



# OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, MARYLAND

Anne Colt Leitess, State's Attorney



## Anne Arundel Justice

A Monthly News Digest from the Office of the State's Attorney for Anne Arundel County

### A Message from Anne Arundel County State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess

#### Greetings!

Welcome to the April 2022 edition of Anne Arundel Justice!

On Monday, April 25, our office will recognize the remarkable service of both individual citizens and law enforcement professionals who are integral in supporting victims of crimes during our **21<sup>st</sup> Annual National Crime Victims' Rights Week Awards Ceremony**. This year's theme, "Rights, Access, Equity, For All Victims," underscores the significance of the many allies necessary to provide justice to those impacted by violence.

Helping others during one of the lowest points in their lives is no easy feat. While we all depend on trained professionals to help victims and their families throughout the legal process, there are individuals who go the extra mile in doing their jobs with remarkable empathy, caring and commitment that should be recognized. Individual community members have also demonstrated that doing the right thing at the right time can make all the difference. I would like to thank the following individuals who we will celebrate for their commitment to our community as they embody the qualities that make our county a great one.

This year's awardees:

- Corporal Ryan McGeeney, Anne Arundel County Police Department
- Keith Cyphers, Community Member
- Sgt. Brian Williams, Anne Arundel County Sheriff's Department
- Corporal Danelo Sobers, Anne Arundel County Police Department
- Detective Greg Lesane, Anne Arundel County Police Department
- Corporal Barry Byers, Retired, Annapolis Sheriff's Department
- Corporal Jason DiPietro, Anne Arundel County Police Department
- Meredith Bass & Matt Reilly, Community members

And, Detective Kala Jennings, who will receive the Warren B. Duckett, Jr. Memorial Commitment to Justice Award for her years of service and dedication as a domestic violence detective with Anne Arundel County Police Department.

We will also recognize the enormous contributions to the investigation and prosecution in the Capital Gazette attack of June 28, 2018 by the following agencies: **Annapolis City Police and Fire Departments, Anne Arundel County Police and Fire Departments, Anne**

## Arundel County Sheriff's Department and the FBI.

The ceremony will be held at Acton's Cove Waterfront Park at 14 South St., Annapolis at 3 p.m. The rain date will be on Wednesday, April 27 at the same time and location. The event is open to the public and will last approximately 1 hour.

If you cannot attend, you can watch the event live on the Anne Arundel County State's Attorney's Office Facebook page.

In this month's newsletter, you'll learn more about three cases our Special Victims Unit prosecuted involving child sexual abuse cases with the defendants collectively receiving 83 years of active incarceration as well as an MS-13 gang member who was convicted and sentenced for second degree murder.

Be sure to follow our social media channels for the latest news and information and subscribe to our newsletter, Anne Arundel Justice, on our website.

- AnneArundelSAO on Instagram and Twitter
- Anne Arundel County State's Attorney's Office on Facebook

As always, thank you for your continued support!

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### **MS-13 Gang Member Receives 30 Years for Second Degree Murder**

Cristian Pleitez-Tejada, 23, of Edgewater was sentenced to 30 years of active incarceration for the second degree murder of Jose Salvador Mancía Aguilar, announced Anne Arundel County State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess.

The defendant entered a guilty plea on October 14, 2021.

"The defendant had an ongoing disagreement with the victim and sought him out at a local restaurant to attack him, unprovoked and without warning. He then fled the state so he wouldn't be caught. I am grateful that the judge recognized the defendant's dangerousness as a verified gang member, and sentenced him to the maximum sentence for this crime," said State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess. "It's my hope that this outcome provides the victim's family and friends some peace as they have suffered a terrible loss."

Assistant State's Attorneys Glen Neubauer and Brian Pritchard prosecuted this case on behalf of the citizens of Anne Arundel County.

Click [here](#) to read more.

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### **Glen Burnie Man Receives 20 Years for Sexual Abuse of a Minor**

Nathaniel Williams, 39, of Glen Burnie was sentenced to 20 years of active incarceration for sexual abuse of a minor. A jury found the defendant guilty on September 23, 2021, stated Anne Arundel County State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess.

"It's heartbreaking that an innocent child was abused by someone who was supposed to be a trusted caregiver," said State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess. "I am grateful for the courage this young survivor had to tell family members about the abuse. Sexual abuse or exploitation of a minor is a crime that must be revealed to stop it. If you or someone you know may be a victim of abuse, please reach out to a trusted adult or [contact](#) the Sexual Assault Crisis Center and Hotline at 410-222-6800."

Assistant State's Attorney Anastasia Prigge prosecuted this case on behalf of the citizens of Anne Arundel County.

Click [here](#) to read more.

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## Convicted Felon Receives 45 Years for Sexual Abuse of a Minor

Mark Thoms, 41, pled guilty and was sentenced to 45 years of active incarceration for one count of sex abuse of a minor and one count of sex abuse of a minor, a continuing course of conduct. This sentence will run concurrent with the former Mary Moss employees' 30-year sentence from 2021 in which he pled guilty to sex abuse of a minor student. Another sentence of 10 years of active incarceration for two cases in 2020 for second degree assault, sex abuse of a minor and third degree sexual assault will also run concurrent, said Anne Arundel County State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess.

"In every facet of his life, the defendant used his power and proximity to the minor victims to sexually abuse them and sadly, no spaces or places where minor victims were located was off limits to the defendant," said State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess. "As this case concludes and the victims continue to heal from this disturbing abuse, it's my hope that this additional sentence - coupled with professional resources and support from family and friends – will provide them with some peace. The defendant is no longer a threat to the public safety and I believe he will never be released from prison now with this additional sentence. It's never easy to talk about or report sexual abuse but if you or someone you know are a victim of this crime, please speak with a trusted adult or [call](#) the Sexual Assault Crisis Center and Hotline at 410-222-6800."

Assistant State's Attorney Maria Stamidis prosecuted this case on behalf of the citizens of Anne Arundel County.

Click [here](#) to read more.

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## Great Uncle Receives 18 Years for Sexual Abuse of Niece

Dennis Moreno, 55, of Norwalk, Calif. entered an Alford plea to one count of sex abuse of a minor and was sentenced to 18 years of active incarceration on March 24, 2022, said Anne Arundel County State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess.

"It's beyond devastating that a child's great uncle would not only abuse his own niece, but also that he was given this kind of access to her despite their extended family's knowledge of his history of abusing another child in the family. Instead of reporting him perhaps preventing the abuse of this victim, the defendant's family looked the other way," said State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess. "The victim, now a teenager, lived with this pain for years as the defendant exploited and abused her as he had done to her older cousin. It is because of her remarkable strength in coming forward, that the defendant will finally be held accountable for his despicable actions. This victim, and her cousin, now 32 years old, both suffered from the inaction of people who stood silent and did nothing to protect them."

Assistant State's Attorney Maria Stamidis prosecuted this case on behalf of the citizens of Anne Arundel County.

Click [here](#) to read more.

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