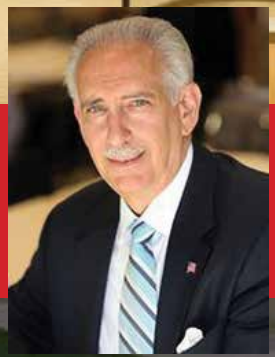

WESTCHESTER COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

2017 ANNUAL REPORT

A Message from the Westchester County District Attorney

Looking back on 2017, I can say my first year as Westchester County District Attorney was a rewarding one. Coming into office, I was met by a talented and dedicated staff who work hard to meet the public safety needs of those living and working in Westchester County. I thank these seasoned prosecutors, criminal investigators and a support staff second to none for making our transition seamless.

Criminal justice and law enforcement policy continue to evolve. As Westchester County's chief law enforcement officer, it is my responsibility to ensure the policies of the District Attorney's Office evolve, too. We must constantly assess the many forces that drive crime here and adjust accordingly.

Like many communities throughout our state, Westchester continues to grapple with opioid abuse and the criminal activity it spawns. We are seeing gangs on our streets who target our young people and terrorize our communities. Identity theft and cybercrime continue to strike individuals and businesses. We are also tackling the serious issues of domestic violence, elder abuse and public corruption, among others.

To address those challenges, we successfully launched a number of new initiatives. The creation of the Gang, Firearms and Narcotics Bureau has strengthened our focus on the criminals doing the most damage to our communities. Our newly formed Heroin and Opioid Task Force is charged with analyzing, investigating and prosecuting drug trafficking on a coordinated basis. Our new Office of Immigrant Affairs makes it easier for undocumented immigrants to report crimes without fear of deportation. I take great pride in the work being done by these dedicated teams.

Here in the office, we are developing a new case management system to strengthen our operation and we have assembled a hiring committee to screen new applicants in our ongoing effort to bring greater diversity to our staff so our office reflects the communities we serve.

As we continue to take the Westchester County District Attorney's office in a new direction, we are mindful of our mission to create a safer and healthier county through the pursuit of truth and commitment to justice.

I encourage you to read about the important work we are doing. I am proud of all we have accomplished in just one year and look forward to building on these accomplishments every day.

Anthony A. Scarpino, Jr.
Westchester County District Attorney

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Our Mission

"We are dedicated to creating a safer and healthier community through the pursuit of truth and commitment to justice."

Courthouse photography courtesy of Paul Warchol

What We Do

The District Attorney is the chief law enforcement officer in Westchester County and is responsible for the investigation and prosecution of offenses committed in the County. The District Attorney leads a team of 120 attorneys, 34 criminal investigators and 84 support personnel.

LOCAL CRIMINAL COURTS & GRAND JURY DIVISION

Division Chief: Robert J. Prisco, Second Deputy District Attorney

The Division's Local Criminal Courts Bureau includes eight branch offices which are responsible for the prosecution of all misdemeanor and violation offenses, and which support the initial stages of felony prosecutions in the 41 city, town and village criminal courts located in Westchester County. The Grand Jury Bureau presents cases to the grand jury that are not vertically prosecuted by other Divisions.

SUPERIOR COURT TRIAL DIVISION

Division Chief: Patricia M. Murphy, First Deputy District Attorney

The Superior Court Trial Division is responsible for obtaining dispositions of felony indictments, either by jury trial or guilty plea, which reflect the gravity of the crime. The Division investigates and prosecutes major felonies, including cross-jurisdictional cases with federal and other DA's offices in New York State. The Division is comprised of the following Bureaus: Pleadings, Homicide, Career Criminal, Narcotics and Firearms, Sex Crimes, Vehicular Crimes and Major Case Coordination, as well as the Violation of Probation, and Arson Units.

APPEALS & SPECIAL LITIGATION DIVISION

Division Chief: Steven A. Bender, Second Deputy District Attorney

The Appeals and Special Litigation Division responds to legal challenges to criminal charges or convictions. These include direct appeals of convictions, challenges to the admissibility of statements, identifications and other evidence, federal writs of habeas corpus, extraditions and other matters. This Division is comprised of the Appeals, Motions, Special Litigation, and Training and Education Bureaus.

Law enforcement officials announce the arrests of 25 drug dealers distributing street-level heroin and crack cocaine in Yonkers.

New ADA Christine DiSalvo signs the Westchester County Oath of Officers Book after being sworn-in.

SPECIAL PROSECUTIONS DIVISION

Division Chief: Fredric I. Green, Second Deputy District Attorney

The Special Prosecutions Division investigates and prosecutes all cases of domestic violence, child abuse, elder abuse and cases involving the human trafficking of children and others trafficked as a result of their relationships with abusers. The Division is comprised of the Domestic Violence Bureau, Child Abuse Bureau, Elder Abuse Unit and the Victim's Justice Center. Working aggressively to combat domestic violence and crimes against children and other vulnerable victims, prosecutors work closely with law enforcement agencies, specialty domestic violence courts, two separate multidisciplinary teams for child abuse and elder abuse cases, social services and victim service agencies, and the county's Child Advocacy Center and Child Fatality Review Team.

INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION

Division Chief: William E. Schaeffer, Second Deputy District Attorney

The Investigations Division is at the forefront of the DA's proactive effort to fight a wide range of complex crimes, including internet fraud, online sexual predators, financial scams, public corruption, illegal narcotics and gang activity, and environmental crimes. The Division is staffed with teams of prosecutors and criminal investigators and is comprised of six Bureaus: Economic Crimes; High Technology Crimes; Organized Crime and Criminal Enterprises; Public Integrity; Gang, Firearms and Narcotics; and Pleadings. The Division also has several units dedicated to combatting certain criminal activity: Environmental Crimes, Auto Crimes, Tax Crimes, Pattern Crimes, Animal Cruelty, Identity Theft and Asset Forfeiture.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Chief Administrator: Pat A. D'Imperio, Jr.

Administrative Services is responsible for all financial reporting, budgeting and forecasting, payroll, personnel, purchasing and procurement, accounts payable, grant administration, information technology, contract administration, record center operations and training requests. The Division also facilitates victim and witness assistance and travel arrangements.

Murder charges were announced against Mt. Vernon gang members connected to the shooting deaths of Shamoya McKenzie and Dean Daniels.

The 143rd class of recruits graduates from the Westchester County Police Academy.

Local Criminal Courts Bureaus & Branches

YONKERS CITY COURT BUREAU

104 South Broadway
Yonkers, NY 10701
914-231-2700

Doreen Lloyd, Bureau Chief

The Yonkers City Court Bureau is the largest both in terms of staffing and case load. The Bureau handled **6,195** cases in 2017.

MOUNT VERNON BUREAU

City Court Building
Roosevelt Square
Mount Vernon, NY 10550
914-665-2440

Patrick Macarchuk Bureau Chief

The Mount Vernon City Court Bureau handled **3,981** cases. ADAs from the bureau cover the local courts of the City of Mount Vernon, the Village of Bronxville and the Town of Pelham.

GREENBURGH BRANCH

188 Tarrytown Road
White Plains, NY 10607
914-995-4075

Adeel Mirza Branch Chief

The Greenburgh Branch handled **3,350** cases. ADAs from the branch cover the local courts of the Town of Greenburgh, the villages of Ardsley, Dobbs Ferry, Elmsford, Hastings-on-Hudson, Irvington, Sleepy Hollow and Tarrytown.

WHITE PLAINS CITY COURT BRANCH

City Court Building
77 South Lexington Avenue
White Plains, NY 10601
914-422-6265

Shameika Mathurin Branch Chief

The White Plains City Court Branch handled **2,837** cases. ADAs from the branch cover the local courts of the City of White Plains and the Town of North Castle.

DA Scarpino and Commissioner Chong join White Plains residents at a National Night Out event.

The DA's Office and County Police announce joint task force to tackle the opioid epidemic.

NEW ROCHELLE BRANCH

475 North Avenue, 2nd Floor
New Rochelle, NY 10801
914-813-5800

Toniann Gagliardi
Branch Chief

The New Rochelle Branch handled **2,641** cases. ADAs from the branch cover the local courts of the City of New Rochelle, towns of Mamaroneck and Eastchester, and the Village of Tuckahoe.

YORKTOWN BRANCH

1940 Commerce Street
Yorktown Heights, NY 10598
914-862-5140

Michael Borrelli
Branch Chief

The Yorktown Branch handled **3,083** cases. ADAs from the branch cover the local courts of the City of Peekskill, the towns of Cortlandt and Yorktown, and the villages of Croton-on-Hudson and Buchanan.

NORTHERN WESTCHESTER BRANCH

25 Moore Avenue
Mount Kisco, NY 10549
914-864-7122

Frank Luis
Branch Chief

The Northern Westchester Branch handled **2,776** cases. It is the largest geographically and covers the greatest number of jurisdictions, including local courts in the towns of Bedford, Lewisboro, Mount Pleasant, New Castle, North Salem, Ossining, Pound Ridge and Somers, and the villages of Briarcliff Manor, Mount Kisco and Pleasantville.

RYE BRANCH

3010 Westchester Avenue
Suite 205
Purchase, NY 10577
914-813-7257

Valerie Livingston
Branch Chief

The Rye branch handled **3,972** cases. ADAs from the branch cover the local courts of the City of Rye, the towns of Harrison and Rye, and the villages of Larchmont, Mamaroneck, Port Chester and Scarsdale.

DA Scarpino congratulates Maria Regina High School senior Julia Fazzinga on receiving award at the County's annual Italian Heritage event.

The Yonkers Exchange Club recognizes the Yonkers Police Department for its work in solving the Michael Nolan murder case.

Hundreds of seniors receive free legal and financial education at the County's annual Senior Law Day.

2017 Financials

UNDERSTANDING THE BUDGET

WESTCHESTER COUNTY 2017 ADOPTED BUDGET

$1,825,011,781

WESTCHESTER DISTRICT ATTORNEY BUDGET

$27,533,559

1.51%

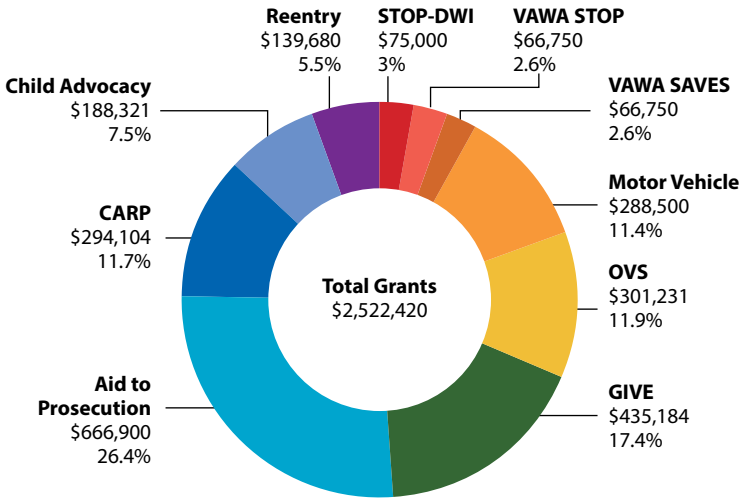
OF THE COUNTY BUDGET

POSITIONS

224 OPERATING

14 GRANT

STATE GRANTS



Grant Explanations

The District Attorney aggressively pursues grant funds from State and Federal agencies to help offset the cost of new and existing law enforcement programs that benefit County residents. The Office received over $2.5 million in grant funding in 2017 which helped offset the cost of these programs.

- STOP Violence Against Women program (VAWA STOP)
- Violence Against Women Sexual Assault & Elderly Services (VAWA SAVES) program
- NYS Dept. of Motor Vehicle Special Traffic Options Program—Driving While Intoxicated (STOP-DWI)
- NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services' Motor Vehicle Theft & Insurance Fraud Program
- NYS Office of Victim Services (OVS) grant
- NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services' Operation GIVE (Gun Involved Violence Elimination) Initiative
- NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services' Aid to Prosecution Program
- NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services' Crimes Against Revenue Prosecution (CARP) program
- NYS Office of Children and Family Services Child Advocacy grant
- NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services grant for the Westchester County Reentry Task Force

Congressman Sean Patrick Maloney visits the DA's office to discuss public safety issues in Westchester.

Bronx DA Darcel Clark welcomes the Westchester DA's leadership team for a meeting between members of both staffs.

District Attorney's Class of 2017

Pictured (L to R) are: Eileen Songer McCarthy, Arthur Bernardon, William Schaeffer, Emily Rowe-Smith, Mathew V. John, Jr., Jennifer Sculco, Lila E. Kirton, DA Scarpino, Matthew Martinez, Spencer Littman, Kevin Jones, Sharleen Bailon, Craig Ascher, Brian Pouliot and Paul Noto.

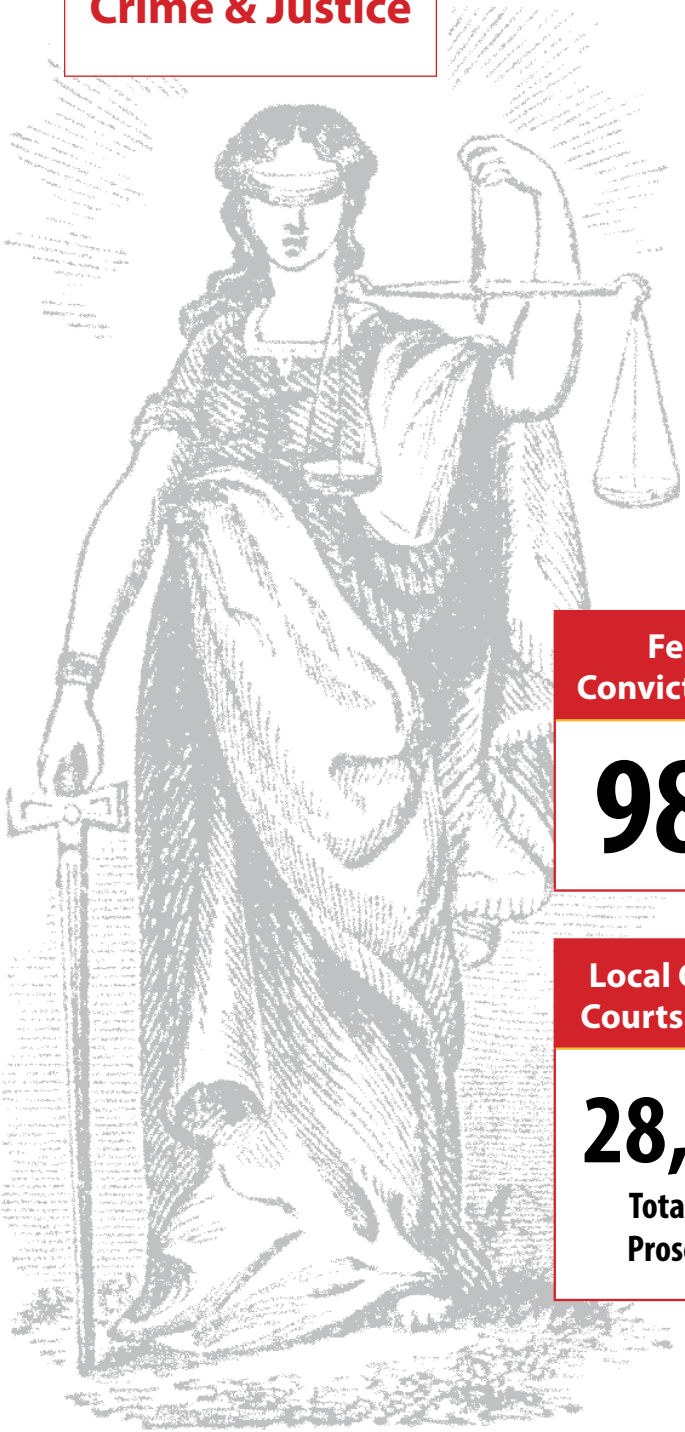
BEST PRACTICES IN HIRING

The District Attorney created an attorney hiring committee consisting of 14 ADAs. The committee includes a First Deputy District Attorney and representatives from each division. The members of the committee range from recently hired ADAs to veteran ADAs and reflect the diversity our office is seeking to achieve. The committee has actively reached out to over 20 specialty bar associations for qualified candidates. Applications are shared with and reviewed by all hiring committee members who meet in person to reach a consensus on a list of applicants to be interviewed. This group has worked not only to diversify the pool of applicants, but also to ensure fairness in evaluating the credentials of each applicant.

Law enforcement partners gather for annual Police Interactive Training Conference at Manhattanville College.

The Westchester Board of Legislators are updated on hate crimes and the County's opioid epidemic.

Crime & Justice



Felony Conviction Rate

98%

Local Criminal Courts Division

28,835

Total Cases Prosecuted

2017 PROSECUTION HIGHLIGHTS

Local Criminal Courts and Grand Jury Division

The DA's Office prosecuted 28,835 local criminal court cases.

Special Prosecutions Division

The Special Prosecutions Division handled more than 2,100 domestic violence investigations and prosecutions, 214 elder abuse investigations and prosecutions, and more than 700 child abuse investigations and prosecutions.

Tax Crimes Unit

The Tax Crimes Unit within the Investigations Division works with the NY State Department of Taxation and Finance and others to investigate and prosecute businesses and individuals that commit tax fraud. These offenses include repeatedly failing to file a return, filing false returns, failing to remit or underreporting sales or withholding tax, and grand larceny.

The Unit opened 34 new tax investigations and was successful in reclaiming $422,341 in lost tax revenue for the State of New York. In addition, the Unit returned $317,842 to the Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund in 2017 through the successful prosecution of unemployment insurance fraud.

Identity Theft

Cases received by the Investigations Division Identity Theft Unit reflect an increase in New Account Fraud, that is, fraud using a victim's personal identifying information to open lines of credit, as well as Existing Account Fraud, which is the cloning of credit cards, theft of credit card numbers, and forged check complaints.

The Unit vertically prosecuted and investigated 159 cases, resulting in 77 felony convictions.

SPECIAL PROSECUTIONS DIVISION

9,547
Total Complaints Handled

GRAND JURY BUREAU

387
Total True Bills (Indictments)

SUPERIOR COURT

1,188
Felony Dispositions

HOMICIDE BUREAU

136
Deaths Investigated

APPEALS & SPECIAL LITIGATION DIVISION

301
Appeals

489
Motions

135
FOIL Requests

2017 CASE

Mount Vernon Man Convicted of Attempted Murder of a Police Officer

The Journal News/lohud.com

In October, Ronald Clare Greenland of Mount Vernon was found guilty of the attempted murder of a police officer. He was convicted on charges of Attempted Murder in the First Degree, Attempted Assault in the First Degree, Attempted Aggravated Assault Upon a Police Officer and several other charges.

In the early morning hours of Nov. 8, 2016, Greenland, 53, was attempting to steal rims from a truck at a car dealership in Mount Kisco. While on patrol, Westchester County Police Officer David Sanchez spotted a suspicious green Honda van in the dealership parking lot. The Honda had been reported stolen. The officer attempted to pull over the van at a traffic light but the defendant sped off. A high-speed chase ensued. Greenland then stopped the vehicle, got out and began running. The officer chased him on foot, eventually catching him. Greenland slashed the officer in the chest with a knife, cutting Officer Sanchez's protective vest. Other officers responded and Greenland was taken into custody.

In February 2018, Greenland was sentenced to 40 years to life in state prison.

This case was prosecuted by ADA Lana Hochheiser, Deputy Chief of the Homicide Bureau.

Fighting Opioid Abuse

Lethal dose of heroin vs. Lethal dose of fentanyl for an average adult male

Source: New Hampshire State Police Forensics Lab

The DA's Office is focused on the fight against heroin and opioid abuse and the criminal activity supporting it. With that, the Office is taking part in several collaborative initiatives to identify, investigate and prosecute drug dealers, and identify those individuals who are addicted and connect them with needed resources.

In a critical move to fight drug trafficking, the DA's Office created the Overdose Response Initiative (ORI) in 2016. The ORI—an information-sharing initiative among all law enforcement agencies in the county and our community health partners—tracks, maps and investigates all suspected heroin and opioid overdoses in the county. The number of overdoses reported to the ORI by law enforcement more than doubled from 2016 to 2017 and one-third of all reported overdoses were fatal. The data received from the overdose reports are analyzed by analysts assigned to the Westchester Intelligence Center (WIC) and shared with our partners in law enforcement.

In July 2017, in another collaborative effort, the District Attorney and the Westchester County Executive announced the formation of a Heroin and Opioid Task Force. Its primary purpose is to create a unit of experienced narcotics detectives and investigators from multiple law enforcement agencies in the county dedicated to investigating opioid trafficking in Westchester. Dedicated analysts from the WIC assist the Task Force in compiling, analyzing and reporting on statistical and evidentiary trends and patterns.

Finally, in 2017, the District Attorney combined the Gangs and Guns

The Hub Drug Court project

Focusing on reducing incarceration and recidivism for nonviolent drug offenders and veterans who have run-ins with the law, a new program was put in place in October to create "hub" drug courts where these offenders find access to intensive court-supervised treatment and tailored services that might not be available through local town and village courts. The Westchester County Drug Court Enhancement Project coordinates the efforts of county drug courts operating in Mount Vernon, New Rochelle, White Plains and Yonkers where the hubs are now based. The program is supported by a federal grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

The Hub Drug Court project is a collaborative effort of the NY State Court System, the DA's Office, the defense bar, the Westchester County Executive's Office, Westchester County Department of Probation, local treatment providers, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and other veterans' services and support organizations.

Bureau with the Narcotics Bureau creating the Gang, Firearms and Narcotics Bureau. The DA's Office added resources to build its capacity to target violent gang members, gun traffickers and narcotics dealers. In combination with the ORI, the Gang, Firearms and Narcotics Bureau has increased our capability to focus on the criminals causing the most damage to the community.

WESTCHESTER INTELLIGENCE CENTER

The Westchester Intelligence Center (WIC) is a centralized crime analysis unit that has been providing vital information sharing and investigative support to all law enforcement agencies operating in Westchester County for the past 10 years. The WIC is an integrated partner of the NY/NJ HIDTA (High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area) Regional Intelligence Center and has access to the most current law enforcement technology including law enforcement and commercial databases.

The WIC is staffed full time by trained investigators, detectives, and crime analysts from the DA's Office, HIDTA, and the Westchester County Department of Public Safety. In addition, the WIC is staffed part-time by detectives and crime analysts from local police departments, the NY State Department of Corrections, New York National Guard Counter Drug Task Force and Homeland Security.

This collaborative team continuously gathers intelligence relating to crimes committed throughout the county, performs independent research and analyzes the data to identify trends, patterns, and associations between individuals and crimes. This information is shared with our law enforcement partners during routine intelligence-sharing meetings, via crime bulletins and through direct contacts. The WIC also provides individualized investigative support to our partners on a case-by-case basis.

2017 CASE

Drug Sweep Ends in Multiple Arrests of Neighborhood Heroin Dealers

On May 4, 2017, 13 local drug dealers and five customers were arrested in connection with street-level heroin sales in Greenburgh and White Plains. Two of those arrested were White Plains resident Willie James Edwards and Otto Armstrong, Sr., of Greenburgh, both significant dealers in Westchester. Among the charges for the 18 defendants were Criminal Sale of a Controlled Substance in the Third Degree, Criminal Possession of a Controlled Substance in the Third Degree and Conspiracy in the Fourth Degree.

Seized in the course of these arrests were two loaded handguns, 2.5 kilos of heroin with a street value of $1.5 million, and over $100,000 in cash.

Many of the defendants sold heroin to upward of 25 customers, some of whom purchased heroin on a daily basis.

The investigation also resulted in federal charges against Bronx supplier Luis Castro, who was arrested by the FBI in May and found with thousands of heroin glassine envelopes in his apartment. He was convicted of heroin conspiracy and firearms possession, and sentenced to more than 10 years in prison.

Both Edwards and Armstrong, who bought heroin from Castro and then sold it to their customers, were also sentenced to prison.

The case was prosecuted by former Narcotics Bureau Chief Thomas Luzio and ADA Mary Ann Liebowitz of the Investigations Division.

2017 CASE

Father Convicted of Killing 3-year-old Son

On Dec. 24, 2016, Blair Robinson of Yonkers walked into St. John's Riverside Hospital carrying the lifeless body of his 3-year-old son, Alex. Doctors were unable to revive the child. The father did not explain what happened. When police went to his home to notify the child's mother, they found a filthy apartment, a bug-infested kitchen and the deceased child's 1-year-old sister laying on a bare mattress in an unheated bedroom with a bottle of curdled milk.

An autopsy revealed the child had multiple internal injuries from being punched and beaten, as well as whip marks on his back. On Dec. 27, 2016, the child's father was arrested and charged with murder. The child's mother, Kenya Reed, was charged with child endangerment in April 2017. In August, Robinson pleaded guilty to Manslaughter in the First Degree and was sentenced to 20 years in prison. Reed was convicted in August of two counts of Endangering the Welfare of a Child and later received a sentence of shock probation, a split sentence of a short jail time and probation.

The case was prosecuted by ADA Fredric Green, Chief of the Special Prosecutions Division, and ADA Joyce Miller, Deputy Chief of the Domestic Violence Bureau.

Special Prosecutions: Fighting for the Vulnerable

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

The Domestic Violence (DV) Bureau, located within the Special Prosecutions Division, handles thousands of domestic violence cases reported in Westchester each year. Specially trained prosecutors work with a team of domestic violence aides to investigate and prosecute cases in every local and superior court in the county and to help victims navigate the criminal justice system. Prosecutors in the DV Bureau are on call 24/7 to assist police investigators on special issues related to domestic violence cases such as mandatory arrest provisions of the Criminal Procedure Law, responding to lethality assessment issues, issues related to orders of protection, and criminal contempt charges.

CHILDREN

The Special Prosecutions Division provides assistance to law enforcement and works with police investigators on child abuse cases at the Child Advocacy Center around the clock. A staff of domestic violence aides assist specialized prosecutors in guiding victims through the criminal justice system. The Division also employs the Child Abuse Multi-Disciplinary Team Investigation Information Coordinator who coordinates all multiagency personnel collaborating on child abuse investigations.

Photo by Jeremy Wong on Unsplash

Photo by Jordan Whitt on Unsplash

THE ELDERLY

This year, showing deep concern for another vulnerable population, the Special Prosecutions Division Elder Abuse Unit (EAU) launched a 24-hour Elder Abuse Hotline providing the public with a way to report elder abuse at any time of day or night, with or without leaving their names. The hotline number is 914-995-1940.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Even in a county like Westchester, traffickers seek to abuse our young people. The Special Prosecutions Division staff and partners are committed to identifying and supporting victims of sexual slavery and trafficking. We strive to do all we can to effectively expose and prosecute those responsible. The Division is one of the leaders in the County in investigating these crimes and co-chairs the Westchester County Anti-Trafficking Task Force.

2017 CASE

Appellate Court Affirms Lacey Spears' Conviction

The Journal News/lohud.com

On Oct.11, 2017, the Appellate Division, Second Judicial Department, affirmed Lacey Spears' 2015 conviction of Murder in the Second Degree and sentence of 20 years to life in state prison for the salt poisoning death of her 5-year-old son, Garnett.

Motivated by the attention and sympathy she received for being the single mother of a "sickly" child, Spears secretly poisoned her otherwise healthy son by infusing salt through his feeding tube, at least twice Jan. 19, 2014, in Nyack Hospital. The salt induced the seizure-like symptoms she had described to emergency room staff two days earlier. Spears witnessed Garnett's suffering after the first salt infusion: his screaming and retching as he was physically unable to vomit the poison. After Garnett started feeling better, she poisoned him again and remained silent as her son lay convulsing on the bed. He was placed on a ventilator and transferred to Westchester Medical Center. There he died as a result of his elevated sodium level.

The appellate court upheld the jury's verdict, finding the evidence demonstrated beyond a reasonable doubt that Spears displayed a depraved indifference to human life, as she subjected her little boy to a "brutal, prolonged and ultimately fatal course of conduct." The evidence demonstrated "her utter indifference to the life of the child."

ADA Steven A. Bender, Chief of the Appeals and Special Litigation Division, and ADA Jennifer Spencer, Deputy Chief of the Appeals and Special Litigation Division, handled the appeal.

2017 CASE

Yonkers Man Extradited from Scotland Pleads Guilty to Manslaughter

On the run after a fatal shooting on Popular Street in Yonkers in August 2016, Sheppard Adeghe was tracked by Yonkers Police detectives and found to be in Scotland. Extradition proceedings resulted in Adeghe's return to the United States with the assistance of Scottish authorities, the United States Department of State and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

Adeghe was wanted in the shooting death of Elias Flores Aug. 10, 2016. Both men were from Yonkers. Two days after the shooting, Adeghe applied for and was issued an emergency United States passport. That same day, he boarded a flight to Amsterdam, The Netherlands and flew on to Edinburgh, Scotland. On Sept. 1, Scottish police executed a warrant and detained him in prison. He was returned to Westchester March 1, 2017 and arraigned the next day.

Adeghe pleaded guilty to Manslaughter in the First Degree, a B violent felony, in Westchester County Court Feb. 28, 2018. He faces a maximum of 25 years in state prison. He is scheduled for sentencing Oct. 18, 2018.

ADA Julia Cornachio and ADA Brian Bendish of the Superior Court Trial Division prosecuted the case. ADA John Sergi and ADA Elizabeth Marcus interfaced with the Department of Justice to secure defendant's extradition to the United States.

Special Initiatives

Judicial Diversion

Judicial Diversion is the felony drug court where a coordinated effort of justice and treatment professionals provide an alternative to incarceration for individuals whose criminal behavior is influenced or caused by addiction. The "drug court team" consists of the judge, case manager, prosecutor, probation officer and defense counsel. Individuals charged with nonviolent felonies participate in the court and receive intensive drug treatment, drug testing and case management along with possible probation supervision, mental health, trauma and family therapy. They may also receive job training. The goal is to reduce overall crime, individual recidivism and restore balance to individuals, families and communities.

Each year, approximately 100 defendants apply for the Judicial Diversion program and over 50 are accepted. Since the program began in 2009, almost 70 percent of the participants have completed the program successfully and approximately two-thirds of those individuals have not been re-arrested. This reduced drug use and criminal behavior translates into healthier individuals, families and safer communities. It also provides greater cost benefits to society than traditional incarceration. Individuals who "graduate" from judicial diversion and their families often express their gratitude in court for the program and the change it has made in their lives.

Upholding Public Integrity

The District Attorney expanded the Public Integrity Bureau of the Investigations Division by adding two more ADAs. As part of this expansion, the new position of Official Corruption Coordinator is in place to develop relationships with other agencies focused on public corruption crimes, such as the Office of the NY State Comptroller, Division of Investigations; and the NY State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision, Office of Special Investigations. In addition, we have added resources to the Investigators Bureau to increase the capacity to investigate corruption. With respect to complaints of excessive force used by the police, the DA's Office continues to conduct high-level review of each complaint received.

2017 CASE

Desir Gets 25 Years to Life In Shooting Death of Iona College Student

The Journal News/lohud.com

In May, Stivenson Desir (DOB 11/12/96) of New Rochelle was sentenced to 25 years to life in state prison after being found guilty by a jury in the shooting death of Iona college student Brandon Lawrence during a fight in Lincoln Park April 3, 2016.

In February, the defendant was found guilty of one count of Murder in the Second Degree, a class A felony, and two counts of Criminal Possession of a Weapon in the Second Degree, class C felonies.

An intensive investigation carried out by the New Rochelle Police Department and the DA's Office revealed that both the victim and the defendant had attended a party hours earlier at an off-campus apartment used by Iona College students. Following the party, around 3 a.m., a group of five men left the apartment, including the victim and the defendant, and went to Lincoln Park. While there, two of the men engaged in a pre-arranged fistfight. As they were watching, Desir pulled a handgun and fired at Lawrence, hitting him once in the torso resulting in his death.

ADA Christine O'Connor, Chief of the Narcotics & Firearms Bureau, and ADA Shameika Mathurin, of the Superior Court Trial Division, prosecuted the case.

Community Outreach

The District Attorney's Office is committed to promoting public safety through a robust program of public education and crime prevention. ADAs, criminal investigators and domestic violence aides participate in events in schools and community settings and conduct trainings on legal topics for our law enforcement partners.

2017

84
Staff Members

443
Presentations

TOPICS INCLUDE

- Internet Safety
- Bullying
- Drug Addiction
- Fraud
- Elder Abuse
- The Role of the DA's Office

SHINE THE LIGHT ON DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Now marking its 10th year, the Shine the Light on Domestic Violence campaign seeks to raise awareness about domestic violence. DA Scarpino encouraged staff to participate on Oct. 19 in our first "Wear Purple Day," the color associated with domestic violence awareness. Pictured are members of the Special Prosecutions Division.

NATIONAL NIGHT OUT

National Night Out Against Crime (NNO) is an annual community-building campaign that seeks to strengthen police-community relationships. ADAs participated in seven NNO events in 2017 in various communities including Yonkers, Peekskill, Mount Vernon, White Plains, Greenburgh and this event in New Rochelle.

HERITAGE FESTIVALS

Every summer, residents celebrate Westchester's rich, cultural diversity at the many heritage festivals held throughout the County. The DA's Office is on hand at many of them to offer crime prevention information and answer questions from the public.

TEACHING ABOUT RACE & RACISM

On Nov. 2, the DA's Office partnered with the Holocaust & Human Rights Education Center to present an instructional workshop for teachers aimed at resolving problems of racism and intolerance in the classroom and in the everyday lives of our young people. DA Scarpino delivered the opening remarks.

COURT OF APPEALS

Students from five local high schools were selected to hear oral arguments when judges of the New York State Court of Appeals held a special session at the Westchester County Courthouse in April. ADAs worked with the classes beforehand, conducting mock debates and educating them on the cases they would hear. Pictured are students from Mount Vernon High School.

OFFICE OF IMMIGRANT AFFAIRS

ADA Lila Kirton, Director

The Office of Immigrant Affairs (OIA) was established in August 2017 to assist various immigrant communities in navigating the criminal justice system in Westchester County. OIA will help all immigrants, regardless of status, obtain justice within our legal system. Victimized immigrants may report any type of crime, including violent crimes, human trafficking, domestic violence, failure to pay wages or fraud.

In addition to examining crimes targeting the immigrant community, the OIA serves as a liaison to foster cooperation within the legal system. We want both victims and witnesses, and their advocates, to work with us to investigate and prosecute cases.

We have joined the NY State District Attorneys League of Immigrant Affairs (DALIA), an organization committed to protecting all residents of their respective counties when they become victims of crimes. As a member of DALIA, we join with the District Attorneys of New York, Queens, Kings, Bronx, Nassau, Rockland and Orange counties.

The Office is also a member of the Protecting Immigrant New Yorkers (PINY) Task Force created to crackdown on immigration assistance fraud through enhanced coordination between the state and local governments, NY State Attorney General's Office, district attorneys offices and federal agencies.

BIAS CRIMES UNIT

ADA Susan Brownbill-Vega, Unit Chief

The Bias Crimes Unit reviews all allegations of incidents of hate in the county to determine if a criminal case exists, and if so, whether the case will be prosecuted under the Hate Crime Statutes delineated in the NY State Penal Law. To make its determination, the unit works closely with prosecutors, criminal investigators and police departments—local, county or campus police—to insure a thorough investigation and an effective course of action are achieved, resulting in prosecution if warranted. In addition, the unit is involved in outreach and community education on bias and hate crimes.

Focusing on Youth

Through our school presentations, Assistant District Attorneys and staff teach our youth about crime prevention and the consequences of reckless behavior. In 2017, members of the DA's Office conducted 367 presentations at approximately 90 different schools in Westchester County.

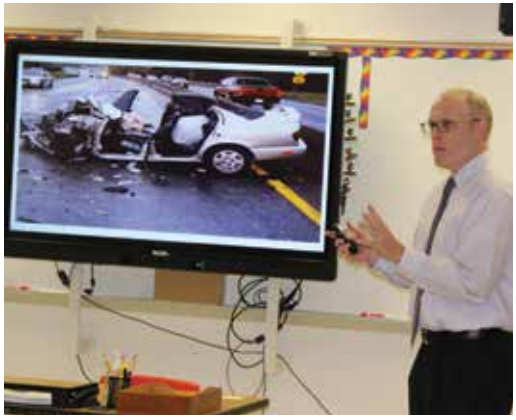
Court tours also offer students a glimpse of the criminal justice system in action, while our internships are designed to expose students considering a career in law to the day-to-day operations in the DA's Office.

STUDENT & FAMILY PRESENTATIONS

ADAs conduct presentations for students on various crime-related topics.

Greenburgh Branch Chief Adeel Mirza discusses the role of the DA's Office with participants of the Greenburgh PD Summer Youth Camp.

Assistant District Attorney Laura Forbes addressed a large group of Rye City School District parents about internet safety.



ADA Jonathan Strongin at Blind Brook High School stressing the dangers and consequences of driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

CAREER DAY

ADAs and criminal investigators participate in school-sponsored career events.

Several staff members took part in Mount Vernon High School's Career Day in April where they discussed their respective roles in the DA's Office. Pictured are Criminal Investigator Latheia Smith (left) and Chief Criminal Investigator Matt Tormey (right).

CRIMINAL COURT TOURS

ADAs explain the role of the District Attorney and the criminal justice system in Westchester County. Following this presentation, students will see real courtrooms and occasionally sit in on a criminal trial in progress.

Students from Yonkers Middle High School were welcomed to the Westchester County Courthouse for a tour by ADA Susan Brownbill-Vega who offered insight into what students might expect to see (pictured left). DA Scarpino also spent time with the students explaining the role of the DA's Office (pictured right).

INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

The DA encourages internships for law students, as well as college and high school students with a strong interest in learning about criminal justice. Seen here some of our summer interns.

SUMMER MOCK TRIALS

Under the supervision of the Training and Education Bureau, law school interns participated in the Office's first-ever mock trial program during the months of June and July. College interns also participated as witnesses and jurors. ADAs created the mock trial hypothetical, drafted jury instructions, the rules of participation, coached the teams, and acted as jurors and judges, one of whom was DA Scarpino. Eighteen law interns participated.

For more information, please visit http://www.westchesterda.net/contact-us/internship-program.

Special Events

HOLOCAUST COMMEMORATION

In April, the Holocaust & Human Rights Education Center and Westchester Jewish Council hosted the Annual Westchester Countywide Yom Hashoah Holocaust Commemoration, "Keeping the Memory Alive: Generation to Generation" at the Garden of Remembrance on Martine Avenue, White Plains.

LEGISLATIVE LUNCHEON

The DA's Office hosted its first Legislative Luncheon in September for elected officials who represent Westchester County in the New York State Senate and Assembly. DA Scarpino spoke on several important issues including our growing heroin and opioid epidemic, wage theft initiatives, domestic violence and issues surrounding our immigrant community.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ADVOCATES

In October, My Sisters' Place hosted its annual Fall Luncheon. The theme was "Human Trafficking: A Decade of Westchester Stories." While there, DA Scarpino spent time visiting with Jennifer Friedman, Managing Director of My Sisters' Place Center for Legal Services which provides victims of domestic violence and human trafficking greater access to legal protections and remedies crucial to their survival and safety.

MEMORIAL & AWARDS CEREMONY

The New Rochelle Police Department hosted its annual Memorial & Awards Ceremony in May with retired NYC Homicide Detective Randy Jurgensen as keynote speaker. Jurgensen (pictured left) is best known as the lead investigator into the murder of NYPD Patrolman Phil Cardillo. He is also the recipient of the Gold Shield for breaking a case that became known as "The Bag Murders."

CARDINAL'S VISIT

Archbishop Timothy Cardinal Dolan, of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York, visited with members of the DA's Office before celebrating the "Red Mass" at St. John the Evangelist Church in White Plains. The Cardinal credited prosecutors for the good work they do every day to ensure the public safety of our residents. The annual "Red Mass" is held for those whose work is related to seeking justice in the courts.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS BREAKFAST

DA Scarpino served as keynote speaker at the Annual Westchester Government Relations Legislative Breakfast in March where he discussed how the office investigates and prosecutes hate crimes and seeks to prevent acts of anti-Semitism. The breakfast was sponsored by UJA-Federation of New York and the Westchester Jewish Council.

LAW ENFORCEMENT TOURS COUNTY JAIL

In March, DA Scarpino and former Westchester County Department of Correction Commissioner Kevin Cheverko toured the grounds of the Valhalla facility.

Staff Sightings

The Westchester DA's softball team, the Brazen A's, enjoyed a competitive summer season and demonstrated great sportsmanship.

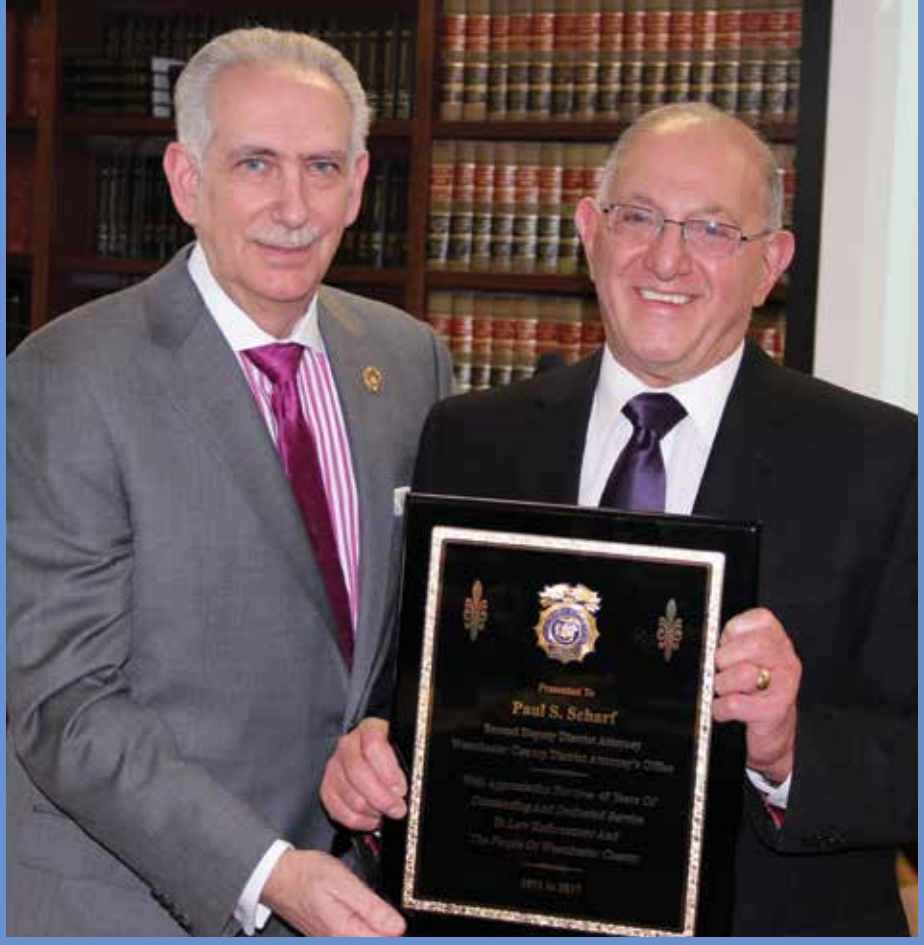
Lisbeth Marte, a domestic violence aide assigned to the Elder Abuse Unit in our Special Prosecutions Division, answered questions and offered other information at Senior Law Day in October.

Special Prosecutions Division Chief Fred Green (pictured third from right) serves on a panel on human trafficking at The Journal News in White Plains in May.

DA Scarpino visited with staff at our Yonkers Bureau following a news conference to announce the arrest of more than two dozen drug dealers in Yonkers.

First Deputy District Attorney Paul Noto addresses questions about the State's "Raise the Age" law at a meeting of The Journal News Editorial Board in May. Under the law, most juvenile defendants will have their cases handled by Family Court instead of Criminal Court.

Awards & Recognition



Paul Scharf, Local Criminal Courts and Grand Jury Division Chief, retired in March after a distinguished 46-year career with the DA's Office. DA Scarpino wished him a happy and healthy retirement and thanked him for his dedicated service to the residents of Westchester County.

ADA Paul Stein, Chief of the Child Abuse/Elder Abuse Bureau, was honored in June for 25 years of service to the Westchester DA's Office. He is pictured at the service awards breakfast with DA Scarpino (left) and former County Executive Rob Astorino (right).

Public Information & News

WESTCHESTERDA.NET

The Westchester County District Attorney's Office is here to serve the people of Westchester. One of our responsibilities is to inform our communities about law enforcement initiatives, educational opportunities and the services we provide to victims of crimes and their families.

The DA launched a new website to inform county residents of our activities and services. Among the topics: About the Office, the Trial Process including a glossary of terms, Victim's Services and a link to report a crime, Crime Prevention initiatives and contacts, Community Outreach educational programs for schools, community groups and law enforcement agencies, as well as press releases, photos from community events and other media. On the website, you may also register to receive our e-newsletter.

ENGAGE WITH THE DA'S OFFICE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Westchester County District Attorney's Office

@WestchesterDA

CALL US

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District Attorney's Office
914-995-3414

MEDIA CONTACT

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Public Information Officer
914-995-3586
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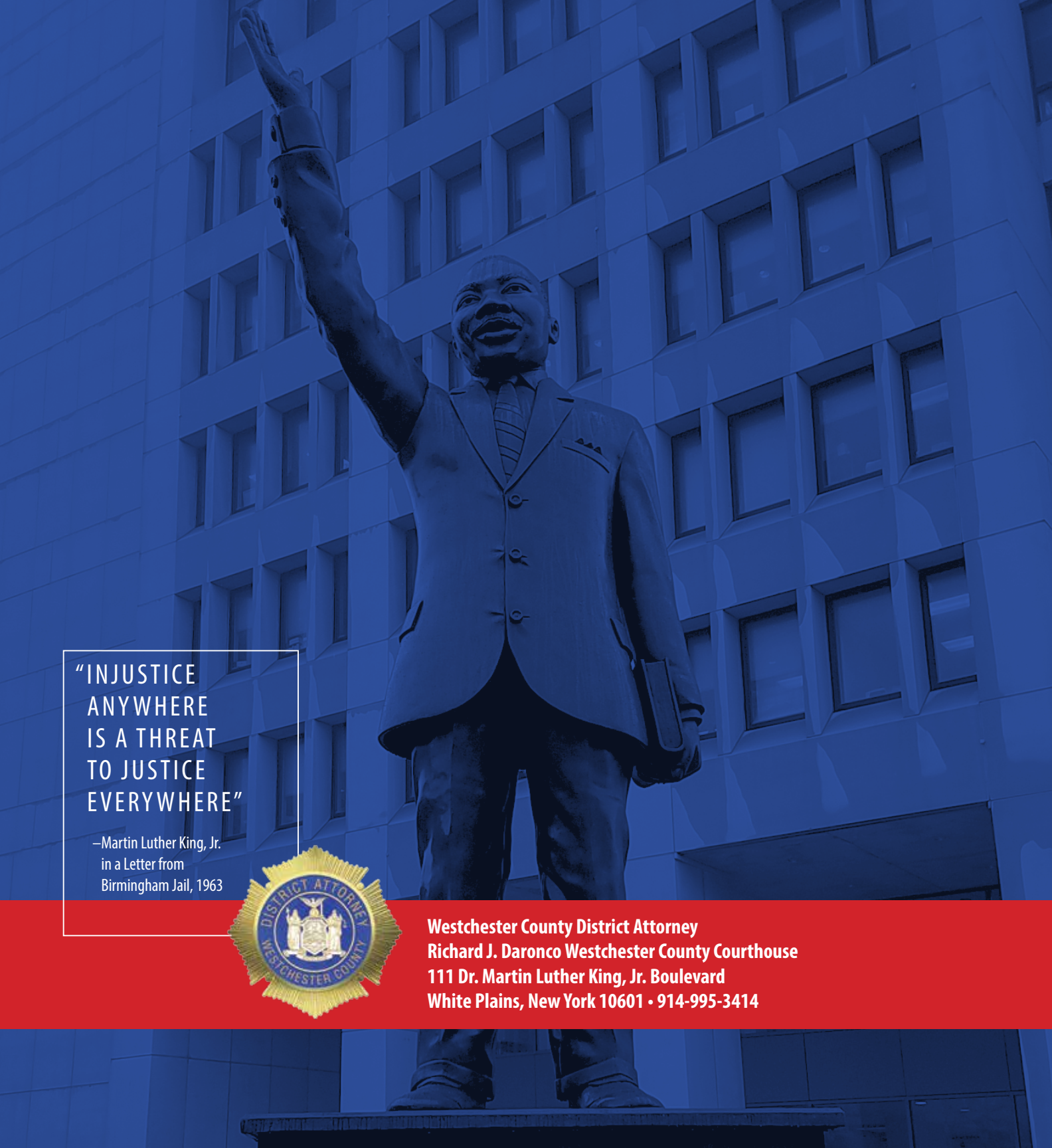

"INJUSTICE ANYWHERE IS A THREAT TO JUSTICE EVERYWHERE"

–Martin Luther King, Jr. in a Letter from Birmingham Jail, 1963

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