not show regard for Jessica as a previous employer, a friend, or even a human being. Malik Black proved once again, that he places no value on human life. Today’s life sentence is the only appropriate outcome for Jessica’s family, for public safety, and for our community.”

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