

# ON THE JOB

CRIMINAL JUSTICE UPDATE

COVER STORY

## A COLD CASE is not a closed case

Attorney General Dave Yost meets with relatives of Robert Mullins — brother David Mullins, center, and nephew Christopher Mullins Jr. — after a press conference announcing that skeletal remains found 31 years ago in Pickaway County had been identified as Roberts'.

### Relentless investigators and forensic scientists, advances in DNA analysis unravel mystery of remains found 31 years ago

For more than 30 years, family members of Robert Mullins held out hope that one day he would show up at their door. Maybe the 21-year-old had left Columbus to start a new life somewhere else — in Florida or Mexico, perhaps. His relatives could see him doing that.

Whatever the case, his sudden disappearance and prolonged absence cast an increasingly dark cloud over the family as months and then years piled up. His mother, Catherine, hired an investigator and, as a last resort, consulted psychics. When she died eight years ago, her heart remained broken, the mystery she'd struggled with since the late 1980s still unresolved.

Thanks to dramatic advances in DNA analysis, the dedication of two generations of investigators, and the partnership of BCI's DNA lab, the Mullins family finally received closure in December: Skeletal remains that hunters found in November 1991 in a shallow grave in a Pickaway County farm field were identified as those of Robert Mullins.

"It's shocking and sad, and nobody wants to get news like this," said David Mullins of Columbus. "But it's a blessing to know they didn't give up on my little brother and are still working to find out who did this to him."

Investigators traveled a long, difficult road to restore Robert Mullins' identity, but they had to wait for the road to be completed before they could get to where they needed to go.

At the time that the bones were found, forensic DNA analysis was in its infancy; the first use of this science in a U.S. criminal court had taken place only four years earlier, in 1987. In fact, the forensic tool that would finally solve the mystery — called genetic genealogy — wouldn't be introduced until 2018, a full 27 years after the bones were discovered.

Lt. Dale Parish of the Pickaway County Sheriff's Office and County Coroner Dr. Michael Geron — both now retired — were central to the investigation from the start. A thorough examination of the site yielded only the skeleton, minus the skull; no clothes or other items that might have helped identify the remains were found.

Parish and Geron quickly enlisted the help of a Purdue University researcher who, based on his knowledge of insects found at the burial site, estimated that the body had been in the ground for no more than three years.

With the start of a timeline in place, the next step was to determine the physical



One of my top priorities since taking office has been to ensure that our law enforcement officers always get the advanced training they need to keep up with the demands and stay ahead of the dangers of the job.

By that I mean all sworn officers, every year, so they can be at the forefront of their profession.

It's just common sense. Think of it in sports terms. You wouldn't expect your school team to become the best in the state if the players couldn't practice after their freshman year.

The answer is annual, state-paid continuing professional training, or CPT.

Last year, the law enforcement community got a taste of what that would look like, thanks to a \$15 million pilot program the legislature approved and OPOTA administered. All told, more than 30,000 peace officers and troopers were required to take 24 hours of CPT in 2022. The state paid agencies up to 50% for the time their officers spent in training, and the agencies picked up the rest.

In December, before recessing for the year-end holidays, the legislature extended this pilot program by approving additional CPT funds through June 2023, when the fiscal year ends and a new state budget takes effect.

That's good news, but it doesn't solve the bigger problem, which is this: Funding for annual CPT in Ohio has been unpredictable. Last year was the exception, not the norm. Even though 24 hours of CPT is technically mandated every year under state law, the same law says agencies can't require CPT if the legislature doesn't set aside money to pay for it. That's a big loophole, and when hard decisions about balancing the state budget have to be made, CPT funding, unfortunately, has typically been sacrificed.

That's why I'm working with the administration and law enforcement partners to urge the General Assembly to create a permanent, sustainable fund that fully pays for CPT every year. Other states have adopted various



permanent funding models, and I'm hopeful Ohio's lawmakers will follow suit this year.

A permanent CPT fund for Ohio's peace officers would accomplish two things. First, it would make our cops better prepared and our citizens safer. Second, it would eliminate the need for lawmakers to make CPT funding decisions every two years as part of the budget process.

It's time we got this done, and I'll be working like hell to see that it happens on my watch.

Yours,  
  
 Dave Yost  
 Ohio Attorney General

# Rapid-drug-testing pilot program continues to expand

## Portable mass spectrometer gives law enforcement quick results

A pilot program that makes it possible for law enforcement officers to test suspected drugs in the field — in a matter of minutes — continues to expand and is moving into its final stages.

Beginning this month, officers from select law enforcement agencies in southeast Ohio will be trained to use a portable mass spectrometer — a cutting-edge device called MX908 — that can analyze suspected drugs virtually immediately. Until recently, such an analysis could be conducted only in a laboratory and typically took weeks.

“The same way breathalyzers helped us crack down on drunken drivers, the 908s will help us combat drug offenders and traffickers,” Attorney General Dave Yost said. “This has the potential to revolutionize how drug testing is done in Ohio.”

Southeast Ohio is the final region in the statewide rollout of the rapid-drug-testing pilot program, which Yost's office launched in October 2021 in conjunction with the Bureau of Criminal Investigation, an arm of the AG's office. Training in southeast Ohio will begin at a handful of agencies and then be expanded as demand dictates.

Through mid-December, BCI had delivered nine 908 devices to agencies in the state and trained 179 peace officers from 99 law enforcement agencies spanning 53 counties. In January, additional devices will be placed at host locations serving southwest Ohio.

Each device is hosted by a single agency and is intended to be shared with neighboring agencies whose officers have been trained. The goal is to have enough 908s so access to one is never more than an hour's drive away.

To use the spectrometer, an officer simply collects a sample on a swab and inserts it into the 908. The resulting chemical fingerprint of the sample is then compared to a target list of known drug substances.

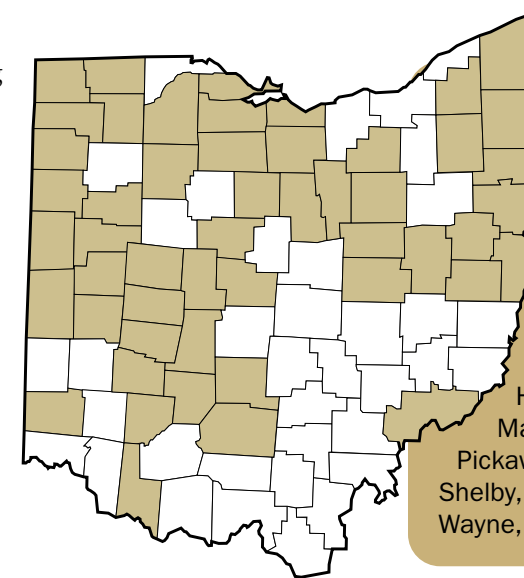
The pilot program is focused on identifying methamphetamine, cocaine and marked pharmaceutical pills. Positive results for these drugs do not need to be verified by the BCI lab.

The device can also identify drugs such as fentanyl and similar opioids. Samples of these compounds, however, must be sent to BCI for chemical qualitative analysis, as they are not part of the pilot program. The validation work is an essential step in testing the accuracy of the device in real-life scenarios. When officers utilize

the “reachback” service offered by the vendor and included in the pilot program to review the results of the test, the accuracy rate of the device has been shown to exceed 99%.

Because of their proven reliability, the 908 devices give officers the ability to establish probable cause and detain a suspect immediately, whereas previously they would have had to send a sample to a crime lab and wait for results before making an arrest — provided the suspect could be found.

The pilot was funded largely with federal grant dollars. The agencies invited for training were selected based on the volume of evidence they had submitted to BCI for analysis over a 12-month period. They also needed the backing of their county prosecutor, so 908 results would be defended in court.



### Participating counties

Counties in gold indicate where officers have been trained to use the MX908 and have the backing of their county prosecutor: Allen, Ashland, Ashtabula, Auglaize, Brown, Butler, Carroll, Champaign, Clark, Clinton, Columbiana, Coshocton, Crawford, Darke, Defiance, Delaware, Erie, Fayette, Fulton, Geauga, Greene, Hancock, Harrison, Henry, Holmes, Huron, Jefferson, Logan, Mahoning, Madison, Marion, Medina, Mercer, Miami, Ottawa, Paulding, Pickaway, Portage, Richland, Ross, Sandusky, Seneca, Shelby, Trumbull, Tuscarawas, Union, Van Wert, Washington, Wayne, Williams and Wood.

### A UNION COUNTY SUCCESS STORY

Because law enforcement officers had access to a portable MX908 mass spectrometer, a driver who was pulled over by the Highway Patrol in Union County and was believed to be carrying a stash of illegal drugs landed in jail almost as soon as he was stopped.

Had there been no 908 available, the trooper would have been required to send a sample of the substance to the Highway Patrol crime lab for chemical analysis, during which time — a matter of weeks typically — the suspect might have remained free.

Instead, the 908 results confirmed the presence of methamphetamine, and Jonathan Flack — who has a long history of drug offenses, including trafficking — was arrested, hauled to jail and later sentenced to prison for up to 22 years.

“No longer do we have to ‘catch and release,’” Union County Prosecutor David Phillips said. “The MX908 allowed us to test the seized drugs almost immediately and then assure the court that Flack was a major drug trafficker. We were able to keep him locked up, thanks to the 908.”

The drugs were tested by task force member Detective Seth McDowell of the Union County Sheriff's Office, one of the agencies participating in the 908 pilot program.



**ON THE JOB**  
 CRIMINAL JUSTICE UPDATE

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attributes of the victim and then cross-reference the information with missing-person reports. Unfortunately, because the state of forensic anthropology was nowhere near as advanced as it is today, investigators were misdirected: Two professors had concluded the remains were female, about 25 years old. What threw them was the victim's small size, somewhere between 5 feet 1 and 5 feet 4.

For Lt. Parish, the two decades from 1991 to 2011 amounted to a quest for any lead that might advance the investigation. Early on, the bones were sent to the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) and the FBI lab, but extracting a usable sample of DNA proved difficult.

A major break came in 2012, when BCI sent the bones to the Center for Human Identification at the University of North Texas, one of the leading DNA testing sites in the nation. The results were jaw-dropping: The victim was actually a male, one who likely had ancestors from the Indian subcontinent. The university staff uploaded its profile to CODIS, the national DNA database that the FBI established in the late 1990s, but no hits turned up.

Fast forward to May 2019, when persistence and coincidence ran headlong into each other, changing the course of the investigation. The occasion was the annual Ohio State Coroners Association meeting. Dr. John Ellis, who by that time had succeeded Dr. Geron as Pickaway County coroner, happened to hear a presentation about unidentified remains by BCI's DNA lab manager, Kristen Slaper. Afterward, he caught up with her and BCI Criminal Intelligence Analyst Jennifer Lester and told them about the box of bones in his evidence locker. He described it as his office's "unicorn case" — mysterious and elusive.

DNA technology had advanced exponentially by this time, and Slaper's first priority was to attempt to extract a large enough sample from the bones so it could be sent to a specialized lab for further testing. Lester, meanwhile, supported the Pickaway County sheriff's and coroner's offices, making sure the case was included in BCI's Project LINK, dedicated to finding missing persons.

"Bone is a very hard substance to get DNA out of," Slaper said. "The cells are flattened. There's a lot of calcium. And as the bones become porous and dry out, the DNA degrades. That was the state these bones were in."

Slaper's lab processed some of the bones but did not get a profile. After discussion with various forensic scientists, another section of the BCI



The work of the Pickaway County sheriff's and coroner's offices spanned two generations in solving the Robert Mullins mystery. The efforts of four men were particularly notable: From left, Lt. Johnathan Strawser, detective bureau commander; former Pickaway County Coroner Dr. Michael Geron; retired detective bureau commander Lt. Dale Parish; and Pickaway County Coroner Dr. John Ellis.

Lab — the unit that does massively parallel sequencing of DNA — worked on the remains.

"They took the bones, created some bone dust for us and we extracted a couple of more samples. We still didn't have a great amount of DNA, but there was enough sample to send out for advanced testing to a lab that specializes in working with limited amounts of DNA."

In this case, advanced testing meant whole genome sequencing, a process that would map all 3 billion pieces of John Doe's genetic code, something BCI couldn't do in-house. So the Pickaway County team and BCI turned to a company called HudsonAlpha.

Not long after, in 2021, Lt. Johnathan Strawser, the new commander of the Pickaway County Sheriff's Office detective bureau, met with Coroner Ellis to revisit the case. Neither man was involved when the case began in 1991 (Strawser was 10 years old), but their predecessors had hammered home their desire to solve it.

With HudsonAlpha having sequenced the victim's full genome, they decided to pursue another avenue to identify the remains: genetic genealogy, a fairly new technique first used in 2018 to convict the Golden State Killer, a California rapist and murderer. At its core, genetic genealogy is simple — build an enormous family tree — but the process is painstaking.

Experts compare a DNA profile from John Doe to DNA profiles that have been uploaded by private citizens and are available on various databases. The more DNA segments that any two people have in common, generally, the more closely related they are to each other. From there, the process involves a massive search of public records to determine how everybody is related.

Such an investigative tactic would have been impossible before the rise of companies such as Ancestry and 23andMe, and before the popularity of consumer DNA testing in general.

After consulting with Slaper and other BCI forensic scientists, the Pickaway County officials contracted with Amanda Reno at AdvanceDNA, a company that BCI had worked with in the past.

Using the profile provided by HudsonAlpha — a data file that can consist of up to a million lines of code — Reno uploaded the information to GEDmatch and FamilyTreeDNA for comparison. Each of these companies offers a central database where people who have tested at Ancestry or 23andMe or a similar consumer-testing company can upload their DNA profile for comparison against others who have done the same.

Equally important, GEDmatch and FamilyTreeDNA allow law enforcement agencies to upload samples from violent crimes or for unidentified decedents. Other companies do not. Between the two companies, nearly 2 million people have given permission for law enforcement to check samples against their profiles.

Each site provided a long list of matches — some "matches" amounting to only a single tiny segment of common DNA. Reno winnowed the list to the 40 DNA profiles that seemed most relevant, the closest possible relative being a third cousin. From there, she started to build out a family tree for each of the individuals to see how the branches connected. After nine months of work, she was looking at 4,000 names.

"You have to plot every single person," Reno said. "Every person matters, because if one person is missing, it could be the person we're trying to identify. So we have to painstakingly

go through and validate thousands of records, some of which are hundreds of years old — obituaries, census records, court files, all types of public records that might help us connect our matches.

"Our research stretched into Virginia, Kentucky, Canada and all the way to England. Eventually, we were able to develop a specific profile for our unidentified individual. We needed a father with deep roots in the Appalachian region of Virginia and a mother with immediate connections to England and India."

Reno contacted eight of the distant relatives; each volunteered additional family information, and some volunteered to share access to their results at Ancestry and 23andMe. Through one of these matches, Reno made a discovery: Deep in the DNA match list was a man named Christopher Mullins Jr. from central Ohio. She clicked on his name for more information and uncovered her best lead: Christopher listed his paternal grandmother's birthplace as India.

Soon after, in November, Lt. Strawser and Reno met with Christopher Mullins and one of his uncles, David Mullins, who had moved back to Columbus and was living with his nephew. They learned that Christopher — about six years earlier, shortly after the birth of one of his children — had had his DNA analyzed through 23andMe. He quickly agreed to upload his 23andMe profile to GEDmatch for comparison. Within minutes, Reno was able to tell him that he was a nephew of the man whom law enforcement had been trying to identify for 31 years.

John Doe had his name back: Robert Mullins.

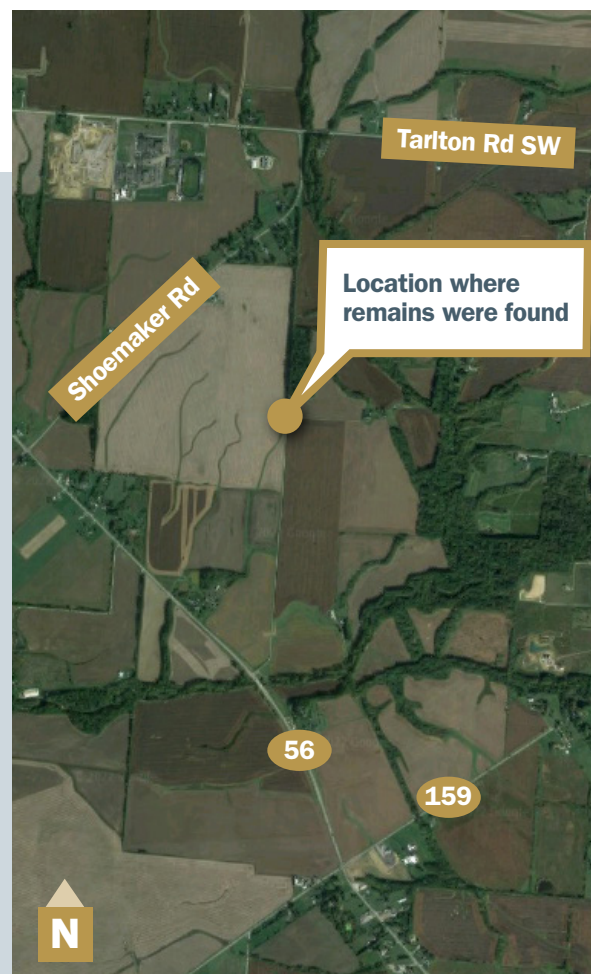
All the pieces fit. David's mother and Christopher's grandmother, Catherine, had been born in India to an Indian mother and a British father. When Catherine's father died, her mother moved the family from India to England, where Catherine married a U.S. service member. The young man from the Appalachian hills of Virginia later deserted the family before Robert, the youngest of six kids, even had a chance to know him.

Ultimately, DNA provided by David Mullins confirmed that the remains were those of his little brother.

"What a tragedy to die unknown, to not have a name to put on a memorial," Ohio Attorney General Dave Yost said. "Thanks to the teamwork and persistence of two generations of investigators, coroners and forensic scientists over the course of three decades, the mystery has been solved for Robert Mullins and his family. The fact of the matter is, a cold case is not a closed case. Now we can get on with the work of finding out who did this to him."

The case remains an open homicide investigation with the Pickaway County Sheriff's Office.

Sheriff Matthew Hafey, who has been in office for two years, said the dedication of his team reflects the attitude that his predecessor, Sheriff Dwight Radcliff, brought to the case: "We don't give up."



## THE POWER OF GENETIC GENEALOGY

Law enforcement uses genetic genealogy to identify anonymous remains and to solve violent criminal cases in which an unknown suspect has left DNA.

The process is twofold. First, it involves taking a DNA extract through a specialized type of DNA testing, either developing what is called a SNP panel or doing whole genome sequencing. Second, it involves comparing that specialized DNA profile to samples from millions of consumers who have made their DNA information available to GEDmatch and FamilyTreeDNA and permitted law enforcement to see their data.

BCI's DNA Lab does not conduct the specialized DNA testing for developing a SNP panel in-house. Instead BCI partners with local law enforcement agencies to send samples developed at BCI to external private laboratories. Since 2018, BCI has sent out 34 cases, and 21 of those have been solved. Several other cases are still in progress.

"We have a solve rate a little above 60%, and that will go up if we officially confirm some of the other cases that are pending."

— Kristen Slaper  
DNA Lab manager

- 1991** Hunters find skeletal remains in a shallow grave along a private farm lane.
- 2012** University of North Texas determines remains are male, not female as first thought.
- 2019** BCI is able to extract DNA sample large enough for advanced testing.
- 2021** Investigators turn to genetic genealogy.
- 2022** AdvanceDNA provides Pickaway County officials a strong lead exactly 31 years after bones were discovered.  
DNA from family member confirms Robert Mullins' identity.





Mansfield Police Chief Keith Porch, left, and Assistant Chief Jason Bammann welcome Allysson Nead onto the force.

Credit: Nead family photo

# Welcome to the Blue family, kid

## Mansfield PD makes dream come true for 5-year-old who 'always wanted to be a cop'

Sept. 7 was a big day for 5-year-old Allysson Nead. So, too, for the Mansfield-area cops who have taken her into their hearts and welcomed her into their ranks.

That Wednesday, after all, was the day the curly-haired kindergartner became a member of the Mansfield Police Department.

Outside the city administration building, in front of scores of relatives, friends, journalists, politicians and Richland County law enforcement officers, Allysson was sworn onto the police force by Acting Safety Service Director Dave Remy.

Looking both solemn and adorable in the pint-size uniform that the Mansfield PD had made for her, Allysson pledged allegiance to the department and the people of Mansfield as Police Chief Keith Porch and Ally's parents and siblings looked over her shoulder.

And then came the badge — No. 300. Assistant Chief Jason Bammann explained that because the radio dispatch code for the Mansfield PD is 300, the number had never been assigned to an officer — until now.

"That badge number is always yours," Bammann told Allysson. "You will always be a member of the Mansfield Police Department."

With that, the assistant chief gave the badge to Allysson's mom, Amber, who knelt in front of her daughter and gently pinned it on her. Both Mom and Dad struggled to fight back tears.

"For as long as I can remember, she has always wanted to be a cop to help and protect people," said Allysson's father, David Nead, who once shared the same dream while a criminal justice student at Pioneer Career and Technology Center. "There are no words to describe what the day meant to our family. We can't say thanks enough to all the men and women from the different agencies who took part in this."

Allysson was born with a rare progressive neurological disease, Neimann-Pick type C, sometimes called childhood Alzheimer's. An inherited metabolic disorder, the disease results in an abnormal accumulation of cholesterol in the cells of the brain and nervous system, eventually resulting in seizures, dementia, problems with coordination and movement, as well as difficulty speaking, eating and swallowing. There is no cure, and death

typically occurs before age 20. In Allysson's case, however, doctors didn't expect her to see her first birthday.

"With love and by the grace of God, she's still here with us today," Amber Nead said.

Allysson's big day came together because a family friend learned of her wish to be a Mansfield cop, told an acquaintance, retired detective Ron Packer — who in turn went to Bammann and suggested the department run with the idea. The chief and the acting safety service director immediately signed on. But all involved knew this wouldn't be easy.

First, there was the planning, which eventually came together thanks to Bammann's enthusiastic team — financial manager, Hollie McCauley; youth program coordinator Ginger Antrican; crime analyst Krista Sonnhalter; and Lt. Mike Napier.

The bigger problem was how everyone was going to keep their emotions in check.

"The chief and I had a discussion behind closed doors," Bammann said. "He brought it up first. He said, 'I don't know that I can get through this.' So we made a pact. We would watch each

other, and when one of us lost it, the other would step in. We were going to leap-frog each other to get through it."

McCauley said team members had to remind one another throughout the planning sessions that "it's not about us — it's about giving Allysson a memorable day."

To add to the festivities, the Mansfield PD invited other area agencies to take part in the event.

Police officers in Shelby, where the Neads live, made sure the family traveled the 12 miles to Mansfield in style.

"I didn't know they were doing all that," David Nead said. "On the morning of the ceremony, I saw two cruisers, lights and sirens on, pulling up in front of our house."

Inside the cars were his friends, Sgt. Tim Scott and Auxiliary Officer David Barnhart. Their first stop after loading up the family was the Shelby Fire Department, which lent one of its trucks for the mini-parade to Mansfield.

"We were cooking — 70 to 75 mph," David Nead said. "Tim let Allysson work the lights and siren. She couldn't have been happier."

After the swearing-in ceremony, Richland County Sheriff Steve Sheldon and Ontario Police Chief Tom Hill got into the act by presenting gifts to Allysson.

"But the Shelby PD showed us all up," Bammann said. "They gave her an electric toy police car that she can drive around her neighborhood."

As with any newly inducted officer, Allysson had training to do. She rotated among various sections — traffic division, SWAT team, crime lab, K-9 unit, detective bureau — and was tasked with investigating the disappearance of the bureau's candy jar. (Turns out, the chief has a sweet tooth.)

Allysson's big smile and big hugs tugged a lot of hearts at the Mansfield PD. Chief Porch said it was an honor to swear her onto the force, and McCauley said the department will definitely look for ways to keep the youngster involved now that she's part of the Blue family.

Because Allysson is an official member of the Mansfield PD, Bammann said, "she will always be afforded the same rights and privileges that any Mansfield police officer receives."

No matter what other honors might lie ahead, Sept. 7 was a dream come true for Allysson.

When she started kindergarten, just days after her swearing-in ceremony, her teacher asked the class what they wanted to be when they grew up. David Nead said his daughter didn't hesitate.

"I already am what I want to be," she told her classmates. "I'm a cop."



### REMEMBERING DEPUTY MATTHEW YATES

First responders from Dayton and Bowling Green came together in October for a benefit hockey game honoring fallen Deputy Matthew Yates and his family. Yates, a member of the Clark County Sheriff's Office, was shot and killed in the line of duty on July 24 near Springfield. The Dayton Hockey Club, in blue, hosted the FOP 109 Warhogs to help raise money for a scholarship fund in Yates' name at Clark State University. The event was organized by the First Responder Face-Off Foundation. Information about upcoming charity events involving police and fire hockey clubs from around Ohio is available at [www.hockeyhelpingheroes.org](http://www.hockeyhelpingheroes.org).





# LINDA POWERS

**LEGAL DIRECTOR OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING INITIATIVE, CRIME VICTIM SERVICES**

Linda Majeska Powers took over as legal director of the Attorney General’s Human Trafficking Initiative in November. She sat down with *On The Job* to explain the scope of the initiative and her role in it.

**What does your job entail?**

HTI works to end labor and sex trafficking in Ohio by building awareness, empowering Ohioans to act in their communities, helping victims leave human trafficking, and ensuring that traffickers and johns are brought to justice. My position focuses on providing education and assisting task forces and prosecutors with best practices in investigating and prosecuting human trafficking cases. HTI is a small but mighty unit. Its success is due to the commitment of Ohio Attorney General Yost and the hard work of his team.

**What is your vision for the Human Trafficking Initiative?**

The impunity of human trafficking perpetrators persists, and the number of prosecutions and convictions of traffickers remains low, making trafficking a low-risk, high-profit crime. It is imperative that the Human Trafficking Initiative continues to work with local, state and federal partners to educate, prosecute and eradicate this modern form of slavery. As in all human trafficking, profit is the motivating factor in sex trafficking. Akin to any legal business, the illegal business of human sexual trafficking has a supply chain. The trafficker is the distributor, the survivor is the supplier, and the john is the demand

side of that chain. Placing a greater emphasis on demand reduction would result in less distribution and supply as the profit from demand would decrease.

**What are your major goals?**

Human Trafficking cases take an inordinate amount of time to investigate and prosecute because of the level of trust that must be built with a human trafficking survivor. Training and education are key in that many individuals still believe the myths that revolve around human trafficking, myths like human trafficking is always a violent crime; all human trafficking involves sex; traffickers target victims they do not know; only undocumented foreign nationals are trafficked; victims and survivors are only women and girls; and trafficking only happens in underground industries. One myth that still confounds is the belief that many victims and survivors of human trafficking consented or chose to be in their situation. It is imperative that people understand that literally no individual would consent or choose to become a trafficked individual.

Additionally, it is essential when implementing policy measures and budgets aimed at investigation, prosecution, prevention and victim assistance that government entities understand the magnitude of the human trafficking problem as well as trafficking patterns and trends. There are inherent issues in overcoming the challenges to accurately measure the human trafficking problem. Data on human trafficking is lagging because statistics may be reported and collected on an ad hoc basis or for different purposes. A personal goal for the Human Trafficking Initiative is to establish some consistent data linkage with Ohio partners with respect to prosecution of traffickers and the processing of trafficked cases. On many occasions, human trafficking cases are dismissed or pleaded down from human trafficking to some other crime. It is important to consistently link arrest data with prosecutions, actual convictions and sentences, or numbers will not accurately reflect the magnitude of the problem.

**How has your experience prepared you for this position?**

In college I interned as a victim advocate in Michigan’s first victim/witness unit, in the office of the Ingham County prosecutor. While in law school, the Michigan Constitution was amended to mandate that all county prosecutors’ offices have some form of victim advocacy. I was



**Bio box**

**Hometown:** Elyria, Ohio

**Family:** Husband, Allan, is a staff packaging engineer for Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems, a member of Knorr-Bremse Group; son, Sean, is an insourcing specialist for Bell Flight in Fort Worth, Texas; daughter, Rachael, is in the Master of Science in Global Health and Population program at Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health.

**Education:** B.A. from James Madison College (Justice, Morality and Constitutional Democracy) with dual major in criminal justice from Michigan State University; J.D. from Western Michigan University, Thomas Cooley Law School.

approached by the Eaton County prosecutor at the time to create a unit within his office. Based upon those early experiences, I take a victim-centered approach to prosecution.

I spent approximately 14 years as a local prosecutor before joining the Economic Crimes Unit of the AG’s Office. As a special prosecutor with the Economic Crimes Unit, I specialized in the financial exploitation of the elderly and disabled. Victims and survivors of elderly financial exploitation have similar experiences as human trafficking survivors: Perpetrators exploit their vulnerabilities and often groom them, so that

what appears to be consent is actually undue influence. In both cases, profit is the motivation.

**What first got you interested in a career in criminal justice?**

I come from a long line of law enforcement officers on my mother’s side, including a Wayne County, Michigan, sheriff; a metro Detroit narcotics detective; and individuals who have served in a law enforcement capacity with the U.S. government. So I guess you can say that in becoming a lifelong prosecutor, I am a true blue blood.



## 2023 HT Summit will shed light on darkness of labor trafficking

Suleman Masood knows the terror of being trafficked and the trials of breaking free.

But his story is unlike most human-trafficking stories that make the news. He wasn’t forced into the sex trade; rather, he was forced to work multiple jobs for as many hours a day as his body could endure.

As a minor and through early adulthood, Masood fell under the thrall of a conman who had ingratiated himself into his family

while passing himself off as a government official. For two years, Masood was trafficked throughout California, working 18 hours a day at three jobs, and was subject to both verbal and physical abuse. A co-worker eventually helped him break away.

Masood’s story is different in another respect as well. Labor trafficking tends to be associated with the exploitation of immigrants, but Masood was born in the

United States and has U.S. citizenship.

“Labor trafficking can happen to anyone and in multiple forms,” he said. “The same is true for human trafficking in general. We have to get beyond the myths that only certain people are affected by this. We should not be thinking of one demographic, one specific gender, one background. We should really be looking at all the elements and the context in which trafficking occurs, because it changes.”

Masood is chair of the 11-member U.S. Advisory Council on Human Trafficking, whose members are appointed by the president to advise and make recommendations on federal anti-human trafficking policies. He will be the keynote speaker at this year’s Human Trafficking Summit on Jan. 26 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center.

He will explain what labor trafficking looks like, who it affects, what types of industries tend to be involved, and what systems are in place to assist victims and survivors.

Now in its fourth year, the summit brings together survivors, social workers and victim advocates, police officers, lawyers, prosecutors, judges and other community stakeholders to learn how different areas of the state are succeeding in the fight against trafficking. It also serves to inspire and motivate participants to help fill regional gaps in services.

This year’s summit is in person but also includes an option to attend virtually. To learn more about the workshops offered, visit [www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/Human-Trafficking-Summit](http://www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov/Human-Trafficking-Summit).

HUMAN TRAFFICKING  
**SUMMIT**

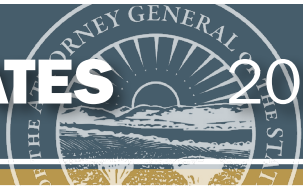
**2023**

**JAN. 26**

**GREATER COLUMBUS CONVENTION CENTER**



# NEWS UPDATES 2023



## Mark Your Calendar

Save the dates



The Attorney General's Office will host two key events in early May: the annual Ohio Peace Officers Memorial Ceremony on **May 4** and the Two Days in May Conference on Victim Assistance on **May 8-9**. Look for more information in coming days at [www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov](http://www.OhioAttorneyGeneral.gov).



# ON THE JOB

CRIMINAL JUSTICE UPDATE

## COVER STORY

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Hard work, DNA science give John Doe his name back | 1

ADVANCED DRUG-TESTING

MX908 PILOT PROGRAM EXPANDING IN OHIO | 3

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5-YEAR-OLD SWORN IN AS MANSFIELD COP | 6



HUMAN TRAFFICKING INITIATIVE

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REMEMBERING

DEPUTY MATTHEW YATES | 7



DAVE YOST  
OHIO ATTORNEY GENERAL