

News Release from
The Honorable Sandra Doorley
Monroe County District Attorney

May 29, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COORDINATOR: Calli Marianetti

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**DOORLEY ANNOUNCES THE CREATION OF THE MONROE COUNTY
DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S CONVICTION INTEGRITY UNIT**

The Monroe County Conviction Integrity Unit Will Investigate Claims of Innocence

Rochester, NY – Wednesday, May 29, 2019 -- Monroe County District Attorney Sandra Doorley released the details of the Monroe County District Attorney's Conviction Integrity Unit. This includes a group of nine members, including a Conviction Integrity Unit (CIU) Coordinator, three Assistant District Attorneys, a current or retired defense attorney or retired judge, a current or former investigator of the Rochester Police Department, a current or former investigator of the Monroe County Sheriff's Office, a current or former investigator of a law enforcement agency, a civilian volunteer from the community and one alternate.

All incoming letters claiming innocence on behalf of convicted defendants, and all New York State Criminal Procedure Law 440 motions claiming actual innocence will be forwarded to and reviewed by the CIU Coordinator. Claims of actual innocence based upon newly discovered evidence, misidentification, witness recantation, informant/truthfulness, and meaningful claims of alibi will be forwarded to the CIU Coordinator for review. These claims will also be forwarded to the First Assistant District Attorney for review. The First Assistant District Attorney will conduct an additional review, separate and apart from the CIU Coordinator and will issue his/her findings to the CIU Coordinator. The CIU Coordinator will decide what claims shall actually go to the Committee. Motions requesting scientific testing will be reviewed by the CIU Coordinator and brought before the Committee.

In a case where the necessary level of review causes it to come before the Committee, there will be an initial review of the facts of the case and the grounds currently alleged. After such initial review, the Committee will take whatever additional actions are reasonably necessary to resolve the claim. This may mean that a full re-investigation is warranted.

"I, along with members of my staff, have been working on establishing a thorough, effective Conviction Integrity Unit for months," said Monroe County District Attorney Sandra Doorley. "At the Monroe County District Attorney's Office we aim for justice, not incarcerating as many people as possible. Convicting innocent people is a horrifying concept and a Conviction Integrity Unit can help with a fair and just Criminal Justice System here in Monroe County. Wrongful convictions lead to wrongful acquittals and the structure we have created of the Monroe County District Attorney's Conviction Integrity Unit allows for oversight while reviewing claims of innocence. I believe in independence, flexibility, transparency and integrity for the Unit, and by having the current members committed to this, it will be achieved."

At its creation, the current members of the Conviction Integrity Unit include:

1. Coordinator: Special Assistant District Attorney Dan Gross
 2. Assistant District Attorney Michelle Crowley, Director of Attorney Training and the Grand Jury Bureau
 3. Assistant District Attorney Elizabeth Buckley, Chief of the Sex Crimes Unit
 4. Assistant District Attorney Michael Harrigan, Deputy Chief of the Major Felony Bureau
 5. Steven Peglow, Retired MCSO Investigator and currently Office of Professional Integrity Investigator
 6. James McCauley, Camp Good Days
 7. Wayne Harris, Retired Deputy Chief, Rochester Police Department
 8. Lynde Johnston, Retired Captain, Rochester Police Department
 9. Honorable Joseph Valentino, Retired Justice of the Supreme Court
- Alternate: Rev. Deloris Simpson

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