



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 June 2022 edition of Anne Arundel Justice!

Today, marks the four year anniversary of the attack on the *Capital Gazette* Newsroom and a day when our community was forever changed.

On June 28, 2018, a lone gunman with a grudge shot through the office doors of our community's beloved daily newspaper located at 888 Bestgate Road. There, he murdered Gerald Fischman, Rob Hiaasen, John McNamara, Rebecca Smith and Wendi Winters and injured several others as they tried to escape. The perpetrator attempted to claim that he was Not Criminally Responsible for his crimes, but an Anne Arundel County jury saw through his sham defense and put an end to his attempt to make the trial a circus. He was sentenced to five consecutive life terms without the possibility of parole and did not file an appeal. While his cowardly act took the lives of five remarkable individuals way too soon, it never silenced their voices. At the **Guardians of the First Amendment** memorial in downtown Annapolis, we will lay wreaths and remember the five members of our community who touched so many people. They will live on forever in our hearts and memories. I was truly honored to represent them in court and seek justice on their behalf. The family members and the survivors of this attack continue to heal from this terrible event. I am in awe of their resilience and I admire their strength as they honor their colleagues' memories and continue to "Put out a damn paper."

Recently, I received two awards for my contributions to the justice system. Earlier this month, I was presented with the 2022 Anne Arundel County Bar Association's Trustees Award for "outstanding service to the bar association and the legal community." Last week, I was honored to receive the Anti-Defamation League's SHIELD Award for my successful prosecution of Joseph Leissler, the leader of the Aryan Brotherhood, who orchestrated the murder of another inmate from a rival gang. Our office was also recognized for our work in prosecuting a total of four people in this multi-year gang

violence case which resulted in the weakening of its organization and dismantling its leadership. I would like to thank Sergeant Christopher Taylor (Maryland State Police) and former Anne Arundel County Assistant State's Attorneys Samantha Mildenberg and Judge Theresa Morse for their contributions to the case and congratulate them for their awards as well.

As I reflect on the anniversary of the *Capital Gazette* shooting and these two awards, it reaffirms my purpose to be a voice for the voiceless and pursue justice for victims and their families. I am fortunate to serve the community I love and glad that I can continue to have a positive impact as the county's prosecutor.

Enclosed, you'll learn more about the conviction of a repeat felon who was found guilty of attempted first degree rape in the home invasion of a 74-year-old woman; the successful prosecution of a Glen Burnie man convicted of second degree murder, and lastly, the recent arrival of Shantae Elliott-Lucas, a Licensed Certified Professional Counselor, who will lead our grant-funded Juvenile Justice Therapeutic Crisis Intervention Program.

Be sure to follow our Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages for the latest news and click [here](#) to receive our newsletter, Anne Arundel Justice.

As always, thank you for your continued support!

Convicted Felon Found Guilty of Attempted First Degree Rape in the Home Invasion of 74-Year-Old Woman

On June 22, a jury found Paul Harell, 50, guilty of all charges in the attempted first degree rape and home invasion of a 74-year-old woman as she lay in bed at her home. The other counts were first degree assault and use of a deadly weapon. Harell had worked for a cleaning company that had cleaned the victim's home just a few days before he returned in the early morning hours and broke into her home.

The defendant will be sentenced on August 30, 2022 and faces up to a life sentence, plus 58 years for his crimes. Harell had previously been convicted of three counts of rape in 1993 in Washington State. He served 16 years in prison and was then civilly committed to the custody of the state as a sexually violent predator following his prison sentence.

"Justice was served as the defendant was found guilty of all charges," said State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess. "I'm thankful that a witness observed a possible suspect vehicle and gave a highly detailed description to county police. Just a few hours after the attack, Officer Slattery observed a vehicle matching the description and photographed it and identified the driver after detaining him briefly in an investigative stop. Shortly thereafter, Detective Klaplaska and Detective Cunningham investigated the suspect's medical treatment after locating a receipt from a clinic in his car. The victim had fought off her attacker and scratched him during the struggle. These injuries, coupled with the suspect's DNA found on her hands were crucial evidence. Most importantly, I hope that the brave survivor of this disturbing crime will gain a sense of peace knowing that we intend to seek the maximum sentence and remove the defendant once and for all from the community."

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

Click [here](#) to read more.

Glen Burnie Man Sentence to 22 Years for Second Degree Murder after Dice Game

Israel Thompson, 19, of Glen Burnie was sentenced to 22 years of active incarceration with the first five years to be served without parole and five years' supervised probation upon his release in the shooting death of Marc Hill, announced Anne Arundel County State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess. The defendant and victim had participated in a dice game that soon turned deadly after an argument between the two.

The defendant pled guilty to second degree murder and use of a firearm in a crime of violence on April 28, 2022 and was sentenced on June 10, 2022.

"Following a brief physical altercation between them, the defendant decided to shoot the victim in retaliation and then stole a nearby vehicle in an effort to flee the scene," said State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess. "I'm relieved that the defendant is no longer on the streets and is being held accountable for his actions. I extend my heartfelt condolences to the loved ones of Mr. Hill."

Assistant State's Attorney April Skrenczuk prosecuted the case on behalf of the citizens of Anne Arundel County.

Click [here](#) to read more.

State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess Announces Licensed Counselor Shantae Elliot-Lucas Will Lead Juvenile Justice Therapeutic Crisis Intervention Program

Recently, Anne Arundel County State's Attorney Anne Colt Leitess announced the hiring of Ms. Shantae Elliott-Lucas who will lead the Office of the State's Attorney's newly formed Juvenile Justice Therapeutic Crisis Intervention Program.

Ms. Elliott-Lucas, a Licensed Certified Professional Counselor, will collaborate with the State's Attorney's Office, along with Anne Arundel County Schools, Department of Juvenile Services, Anne Arundel County Police Department and the Anne Arundel County Mental Health Agency's Crisis Response System to identify juvenile offenders in crisis, assess and connect those youths and their families to trauma informed critical services and provide case management and counseling as needed. The goal of this two-year grant funded program is to assist youth in grades six through nine by providing intervention services that will reduce their risk of becoming involved in criminal activity and increase the likelihood that they will remain in school. Ms. Elliott-Lucas will work with Anne Arundel County Schools and other agencies to identify students who may benefit from counseling and mentorship. She will also connect them to holistic services such as the Anne Arundel County School's Behavioral Support Services, mental health or drug

evaluations, treatment and trauma informed therapy. The program aims to assist at least 20 students per month and will report its efforts and progress to the U.S. Department of Justice which provided the grant funding.

“I am extremely pleased that our office has the ability to serve young people during a time that they are vulnerable and may be at risk for committing criminal offenses. We want to intervene during this critical time,” said State’s Attorney Anne Colt Leitess. “Negative choices can adversely impact their entire future. Under the leadership of Ms. Elliott-Lucas, we hope that this program will help support their needs and development. Each child deserves a chance and it’s my hope that by providing these resources and working with our partnering agencies, each child will thrive and do better in the community.”

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