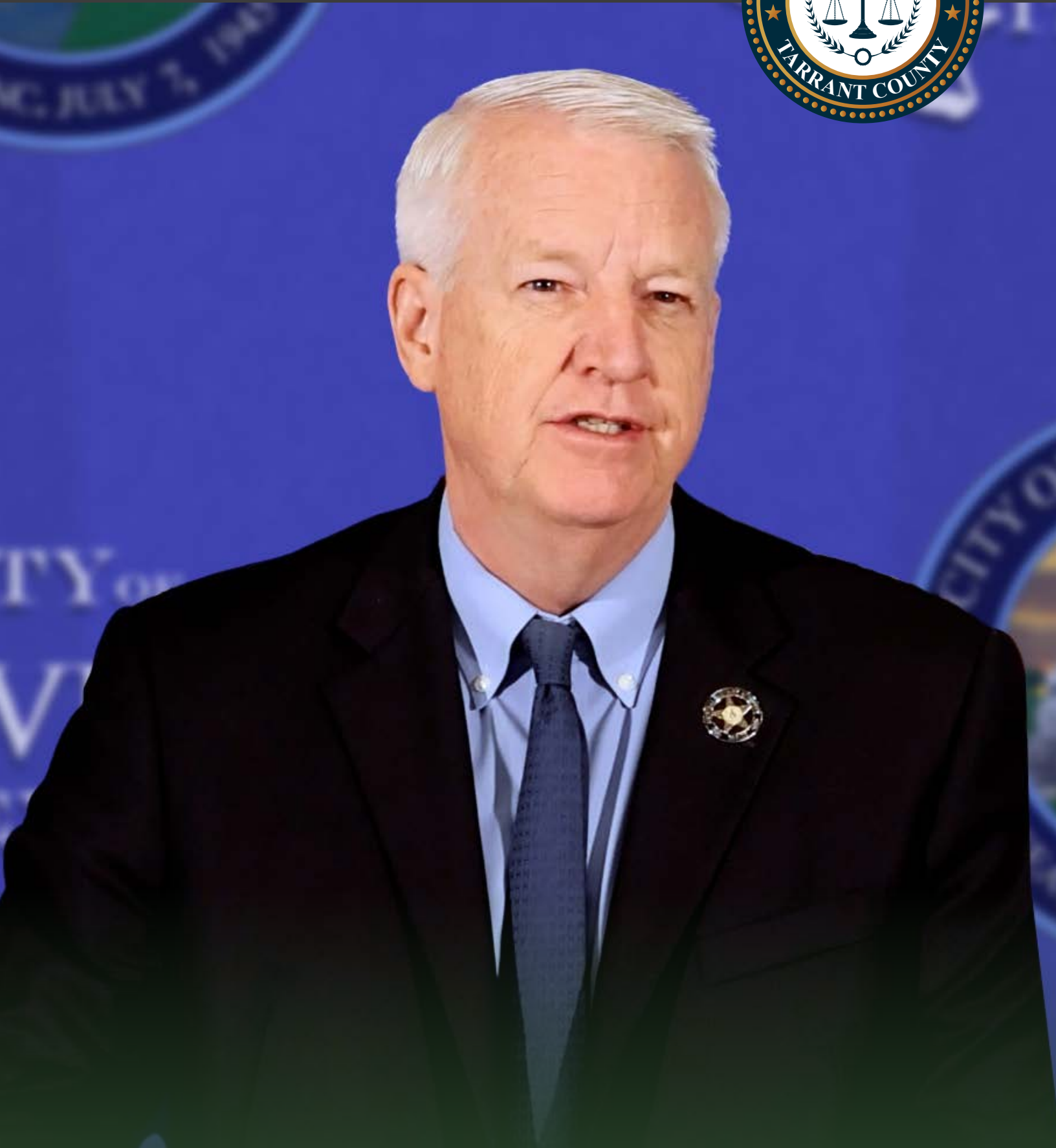


# The DOCKET

Phil Sorrells - Tarrant County District Attorney

Fall 2025



# A Message from DA Phil Sorrells



Twenty-eight. That's how many Tarrant County defendants, as of September 1<sup>st</sup>, have been sentenced to life in prison this year.

That's more than the 22 life sentences given in 2023 and the 24 life sentences in 2024.

And the number might grow larger before the end of the year.

Our prosecutors are asking Tarrant County juries to send a message that murders, sexual abuse of adults and children, human trafficking, and other heinous crimes won't be tolerated here.

Juries have responded to the call.

And for some defendants, one life sentence in prison simply isn't enough.

William Nevilles, for instance, was given four consecutive life sentences earlier this year for kidnapping an 8-year-old girl in a local Wal-Mart and sexually assaulting her in three separate locations in the store.

Even if a Tarrant County jury doesn't give a life sentence, jurors often lean toward lengthy prison terms.

People are paying attention.

Here are a few messages people posted on Facebook about a recent 42-year drug conviction:

*"Tarrant county handing out extreme numbers lately. Everybody need to tighten up."*

*"They not playing around! Stay out the way."*

*"tarrant county been handing ts out lately"*

*"One thing about it, Tarrant county ain't bulls\*\*\* with violence or controlled substances."*

*"Everyone need to get a job because they are giving basically life sentences"*

*"Idk how many times yall gone see the signs. Tarrant county don't play!"*

We fight for justice every single day. And we are making a difference.

# By the Numbers

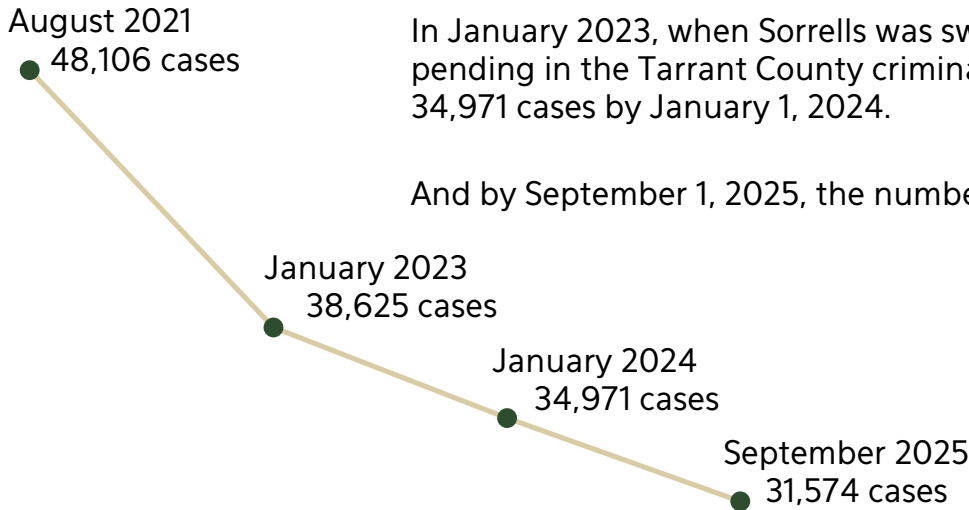
District Attorney Phil Sorrells continues with his mission to reduce the caseload that grew in the criminal courts under Covid restrictions. Here's a look at the progress.

## Caseload Backlog

The backlog was at its peak in August 2021, with 48,106 cases.

In January 2023, when Sorrells was sworn in to office, 38,625 cases were pending in the Tarrant County criminal courts. That number was down to 34,971 cases by January 1, 2024.

And by September 1, 2025, the number of pending cases dropped to 31,574.



## Citizen Prosecutor Academy

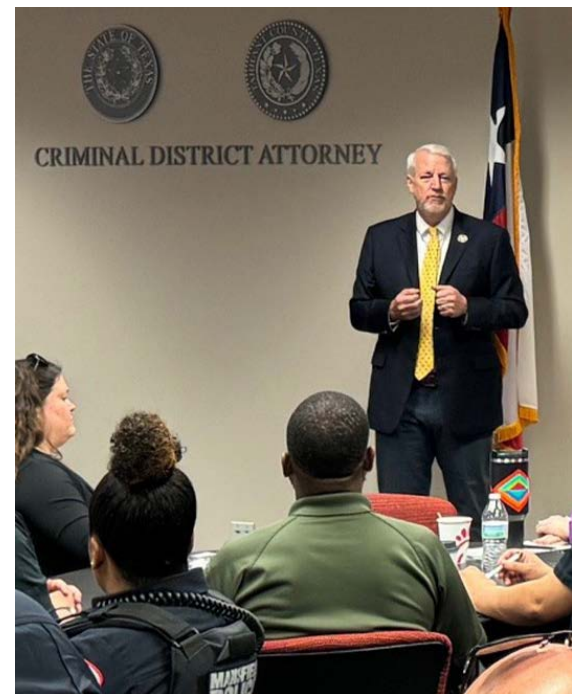
Do you want to learn about the criminal justice system in Tarrant County?

Then join our office's Citizen Prosecutor Academy. We hold it twice a year – once in the Spring and once in the Fall.

You will learn about every step of prosecution, and you'll get an insider's perspective on how the system works. Assistant District Attorneys and Investigators teach the classes. You even get to tour the Tarrant County Corrections Center.

Our Fall class already is underway, but you can sign up for our Spring class that runs from March 5 to May 14 in 2026. Classes meet on Thursdays from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. and there's no cost. The deadline to apply is January 30, 2026.

For more information about the program, call 817-884-1400 or go online to [cda.tarrantcountytx.gov](https://cda.tarrantcountytx.gov) and click on the Community tab. You can apply online to participate.



[Online Application](#)

# Seeking Justice for Noel

Cindy Rodriguez Singh — the Everman woman believed to have killed her 6-year-old son before fleeing the country with much of her family — was returned to Tarrant County less than two months after being added to the FBI's 10 Most Wanted Fugitives List.

Rodriguez Singh, 40, is charged with capital murder for the disappearance of Noel Rodriguez Alvarez, who was born with developmental and physical disabilities. Last seen alive in October 2022, Noel wasn't reported missing until months later.

When law enforcement officers visited Rodriguez Singh's home to check on his welfare in March 2023, they were told that Noel was living with his biological father in Mexico. That was not the case.

Within days, Rodriguez Singh and Noel's stepfather, Arshdeep Singh, fled to his home country of India with six of her other children. Noel was not with them.

Police have long said Noel, whose body has not been found, is presumed dead.

A Tarrant County Grand Jury indicted her for capital murder in 2023 and a warrant was issued for her arrest.

Rodriguez Singh was returned to Tarrant County and booked into jail on August 21, 2025, due to the diligent work of the FBI, U.S. Attorney's Office, and our many other law enforcement partners. A \$10 million bond was set for her.

"Our focus now is the successful prosecution of Cindy Rodriguez Singh," District Attorney Phil Sorrells said. "We owe it to Noel and our community to hold her accountable."

Tarrant County Assistant District Attorneys Rose Anna Salinas and Ashlea Deener will prosecute this case.

On July 1, Sorrells joined FBI and Everman leaders to tell the community that they weren't giving up on finding Noel and that Rodriguez Singh was added to the Most Wanted Fugitives List.

"We will seek justice for Noel," Sorrells said.



Cindy Rodriguez Singh



Noel Rodriguez Alvarez



# “Live Like Wes”



Matthew Purdy Jr.

Guilty.

That was what Matthew Purdy Jr., 23, quietly said in a silent, standing-room-only courtroom on June 26 when asked how he pled to the murder of TCU student Wes Smith.

Purdy was sentenced to 60 years in prison by the judge, who also sentenced him on nine additional felony charges.

In the early hours of September 1, 2023, Wes Smith was outside a bar in the West 7th Street District helping a friend get a ride home. Purdy came up to him and shot him twice. Once Wes fell to the ground, Purdy shot him again in the back of the head to make sure he was dead.

Purdy then pistol-whipped an 18-year-old woman as she ran from the shooting. In a police interview, he said he didn't shoot her because he had run out of bullets. Police later found Purdy near Farrington Field, about two blocks from where the shooting occurred.

Wes, a 21-year-old junior from Tennessee, was taken to a local hospital where he was pronounced dead.

“I believe he died a hero taking that bullet so no one else had to,” Philip Smith, Wes's father, told the court after the sentence was handed down.

Wes's two brothers also spoke, saying Wes is always with them and that his legacy will live on.

Wes's mother, Dorree Smith, also spoke at the sentencing, telling Purdy what a wonderful person her son was.

“Wes had a way of drawing out the best of us,” she said. “Our family of five has a big, big hole.”

He loved his friends and family, lived life fully with boundless energy, and had a great way of listening, she said.

“Wes is now in Heaven. You are still on Earth,” Dorree Smith told Purdy. “You have a chance to give your story a different ending. ... I pray you can find a different ending by finding God's love.”

“Live like Wes.”

Tarrant County Assistant District Attorneys Ashlea Deener and Rose Anna Salinas represented the State. DA Investigator Benjamin Lopez and Victim Advocate CeCe Jones also worked on this case.



Wes Smith

# Operation Showdown

Don't mess with Tarrant County.

That was part of the message announced this summer by a group of law enforcers, including District Attorney Phil Sorrells, after the culmination of a two-month effort to reduce violent crime in Fort Worth.

The effort — Operation Showdown — led to the arrest of dozens of people for drug and gun offenses.

"This is about protecting our families and making sure drug dealers know Tarrant County is not open for business," Sorrells said. "We are sending a simple message: If you choose to poison our streets, you will be met with the full force of the law — no exceptions, no excuses."

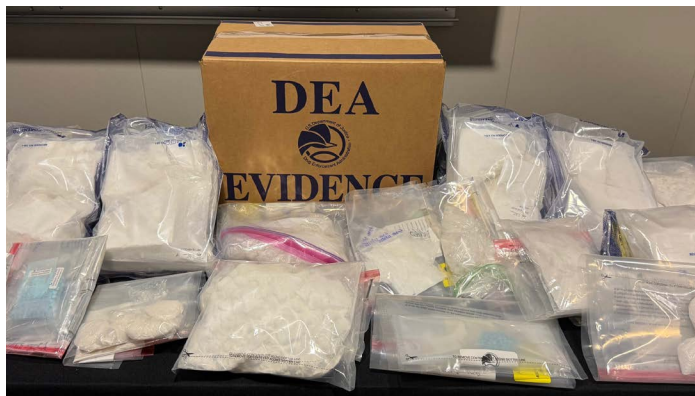
For the announcement, Sorrells joined a group that included local officials from the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Texas, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

In addition to charging more than 75 defendants with state or federal crimes, law enforcers recovered a total of 287 firearms, 14.8 kilograms of cocaine, 7.5 kilograms of methamphetamine, 480 grams of fentanyl, 13 grams of heroin, and 1.4 kilograms of marijuana.

"This operation highlights the tremendous work of our law enforcement partners in dismantling criminal networks — located within and outside our borders — that flood our communities with deadly drugs and tools for violence," Acting U.S. Attorney Nancy Larson said.

Sorrells said he's determined to protect our neighborhoods, defend our children, and stand up for law abiding families.

"My office is firm in our resolve," he said. "If you bring this poison into our communities, we will find you, we will prosecute you, and we will send you to prison."



# Changing the Conversation

It's the last place you want to be.

If you're in there, it means something terrible, something traumatic, happened to you.

But the room, known as a "soft" interview room, is geared to make victims feel at least somewhat at ease when they talk about what they've been through.

Now our office has one of these rooms — the 142nd one constructed by Project Beloved, a non-profit organization created by Tracy Matheson after her daughter, Molly Jane, was strangled, raped, and murdered on April 10, 2017.

Molly Jane's killer, Reginald Kimbro, pled guilty to killing and raping her and others, including Megan Getrum, who was raped and strangled days after Molly Jane died. He was sentenced to life in prison.

Tracy Matheson has poured herself into changing the conversation around sexual assaults and ensuring that sexual assault survivors are heard and believed.

In one of our conference rooms, she and her team replaced the conference table and chairs with a colorful rug, comfortable furniture, lamps, side tables, blankets, and a coffee table. Artwork by Megan Getrum now hangs on the walls.

"We want to help people feel safe," Matheson said.

Project Beloved has created or helped with these rooms across the country. The group produces about four rooms a month and there is a waiting list for the rooms that stretches into June 2026.

"Thank you, Tracy Matheson and Project Beloved, for working with us to create a space where victims feel more comfortable sharing what happened to them with us," District Attorney Phil Sorrells said. "Your dedication to helping others is inspiring."

"Molly Jane will never be forgotten."

## Before



## After





# Game On

Our office has a new Play Station!

But it's not for staff, prosecutors, or investigators.

It's for child victims to use while they are in our office's family room, which also has games, books, stuffed animals, toys, and movies.

The new Play Station — along with games such as Madden, NBA2k, Cars, and Sonic Mania — was donated to our office by Bikers Against Child Abuse, a nonprofit started in 1995 that works to empower abused children.



BACA members noticed earlier this year that a gaming system in our family room wasn't working. So, they replaced it.

"We knew we could take care of that," Attica, vice president of the Fort Worth BACA chapter, said when he and more than half a dozen other bikers showed up to make the donation.

BACA gives child victims biker jackets and biker names. Members mentor the children and take them for bike rides.

And BACA members sit in the courtroom as a sign of support while children testify against their attackers.



"We want to help them endure the darkness," Attica said. "We come with those kids to encourage them to have the strength and courage to tell their story."

Thank you, BACA, for your donation to our office!



# Fentanyl Murder Conviction

Richard Harrison's oldest son, Brandon, died September 18, 2023, after ingesting fentanyl and methamphetamine.

His death devastated his family.

"I wake up in the morning, realize my son is dead, grieve, park the pain," Richard Harrison said. "I go to work, put on a fake smile, do what I have to do to make it through the day, then pick it up on the way home. And that's what life is like."

But at least he'll never have to see his son's killer again.

The man who provided the fentanyl and methamphetamine to Brandon Harrison, 26, was Jacob Lindsay, 48. On June 4, a Tarrant County jury convicted Lindsay of murder under a new Texas law targeting deadly fentanyl distribution. He was sentenced to life in prison.

Lindsay was the first person in Tarrant County to go to trial under the new law that went into effect September 1, 2023. That law now allows murder charges for individuals who supply or deliver fentanyl that causes the death of another.

The first Tarrant County person sentenced under this law was Kaeden Farish, a 19-year-old Azle man who pled guilty in 2024 to murder after selling fentanyl-laced pills that killed a 17-year-old. He received a 19-year prison sentence.

"If you manufacture or distribute fentanyl that causes the death of another person, we will charge you with murder," District Attorney Phil Sorrells said.

Sorrells launched a dedicated Narcotics Prosecution Unit in 2023 to handle fentanyl-related and other high-impact drug cases. Tarrant County Assistant District Attorneys Michael Ferry and Sarah Bruner, both members of the unit, prosecuted Lindsay on behalf of the State.

Fentanyl is a powerful synthetic opioid approved for medical use but often illegally manufactured and sold due to its potency and low cost. As little as two milligrams — the size of a few grains of salt — can be fatal.

"This sends a message to all the Jacob Lindsays out there," Richard Harrison said after Lindsay's trial. "If you (sell fentanyl and someone dies), you are going to forfeit your right to live among us for the rest of your life."

DA Investigator Sean Wheetley and Victim Coordinator Imelda Lopez also worked on this case.



Jacob Lindsay

# Getting Life

In addition to Jacob Lindsay, seven people were sentenced to life in prison in Tarrant County between June 1 and September 1. Here's a look at those cases.

## Joseph Campbell, 36



Campbell was found guilty of continuous trafficking of persons. Campbell recruited young girls from all over the country into prostitution, including one under the age of 18. He put the girls on "sugar daddy" websites and ensured that they performed acts of prostitution while he collected the money. He physically and sexually assaulted the victims and threatened some of them with guns.

Prosecutors: Stephanie Simpson, Kim D'Avignon, Alec Trono.

Investigators: Raul Rodriguez, Tim Pinckney.

Victim Coordinator: Carma Anderson.

June 2, 2025.

## Dedrick Davis, 32



Davis was found guilty of family violence-aggravated assault with a deadly weapon causing serious bodily injury. He was given three life sentences. On November 2, 2023, Davis physically assaulted his ex-girlfriend multiple times and threatened her with a knife. While at the hospital for her injuries, she was able to get help from staff and law enforcement.

Prosecutors: Chase Payne, Riley Reynolds.

Investigator: Kristina Gonzalez.

Victim Coordinator: Elizabeth Garcia.

June 12, 2025.

## Shawn McFarlane, 42



McFarlane was found guilty of aggravated assault against a family member. On June 2, 2023, McFarlane asked a family member for money. When she didn't give it to him, he spent hours beating her in her own home. He slammed her face into the floor, tied her up with zip ties, hit her, and strangled her until she blacked out. The woman had various injuries to her face, multiple rib fractures, and a partially collapsed lung. McFarlane took cash the woman had in her pants pocket as well as her debit card and cell phone.

Prosecutors: Alec Trono, Emily Dixon.

Investigator: Josh Neiswender.

Victim Coordinator: Imelda Lopez.

June 26, 2025.

# Getting Life

## Albert Flores, 57



Flores was found guilty of aggravated sexual assault of a child. While on parole for a 2000 indecency with a child offense, Flores sexually assaulted a male relative multiple times, starting when the boy was 8. Flores threatened to hit the victim with a belt if he did not comply. He also threatened to kill the boy's family in front of him if he told anyone.

Prosecutors: Megan Bradshaw, Steven Elliott.

Investigator: Matt Hardy.

Victim Coordinator: CeCe Jones.

July 10, 2025.

## Jacoby Roberts, 25



Roberts was found guilty of capital murder. On April 4, 2023, Roberts helped set up a fake drug deal to lure his 25-year-old cousin, Jailon Freeman, outside an apartment complex in south Fort Worth. Roberts, who believed Freeman owed him money from drug deals the two conducted, shot Freeman in the back of the head. He then grabbed a bag of cocaine and a handgun Freeman had and ran from the scene.

Prosecutors: Matt Rivers, Ashton Moore.

Investigator: James Desmarais.

Victim Coordinator: CeCe Jones.

July 24, 2025.

## Freddy Garcia, 57



Garcia was found guilty of sexual assault and assault of a family member with a prior conviction for family violence. On April 9, 2024, Garcia threatened to kill a woman he was dating as well as her family members, and then sexually assaulted her.

Prosecutors: Jasmine Banks, Chase Payne.

Investigator: Darla Dowell.

Victim Coordinators: Carrie Farley, Clara Salvatierra.

August 7, 2025.

## Kaitlyn Bailey, 27



Bailey pled guilty to murdering her mother and grandmother and was sentenced to two concurrent life sentences. On November 22, 2023, she went to a home in Rendon where her mother, Shari Bailey, 60, and grandmother, Bertha Bailey, 84, were present. She demanded money from her mother. When Shari refused, Kaitlyn took Shari's gun and shot her. She then shot her grandmother.

Prosecutors: Lloyd Whelchel, Jeff Stewart.

Investigator: Caleb Blank.

Victim Coordinator: CeCe Jones.

August 29, 2025.



# In Our Community

Our staff meets with community groups in Tarrant County. DA Phil Sorrells, prosecutors, and investigators frequently explain how our office works. Here are some recent speaking events by DA staffers.



Sexual Assault Nurse Examiners (SANE) are often among the first professionals a domestic violence or sexual assault victim encounters after an incident. These specially trained nurses provide medical forensic examinations and other compassionate care for both the physical and emotional trauma victims experience. Assistant DA Kim D'Avignon visited One Safe Place to educate these nurses about the judicial process and how their work supports the pursuit of justice.

Assistant DA Ashlea Deener spoke to the media after Matthew Purdy Jr. was sentenced to 60 years in prison for murdering TCU student Wes Smith.



Assistant DA Danielle Bonanno joined DA Investigator Raul Rodriguez and Kirsta Melton, CEO of the Institute to Combat Trafficking, in speaking at a symposium to help law enforcement officers in Tarrant County properly prepare cases for trial.

# In Our Community



Assistant DA Deanna Franzen spoke at the Crimes Against Children Conference about the impact of fear and family pressure on victims. She explained how these factors can keep victims silent for years – even decades – delaying both the reporting of crimes and the pursuit of justice.

DA Sorrells joined other county officials at the 2025 State of the County luncheon. He told the crowd that there have been more life sentences handed down so far this year than in 2024 or 2023. Prosecutors continue working to remove even more criminals from Tarrant County streets.



# Recognition



Congratulations to Assistant DA Lori Varnell for being honored with this year's Colleen Colton Award from Guardianship Services Inc., a non-profit that works to help at-risk adults in Tarrant County.

She was celebrated for her constant support of GSI's mission and her dedication to protecting vulnerable people in Tarrant County.

"Her tireless advocacy and commitment to justice have made a profound difference in the lives of those we serve," according to a GSI statement. "We are proud to honor Lori for her exceptional leadership and lifetime of service as one of our community's most passionate and effective champions."

# Teamwork

It's not often that our office is recognized in New Jersey.

But that's what happened in June.

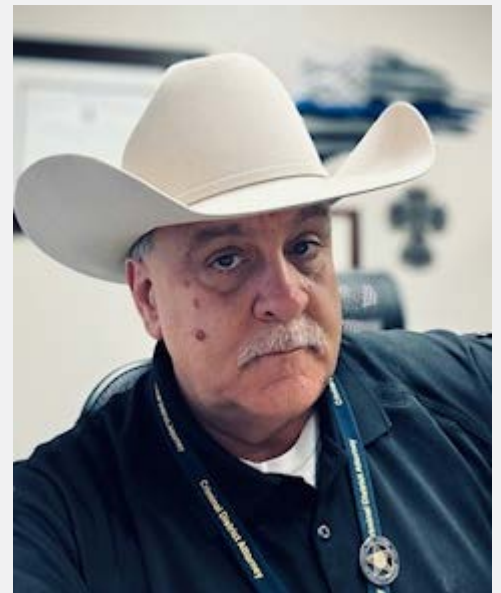
The Cyber Crimes Task Force in the Mercer County Prosecutor's Office sent out a press release about two people arrested for stealing \$150,000 from a New Jersey small business owner.

That agency noted multi-state cooperation from other agencies including the Tarrant County DA's Office — courtesy of DA Investigator Mark Taylor — that was needed to wrap up the extensive investigation.

One of the defendants in the theft of property case, involving the transfer of money from New York to Texas and back, is from Marietta, New York, while the other defendant is from Granbury, Texas.

"This case highlights the growing threat of cyber-enabled financial crimes and the importance of law enforcement collaboration across jurisdictions," said Sergeant Edward Hughes of the MCPO Cyber Crimes Task Force.

Thank you, Mark, for your help!



## Editorial

DA Communications Officer Anna Tinsley Williams wrote and compiled this newsletter.

Tarrant County Graphics Assistant Dakota Wyatt designed this newsletter.